

Interview Date: 4/2/03

Subject: James Roemer; DeGraff, Foy, Conway, Holt-Harris Law Firm, 1969-1976; Roemer and Featherstonhaugh Law Firm (General Counsel to CSEA), 1976-1987; Founding Partner of Roemer, Wallens and Mineaux Law Firm, 1995-present.

James Roemer first became involved with the CSEA in 1969 when he took a job with the law firm of DeGraff, Foy, Conway and Holt-Harris. Working for the general counsel to the CSEA, Roemer worked on the legal issues involving the early years of the Taylor Law. Roemer worked with the CSEA under the DeGraff firm until 1976.

In 1976 Roemer formed his own firm, Roemer and Featherstonhaugh, which represented the CSEA. Roemer discusses some of the highlights of the 11 years he was involved in with the CSEA.

Roemer explains his role and involvement with the establishment of the state-CSEA Labor/Management Committee. Roemer credits his experience with the CSEA for helping his mediation and negotiation skills.

Roemer discusses some of the personalities at CSEA that he worked with over the years. He talks about past presidents Dr. Theodore Wenzl and Bill McGowan's strengths and weakness. Roemer goes into great detail about his relationship with Bill McGowan.

Roemer addresses the falling out between his firm and the CSEA in the 1980's. Roemer refers to leaving the CSEA as "the best thing that ever happened to me", explaining why losing the CSEA as a client, opened new opportunities for the firm in the long run.

Lastly, Roemer reflects on some of his fondest memories while representing the CSEA, such as arguing in the Court of Appeals 23 times. He also reflects on some of his disappointing memories while working with the CSEA, including his terminations by the CSEA. Roemer ends the interview with lessons that can be learned from his experiences.

Key Words:

AFL-CIO

AFSCME

CSEA

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Firm

General Counsel

Labor/Management

Litigation

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PEF

PERB

Taylor Law

Unions

Key People

Hugh Carey

Mario Cuomo

John Degraff Sr.

Jim Featherstonhaugh

Sandy Frutcher

Victor Gottbaum

Tom Hartnett

Sam Jacobs

Joe McDermott

Bill McGowan

Jim Moore

Jack Rice

Fred Rierter

Theodore Wenzl

Jerry Wurf

CSEA HISTORY PROJECT

JAMES ROEMER INTERVIEW

4/2/03

INTERVIEWER: And he's rollin', so who are you and --

MR. ROEMER: Where do I come from, huh?

(Laughter.)

MR. ROEMER: Well, my name is Jim Roemer. Should I be looking at you, by the way --

INTERVIEWER: Yeah, yeah.

MR. ROEMER: -- as opposed to -- okay.

INTERVIEWER: If you can, yeah.

MR. ROEMER: Okay. I'm an attorney --

INTERVIEWER: M-m h-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: -- and starting in the fall of 1969 I began employment with the law firm of DeGraff, Foy, Conway & Holt-Harris, as it was then known, and they were the General Counsel to CSEA, and even though I did not take labor law in law school, couldn't spell it in fact, I landed a job with them in September or October of 1969 and they said, this is your first assignment, and I never saw a law office. I was shipped directly to a conference room on the second floor of CSEA, where I shared it with

three other lawyers, or maybe four on occasion. That was our office for a while.

And so I sort of cut my teeth, starting in 1969 which, coincidentally and the reason CSEA was in need of more lawyers, that was basically when the Taylor Law began to take off. It was passed in 1967 but there was some litigation over the legality of it and the constitutionality of it.

INTERVIEWER: M-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: That didn't really settle down until 1969, so it was at that point that CSEA, the Association, decided that it wanted to become CSEA, the Union, and go out and get formal recognition or certification under the Taylor Law of all of those various bargaining units, not only State employees but local government employees all over the state that it currently -- or that it then represented, but in a sort of hat-in-hand kind of way.

INTERVIEWER: M-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: So we were -- we were pretty active and pretty busy for a long time. We --

INTERVIEWER: So you really had on-the-job training.

MR. ROEMER: Oh, absolutely.

INTERVIEWER: Right from the beginning.

MR. ROEMER: Absolutely.

INTERVIEWER: Who were you working with?

MR. ROEMER: The -- well, the DeGraff firm was Counsel.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

MR. ROEMER: So John DeGraff, Sr. was still alive then.

INTERVIEWER: Okay.

MR. ROEMER: And he had been the Association's Counsel since I think the early 1940s.

INTERVIEWER: Uh-huh.

MR. ROEMER: So he had a lot of history but he was in the latter years of his practice in his life at that point in time, as I recall. There was a fellow by the name of Jack Rice who was in his early thirties. He was a young partner at the firm and he was the person

in charge of and was known as the Counsel to CSEA.

There was a part-time associate from the law firm who split his time between CSEA and the law firm by the name of Fred Riester. Jim Featherstonhaugh, who was a classmate of mine, and I joined pretty much at the same time, and there was a retired City Court judge by the name of Sam Jacobs who basically was our mentor, Featherstonhaugh's and mine, relative to finding our way around the courts. He knew every judge, he knew all the ins and outs and all the judges' law clerks and secretaries who most of you know are more important in many cases than the judges are, so that was sort of how we -- we conducted things here.

INTERVIEWER: M-m h-m-m. So what happened next? That was --

MR. ROEMER: What happened next was we actually got an office. They kicked us out of the conference room and they made an office for us.

INTERVIEWER: So it was sort of permanent.

MR. ROEMER: Right. That was down on 33 Elk Street.

INTERVIEWER: M-m h-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: And, you know, we began, you know, getting actively involved in the conversion of CSEA from an Association to a Union.

INTERVIEWER: Right.

MR. ROEMER: And that, you know, that really meant taking on the challenges both legally and politically whenever they were needed or wanted.

INTERVIEWER: M-m h-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: The one fairly significant negative for CSEA at that point, 1970, '71, '72 now, was that while they were equipped from a legal point of view, from a staff point of view, to deal with lots of the issues that the public sector was now dealing with, both public employers and the unions, they weren't equipped to deal with the political aspects of being a public sector union.

