

Interview Date: 12/7/04

Subject: Ed Draves; Assistant Legislative Director, 1979; legislative Director, ?; Ran Buffalo Campaign Office for Mario Cuomo, 1982; Hilary Clinton's Deputy Campaign Manager for Upstate New York, 2000; Campaign Manager for Transportation Bond Act, 2003; Lobbyist for Bolton St. John's, 2002-present.

Ed Draves describes his early awareness of CSEA coming through his father who was a local president with AFSCME in Scotia-Glenville school district. He served an internship with AFSCME while in college and in took a job as assistant legislative director in New York in 1979.

He describes how his department consisted of young people, mostly in there twenties, eager and energetic but inexperienced. Draves offers insight into the initial trial affiliation between CSEA and AFSCME, which was made permanent in 1981.

Draves discusses the campaign to pass the Public Employee Safety and Healthy Act and its significance. He saysIt was the first time where the AFSCME, DC-37 and the CSEA were able to formally work together for legislation.

Draves also discusses his involvement in Mario Cuomo's gubernatorial 1982 campaign. He points out that Cuomo, then Lt. Governor, was an underdog against New York City Mayor Ed Koch. Draves describes heading up the Buffalo area Campaign for Cuomo with limited resources and CSEA volunteers.

Draves describes the success of the campaign due to the commitment of the Public Employee's. He then discusses the sour relationship between Cuomo and the CSEA shortly after Cuomo became Governor.

Draves also describes his involvement through the union with the Clinton Administration and his role as deputy campaign manager, in Hillary Clinton's successful senate campaign in 2000.

Draves also talks about many CSEA and AFSCME leaders he worked with, from William McGowan, Joseph Mcdermott, Danny Donohue, Gerald McEntee to Bill Lucy. He offers insight about their strengths and qualities.

Key Words

AFL-CIO

AFSCME

Bolton St. Johns

Buffalo

Comptroller

DC-37 Legislative Office

Democratic Leadership Council

Governor

Gubernatorial

Legislative

Members

Organizing

Public Employee Safety and Health Act

Senate

Taylor Law

Key People

Norman Adler

Irene Carr

Bill Clinton

Hillary Clinton

Erastus Corning

Mario Cuomo

Danny Donohue

Maggie Dresen

Victor Gottbaum

Ed Koch

Bill Lucy

Carl McCall

Joeseeph McDermott

Gerald McEntee

Bill McGowan

Howard Nolan

George Pataki

Ned Regan

Bernie Ryan

Eileen Shaughnessy

Jerry Wurf

CSEA HISTORY PROJECT

ED DRAVES INTERVIEW

12/7/04

INTERVIEWER: Okay. This is December the 7th, 2004, and we have Ed Draves with us. Ed, why don't you start by telling us who you are and what your association has been with CSEA and AFSCME over the years.

MR. DRAVES: Okay. I started in 1979 with AFSCME as an assistant legislative director in New York, eventually became legislative director in New York and worked for the International Union in New York State for 22 years.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. And what do you do now?

MR. DRAVES: Now I am with Bolton St. Johns which is a governmental and -- affairs firm here in Albany, New York.

INTERVIEWER: Great. Do you remember when you first became aware of an organization called CSEA?

MR. DRAVES: Actually, my father was a local president with AFSCME in a small school district in Upstate New York, Scotia-Glenville. He had the noninstructional employees unit that varied from 75 to 125, so during the -- when the

Taylor Law came into existence those units which were unorganized at the time, organizers from CSEA and organizers from AFSCME would come out and try to get those organizations to affiliate with them and create units, and so that's when I first ran into CSEA and became aware of the organization.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. And how did you come to be hired by AFSCME?

MR. DRAVES: I did an internship with the AFL-CIO, when I was going to school did an internship with AFSCME. It was when State Senator Howard Nolan took on Erastus Corning for mayor of the city of Albany and the AFSCME units hated the mayor because he wouldn't allow them to organize and bargain collectively, so AFSCME put a campaign together here and I worked on that with -- with Maggie Dresen who was in the executive -- the legislative director for AFSCME in New York.

Worked on that campaign after school, got hired by the UAW and then her assistant's position came open and so I came back from South Carolina where I was working for the Auto

Workers and took a job working with Maggie.

INTERVIEWER: So with your -- you started with AFSCME in 1979 which was really right at the time when CSEA had affiliated.

MR. DRAVES: Right.

INTERVIEWER: What -- what do you remember about -- about those times in terms of the -- the dynamics of the relationship?

MR. DRAVES: Well, when I came into -- to the operation it was just as the affiliation had occurred, so AFSCME was starting to staff up in the state because they had the new affiliate.

