

LOCHNER

1

CSEA HISTORY PROJECT

BILL LOCHNER INTERVIEW

March 1, 2007

□

2

MR. MADARASZ: Okay. This is March

Page 1

LOCHNER  
the 1st, 2007. We're in Albany, New York and we're speaking with Bill Lochner who is a longtime employee of CSEA, recently retired. He's also the son of Joe Lochner, who was CSEA's first employee and longtime executive director of the Association so --

MR. LOCHNER: Glad to be hear, Steve.

MR. MADARASZ: Thank you, Bill.

Let me ask you this: Obviously you have a long family affiliation with CSEA.

MR. LOCHNER: Indeed.

MR. MADARASZ: When did you remember first being aware of the Association and your father's role in it?

MR. LOCHNER: It's rather vivid. In my memory are location at 8 Elk Street and in a way the organization was a baby-sitter for me because every member of my family was recruited to work for CSEA when crisis time developed and that was typically twice a year when we did mailings to the membership and my father insisted that my mother, my two older sisters were required, mandated, to come in and operate

□

3

the key punch machines so that we could get the huge mailings done, so my younger brother and I naturally had to come along for the ride.

And what I remember most was the manipulation of the elevator. I'll never forget

LOCHNER  
that. For any child that was amazing to push buttons and go up and down and it had one of those pull-across glass dividers that, you know, made it official. I'll never forget that.

Our location at 8 Elk Street was next door to the Society for the Propagation of the Faith and call my sense of humor quirky but it's indelibly etched in my mind that CSEA's headquarters was right next door to the Society for the Propagation of the Faith and I thought that that was quite apropos.

So from my earliest memories, Pat Demurio, so many of the icons of early CSEA, were a very small group, very closely knit and it was very top down in management. My father ruled the roost and that's just the way it went for many, many years.

MR. MADARASZ: Good. Tell us about how --

□

4

(Inaudible conversations.)

MR. MADARASZ: Tell me about how your father first came to work for the CSEA and what were those circumstances.

MR. LOCHNER: To the best of my recollection, Steve, my father graduated from Christian Brothers Academy in 1930 and it's significant in that he's from the South End, which was a cultural melting pot and where the

LOCHNER

South Mall -- at least we called it the South Mall when it was built, now the Empire Plaza -- had a -- the South End originally housed many immigrant groups.

My grandparents were immigrants from Germany and they didn't have much and the fact that my father went to Christian Brothers Academy was a serious deal because it required a real strain on the resources of the family to send him there and it left an indelible impression upon him.

So they didn't have the resources for him to further his education and it was in the depths of the Depression and the organization hired him, I believe, in 1930, not much out of

□

5

high school, as the first employee of the organization and it was one of those magic type of scenarios where I think he was born and destined to have that job and once he sunk his teeth into it, growing the organization was his mission.

And that never ended up until the time that he left service as the executive director and certainly beyond. CSEA was in his blood from 1930 until the day he died.

MR. MADARASZ: Do you know who actually hired him?

MR. LOCHNER: Yes. I believe it was

LOCHNER

Mr. McDonough, who was the president at the time and they had a strong bonding and from what I recollect they had a tiny cubbyhole in the State Capitol that they operated out of and over decades they slowly but surely gained stature as a lobbying group for public employees, proselytizing for public employees and trying to make their terms and conditions of employment improve but because we didn't have recognition as a bargaining agent this was all done through political channels, as I recollect.

□

6

MR. MADARASZ: What kind of stories did your father tell you about those early days and how the organization really --

MR. LOCHNER: Well, I guess he recognized early on that I was the responsible party within the family to answer the phone and it was a party line, in fact, at the time and the phone never stopped ringing at my house and I was officially designated to be my father's personal assistant since my sisters wanted nothing to do with it and neither did my mother, being a CSEA widow at the time, because my father was married actually to CSEA as much as he was to his wife.

I handled a lot of the home telephone messages and assured people as sincerely as I could that my father would return the phone

LOCHNER  
calls (laughter) and that they had, in fact,  
contacted Joe Lochner's residence but he wasn't  
available at that time.

And Sol Bendet, I will never forget as  
-- I mean I'm a youngster, you know, maybe nine  
or ten years old taking messages for my father  
and I would get phone messages from Sol Bendet

□

7

from the City and he was notorious as a ball-  
buster and that's the only term I can think of  
and I would have to appease Mr. Bendet who just  
would not get off the line and would rant and  
rave about how CSEA had to do this and CSEA had  
to do that and so from my earliest memories I  
recall being the individual responsible for  
taking my father's messages and making sure that  
he returned his phone calls.

Aside from that, it's so clear in my  
memory that when my father closed the door in  
his bedroom he was not to be interrupted and  
make sure you get the context of this. He had a  
card table set up in his bedroom and stacks of  
paperwork and it was really fascinating to me,  
not because of the content of the paperwork but  
because he had this machine that had a big  
microphone and it made wax disks and I think it  
was a dictaphone, some type of early dictaphone,  
and he would spend countless hours every weekend  
in his bedroom with the door shut and with

LOCHNER

instructions not to interrupt him and he would go through stacks of paperwork and dictate so that on Monday when he went in to the office he

□

8

could, you know, give that to his secretaries and, you know, they could get the word out, whatever the oracle from Albany said.

And that was pretty much the way it was. Very top down. He ran the organization and there was -- nobody could question it.

MR. MADARASZ: M-m-m. Tell me a little bit more about his style and personality because I know as I looked through documents that he prepared it certainly looks like he was very organized.

MR. LOCHNER: Extremely organized, and I would say that my brother, the CPA, more follows those facets of my father's personality and I do not. What was interesting is that I definitely feel that my father's sense of humor is something that left a profound impression on me and also his remarkable communication skills and facility for getting people to work together and when they failed to work together he would yell, scream and pull his hair out and then apologize so, I mean, he had a volatile temper. He would scream and yell a lot but the individuals that I came to know within the

□

organization absolutely loved him.

The loyalty was just unbelievable because at the end of the day they knew that he was a perfectionist and that he wanted to fulfill the vision of this organization and that we all played a part in it and that created that community of interest that we all shared. You know, it was a very, very small organization that I knew as a child growing up.

We had not gone through the explosion of growth that pretty much coincided with the Taylor Law's conception in '67.

MR. MADARASZ: So in those days there were very few employees --

MR. LOCHNER: Very few employees.

MR. MADARASZ: -- and you're saying recruiting --

MR. LOCHNER: Recruiting the family to do the mailings was pretty standard operating procedure. Everybody was on a first-name basis and there were picnics; not the spectacles that we have today. We don't have enough of a wide angle lens to get everybody in the picture. But, yes, I vividly recall get-togethers with

□

the family of CSEA during the summer and a very close-knit organization.



LOCHNER

MR. MADARASZ: Now, if your father started in 1930 and was here well into the 1970s --

MR. LOCHNER: Right.

MR. MADARASZ: -- he really presided over some enormous growth in the organization --

MR. LOCHNER: Yep.

MR. MADARASZ: -- in every conceivable way, not only in actual membership but just even in technological change and operating circumstances.

MR. LOCHNER: Right. No question about it.

MR. MADARASZ: How did you see him moving through those transitions?