INTERVIEWER: M-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: They had -- as I recall

it, because they were a corporation they were limited under the law to making a \$5000 contribution, total contribution, to politics.

INTERVIEWER: Now that's certainly changed.

MR. ROEMER: Right. And they had no political action force and they had no lobby arm. It was, basically, fast-forwarding a little bit to 1976, it was that issue, wanting to become politically active and wanting to lobby and wanting to take positions on who was going to be the boss, i.e. the Governor, that caused the DeGraff firm to part ways with CSEA.

They were a very influential firm in Albany. They had a lot of lobbying clients such as the Medical Society and other clients that looked upon unions as not being in the same league, and so it made it very difficult for the DeGraff firm to accept the fact that CSEA was going to now become a political force. They decided that rather than fight that or join it, they resigned.

Featherstonhaugh and I formed the firm of Roemer and Featherstonhaugh. We became the

General Counsel to CSEA in 1976, I think it was April or some...maybe it was May. It might have been March. And that was really --

INTERVIEWER: You still had your office at CSEA?

MR. ROEMER: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

MR. ROEMER: Right. I was there basically full time as was he. He had actually left -- Featherstonhaugh had left CSEA and the DeGraff firm in '72 or '73 --

INTERVIEWER: Oh.

MR. ROEMER: -- gone on to Schenectady. He didn't think CSEA was worth -- he didn't like the business, the people, or he wanted to do more interesting things, so he went on to greener pastures. Truth of the matter was he was actually -- he'd never tell you this, but he was actually starving to death in Schenectady when I called him because his secretary who joined us over here was a friend of mine and she kind of let me know that he was probably interested in coming back again so he came back to head up the political operation. I sort of

headed up the general counsel/chief negotiator side of the equation.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

MR. ROEMER: And then CSEA began its significant lobbying, political action --

INTERVIEWER: M-m h-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: -- force and impact and grew from that point forward --

INTERVIEWER: M-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: -- to a certain point in time when someone argued that it had diminished in its power and its prestige.

INTERVIEWER: M-m h-m-m. Now you were called -- according to Steve, he said you were called Mr. Inside?

MR. ROEMER: That's correct.

INTERVIEWER: And your partner was Mr. Outside. That was a good division of labor, wasn't it?

MR. ROEMER: That didn't happen by accident. That was actually my idea. The reason I called Feathers back was I had no interest -- see, as a young person, I didn't realize what a lucrative business lobbying could

become, so I basically didn't -- I viewed lobbying more as ass-kissing and back in those days -- I've gotten a little better at it as I've gotten older, but I had little tolerance for that. Feathers on the other hand was a consummate schmoozer. He could look you in the eye when he hated you to death and make you feel like you were the best person in the world, even though you weren't in his eyes.

INTERVIEWER: M-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: So it was a good -- it was a good fit that way. In many ways, you know, Featherstonhaugh was short, had no hair. I was tall and had a healthy head. I'd know how to deal with people on the inside -- deal with people on the inside. He'd know how to deal with 'em on the outside, so we were opposite in many ways. I found out later on just how opposite we were but that's a whole 'nother issue.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah (inaudible).

MR. ROEMER: No, maybe not, but --

INTERVIEWER: Well, it's up to you.

MR. ROEMER: But the reality is it --

it was a good fit for CSEA and we had a good 11-year run, they had a good 11-year run basically in terms of their growth and how they became, you know, a major force --

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

MR. ROEMER: -- on the political front.

INTERVIEWER: Well, what are some of the highlights of that 11 years that you were involved in?

MR. ROEMER: Well, certainly the -- the critical crunch, by the way, that caused CSEA to say it's time to step up to the plate was the fiscal crisis that occurred in New York State in 1975.

In 1975 we managed to negotiate a one-year contract with the State that called for a \$250 one-time bonus --

INTERVIEWER: M-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: -- which means it didn't even get built into your salary, and after taxes I think it probably amounted to about \$208 or \$211, and the troops were not happy about that and it became clear in those negotiations when

the rubber met the road, so to speak, that CSEA really had little political clout and we basically had to take what the State offered us, like it or not.

INTERVIEWER: M-m h-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: And so in '76 the decision was made that we can't go through this again. We've got to be able to have some leverage and some force so that was -- I think that was really one of the highlights under Hugh Carey, he was the Governor at that point in time, that that meager pay raise was something that said, okay, we gotta get out there and become active.

INTERVIEWER: It was like the grit in the oyster that started a pearl, I guess.

MR. ROEMER: I think that's probably a fair way of saying it.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

MR. ROEMER: Things were moving pretty quickly back then, though, because that 7 or that \$250 pay raise was probably the impetus for the PS&T unit to begin to be even more dissatisfied with CSEA --

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

MR. ROEMER: -- because it impacted them the most dramatically. They were the highest paid. Therefore, a \$250 bonus meant the least to them and hence they started their -- a few of the dissidents from within started their machinations towards forming a union. The rest is history.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

MR. ROEMER: PEF was formed. I still maintain to this day, by the way, I was thinking of it driving over here today, that they never really had a legitimate showing of interest. We had a huge battle at PERB as to whether or not they had 30 percent of the bargaining unit signed up on designation cards and we know and we were told later on that they left-handed probably more than half the cards that they put in then, but I'll never forget that in one of the decisions at PERB, I think Paul Klein was the Director of Representation at the time, I learned that infamous phrase which I always -- I've now learned in law that there's a lot of -- there's a lot of things that are contradictories

and this was certainly one of them -- or contradictions. This was certainly one of them, and that was that the election cures the fraud.

And what that meant was that even if the cards that are submitted that causes the election are fraudulent --

INTERVIEWER: M-m h-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: -- then it doesn't matter because whoever wins the election, it's the election that counts.

INTERVIEWER: Right.

MR. ROEMER: Well, there's a big fallacy in that if you didn't have 30 percent of the people legitimately asking for the election, then you've misled not only the people within that 30 percent but also the other 70 percent who didn't sign into thinking that 30 percent of their brethren really wanted this to happen. If only five percent wanted it to happen, it never would have happened, so the election really doesn't cure the fraud, but --

INTERVIEWER: M-m h-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: -- in any event, that's history. CSEA lost the PS&T bargaining unit and

I think that they were reeling from that.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

MR. ROEMER: And in an attempt to save it, the whole idea of affiliating with AFSCME, AFSCME came courting to us and CSEA was in the market for some insurance.