The other thing that was going on at that time was the current president of AFSCME, who was Jerry Wirf, and the DC-37 executive director, Victor Gottbaum, was preparing to mount a campaign to -- to take Wirf on for president and interestingly enough we had a legislative office that had the AFSCME legislative office, the DC-37 legislative office and the CSEA legislative office all housed in one contiguous office and so you had a lot going on because you had the affiliation going on and both Wirf and Gottbaum wanted that affiliation

to occur so they were for that.

But at the same time they were preparing to do battle with each other, so they were watching the moves of each other and so it was a very interesting office to be in, to say the least.

INTERVIEWER: There -- there had been, prior to the affiliation kind of an adversarial relationship between CSEA and AFSCME. How did you counteract that as a staff person when the affiliation went forward?

MR. DRAVES: Well, it was interesting because I think most -- the same political department, almost all the people that we hired were very, very young. We were all in our twenties and we had no history. In fact, some of them -- some of the folks in the office came at -- from internships with either AFSCME or with CSEA or DC-37, so we had this mix of young people that had no history of -- of the problems there and the adversarial relationship of fighting for units and things like that that had gone on before.

And one of the things that I've always

found in -- in the union movement is where people may fight about a lot of things, there's usually agreement on the political program. Everybody wants the same bills passed, everybody wants more money for contracts and for member benefits and things like that, so it's the one place where, even if things aren't working in other parts of the Union where people that have diverse opinions on how the Union should move forward, agree on the legislative and political program.

So we had a bunch of people there that had no history except as interns or very young people, young staffers, working together. We're all working on the same program and we were told, and this was the thing that was -- that was really fascinating about it. We were told just to go out and service members. We were told to go out and do trainings, go -- you know, do, you know, outreach.

And that's what we did. We did what good legislative political staff should do and even though these politics were swirling above us, we were out dealing with members; you know,

organizing them, getting them to work together on endorsements, on legislative programs, on letter-writing campaigns and on electoral politics.

So we just, you know, we didn't worry about what was going on above us. We just went out and did the program.

INTERVIEWER: When you talk about what was going on kind of above you, on the one hand you have DC-37 which to that time was really the flagship of AFSCME, and suddenly there's an affiliate of AFSCME that has even more members and actually is kind of like striking, in some ways, an independent position because there was a lot of issue with maintaining CSEA's independence as part of the --

MR. DRAVES: Right.

INTERVIEWER: -- affiliation, so how did the dynamic of that relationship work and how did you see that evolve over the years?

MR. DRAVES: Well, I think you had basically two things going on at the same time. One was this Wirf/Gottbaum thing, and a lot of that was centered in New York City and a lot of

that was centered within DC-37. On the other hand, you had this situation going on where you were -- basically CSEA and AFSCME were dating. I mean that's pretty much what it was.

They, you know, had made an agreement that they were gonna take a look at each other and that they wanted to affiliate but CSEA always had the opportunity to pull out of that relationship and so one of the things that we were always very cognizant of was understanding the CSEA traditions and their independence and how they got to be to where they were in their structure, which their structure was so much different than the AFSCME structure.

The 37 structures and the AFSCME/New York structures, you know, very much meshed. They were the same structure, same Governor's policies. CSEA was an entirely different way of governing themselves and setting themselves up, plus they came from a long tradition of being outside the AFL-CIO, where AFSCME affiliates had already been part of the AFL-CIO, so it was understanding those traditions and the desire of the leadership and the members of that

organization to retain those things that were theirs but to also say you can have those things but you can be part of this greater organization.

If you're part of this greater organization it's gonna be good for you here in New York and it's good for public employees nationwide.

INTERVIEWER: What did the CSEA affiliation do for AFSCME's credibility in New York State?

MR. DRAVES: Well, I mean the main thing was, is that AFSCME was a major political player in the City of New York because of DC-37 but not a major political player statewide. The CSEA affiliation gave the ability to have large numbers of members across the state, gave -- as an institution for AFSCME it gave them significant amounts of members in every political district in the state, both Assembly and Senate.

It gave you the -- a platform to be major players in the gubernatorial and, you know, statewide elections that occurred.

Federally it was important because New York had a large congressional delegation and now it wasn't just New York City that AFSCME was concentrated in, but it had the ability to have tens of thousands of members in districts across the state.

So it really, for both CSEA and AFSCME, it was a huge opportunity to take this political muscle that was -- you know, to actually create political muscle and that's what happened.

INTERVIEWER: M-m h-m-m. One of the benchmark achievements for CSEA and I would assume for AFSCME, too, actually occurred, I think, in 1979, which was the passage of the Public Employee Safety & Health Act. What do you remember about the campaign to -- to move that legislation forward and what significance do you think it's had?