MR. LOCHNER: Well, I really believe that his motivation was providing value to the membership and giving them some sense that there was, again, that community of interest that they shared as public employees. I mean that really is the baseline and since we couldn't bargain collectively and were lobbying for the best

□

11

interests of public employees pre-Taylor Law, then the value of CSEA membership was synonymous, I think, with member benefits.

It had -- you know, that linkage was key and that resulted in the development of our group life insurance programs which to this day

LOCHNER

are an extremely valued benefit by the membership and a host of other benefits that flowed from that. Supplemental life, accidental health and, let's see, we had automobile insurance. I mean we had the gamut of it and primarily offered through TerBush & Powell, which was our insurance organization out of Schenectady and underwritten by Travelers.

And I just remember that because it was so imperative in my father's mind that we offer something of value to the membership at the lowest possible cost and the best possible value and it seemed like the insurance programs were the ticket and he was the driving force for that.

MR. MADARASZ: How -- did you know how they went out and sold it?

MR. LOCHNER: Yeah, I do, (laughter)

□

12

because in 1973 after I graduated from SUNY at Albany the -- I was an educator and that was my training and I really believed that I would go on to a successful career in education as -- I had the inspiration from my older sisters who became educators and when I graduated after my student teaching I realized that, yeah, teaching was interesting, but there was an awful lot of action within CSEA.

And I heard about it every day. I

LOCHNER

mean you couldn't sit down at the kitchen table without my father launching into, you know, a dissertation about what had gone on that day and he definitely monopolized the conversation, as you can well imagine. He was quite a talker and I was successful in getting an appointment to work on the CSEA insurance programs in September of 1973, shortly after I graduated from SUNY, and it was a phenomenal opportunity to learn from the ground up the structure of the benefits that CSEA provides to the membership.

And it kind of was a litmus test for me. Did I like working with the membership? Could I articulate what the benefits were and

□

13

explain them in a way that was meaningful to the employees? And it set the stage for appointment to a labor relations specialist -- actually an organizer position when the regions were created in 1975, so that was a -- just a tremendous opportunity to get firsthand knowledge of how benefits worked, how they were underwritten, what employee eligibility criteria were and one of the main hooks that CSEA used was if you sign up within your first "X" number of days -- I don't know, was it 30 days?

If you sign up as a member within 30 days, then there's no doctor's examination and you're guaranteed insurable. whoever thought

LOCHNER

that up was a rocket scientist because it went over extremely well and was very important to getting people to sign up as members.

MR. MADARASZ: That was Ed McMahon, wasn't it, that dug that up?

(Laughter.)

MR. LOCHNER: I think we were doing it long before he was --

MR. MADARASZ: Yeah, right.

MR. LOCHNER: -- and I think was kind

□

14

of an aside. One of those great untold stories in CSEA is how important the insurance program has been to -- not only the growth of the organization --

MR. MADARASZ: Yeah.

MR. LOCHNER: -- in terms of signing up members, particularly in the '30s, '40s, and '50s, but that it also helped lay the groundwork for CSEA when the Taylor Law came into --

MR. MADARASZ: Oh, no doubt.

MR. LOCHNER: -- effect because on the one hand employees didn't want to lose the insurance if they didn't select CSEA as their representative and --

MR. MADARASZ: M-m h-m-m.

MR. LOCHNER: -- by the same token CSEA had an enormous network --

MR. MADARASZ: Right.

LOCHNER

MR. LOCHNER: -- of people who were able to go out and sign up those members because they were already selling them insurance and --

MR. MADARASZ: Right. I would imagine your father was instrumental in setting up that structure for (inaudible) touching the members.

□

15

MR. LOCHNER: Indeed. The -- it's important to point out that the State side and the local government side not only have a long history, sometimes not a very pleasant history, within the organization of getting along and caring about each others' interests but I believe that for State employees in particular CSEA positioned itself as an organization in a superb way.

We were in the right place at the right time with the right product and I think that the membership saw that and felt that that was the ticket to move forward. We were well known, we had established a track record as a valued commodity and it was so early in the collective bargaining process that I think people really didn't exercise a heck of a lot of thought about it. They went with the flow.

But in local government it was much more difficult to ring the bell because management didn't want any time for the employees to meet with representatives to the

LOCHNER

CSEA. It was like pulling teeth and management would just not grant permission for

□

16

representatives to meet with employees. It had to be done off company time, whereas the State was more accommodating and reasonable with regard to access to employees.

And I think, you know, one of the key aspects of the State agreements probably from the getgo was that we had access to employees. Without that, you didn't have much and certainly that was one of the major stumbling blocks in marketing CSEA to local government, so the State kinda led the charge.

MR. MADARASZ: That brings up two questions. While you were growing up do you remember your father traveling a lot?

MR. LOCHNER: Yes. And I would occasionally go on trips with him to keep him company and Buffalo was always a fun time but, yes, he spent a significant time on the road preaching to the elected officers of CSEA and trying to get them to see that productively we could go a lot further than a parochial organization, so he did a substantial amount of traveling but, you know, it's hard to underestimate the impact of CSE...of Albany and

□

17

LOCHNER

CSEA, inextricably linked.

This is the State Capital. This is where a lot of the action took place and as a lobbying group if you weren't in Albany trying to get the ear of the Legislature, you were nowhere so, I mean, you had to go out and deal with the membership in various loca...in particular, Long Island and the City were always major, major headaches for CSEA organizationally and I'm not sure exactly why, other than maybe people Downstate were a little bit more self-actualized. I don't know, but they knew what they wanted. Let's put it that way.

They knew that they were paying dues and they wanted CSEA to do something for them, whatever that may be.

MR. MADARASZ: Do you think there's a unique CSEA culture?

MR. LOCHNER: Oh, yeah. Oh, there's no -- and I'm not sure how you would define that. There are a lot of layers to it. You know, we've seen the enemy and it's us. I mean there's a lot of internal rivalry within CSEA and I don't think that makes us a unique

□

18

organization. I think that makes us, you know, like almost any other organization.

LOCHNER

I'm not ashamed of the fact that I'm my father's son, but I certainly had to endure an awful lot of finger pointing, you know, because of nepotism. There -- I think within CSEA there -- I'm not unique at all. As you've probably found out through your interview process there is a lot of family connections within CSEA and I think it was -- as we were growing as an organization, you reached out to family and friends that you could rely upon that were gonna get the job done and for my part I just think it was destiny.

I trained as an educator, but I knew I wanted to go where the action was and this was a very exciting time for CSEA in the early seventies. I mean we had an Irish Mafia that was operative at that time and, you know, if you go down the list of the names who were movers and shakers within this organization, Corcoran, Conneby, Cooney, Reidy, Naughtner, Jase McGraw. I mean the ringleader, Jase McGraw. You know --

MR. MADARASZ: (Inaudible) an

□

19

important one.

MR. LOCHNER: Who?

MR. MADARASZ: Dolan.

MR. LOCHNER: Oh, yeah (laughter). My father's successor. (Laughter.) About the culture of CSEA. (Inaudible) blows off before



LOCHNER

they do yours. I -- you know, as we got bigger the in-fighting got more intense. I mean there's no question about it but the -- my impression is this, and I'd be remiss if I didn't point out those individuals who were not part of the Irish Mafia: Manny Vitali not Irish, and Herm Switz who was a legend, so those were the nucleus of people on staff and they were kick-ass. I mean their ego knew no boundaries and they were the pros from Dover and what did they have in common?

well, beside from being Irish and a lot of them from Troy, they're all Siena -- most of them were Siena graduates. Maybe all of 'em were Siena graduates and my father tapped into that resource and I think that it paid some real dividends for the organization. They were the best, they were the brightest and,

□

20

coincidentally, there's an awful lot of people in State government at that point in time that were classmates of theirs.