INTERVIEWER: M-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: Not the kind you can buy from your local agent, but the kind that you get under Article 20 of the AFL-CIO relative to protection from raids from others who are also affiliated with AFL-CIO.

INTERVIEWER: M-m h-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: So that even though AFSCME had initially made overtures that they could perhaps save the PS&T bargaining unit if we affiliated, that didn't quite happen.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

MR. ROEMER: And -- but the reality was, in my view at that point in time, CSEA needed the insurance policy in order for it to move forward and focus on the internal issues here in New York with the State and everything else as opposed to fighting internally --

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

MR. ROEMER: -- over who was going to represent its various members.

INTERVIEWER: A lot of time and money spent fighting the challenges.

MR. ROEMER: That's correct. Yep.

INTERVIEWER: M-m h-m-m. So you had a lot to do with the Labor/Management Committee, I understand. Is that right?

MR. ROEMER: Well, my role -- I was the -- I was so -- known as the, quote, chief negotiator for CSEA.

INTERVIEWER: M-m h-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: Whenever CSEA bargained with the State of New York, it was my role, in conjunction with the president, who for the most part then was McGowan --

INTERVIEWER: M-m h-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: -- to basically head up the negotiations, formalize the strategy, talk to the troops, and back then we did negotiations with what was called the coalition form, which meant that at that point in time, talking about the late seventies now and into the eighties,

CSEA was representing three State bargaining units, but they all had to have the economic package be the same.

INTERVIEWER: M-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: Their individual nuances were done in separate negotiations, but the retirement, health insurance, salaries were done collectively.

INTERVIEWER: M-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: So we used to have negotiating teams of upwards of 75 people, so we would march into a room and there would be me and a half a dozen people sitting at the table and we'd have 75 members behind us, and then when we went into our own caucus, much of the job there was to get a consensus among 75 people --

(Laughter.)

INTERVIEWER: Wow.

MR. ROEMER: -- as to what our next move in bargaining should be, so --

INTERVIEWER: (Inaudible) you're out of the room already.

MR. ROEMER: Yeah, well --

(Laughter.)

MR. ROEMER: It actually -- you talked about me learning -- learning on the job before. That was a good teacher, too.

INTERVIEWER: I'll bet.

MR. ROEMER: Because in order to get those diverse people to get on the same page or at least get a majority of them relatively on the same page --

INTERVIEWER: M-m h-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: -- you needed to learn some skills that you didn't find in a textbook.

INTERVIEWER: Right.

MR. ROEMER: And so that's been very helpful for me personally in other things in my life and in my life after CSEA --

INTERVIEWER: M-m h-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: -- now that I negotiate on behalf of municipalities in many cases against, although I don't look at it that way, against CSEA.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

MR. ROEMER: The day isn't over till you sign a contract, so that my job really

hasn't changed much as basically trying to get people to agree, except now I act like a mediator trying to get the people I represent to agree with the folks that are on the other side of the table, and those are the skills that I kind of picked up --

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

MR. ROEMER: -- back at CSEA.

INTERVIEWER: And you understand both sides.

MR. ROEMER: I use that --

(Simultaneous conversation.)

MR. ROEMER: I use that often as my marketing technique when I sell with a municipality, that who knows them better than me, so --

INTERVIEWER: That's very good.

MR. ROEMER: Yep.

INTERVIEWER: Steve gave me some notes before, as you could probably figure, I've been looking down here.

MR. ROEMER: I'm glad he did because I'm not sure I could remember a lot of the things you want me to talk about.

INTERVIEWER: Well, there's a lot to do with the work environment and productivity, working conditions.

MR. ROEMER: What he's talking about is during the course of negotiations we -- excuse me a minute.

INTERVIEWER: Sure. Take your time. We have lots of dates and lots of time.

MR. ROEMER: During the course of bargaining there were a lot of labor/management type issues that because of the sheer size of the bargaining teams and the number of issues and the number of players, you couldn't address inadequate ventilation at the Sing Sing Prison in collective bargaining.

Now that's not important to you and me sitting here today, but to the people who work at Sing Sing Prison --

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

MR. ROEMER: -- if they had to eat in a lunchroom where the air never exchanges, then that's a problem.

INTERVIEWER: Sure.

MR. ROEMER: So -- and that's a --

that's a very minute example. There were lots of other issues dealing with attendance and leave and time abuse and all these other kinds of things that were significant enough to have to be dealt with but they weren't big enough to be dealt with in bargaining.

INTERVIEWER: M-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: So we set up a lot of joint labor/management committees. I will say that Sandy Frutcher, who was the chief negotiator for the State, the Director of Employee Relations at the time, was probably the father of the labor/management committees because they were basically his idea, and I'll tell you why in a second.

INTERVIEWER: Sure.

MR. ROEMER: They were -- in order to have a successful labor/management committee structure you needed money, and so we got the money through collective bargaining. Sandy, of course, was -- was a proponent of the committees. He was the one who allowed us to get the money through collective bargaining. It was a joint situation and then he was -- as a

result of that lots of jobs were created that both management and labor were able to fill.

INTERVIEWER: M-m h-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: I think he got more of the -- he got the longer end of the stick, we got the shorter end of the stick, but the reality is millions and millions of dollars were funded into those committees and probably still are today. I've lost track of them.

INTERVIEWER: M-m h-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: For the most part, to set up legitimate programs and functions, but secondarily lots of people's friends who might not otherwise be able to earn at a level that they were then earning at got jobs.

INTERVIEWER: M-m h-m-m. Yeah. Sandy Frutcher was one of the names. Hartnett was another name?

MR. ROEMER: Tom -- Tom Hartnett was -- really followed Fruscher. Frutcher was really the -- there weren't a lot of -- I don't recall a lot of innovations that went beyond what was already established when Frutcher was there. Tom Hartnett is a good friend of mine

and I see him often and, you know, he just basically carried on from where Sandy left off. His -- he was good at bargaining and dealing with -- you know, it's hard to bargain with State unions and get a consensus at the table, on much of anything, Tom had a pretty good knack of, you know, making that happen.

INTERVIEWER: That's good.

We should talk about some of the personalities at CSEA that (inaudible) presidents of CSEA that you were familiar with. Where do we start? With --

MR. ROEMER: Theodore C. Wenzle.

INTERVIEWER: (Inaudible.)

MR. ROEMER: Dr. Wenzle, who I guess passed away only a couple of years ago, would have been well into his eighties at that point in time. He was the president of CSEA at the time it was an Association and was the president as it transitioned into becoming a union.

INTERVIEWER: M-m h-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: I think it's difficult for somebody with a Ph.D. who goes by the title of Dr. Theodore C. Wenzle to be the president of

a union, and I think that was probably -- if I were him I would have gotten a name change probably, you know.

(Laughter.)

MR. ROEMER: Like Jack Smith or something, and he would have succeeded, but I just think that --

INTERVIEWER: Ted.

MR. ROEMER: Right, exactly. Well, and he did go by Ted to some of his friends, and he was a very -- Wenzle was a very bright man.

INTERVIEWER: M-m h-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: Very insightful. I think his difficulty was that in this business you have to know how to relate to the common man. You have to speak the common man's language. They've got to be able to understand what you're saying and that's no -- no slam on the common man. I'm just --

INTERVIEWER: Oh, no.

MR. ROEMER: -- saying that if you're -- if you're used to talking to other Ph.D.s and you're trying to relate to somebody who's not a Ph.D., you could have an issue, so I think that

was really Ted's problem. But I can tell you from -- and I worked with him. My office was right around the corner from his. I mean, I became -- I wore a path back and forth. He would call me virtually every day with issues and problems and I had a lot of respect for Ted Wenzle.

In the end when the DeGraff firm was resigning from CSEA and our firm was becoming Counsel, he was -- he was opposed to that. He was against me becoming the Counsel and wanted them to stay --

INTERVIEWER: M-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: -- but I never held any grudge against him as a result of that. I think that was really sort of a holdover and a comfort factor for him; that those were people that he'd been with and he was trying to be loyal to them.

INTERVIEWER: I think that's a normal --

MR. ROEMER: Yeah, it's a --

INTERVIEWER: -- normal thing.

MR. ROEMER: -- normal reaction, right. And, you know, like so many other people

that were in his position, and I've seen it time and time again in my -- in my life, some people just never know when to go, and Wenzel hung on longer than he probably should have hung on and he tried to continue to hang on and it just, you know, at some point in time you run -- you run out of gas, and I see it now with mayors.

Any mayor that gets more than -- that tries to run for a third term is on thin ice. If they try to run for a fourth term, bet everything you got against 'em. I don't care how good they are.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

MR. ROEMER: Nobody wants to see anybody in there for a fourth term. Maybe at the State level, you know, Mario Cuomo managed to do it. I don't know whether the current Governor will manage to do it or not, but --

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

MR. ROEMER: -- difficult to do. So Wenzle was, you know, he was there until '76, I believe, and then a number of people -- I guess I'd have to say a number of people put the arm on me to put the arm on Bill McGowan to run for

president of CSEA and I'll never forget going into his office, which was right next to the president's office -- much smaller, of course -- and I sat across the desk from him. Like most vice presidents, he didn't have much to do. He's -- I think vice presidents just wait around for the president to die. If the president doesn't die, they're -- they're kind of like useless. It's sort of like a Lieutenant Governor.

He sat there with a clean desk and he had his hands folded and we were having a conversation and he knew there must be -- he had some conversations with other people that were putting pressure on him to run for president, but Bill was a -- while he was a very smart man, made a lot of money after the Korean War in the television business installing television antennas in western New York, wound up selling the business with 17 installation/repair trucks and whatever. I think he put a couple of million dollars in his pocket back in those days. Then went to work for the West Seneca Developmental Center in their steam plant just

to have something to do, then rose up through the Union.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

MR. ROEMER: But I'll never forget him sitting there and me basically having the last conversation with him to convince him that he had to run against Wenzle for president and his hands literally began to tremble.

INTERVIEWER: M-m h-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: The sweat was pouring out of his brow and he basically looked at me and he said, you know, I'm not the man you think I am. I can't do this job.

And I said, you know, no one's expecting you to do it alone. You have all your friends. To the extent that you have confidence in me, and Featherstonhaugh, I think, was back at that point in time. The DeGraff firm had parted and we were -- or departed and we were there and Wenzle was still there.

I said, you know, you gotta rely on the people around you, and he basically made me commit, if you will, that if he were to run and win, as most of us expected he would do if he

did run, that I would, you know, be there and I would assist him and I would do whatever, and I told him I would. I mean that's -- that was easy enough for me to say.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

MR. ROEMER: So he was the president for, you know -- he was the next president and the only other president that I worked for before our firm was fired in 1987 by CSEA, so I worked with him for a long time.

INTERVIEWER: So you knew him pretty well.

MR. ROEMER: Knew him pretty well, knew him inside and out actually. Just about everything there is to know about Bill McGowan that I can talk about and that I can't talk about, I probably know better than anybody else.

INTERVIEWER: Well, can we -- can we tell some stories?

(Laughter.)

INTERVIEWER: Can we tell some stories that illustrate the man well?

MR. ROEMER: Well, he was a man of few words, and the words he chose were short and

simple.

INTERVIEWER: (Inaudible) the job, in other words.

MR. ROEMER: That's right. He -- to the extent that Wenzle might have had a problem communicating with the common man, McGowan might have had a problem but the other way because they couldn't understand what he was saying.

(Laughter.)

MR. ROEMER: There were a couple of reasons for that. Number one, he always chomped on a cigar.

INTERVIEWER: M-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: And when people chomp on a cigar and they try to talk at the same time, sometimes it's hard to understand what they're saying. Now if you were around him enough, you'd get to understand the words, but if you're just having your first or second conversation with somebody, you're like looking for an interpreter to make sure this is happening, so he had a little bit of a communication problem that way, but not -- not very seriously.