So, I mean, a lot of communication could take place because there wasn't as much stigma involved in doing business with the union because you knew these people and they were okay. You know, whereas in Local Government the union was not looked at as, you know, something that you wanted on the premises and in State

LOCHNER  
government I think the union was looked at as a resource for change and improving public employees, and if you were in management that wasn't such a bad thing.

MR. MADARASZ: So I guess you could also make the point that as a lot of the things were developed with the State, they found their way to trickle down into Local Government.

MR. LOCHNER: No doubt about it. In '75 when the regions were created, and that was huge. I mean I remember organizationally how traumatic that was and I really believe that that was a tremendous testimony to consensus at work. That for us to survive as an organization

□

21

we needed to get away from being a central Albany-based organization that told -- that dictated how things were going to operate and that the sense of regions gave each geographic entity an identity.

Not that they didn't have them before, but this really was substantial and I guess the point is best made by virtue of the fact that the regional office, the Albany Regional Office, wasn't in headquarters. I think it started in headquarters but then McDermott was absolutely instrumental in getting the regional office established and that's where I first went to work. I didn't report to work at headquarters.

LOCHNER

I reported to work at the brand spanking new regional office on Colvin Avenue, so that was a very, very exciting time.

And in my initial years of employment, first two and a half years of employment as an organizer, I was very, very fortunate to visit virtually every State agency in the Capital District area, get exposed to how they worked and partially through the insurance background I had visited some of those in an insurance

□

22

capacity, but then I got to see how they operated from a labor/management point of view and it gave me such a heads up as to how things could work if there was collaboration between the parties.

Nothing prepared me for what Local Government was, right, and I don't want to paint it completely black and white, but in my mind it -- once I had -- became an LRS in '78 with a specifically defined field area, Saratoga, Washington and Warren County, it was 90 percent Local Government contracts and maybe 10 percent State, so all I did was Local Government and the State agencies had their act together and they required ver...a minimal amount of my time, whereas Local Government was a crisis every -- every minute of every day 'cause they were so clueless on how to do business.

LOCHNER

It was shocking to me. I'm not just talking about -- I mean everybody. All the stake holders were clueless. Management didn't want to work with the union at all. The unions were a very unnecessary evil as far as management was concerned, with the exception of

□

23

school districts, which I think were a little bit more receptive because NYSUT or NEA -- yeah, NEA before NYSUT was formed, blazed that trail, so school districts were more supportive of union organizations.

Towns, cities, villages, counties, no way, especially not in Saratoga, Warren or Washington counties, which is a bastion of Republican patronage and power, so --

MR. MADARASZ: Very interesting. I mean was the union seen as threatening that patronage?

MR. LOCHNER: Absolutely. Enforce Civil Service Law? Why? You know, noncompetitive class positions? Are you a Republican? Okay, you got the job. Sheriff deputy, can you count to three? Are you a Republican? Well, then, here's your gun and your badge (laughter). It really -- I don't want to be facetious but when I say that noncompetitive class positions, your drivers in the highway department, your nursing home

LOCHNER  
personnel, your building employees, it was all  
patronage and it was who you knew and that's how

□

24

you got your job and management never let you  
forget it, so I mean that was the picture.

Now if you were a competitive class  
employee, that helped but, you know, the rule of  
three was if you have two Democrats and one  
Republican, there wasn't any question as to  
which was gonna get the job (laughter), you  
know, and everybody -- I mean it's a small world  
and maybe what we're talking about is the  
evolution of an organization from a very, very  
small tight-knit group that just got bigger and  
layer upon layer of complexity was added into  
the mix.

And, in particular, Local Government  
is what I know because that's where I spent  
my -- virtually my entire career doing, was  
Local Government.

MR. MADARASZ: It sounds particularly  
interesting because what you're describing is  
really the reason why CSEA came into existence  
in the first place in 1910, which was --

MR. LOCHNER: Right.

MR. MADARASZ: -- to have some merit  
and fitness in public employment as opposed to

□

25

LOCHNER

simply a patronage (inaudible).

MR. LOCHNER: Absolutely. Right. Well, my father never got tired of saying that it was Rocky who delivered on the Taylor Law and that was a Republican Governor and he never got tired of reminding people that, you know, you have to be pragmatic and support both parties and we do and I still maintain that's a pretty good philosophy.

MR. MADARASZ: Tell me a little bit more now about what you describe as the exciting time in the early seventies. I know others have described it as a time of enormous growth. That there was great opportunity to carve out a niche and make a name and make a difference in a lot of practical benefits and --

MR. LOCHNER: M-m h-m-m.

MR. MADARASZ: -- just that every time you turned around the organization was growing in leaps and bounds.

MR. LOCHNER: No doubt. No doubt about it. The cadre of people that I mentioned were your -- were hired in the late sixties and were responsible for many, many contracts on the

□

26

State side and Local Government and collectively they were very charismatic individuals and the analogy I'd like to make is that at that

LOCHNER

particular point in time the membership just was not empowered at all. They had no clue what was going on and they had implicit trust that CSEA was gonna deliver and I call it, you know, the Lone Ranger effect.

These guys, you could hear Sergio -- what is it, Sergio (inaudible) in the background with the spaghetti westerns. You know, like Clint Eastwood riding into town and you'd pan to his face, he'd grit his teeth and he'd get off the horse and kick ass. That's what these guys did and, honestly, they were my role models. I mean I was pretty impressionable at twenty-three years old when I came on board and these guys were the ones that I looked up to and they groomed me to assume that role and I adapted very quickly to it.

And, you know, at the beginning of my career the membership turned over an amazing amount of power and control to make decisions for them to their LRS or CBS. I was shocked. I

□

27

just could not comprehend that employees just did not feel equipped to make those decisions, felt that since I was the emissary from headquarters of the region that I knew what to do and that I would do it and that things would work out okay and, you know, I didn't do much to dissuade them from that belief (laughter).

LOCHNER

You know, and that's just the way it was, is that there was a lot of ego involved and we got a lot of things accomplished for the membership because management was not sophisticated. I mean they hated unions for the most part but they were not very sophisticated. This was before they hired attorneys to go to the bargaining table on their behalf and I think that the people CSEA had working for us at the time were not just a half-step quicker, they were a full step quicker, and we got accomplished the collective bargaining process inroads in minimizing management's power that we've enjoyed ever since, you know?

And I think that the template of contracts was established in the seventies and we've been operating off that template ever

□

28

since. I mean, you know, once the Taylor Law determined that you couldn't strike and that it was two-for-one penalties if you did and, you know, then you put together contracts that focused on due process was key.

I mean part of our strength as an organization was that we didn't -- we effectively represented employees because we knew the due process better than management did. We were more diligent about doing the background investigations, but they caught up eventually



LOCHNER

and became very good at it themselves, but we had already achieved those contract protections that are kind of taken almost for granted today. You know, codifying the health insurance, establishing due process in the grievance procedure, access to employees, codifying the benefit structure and telling management that it was an improper practice to change anything without consulting with us first (laughter). That's how it was.