But his choice of words, sometimes,

was and I can still remember them, some of them very vividly. I think it best illustrates while he was a very smart man, street smart man, he wasn't all that book smart. You don't need to be to be the president of a union, however, but I can -- one of his favorite sayings, and he used them in negotiations a lot. He used to say, we have to put -- well, I'll give you the exact quote.

"We's have to puts the otis on them."

And people would look at me and say what's he talkin' about an elevator for, and I would say --

(Laughter.)

MR. ROEMER: -- no, no. It's not -- it's not -- he doesn't mean "otis." He means "onus." But there were lots of phrases like that with words he would fracture, but you never held it against him because, you know, his heart was in the right place.

INTERVIEWER: I was just -- what I was trying to do in my head just now was cast -- if I were casting a movie, who would I have play him. I think it would -- remember Norm Crosby?

He used to --

MR. ROEMER: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: -- get all his words tangled up?

MR. ROEMER: Yep. Yeah. Well, that's --

(Laughter.)

MR. ROEMER: He could probably do very -- very well at that. That's right.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

MR. ROEMER: McGowan would get his words torn up. But as I said --

INTERVIEWER: He got the job done.

MR. ROEMER: -- he got the job done.

And you know what? Even though his words were, as I had said previously, I think the good thing about Bill McGowan is he was -- Wenzle was comfortable talking to governors and very uncomfortable talking to the blue collar folks or understanding them.

McGowan was very comfortable talking to the blue collar folks and understanding them and he was also somewhat comfortable and near the end very comfortable talking to the

governor. So he was able to do the A-to-Z kind of thing. Took a while for him to get used to it. He was very nervous early on --

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

MR. ROEMER: -- but by the end -- but by the end of his term or, you know, time as president, he'd have -- you know, he'd run into Mario Cuomo and, you know, it was just Mario. I mean he would call him Governor, but --

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

MR. ROEMER: -- he wasn't intimidated by him any more and the sweat didn't come out on his brow and the whole thing, so --

INTERVIEWER: He could translate between the two.

MR. ROEMER: He could. Yep. He was very effective at that and, you know, understood that whole issue. He was what you would want in a -- he didn't need money. Bill McGowan was independently wealthy. In fact, during his tenure as president, as the salary and benefit structure for the CSEA officers became enhanced over time, McGowan wasn't the driving force to enhance it. McGowan was perfectly well set

where he was.

INTERVIEWER: M-m h-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: But one of the things I've noticed in the union movement is that there's a lot of people who come inside in the Union from their regular jobs and succeed in here and earn in some cases five or six times the amount of money they can earn back at the job that they came from, and so they use the Union as a stepping stone for their own personal economic success. Something, by the way, which I don't begrudge them about, but something that they never would admit publicly that they would --

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

MR. ROEMER: -- that they do that, so McGowan was -- didn't need that, so he was -- that wasn't part of his focus, but he had people around him that were pushing and pulling him to -- to bring things up in terms of the benefit structure and the salaries for the officers, and so he went along with it. He never turned the money down, but he was -- his day wasn't spent trying to figure out how to make a better life

for Bill McGowan.

INTERVIEWER: (Inaudible.)

MR. ROEMER: He rarely took a vacation. The man never put a bathing suit on that I can recall. Had lots of money. Lived in West Seneca, New York. I think a vacation for him was walkin' over here in the park in the afternoon and maybe sittin' on a bench and feedin' a squirrel. I mean, I don't ever recall him doing much of anything else, so he didn't need a lot on the outside. Others around him, you know, kind of nudged him a little bit.

INTERVIEWER: That's a good picture of him. That's good.

MR. ROEMER: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Definitely sounds like the right guy at the right time.

MR. ROEMER: He was the right guy at the right time, yep.

INTERVIEWER: Now, you made reference to you and Featherstonhaugh being fired by CSEA.

MR. ROEMER: Correct.

INTERVIEWER: Is there anything about that we can talk about?

MR. ROEMER: Sure.

INTERVIEWER: Okay.

MR. ROEMER: I mean we had -- we had nothing to do with it.

(Laughter.)

MR. ROEMER: Physically -- well, I learned some lessons in life. We all have to learn along the way --

INTERVIEWER: Sure.

MR. ROEMER: -- and I'll be happy to impart this lesson, which is sometimes success breeds contempt.

INTERVIEWER: Oh, yeah.

MR. ROEMER: And the impetus for our firm being terminated by CSEA and by McGowan, who was then -- had become -- he had some illnesses and he became rather feeble and he was basically being engineered by a lot of other people at that point in time. It was a sad situation --

INTERVIEWER: M-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: -- but nonetheless true. One of the things that CSEA was infamous for when I was there was that any problem that was

not easily resolvable became a legal problem.
And so, therefore, we as a law firm were
required to basically do lots of things --

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

MR. ROEMER: -- that you didn't have
to go to law school to do.

INTERVIEWER: M-m h-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: But I'll never forget,
I've had -- we -- I must have had -- I can't
remember the number, but I will tell you without
exaggeration at least 50 of the rank and file
members or, probably more to the point, the
mid-level leaders, local presidents, members of
the board of directors, over our tenure with the
CSEA as Counsel say to me, you know, I hate to
bother you with this, but this is the only place
we're gonna get anything done. It's the only
place we're gonna get any results.

And so what happened was -- whether
that was a hundred percent true or not, you
know, it probably wasn't a hundred percent true,
but I think it -- I know because I worked here.
It was probably 95 percent true.

INTERVIEWER: M-m h-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: And I think what that did was it made us become far more than CSEA's, at the time I think, very adept law firm, but we became the deliverer of anything that was -- that was of any consequence in the organization. And so others saw that as an opportunity to get McGowan's ear and he told me in private when this whole thing was going on, you know, the way it was portrayed to him is that if people needed to get something done, they didn't call the president's office, they called Roemer's office.

And I said to him, well, Bill, let's assume for the moment that that's true. If I'm your man, then how are you hurt by that? In fact, isn't that what you wanted when you -- when I asked you to run for president and you told me that you were -- you were not capable of being the president and you asked me to be there?

INTERVIEWER: M-m h-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: But, of course, that was -- we're now talking about 10 or 11 years later and --

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

MR. ROEMER: -- times change and success breeds contempt and, you know, the whole thing that goes with it, so --

INTERVIEWER: Yep.

MR. ROEMER: So what happened there very simply was that -- and I will say it. Jim Moore was the -- was the leader of the pack, so to speak --

INTERVIEWER: Uh-huh.

MR. ROEMER: -- and it was not so much if the -- let me sidestep this for a second.

Joe McDermott and I were personal friends. Outside of our professional relationship within CSEA we were personal friends and McDermott was the heir apparent to McGowan, couldn't wait until McGowan would leave naturally. On the other hand, McGowan was probably overstaying his welcome anyway. You know, it's the same old story as with Wenzle.

So McDermott may have been pushing and so the other folks saw that as an opportunity to shore up McGowan and I think the message was, Joe, one of the ways -- or Bill, one of the ways to wound Joe is to wound Roemer. You get rid of

Roemer and then Joe doesn't have anybody to talk to all day long.

Quite honestly, I don't remember being disloyal to McGowan --

INTERVIEWER: M-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: -- but that didn't matter. Facts sometimes don't get in the way of politics, so that was the way it kind of came down.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

MR. ROEMER: And then there was this turmoil for six months in the Union and factions, then a vote at the Concord and then, you know --

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

MR. ROEMER: We're on with things.

INTERVIEWER: And -- so, you --

MR. ROEMER: The best thing that ever happened to me, though.

INTERVIEWER: Really? Why?

MR. ROEMER: Oh, absolutely. Oh, it's -- my life has been much better outside of CSEA.

INTERVIEWER: Oh.

MR. ROEMER: It was all-consuming

within CSEA.

INTERVIEWER: Sure.

MR. ROEMER: On the -- I had been for a long time -- whatever I've done in life after CSEA I don't owe to CSEA. I mean we got knocked on our ass hard when we lost CSEA as a client, because they were our client.

INTERVIEWER: M-m h-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: And we had no other labor clients because it would have been stupid for us to do that when CSEA was so big, so I single-handedly -- Feathers really had little to do with this. He did the lobbying end of it.

INTERVIEWER: M-m h-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: -- successfully built our firm's lobbying practice after CSEA, but I single-handedly went around knockin' on doors to build up the employer practice that we have now --

INTERVIEWER: M-m h-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: -- and we've had now for 15 years as you pointed out.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

MR. ROEMER: So it's been -- you know,

it was an eye opener for me and I've --

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

MR. ROEMER: -- I've used that to talk to -- to mentor a lot of people along the way, including my two daughters that don't assume that a setback in life is a long-term setback because you can learn from a setback and you can become a stronger and a better person from --

INTERVIEWER: Absolutely.

MR. ROEMER: -- from a setback, so --

INTERVIEWER: Become a great opportunity.

MR. ROEMER: That's right, exactly.

INTERVIEWER: That's the way you gotta look at it.

So am I right in assuming that the split between you and Feathers was after CSEA? Didn't have anything to do with CSEA or --

MR. ROEMER: Oh, sure. Yeah, that's correct. We didn't split till 1995.

INTERVIEWER: Oh, so that had nothing to do --

MR. ROEMER: It has nothing to do with this stuff, no.

INTERVIEWER: -- with CSEA, so we don't have to talk about that. That's good.

MR. ROEMER: No. No.

INTERVIEWER: Let's talk about more pleasant things then.

MR. ROEMER: Yeah. Right.

INTERVIEWER: Because what I want to -- I want to ask some specific questions.

First of all, were you around -- when was the affiliation with AFSCME begun? That was --

MR. ROEMER: That was in 19...

INTERVIEWER: -- about five years ago?

MR. ROEMER: That was in 1978.

INTERVIEWER: You were --

MR. ROEMER: I was there, yeah. Well, I was -- that was when -- I had to look at that earlier.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

MR. ROEMER: CSEA had lost the PS&T bargaining unit.

INTERVIEWER: Right.

MR. ROEMER: And AFSCME came knockin' on the door and we were lookin' for them --

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

MR. ROEMER: -- as a natural and that's when we talked about maybe we can save the PS&T bargaining unit --

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

MR. ROEMER: -- if there was an affiliation, but even if we couldn't, we needed them for life insurance going forward.

INTERVIEWER: You were in favor of the AFSCME --

MR. ROEMER: I was in favor because McGowan, McDermott, all the officers --

INTERVIEWER: They were, yeah.

MR. ROEMER: I mean they could see the handwriting on the wall. If things went on the way they were going, my bet is by 1983 there wouldn't be a CSEA.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah. That's pretty much --

MR. ROEMER: They would have picked off the other three State bargaining units and everything else would have gone down the tubes.

INTERVIEWER: Sure. Sure. But there were -- there were factions against AFSCME,

people who thought the very joining with AFSCME was gonna do away with CSEA. That they'd get lost somehow and their Union --

MR. ROEMER: Aw, that was -- that was a lot of paranoia. No. I mean there always has to be a substructure.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

MR. ROEMER: When you have something as big as CSEA, it just can't get, you know, absorbed in that --

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

MR. ROEMER: -- whole thing so that was --

INTERVIEWER: (Inaudible.)

MR. ROEMER: Right.

INTERVIEWER: You're making a separate agreement with AFSCME.

MR. ROEMER: Right.

INTERVIEWER: Now were you involved in that?

MR. ROEMER: Yeah, I think so.

INTERVIEWER: I mean --

MR. ROEMER: The drafting of the agreement, yeah, I think -- I think I probably

drafted it, yes.

INTERVIEWER: It's pretty important stuff.

MR. ROEMER: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: You know?

MR. ROEMER: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Any stories about that that we shouldn't hear? Because that's a -- that's a big step.

MR. ROEMER: Well, it is. Probably the most significant thing that I could recall about the merger and around the merger was AFSCME's president, Jerry Wurf.