MR. MADARASZ: How did you see the change evolve with membership becoming more empowered over the course of your career?

□

29

MR. LOCHNER: I think it was a -- you know, it's easy for me to say that it's a great thing for employees to take ownership of their organization and I truly believe that. I just wish it was less haphazard. I've had some outstanding officers to work with that I believe that I mentored and everything I invested in training them they gave back and more.

Unfortunately we have a high burnout factor with our officers. That's been endemic within CSEA from square one. We have some exceptional people that stick with it long term, but most people have a term or two and they burn out and, you know, it's just an impossible job appeasing the membership, especially when you're

LOCHNER

one of their peers.

It's tough enough when, you know, you've got the imprimatur of the organization on you. Well, I'm not elected, I'm appointed by the organization and, you know, this isn't a popularity contest. This -- you know, I'm here to help you because I've got a solid background in labor relations not because, you know, I throw the best parties or because, you know,

□

30

other people like me.

And I think that the struggle for the membership to take ownership of their contracts and run their units and their locals has been a process that is incomplete, is still we're working on it organizationally and we'll probably always continue to work on it.

And I used the term "Lone Ranger" before. The Lone Ranger's dead and buried and deservedly so. That worked at a time when we were young but I don't think that it's the right way to approach labor relations and working with the membership now, but we don't have very many A teams, and by A teams I mean an ensemble cast that can go in there and know what their responsibilities are, take ownership of a contract, go back and sell it to the membership because this really -- you know, you put me on that team to represent your interests and I'm

LOCHNER

here to tell you that I did that and I did my job and, you know, we as a negotiating committee make this recommendation.

I look behind me from time to time (laughter). You know, you always felt that your

□

31

negotiating team -- you know, from the moment that you signed the tentative agreement to the time you presented it to the membership you always wondered, you know, how much waffling came in and where the fortitude went because very often they weren't prepared to stand up for what they had done and it was the LRS who did it and pulled the strings.

So, you know, I do think that it's -- that we are on the right track. We do a lot of good things with our leadership training. It's never been my role to determine how we spend money as an organization but I can say that the training of staff is rudimentary. In my opinion, very rudimentary, and I think it's effective in what it does but there is very little in the way of follow-up and there's not much for seasoned veterans. They're pretty much on their own, you know, to do the best you can within the organization and I think it's improved somewhat but that's basically the way it has been.

MR. MADARASZ: I think you mentioned  
Page 27

LOCHNER

something before about your father and his

□

32

insistence on some pragmatism and I think it would be fair to say that that's probably a quality that continues within CSEA --

MR. LOCHNER: M-m h-m-m.

MR. MADARASZ: -- to this day, sometimes to the point where perhaps others who might want to be more strident or more activist in the activities might be critical of --

MR. LOCHNER: M-m h-m-m.

MR. MADARASZ: -- of CSEA, yet there always seems to be a focus on trying to get the job done. How would -- how would you look at that situation between trying to strike that --

MR. LOCHNER: M-m h-m-m.

MR. MADARASZ: -- balance between activism and pragmatism?

MR. LOCHNER: I think exposure, long-term exposure, turns activists into pragmatists. I wish I had a nickel for every activist that was gonna change CSEA and set the world on fire through their direct participation as an officer, grievance chair or what have you, because people come in with certain expectations and certainly managing expectations is the

□

33

LOCHNER

biggest challenge to anybody within the organization.

And what I mean by that is that when people pay dues, they project certain expectations and how it's changed is I pay dues, you do the work. You're paid by CSEA and, you know, I pay my dues and that's all I have to do. I don't have anything more. You do it because that's what I pay does for.

And fortunately that mind set has gradually changed so that people recognize, well, wait a second. If I, you know, I need to make a contribution to the collective benefit and good of not just the people in my job title but this bargaining unit as a whole and they have -- they become more experienced, more pragmatic and more effective the longer they're involved, in my opinion.

But the history of CSEA is that, just like the immigrants, we have absorbed wave after wave after wave of activists and a lot of those people have percolated to key positions within the organization and play very, very valuable roles but I think that precarious balance in

□

34

blend of keeping -- the people that come in here with fire, you want to nurture it and not alienate them and I think that we've done a

LOCHNER  
pretty good job of welcoming them into the fold  
and then subtly mentoring them to be effective  
representatives of the organization, so that  
process isn't gonna change, although my  
experience is that we're getting grayer and  
grayer.

It's always been leadership that were  
time tested, but now within the organization  
it's, you know, I'm really worried about the  
brain drain, make no bones about it, that I  
don't know where some of the institutional  
memory is gonna come from when a Don Kelly  
leaves, when a Dave Stack leaves? I mean, I  
don't (laughter) you know, I'm forever grateful  
to Dave Stack for managing my retirement  
portfolio, believe me, until the time that I can  
take responsibility for it myself.

There are icons within this  
organization. I don't know how we're ever gonna  
replace -- we will but, you know, those are two  
that come immediately to mind.

□

35

MR. MADARASZ: Kind of an interesting,  
you know, point because go back to your father's  
day, too, with some of the expertise. Because  
while you talked about there being a small  
staff --

MR. LOCHNER: Yeah.

MR. MADARASZ: -- there was also a

LOCHNER  
relationship with a very effective and well-known Albany law firm that represented the interests of the organization on the outside.

MR. LOCHNER: (Laughter.) What were -- what would the conversations about CSEA's history be with Roemer and Feathers, right?

MR. MADARASZ: I was thinking about --

MR. LOCHNER: Right.

MR. MADARASZ: -- DeGraff Foy.

MR. LOCHNER: DeGraff Foy, yeah. Oh, absolutely.

MR. MADARASZ: DeGraff Foy with a relationship that goes back to the thirties.

MR. LOCHNER: Oh, no doubt about it. Jack Rice was one of my idols growing up and remains so to this day although I haven't maintained communication with him, but

□

36

brilliant, absolutely brilliant. Cockeyed or not, he was just a tremendous strategist and wired and, you know, we had outstanding legal representation through the DeGraff Foy firm and as I recall Rice was really, in my recollection, the ringleader.

And Jim Roemer was on board with the firm and I knew Jim because I was the paperboy on Palmer Boulevard and his dad and family lived on Palmer Boulevard in Westmere, you know, a suburb of Albany, and so I knew Jim slightly.

LOCHNER

He was an adequate basketball player and member of the DeGraff law firm and saw an opportunity to insinuate himself into that dynamic and successfully staged a coup d'etat that resulted in him being our Chief Counsel, so that was an amazing time and, you know, that whole controversy between having an in-house and an out-house (laughter) law firm, we could go on forever.

But maybe the best thing that Roemer brought to the table was Feathers. I mean Jim Featherstonhaugh was equally -- people would form an impression of Jim when they met him. He

□

37

was about five foot six and he was prematurely bald and, you know, didn't seem to have that much charisma, whereas Roemer was six three, you know, prematurely gray but looked like a senator. Had embroidered shirts and, I mean, he epitomized what an attorney should be.

And when they were together, the synergy between those two was absolutely amazing. That was our golden period as far as I'm concerned as far as legal representation. They were the pros from Dover, but what's underestimated, in my opinion, was Feathers. Feathers knew and was wired to the Governor's Office and he was and is to this day one of the most admired lobbyists bar none in New York



State.