INTERVIEWER: M-m h-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: Jerry was, to say the least, a very interesting individual. And while I don't want to speak ill of the dead, Jerry had a lot of enemies within AFSCME who were -- would have liked to have seen him fall. Some of them tried to convince CSEA not to affiliate with AFSCME because it was Wurf.

INTERVIEWER: M-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: At that point in time CSEA had become friendly with Victor Gottbaum

who was already in AFSCME, who was head of DC37, one of the largest unions, if not the largest union in New York City. And because we were both New York City and State, Gottbaum was already friends with McGowan.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

MR. ROEMER: Gottbaum hated Wurf. The two of them could not even be on the same block together, so there were all these subpolitical machinations going on as part of the affiliation that made -- made the whole project much greater -- not from a legal point of view. The piece of paper that we ultimately wound up signing was a pretty simple document, as I recall, but all of the subfactors --

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

MR. ROEMER: -- that were goin' on out there and all the phone calls and all the meetings and everything else that happened, and then after -- it first started out as a trial affiliation, as I recall. It was --

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

MR. ROEMER: -- a three-year deal that we could walk away from --

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

MR. ROEMER: -- at the end of three years and so there was a lot of wineing and dining that went on during the three years and again, you know, Gottbaum's goal was to become president of AFSCME, which he never got to be.

INTERVIEWER: M-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: And that was really an overwhelming and predominant issue for him, and because of the close proximity to CSEA and our newness to AFSCME, he was trying to, you know --

INTERVIEWER: M-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: -- get us on board early on. That caused -- I'm now remembering that caused a bit of a division within CSEA because as Gottbaum wanted to become an officer, my recollection is McGowan was supporting that. McDermott was not supporting that.

INTERVIEWER: Ah-h-h.

MR. ROEMER: And when McEntee became the president of AFSCME it was because McDermott was supporting him while McGowan, I think, was supporting Gottbaum. I'm a little hazy on how that worked out but --

INTERVIEWER: Yeah, but that --

MR. ROEMER: -- but those two --

INTERVIEWER: -- that was the deciding
line --

MR. ROEMER: That was the division,
right.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

MR. ROEMER: Exactly. So you can see
that the McGowan-McDermott split, so to speak,
began earlier than firing Roemer and
Featherstonhaugh and that kind of stuff.

INTERVIEWER: The division, yeah.

MR. ROEMER: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: All right. We're
casting our movie. Who plays Wurf and who plays
Gottbaum?

MR. ROEMER: Wow.

(Laughter.)

INTERVIEWER: Anybody? And any
generation of actors. It doesn't matter. You
don't have to stick to contemporaries.

MR. ROEMER: I gotta tell ya, those
are two tough characters.

(Laughter.)

MR. ROEMER: You're from AFSCME,
aren't you?

INTERVIEWER: Richard Boyle, I think,
would be a very good McGowan.

MR. ROEMER: Well, you didn't say
McGowan, though. You said --

(Simultaneous conversation.)

INTERVIEWER: (Continuing) about
Wurf --

MR. ROEMER: Wurf and Gottbaum. I
mean who would play Wurf? I mean that's --

INTERVIEWER: We won't cast everybody,
so this is --

INTERVIEWER: Someone from Cuckoo's
Nest.

MR. ROEMER: There you go. Who's the
guy, Robert, who's on trial now for murdering
his wife?

INTERVIEWER: Oh, Robert Blake.

MR. ROEMER: Robert Blake. Maybe he
could play -- he could play Wurf. Yeah, he's
the kind of -- (laughter) -- right. Exactly.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. It's tough to
visualize this. Oh, God, that's funny.

Okay. Now, I've got a couple of questions here about -- a little more general, about what -- how you feel about your days at CSEA. You did a lot for CSEA, but what are you most proud of in CSEA, and I don't mean leaving.

(Laughter.)

MR. ROEMER: I'm not sure that I could put my finger on any one accomplishment. I mean I enjoyed -- we had some major litigation wins on behalf of CSEA. And as a lawyer, those are things that I treasure, you know, more than some of the nonlegal things that I did.

INTERVIEWER: M-m h-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: I had opportunities -- I believe that I've argued in front of the Court of Appeals of this state 23 times. Now I've been a lawyer for 34 years now.

INTERVIEWER: M-m h-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: You might say, well, gee, that's not that many times, but unless you work for the Attorney General and you're in the Appeals Bureau, there aren't that many private practice attorneys that get to go to the Court of Appeals --

INTERVIEWER: Right.

MR. ROEMER: -- even once, and I've been there 23 times.

INTERVIEWER: M-m h-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: Out of those 23, probably 16 or 17 were when I was with CSEA, so I had some amazing opportunities early on. I mean I think in 19...I think my first trip to the Court of Appeals was 1972. I'd only been a lawyer for three years.

INTERVIEWER: Wow.

MR. ROEMER: I could hardly spell lawyer, and here I was in front of the Court of Appeals.

INTERVIEWER: Wonderful.

MR. ROEMER: And I remember a major, major case was -- dealt with the fact that the State Legislature had passed a law directing the comptroller of the state of New York to invest retirement funds in Big MAC bonds, bonds that were made up, designed to bail out New York City, and lots of organizations went crazy, including CSEA, because it put the pension funds at risk.

INTERVIEWER: H-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: And so litigation was commenced by a number of organizations. I'm not sure whether one or two others tagged on with the CSEA litigation, but I remember -- and I don't know that this has happened. I mean I can't -- I don't know of any other instance but I'm sure it's happened on a couple of occasions that I just don't recall, but when this case got to the Court of Appeals, for whatever reason they as a body were in Manhattan and they held oral argument on the case in the building owned by the Association of the Bar of the City of New York and it was -- it was not a typical courtroom so you were a lot closer to the judges and things were just a whole lot different.

And I went down and argued that case on behalf of CSEA and we won the case, so I think -- you know, your question was what do I remember most? I remember from a personal point of view being given opportunities as a lawyer to litigate matters in the State Court, right up to the Court of Appeals --

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

MR. ROEMER: -- that I never would have seen, couldn't have hoped to have seen, in a regular private practice situation.