So I definitely recall all of the battles, organizationally, as it related to the law firm and, you know, the fact that -- Joe McDermott was right in the thick of that situation, our former regional president and president of CSEA, and I don't know how to qualify the impact of McDermott other than to say the first day that I was employed I met Joe,

□

38

shook his hand, and I never forgot it and he was a real, shrewd power broker and he aligned himself very closely with the law firm. They took very good care of him and provided a lot of good insight and judgment, I think, to not only Joe McDermott but to the organization as a whole.

And then, you know, we subsequently went to an in-house law firm and I think that that's worked very effectively for us but, you know, as far as shoot 'em up, bang, bang and, you know, getting things done and having (inaudible) Roemer and Featherstonhaugh were really the big two.

(Simultaneous inaudible conversation.)

MR. MADARASZ: Let me ask you to talk a little bit more about Joe McDermott because obviously you had a very good relationship with him --

LOCHNER

MR. LOCHNER: Oh, yeah.

MR. MADARASZ: -- over the years.

MR. LOCHNER: I did.

MR. MADARASZ: Tell me how you saw him grow and change. He was somebody who you say

□

39

was region president --

MR. LOCHNER: M-m h-m-m.

MR. MADARASZ: -- in CSEA and a vital force. He became executive vice president and eventually president of the organization. How did you see his evolution?

MR. LOCHNER: Joe was -- first of all, he was with the Department of Transportation and these are subtle things but you can't discount 'em. Bill Hennessey was the director of DOT; he's also my baseball coach (laughter). In full disclosure here, Featherstonhaugh married me the first time (laughter) and divorced me the first -- and helped divorce me the first time so, I mean, I knew these people real well.

And it was quite an eye-opening experience for a young kid to be around these very charismatic people, but charisma is not what you think of with Joe McDermott, not at all. He was a poker player, very bright, but because he worked for Department of Transportation in a PS&T position, he had juice. I think that he had carte blanche to do whatever

he needed to do as regional president and this

□

40

was pretty much unheard of.

But, you know, Bill Hennessey subsequently became the statewide Democratic Chair and all I can say is that he was an incredibly bright guy that had a personality so big and it permeated down within his selections to HR and how management and the union dealt with one another and Joe McDermott benefited from that immeasurably because he could pretty much come and go and do whatever he damn well pleased on behalf of CSEA.

It's not that he had a no-show job but he was very wired throughout the Capital District Region and once again he was a PS&T employee and I think that Wenzel certainly was the individual that is the personification of, you know, the scholarly, you know, educator that was from the Education Department, as I recall, and he had, you know, a tall, commanding presence and, you know, follow me and, you know, we enjoyed some outstanding leadership from the ranks of the PS&T, which is why when we subsequently lost the decert of the PS&T there were some questions as to whether or not we were

□

41

LOCHNER

gonna survive as an organization.

And we did very successfully. I think we shocked ourselves and a lot of other people that we were able to get over that and develop new leadership but, you know, there's linkage there. There's a bridge. McDermott was the bridge, in my opinion. He is only -- I don't think he made a lot of mistakes. I think that he recruited some very good people that were close to him.

Michelle Agnew was my secretary when I first started within the region. Of course, she's everybody's secretary but McDermott's as well and Joe brought her along with him and she wielded a lotta power, both at headquarters and within the region. Joe was successful in getting his agenda across and pulled an awful lot of strings and a lotta people said, yeah, Joe, I'll do that for ya. He was a very well-organized, shrewd politician. That's just the way I remember him.

And he was -- you know, he had a reputation of being a real hard ass for staff. I never really, you know, I was out on a strike,

□

42

our first strike with -- against the organization and McDermott was the focal point of that and, you know, there's an awful lot of dissension and hard feelings and, you know, he

LOCHNER

crossed the picket line, yada, yada, yada.

well, he had to wear a couple different hats and I'm not an apologist for McDermott. I will say this: That he treated me fairly and I thought that he was an effective individual and moved the organization forward and, you know, I'm not gonna fault him for Jack Corcoran because my father hired Corcoran and that was the biggest mistake he ever made and he admitted that to me and anybody else that would listen to him but, you know, he made that particular bed and then the rest of us had to lie in it.

(Pause in the proceedings.)

MR. MADARASZ: Okay. This is Part 2 of our conversation with Bill Lochner on the 1st of March 2007 in Albany, New York.

Bill, we were talking a little bit about Joe McDermott before our break. Tell me about some of your experiences with some of the

□

43

other CSEA presidents who you knew. I know when we first started talking this morning you said that Joe Feeney was somebody who you have a vivid memory about.

MR. LOCHNER: Right, because he had a very, very deep voice and he was old school, one of the few presidents that I think my father feared. He was very involved with CSEA. I

LOCHNER

think that, you know, when you look at the portraits of the presidents that are in this room, I can't imagine that any of 'em lacked for passion in their belief that they were going to play a role in improving the terms and conditions of employment of public employees and Joe Feeney is someone that I remember from my -- one of my earliest recollections as someone who is a hands-on president, who didn't delegate responsibility, who really worked his role and certainly wenzel -- he set the stage for wenzel and I don't know if there's ever been anybody quite like Ted wenzel as the president of the CSEA.

He had the ability to lead and to alienate like none other (laughter) as I recall.

□

44

I was at the infamous Palace Theater fiasco. It was one of my earliest days of employment with CSEA and when the -- when the president was on the stage and it appeared like the membership was going to manifest itself as a mob and lynch him, I'll never forget, what the hell have I got myself into with this organization.

MR. MADARASZ: What do you remember that being all about?

MR. LOCHNER: It was about the State contract, as I recall, and you know, sometimes the presentations of the State contract went

LOCHNER

smoother than others. We learned through trial and error that getting toget...getting a huge mass of people together like at the Palace Theater and telling 'em this is what the contract is may not be the best strategy.

And then we shifted gears and if memory serves me correctly we then sent out reconnaissance parties to -- that were composed of members of the respective statewide negotiating committees and they did their dog-and-pony show throughout the state and, you know, hit as many centrally-located areas to

□

45

explain the contract and to -- you know, it's one thing to get the details of the contract in the CSEA Work Force or prior to that the CSEA Leader, but it's another thing to have live representatives there to explain it to ya.

And I really think that we as an organization learned well that you just can't pack people into a room, tell 'em this is the best we're gonna get, and that they're going to endorse that. That's not the way it worked.

Ted had some issues in communicating his vision to the board of directors and to the membership but he was probably the first president of the modern era of CSEA and, you know, he was photogenic. He put on his warrior headdress -- you know about that?

LOCHNER

MR. MADARASZ: No.

MR. LOCHNER: Oh, yeah. He had this full warrior chief, you know, like a Sioux Indian, the headdress that would go way -- you know, with the feathers, very ornate, and he'd wear that from time to time, you know, to demonstrate that he was El Hefay (phonetic) and I'll tell ya (laughter) we had some eccentric

□

46

personalities within the organization and I remember Ted well because he had a long life and he -- even after he was president of CSEA he was involved and then, you know, McGowan.

MR. MADARASZ: Did many things in the community but not with CSEA.

MR. LOCHNER: Right. Yes. Right. Well, I'll never forget when we organized the Delmar Library and Ted's wife was on the board of directors of the library and the library did not appreciate CSEA organizing these public employees who should be ready, willing and able to volunteer their time to the library so there was always conflicts of interest so, you know, as cerebral as Ted Wenzel was, we went from there to Bill McGowan, who was "deez" and "doze" and "dems" and the cigar and, I mean, I can't imagine a broad -- a greater shift.

But Bill tapped into something that Ted didn't have which was a membership that



LOCHNER

identified very, very closely with him and, you know, I think in our dialogue today it just -- it's a recurrent theme that the membership wanted at a certain point in time to be told

□

47

what to do and then they became more aware of what their power was and they wanted a leadership that they could communicate with and that would integrate their input and roll up his sleeves and be one of them, and I certainly think that McGowan represented that.

And he was notorious for having the answers to everybody's problems in his briefcase (laughter), and it was like the briefcase was a big black hole and I don't think anything ever came out of it once it went in, but Bill was working on it and he had you believe that he was working on it so he definitely was a man of the people. There's no question about it.

And McDermott was, as I mentioned previously, was more in the model of a wenzel in that he was a -- Joe was a very articulate speaker. I think that he presented his ideas well and he had a network bar none, and I think that it helped that he had -- you know, the State employees seem to have a more realized community of interest and they stuck together and they were successful in electing officials because of that identification.

where Local Government was just much more fragmented and it was more difficult to have people elected from that particular era, and when you think about regional -- Al Mead. Al Mead was the regional president from the Health Department and, you know, it just seemed that regional leadership came from the State rank and file primarily.

MR. MADARASZ: And certainly if you look at the more recent history of the Capital Region CSEA, it really has been the most volatile region in the organization. Why do you think that is?

MR. LOCHNER: The State locals are very well-organized for the most part. I think that they over decades have done a better job of informing their membership. I think that -- this is generally speaking. You still have State agencies and authorities that don't communicate effectively, but I do feel that the State has had more of a laissez-faire attitude in that, you know, I mean if you're doin' union business, it's not that big a deal because indirectly the State can benefit from it if

LOCHNER

you've got a more tuned in, cooperative, self-actualized membership. I think that they see that there's some benefit in that.

I think that there is substantial rivalry between the vested interests of Local Government and the State as far as the division -- or as far as, you know, their vision for where CSEA should be going and the services that CSEA should be delivering and, you know, whether it's true or not there is a perception that CSEA has had the luxury organizationally of a State group of officers that were much more effective in getting their agenda across than Local Government.

And Local -- ironically, I think from CSEA's perspective, the services have been funneled to a remarkable degree to Local Government, whereas some State-represented personnel would say, well, you know, how come the organization spends so much money on Local Government? What are we getting out of this?

And when you stop and think about the decerts and all the money that CSEA has had to spend in Local Government to protect our right

□

50

to represent long-established bargaining units, those concerns probably have some validity and it's always that delicate a balance between how are we best spending the resources of our

LOCHNER

organization.

And I think that that leads to a lot of political rivalries internally and I firmly believe, calling on some recent history, Tappy Garrison (phonetic) as regional president in the Albany Region now for two terms, the key to her success was going out into Local Government, rolling up her sleeves and taking names and kicking some butt and making a name for herself. I'm convinced that she never would have been successful in getting elected to her second term unless she took her message out to Local Government and sold it effectively.

And I think that in the past, despite being an outstanding regional president, Al Mead, for example, never had that audience, never had that loyalty in Local Government. His base was in the State and that unfortunately you can't bank on that to come through in elected -- when you're running for elected office.

□

51

Sometimes that support is a mile wide and an inch deep.

MR. MADARASZ: Well, you're kind of alluding to another point that I wanted to raise and that would be a significant difference between your father's day in CSEA and your day in CSEA --

MR. LOCHNER: Yeah.

LOCHNER

MR. MADARASZ: -- where in your father's day everything was very male dominated --

MR. LOCHNER: Yes.

MR. MADARASZ: -- and certainly women have been much more actively involved in the last generation --

MR. LOCHNER: No doubt.

MR. MADARASZ: -- of CSEA. How did you see that evolve?

MR. LOCHNER: well, there were no female labor relations people when I was hired. It did not exist. I will always remember meeting Marge Carow (phonetic) for the first time and we were talking about the leverage and leadership that was provided by the law firms,

□

52

the out...you know, the outside firms, and then when we went in-house and Marge took over as in-house counsel as I recall, that was mind boggling that we had a female attorney as our in-house counsel.

I mean that -- that really was a breakthrough. It was perceived that life in the trenches doing collective bargaining contracts, grievances and labor management, that was very much male oriented work and CSEA really deserved a lot of credit for, I think, breaking that mind set.

LOCHNER

And I have a colleague in Region IV went to Sage, who came up through the ranks, worked at headquarters, came out into the field and I have a lot of respect for the fact that women have proved that they are as adept as men in getting the job done. They weren't as good drinkers, but on the other hand they were quite successful in getting to a bottom line.

MR. MADARASZ: Depends on who you're drinking with.

MR. LOCHNER: That's right. And I really think that that whole -- you know, you

□

53

went to CBA, Christian Brothers Academy, which I didn't do. I defied my father on that. Then you went to Siena. I didn't do that, I went to Albany State, so I was a bit of a nonconformist but, you know, I thought I was a nonconformist at the time, but what difference does it make and then I went to work for the organization.

Well, if you're a woman you couldn't go to Christian Brothers Academy and Siena probably didn't have a lot of female undergraduates, but once we got into the seventies and we had -- who was our first regional director that was a female?

MR. MADARASZ: Diane Campion  
(phonetic).

MR. LOCHNER: Diane Campion. Okay.

LOCHNER

That was another huge breakthrough and culminating in our first female regional director in the region, Kate Luscom (phonetic), who came into our region about 20 years ago as an intern; that we had an intern program that somebody came up with this idea. Hey, let's get these master graduates from Michigan and hire a bunch of 'em and we did and Kate was one of 'em

□

54

as an intern.

And then we figured, well, gee, they did a really good job. Let's hire 'em permanently and what a success story she's been and I'm very proud of the fact that women are doing labor relations now seamlessly with male counterparts and that we've been working shoulder to shoulder now for quite some time.

And there was a sense of rectifying an imbalance because we understood as an organization that women were -- our membership was predominantly women. Why the hell didn't we have any women working in other than clerical capacities, so I think CSEA has developed a conscience over time. Some people would question that but I believe that we organizationally have really attempted to make our staffing more closely resemble what goes on with our membership, what the demographics are with our membership and that's been a key to our

LOCHNER  
success. So that has been a profound change within the organization and, you know, about time.

MR. MADARASZ: Okay. Tell me some

□

55

more about some of the other characters who you've experienced in CSEA and I know one who's coming to mind for me, certainly, somebody who was very, very important in the communications department was Dan Campbell.

MR. LOCHNER: Oh, yeah.

MR. MADARASZ: Tell me about working with Dan Campbell and his role in advocating for the membership.

MR. LOCHNER: It's probably not well-known but Dan and I were quite close. Having come out of an education background I knew how to read or write -- read and write, and Dan very often collaborated with me because he had many areas of skill and expertise, you know. His renown with a bull horn is well documented, but sometimes his ability to put sentences and paragraphs together with the appropriate punctuation left a little bit to be desired and I was there to assist him.