INTERVIEWER: Huh. What are you -- what are you most disappointed by in your years with CSEA?

MR. ROEMER: You know, I don't know that I have many disappointments about my years with CSEA. I enjoyed them when I was here.

INTERVIEWER: M-m h-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: I guess you -- you might have asked the question to say -- to allow me to say, well, I was disappointed about being terminated by CSEA.

INTERVIEWER: It doesn't sound like you were.

MR. ROEMER: Well, and, you know, you're causing me to think, well, what would life have been like if that hadn't happened.

INTERVIEWER: M-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: And I suppose if you said to me, tell me one disappointment, I guess I would say I'm disappointed in that I don't know what life would have been had that not happened,

how things would have gone on. I do know that I've enjoyed my life both -- from every point of view --

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

MR. ROEMER: -- after that, but I also enjoyed, you know, doing what I did when I was here. I think -- some people have said to me that when our firm parted ways with CSEA or maybe better said, CSEA parted ways with our firm --

INTERVIEWER: M-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: -- that they lost something within the State. They lost some power, they lost some clout, and they've never regained it. I don't know whether that's true or not. I know they lost immediately thereafter because they took a long time to rebuild --

INTERVIEWER: M-m h-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: -- but I wonder what things would have been like for CSEA and us as a team had we stayed together.

INTERVIEWER: M-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: Don't know the answer. Could be a lot of speculation. Good drinking

question some night --

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

MR. ROEMER: -- you know, but -- so that's really the only lingering -- you know, I don't spend a lot of time thinking about it, but, you know, it would be interesting to know what would have happened.

INTERVIEWER: All right. One more -- one more question and I will let you go unless you have other things you want to tell me.

What lessons do you think CSEA's history holds for its future? What can I learn?

(Pause.)

MR. ROEMER: I think the fact that they became affiliated and the consequences of what -- of the affiliation itself allowed CSEA not to be too concerned about learning from its history. When you have a life insurance policy that not only pays upon your death, but actually prevents your death (laughter), you may not be -- you may not have to learn too much from your history.

INTERVIEWER: (Inaudible.)

MR. ROEMER: That's right. Exactly.

That's right. So I -- I don't know. You know, I believe that CSEA has always tried hard.

INTERVIEWER: M-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: I think sometimes they had a difficult time figuring out what it was they needed to try hard at and I'm not sure that they have even figured that out.

Because I deal with CSEA a lot --

INTERVIEWER: From the other side.

MR. ROEMER: -- from the other side, well, you know, let me -- let me give you something that you can -- that somebody can look at on this tape later on and figure out whether it means anything or not.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

MR. ROEMER: I deal with CSEA representatives from their Mid-Hudson Region down in Kingston, Dutchess County --

INTERVIEWER: M-m h-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: -- Sullivan County. I deal with reps from the Albany area obviously. I deal with reps from -- out of the Syracuse area because we represent the City of Utica.

INTERVIEWER: M-m h-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: And Oswego, although I don't know that I see CSEA in Oswego. I don't think I do. And I will tell you almost universally the staff feels that they can't do their job adequately, and the reason is because there's a parallel of paid staff professionals here and elected leaders here, and under the two-tiered approach that CSEA has to its own internal organization, regional president elected, regional director staff person, I think they need to do a lot of work because I think they're losing efficiency out there.

INTERVIEWER: M-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: When a CSEA field rep says to me in an off-the-record conversation, Roemer, you're right and we ought to be able to get these negotiations done on what you're talkin' about, but it's out of my hands. The Union -- if I say to -- if I try to settle this deal against the Union president's wishes, they go running to the regional president. The regional president goes running to the regional director and then I'm told that I'm screwing up the operation.

So what's basically happened is because of this dual line of -- authority is really not the right word, but the competition, the elected folks need to get elected. The staff doesn't vote for the elected folks. The elected people at the local level vote for the elected folks and so, therefore, they've kind of turned things around.

I will -- let me state it a different way. Thirty years ago, in 1973, staff was king in CSEA. Now some would argue maybe too much of a king and I wouldn't vigorously dispute that, but the pendulum has apparently, in my estimation, swung to the point where now the membership is king.

INTERVIEWER: M-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: And when you're paying the kind of money that CSEA is for staff services but you can't let staff do their job because you've got the membership getting in the way, maybe the pendulum needs to come back. My life experience tells me that whenever it gets too far out one way, that it always has a way of coming back.

INTERVIEWER: Right.

MR. ROEMER: And so maybe what CSEA ought to think about in the next several years is taking that pendulum back a little bit more towards the center point to give their staff the kind of authority and recognition that they pay them for.

INTERVIEWER: M-m-m.

MR. ROEMER: And I'll tell you that I've had staff people say to me, you know, I got a good life here. I have no responsibility 'cause I can't make a decision. They pay me pretty good and, you know, somebody else picks it up for me.

INTERVIEWER: Who wouldn't like that system?

MR. ROEMER: Right, exactly.

INTERVIEWER: Wow. That's very honest. Thank you.

MR. ROEMER: Well --

INTERVIEWER: I appreciate that. I'm sure --

MR. ROEMER: I could -- I'm free to say it because they can do nothing to me about

it and, frankly, it's the truth. I -- anyone who's -- even the people who knew me and disliked me, and there were many, although fewer than those who liked me 33 years ago, will never quarrel with the fact that whenever they asked me for my opinion about something, I gave 'em the best shot I had. I didn't make up a lot of stories about it, so --

INTERVIEWER: Good. That's good.

Skip, anything?

MR. ROEMER: No.

INTERVIEWER: I think we covered a lot of new ground.

MR. ROEMER: Okay.

INTERVIEWER: I really appreciate it.

MR. ROEMER: Okay. Good.

INTERVIEWER: Thanks for your honesty.

MR. ROEMER: Okay. Thanks for inviting me.

(Whereupon, the interview of James Roemer was concluded.)

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, JEANNE M. CARPENTIER, do hereby certify that the preceding is a true and accurate transcription of the taped proceedings held in the above-entitled matter to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Sworn to before me this

_____ day of _____

My commission expires