And Dan was the consummate team player, absolutely the consummate team player. He represented the type of individual who when you asked him to do somethin', he just -- he



would do it and he would do it successfully and with -- he didn't have much of an ego that I recall but if I asked him for anything I could bank on it because he would do it and he had a long, distinguished career with CSEA.

And, you know, I've got maybe -- CSEA as an institution really owes so much to our PR Department. I mean -- and this isn't a self-serving statement because I have two representatives (laughter) of that department with me, but I'm talkin' about Joe Relyea (phonetic).

Remember Joe Relyea? Well, this is before your time. He had a trench --

MR. MADARASZ: A trench coat.

MR. LOCHNER: Yeah, trench coat, you know. He looked like he was right out of AB...you know, A...one of the major news carrier services reporting to -- I mean, it was -- he was such a stereotype but it was like the wizard of Oz.

We had a PR Department that was amazingly effective at putting our image out there and people throughout the State, our own

LOCHNER

the newspaper or saw TV had this image of CSEA being this all-powerful, omniscient organization.

What we know is that it was this little guy behind the curtain pulling all the (inaudible) and blowing all the whistles and makin' all the smoke because when you look at CSEA's budget and when you look at how many people we employed over the years -- I mean we're bigger now but we're still not big potatoes, but I mean I remember when we were tiny and we still had an aura about us as an organization that was way out of proportion to what we could actually deliver but that didn't matter because the membership and the public at large thought CSEA, New York State's largest public employee union. That was it.

And we tried to live up to that and Dan was in the trenches more than anybody that I can ever remember leading the chants and when CSEA had contracting out issues, he -- and we still do and we did during Dan's era, nobody was more effective at rallying the troops and

□

58

getting the logistics situated so that if CSEA had 20 people there outside it looked like 200 or there was 200 people loud and he gave his heart and soul to CSEA and he was instrumental in helping me decide that I should go at 55.

LOCHNER

There's not -- and I'm very serious about that. Dan died, he and I were very close in age. His loss shook our region to its foundation. I don't think Phil Reidy (phonetic) has still recovered from it and I knew that I just did not want to go down the way Dan went.

In his own -- knowing Dan, he -- that was a tremendous -- you know, he gave everything to the organization and he had his flaws as we all do, but he -- I was privileged to work with him. He's a hard-working individual and he may not have been as polished as some of our other PR people but he got the job done so -- and he died prematurely, as a lot of good people within CSEA have. Joe Picareon (phonetic) our -- one of -- our second regional director, very prematurely, so -- and there's others.

But certainly the PR Department, as far as image building, I -- there's no way that

□

59

you can put a value on it, none. Even now.

MR. MADARASZ: What do you remember your father saying about that because it's pretty remarkable as you look back.

Could you just look outside and see what all this banging is?

(Laughter.)

MR. LOCHNER: All right. For the record, you two need marriage counseling.

LOCHNER

You've been together too long.

(Laughter.)

MR. LOCHNER: You're getting on each other's nerves and you know each other too well.

MR. MADARASZ: I guess, you know, the point that we were talking about was the importance of the communications and PR efforts to the organization. I think what's remarkable if you look back is the sophistication of what the organization was doing to promote its image really very early on --

MR. LOCHNER: Yes.

MR. MADARASZ: -- in its history. I mean throughout the decades and way beyond what many other organizations were doing at that

□

60

time.

MR. LOCHNER: My best guess is that I don't want to identify Albany as the fountain of power and wisdom because it sure as hell isn't, but neither is it a backwater and we hired people with established credentials to get CSEA's -- to polish CSEA's image and I think it exceeded beyond anybody's expectations and it continues to this day.

whoever the rocket scientist was that came up with the idea of CSEA being a sponsor for NPR -- you know, for National Public Radio, and whoever came up with the idea of those sound

LOCHNER

bites by President Donohue on the news at 6 and 11, I just think that it's some -- this organization has succeeded in getting our logo, you know, CSEA Night at SUNY. You know, there's so many examples I can think of where we had permeated into the community's consciousness.

How many other organizations can say that and for as long and as successfully as we have and the sad part about it is we can't rest on our laurels at all because our society is becoming, at least in my opinion, much more

□

61

fragmented in its allegiances and its interests and we have been a source of consistency and cohesiveness, but I think that the challenge and the bar is always being set higher for us and I think that, you know, whatever new idea -- and just the partici...my participation today in this is meaningful to me.

Not just because of my family history but, you know, I still believe in the organization. And personalities aside, because I've certainly rubbed people the wrong way and other people have certainly irked me, but aside from that, we as an organization have found our way through consensus building and we've evolved from top down to a horizontal platform. You know, we've managed to integrate that in a way that's meaningful so that people feel that they

LOCHNER

have some impact on what goes on within this organization. At least I like to believe that.

MR. MADARASZ: Okay. Actually that was a great answer to the question that I traditionally ask as the last one, which is why we've survived --

MR. LOCHNER: (Laughter.)

□

62

MR. MADARASZ: -- a hundred years.

Let me ask you this: Tell me for you personally what were some of the best things that you experienced here and some of the more difficult challenges.

MR. LOCHNER: All right. The opportunity to start doing contracts when I was in my mid-twenties. Conservatively I believe I've done in the ballpark of 400, maybe 500 contracts over my career, and I take pride in that not for any one contract, but I like to think that I built on the base that I was given and that I was in the right place at the right time to be the workhorse in this area for Local Government contract negotiations. That's what I excelled at.

Maybe in retrospect it would have been so much better if I -- if we were less crisis-oriented as an organization because it just seems to me that's our modus operandi. We have been very, very crisis-oriented and the demands

LOCHNER

that are placed on field staff and headquarter staff are great and they don't seem to be lessening. They seem to, you know, layer after

□

63

layer of responsibility. And you know, that's not any different than any other organization.

However, by being in the right place at the right time I think that I helped tens of thousands of people have a better future. I mean what more can you ask for? That alone to me is satisfaction enough.

The fact that for from 1930 until 2006 there's been a Lochner that has worked for the organization makes me feel very proud and there are others that I'm not gonna mention today that have great continuity within this organization but I love CSEA and want nothing but the best of our organization to proceed into the future.

As far as the negative side? There's plenty of it, the decerts, so disheartening because we really want to have the hearts and minds of our membership and when the decert activity occurs you're smacked in the face with the realization that there's a strong contingent, at least 30 percent, of your bargaining unit membership that doesn't like what you're doing and doesn't like you as an organization and wants out because they feel

that they're gonna get a better deal somewhere else.

And I think that we have been remarkably successful in convincing people that false prophets are not going to be beneficial to them in the long run; that we can run on our record and continue to be the effective representative that we have historically been.

But in all -- the decerts have been a real challenge but that's part of the game and you suck it up and you move forward. And as I pointed out, when we lost 40,000 people in one swoop with the PS&T election, a lot of people thought that was the demise of CSEA.

It isn't and we've lost other groups in Rensselaer County, for example, and we've moved forward and we just try to do our best every single day and I think that's all you can do. Otherwise, I feel privileged that the organization selected me to do some high profile contracts that I wasn't responsible for but they needed somebody to go in in a crisis situation and perform and I was the go-to guy for a long, long time and I think that that paid dividends

for me.



LOCHNER

In particular Shenendehowa Central School District, Danny -- President Donohue's home school district (laughter). I did that for many, many years. The City of Troy, which has been -- which has turned many people prematurely gray and (laughter) I've done that. The Peru Central School District up north, I mean -- you know, yeah, there is gratification. I volunteered to do a lot of contracts that took special effort because you have pride in what you do.

I regret that, you know, the first fifteen years of my employment were tainted by a regional director who I really feel lacked empathy for the human resources that he supervised. I mean -- I was a tough grind. I came in as a young idealistic individual and ran right into the face of a two-bit Bonaparte (laughter) that was extremely difficult to work for, never could do enough for. Unbelievably autocratic and who brought me up on disciplinary charges because I grew a tiny tail and kept it hidden underneath my shirt but he knew it was

□

66

there and he attempted to bring me up on disciplinary charges because I grew a pony tail. That was frustrating.

Now, for every situation like that, and that was the first fifteen years that I was

LOCHNER  
employed, and it wasn't fun but I learned from that experience and because he was such an autocrat it manifested itself in a camaraderie within the people that he supervised that was second to none because we all had one thing in common. We hated this guy, so that proved to be beneficial.

But my comments today really don't focus on the negative because I have so much to be grateful for. When my wife became ill about a year and a half before I retired I needed time. The organization was there for me.

When I needed help and the resources of the Legal Department, I've always been very pleased with the assistance that I've received from headquarters in training and education. In particular, I'd be remiss if I didn't mention that we continue to do a good job training our membership and our officers. I just wish that

□

67

we didn't lose 'em as fast as we trained 'em. I don't know what we're going to do to get a handle on that dilemma.

You know, all sorts of ideas have been floated but, you know, there's gotta be a way that we can liberate the LRSS in the field from doing some of the work that they -- you know, the day in-day out work of just writing a grievance.

LOCHNER

You'd be shocked, I'm sad to say, that there are many jurisdictions now where the LRS still has to hold hands and baby-sit bargaining units because they just don't have the ability to utilize the grievance procedures that are right in the contract and so the LRS has to help them, and that's not a bad thing.

It's just that we don't have a chance to do the internal organizing that really needs to be done, so that summarizes, I think, some of the feelings that I have that some of the longer-term staff would really benefit by some additional training and programs that are related to separating your life from your job.

There's a lot of people that have

□

68

passed on because they couldn't draw the line between where the role of CSEA and the real life and family, you know, where it begins, where it ends. It's a problem that many people encounter but I think that within CSEA it's been always very difficult because we live and breathe the organization and feel like we're on call 24/7 to service the membership.

And, you know, you get into it and then you wake up at the end of your career and you realize, gee, what about my family? What about all the nights I was out? What about all that and I just feel that there is a need to

LOCHNER

reach out to some of our long-term staff and give them -- it's not training in skills per se; it's in coping.

You know, I really feel that we've lost some very important people because they couldn't handle the stress that's involved in representing this organization. I came close myself to losing it all. I just feel very, very fortunate that I didn't and that I was able to wrap up my career and move forward.

MR. MADARASZ: Any areas that you'd

□

69

like to get into that you think we didn't cover or --

MR. LOCHNER: I'm gonna take a quick peek here at -- I did receive this e-mail and I took some notes.

(Brief pause.)

MR. LOCHNER: Oh, that's interesting. Oh, two things. On behalf of my brother Joe (laughter) he's a year, 15 months younger than me, who worked in CSEA's print shop before he went on to become a CPA and work for the Public Service Commission.

When I walked in the door today and saw Ray Latham (phonetic) the first thing out of Ray's mouth was, "How the hell is your brother Joe?"

(Brief interruption of interview.)

LOCHNER

MR. LOCHNER: Ed, do you still have control of all your faculties?

(Laughter.)

(Simultaneous conversation.)

MR. MADARASZ: You walked through the door and you saw --

MR. LOCHNER: I saw Ray Latham and the

□

70

first thing he asked me was how was my brother Joe. My brother Joe is 54 years old now and stopped working in the print shop when he was probably 22 or 23 and that's CSEA. That is the kind of camaraderie and brotherhood that I still feel such satisfaction in.

When I come in and saw Ed I remembered all the derogatory things that Jim Martin said about him. That made me laugh.

You know, there are ways that we can bridge the idea that headquarters is where bad people live and work and that we in the regions have to be very careful who we talk to in headquarters because it's gonna come back and bite us in the ass and, you know, sometimes it does but, you know, Ross Hanna wears a pony tail now (laughter) and he hasn't been brought up on disciplinary charges lately that I'm aware of, you know?

There are so many interlocking connections that we have talked about today and

LOCHNER

all of them, you know, made some contribution to make CSEA what it is. It's not one person. It wasn't Joe Lochner, although I do think that he

□

71

ran with the ball and nurtured what he was given.

And you know, one of the areas that we didn't talk about today, which I feel my dad recognized early on and he's always gonna be identified with the insurance program, but what people don't realize is that he was the one that got FINSERV (phonetic) involved. He was the one that when computers and data collection were just evolving, he hired some consultants that made inroads to getting this organization up to speed.

Now, some people would argue that we still operate in the 19th Century as far as our sophistication with computers and so forth. I don't think that's true. I think it might have been true at one time, you know, because it was very slow for the regions to go on-line and, you know, I mean some of our efforts to get up to speed with technology, you know, fell flat on their face, they really did.

But for the most part we emerged as a viable organization because we're able to streamline our ability to communicate with our

□

membership and that came through computerization and getting less labor intensive mass mailings done and, you know, shifting our publication from, you know, the old school Leader to the new school work Force.

You know, that kind of stuff, I think, is very, very important. I want to see CSEA continue to be on the cutting edge of labor relations in New York State, and if it's to do that we have to somehow continue our ability to develop that consensus from so many different sources.

The difference between CSEA and other unions, in my opinion, is that we are a house composed of a million -- thousands and thousands of different job titles and different allegiances, and we somehow put 'em all together and get a general consensus that we're moving in the right direction, but grudgingly.

Nobody's ever really wildly enthusiastic about the direction we're going in but there's a general perception that, yeah, CSEA does get the job done. Well, I want to nurture that in the future and when you're

□

representing just cops or just nurses or a special interest group that is homogenous, I

LOCHNER

think your job is a helluva lot easier.

We represent every type of configuration. We represent private sector. We represent public sector. We represent hybrids. You know, we have gotta be everything to everybody and so far we've done a damn good job over the last 80 years or so in achieving that objective and maybe our story that we're working on today is going to be the piece of the puzzle that's going to get people to realize there's a beginning, there's a middle and hopefully there's no end to the union movement in New York State and elsewhere.

I'm sad that our union membership has declined to the degree that it has but if there's gonna be a saving grace it's gonna be in the public sector and we've gotta step up and step up to the plate, and to achieve that it's not the field staff telling people what to do. It's persuading, cajoling, leading by example to get the job done and that really is a hard job to do.

□

74

I think we're done, Ed.

MR. MADARASZ: That sounds like the end of the video as a matter of fact. There is material here.

MR. LOCHNER: Good. I knew this was gonna be fun.



LOCHNER

(Conclusion of interview of Bill  
Lochner.)

□