MR. DRAVES: Well, I think the -- the significance of it was that was just the beginning, the tip of the iceberg, of understanding what would happen if AFSCME created this, you know, statewide political

operation with all the affiliates working together, what role that meant in the labor movement.

Because you have to understand at that point in the labor movement, the public employees were not a real part of the labor movement. They had a thing called the Public Employee Conference that really lobbied and represented the public employees outside of the AFL-CIO at that point and it was a significant, significant piece of legislation because the public employee unions did it together on their own.

The AFSCME -- for the first time CSEA, DC-37 and the other AFSCME affiliates worked together, you know, on a campaign and they won and, you know, obviously it meant health and safety protections, you know, for New York workers across -- whether they worked in the City or whether they worked in Hicksville or whether they worked in Amherst, and it was extremely, extremely important in establishing, you know, worker safety rights in the state.

INTERVIEWER: What was -- what was the

dynamic like between the AFSCME staff and the CSEA staff?

MR. DRAVES: The -- it was interesting. I mean, I'm gonna talk strictly, because I was a political operative, and I'm not gonna talk about field service stuff. I'm gonna talk about politics again.

One of the reasons that we were all so young is that we were not threatening, okay? The people that were the leaders or executive directors of the, like DC-37, Norman Adler, Bernie Ryan or those guys who'd been around a long time, you had the law firm that represented CSEA at the time. They had, you know, big political credentials.

So we were not a threat to those political credentials. We worked really hard and we did the grassroots work and organized the members but they felt secure that their direct access to leaders wasn't being, you know, in any way threatened by the International Union.

Wirf, at one point, thought about coming in here and hiring a major law firm to represent the International Union and went about

talking about doing that and ran it by Victor Gottbaum, who was of course threatened by it. Ran it by the CSEA folks who were threatened by it and they said no. We like your political operation just the way it is, and so it stayed just the way it is.

The interesting thing was that Wirf would have made the biggest mistake in the world by doing that because he was never gonna be -- you know, the International Union was not gonna be the major player here because it didn't have the major amounts of members.

However, by taking a group of young and energetic field staff and putting us out to work with the CSEA members and their locals, that was the best thing he could do because we brought some of AFSCME's political traditions to them, they brought some of theirs to us, and we formed and created this new political operation. So, you know, you did what you should do which is to build from the grassroots up and that's what we did.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. Tell me a little bit about 1982 and the -- the support for Mario

Cuomo as kind of an underdog candidate running in a Democratic primary against Ed Koch, then the mayor of New York. What -- what did AFSCME and CSEA bring to the table in that primary?

MR. DRAVES: Well, I can give you a perfect example of that campaign. Ed Koch was endorsed, is mayor of the City of New York, so he had the entire New York Democratic -- City Democratic party with him. Upstate everybody thought he was the inevitable governor so all the Democratic office holders immediately jumped onto the Koch campaign. He was, of course, an anathema to DC-37.

CSEA said, man, we've seen what he's done to the 37 members. We can't have him as Governor of the state of New York. I was sent out to run Buffalo and I came out to the Buffalo Office of the Mario Cuomo for Governor campaign in July and the office consisted -- and I'll always remember. This is a huge Koch office, Erie County Democratic Headquarters. Everybody in.

I go to an office, there is two phones, there is the CSEA regional political guy

who's not like the kind of regional political guy. He's not -- who you have on full-time leave, but a guy that's workin' full time at a mental hospital and then comin' in to do the thing, myself, a guy that worked in a parking garage and another guy who he and his brother had so upset every faction of the Democratic party in Buffalo that nobody would talk to him, and I walked -- I came out there and that was the office. We had nothing.

And the only reason that the Cuomo campaign survived was because the unions put in the resources to keep the campaign alive and then as the campaign took off, you had progressives in other labor organizations come to the campaign and eventually we won in Erie County against everything and it really was a watershed moment because it showed public employees and labor as a whole in New York what they could do if they were politically organized.

INTERVIEWER: What -- what did you actually do with Cuomo during that campaign? Was he hands on out there working the members?

How did you build up support among the membership ranks for this -- this individual?

MR. DRAVES: Well, it was -- it was -- I mean Cuomo, anybody that's seen Mario Cuomo knows he's an incredibly charismatic and unbelievably good speaker, and he did that. He would come to Buffalo and he would speak and just do these speeches that were absolutely incredible, fire up the crowd.

The thing that we had going for us, really, at the beginning, because Mario Cuomo was pretty much an unknown quantity in Buffalo, New York. I mean he's a, you know, Italian-American from Queens. He's been a Secretary of State. You know, I mean, he -- and Lieutenant Governor. I mean he was like pretty much unknown.

The thing was what we really worked with was the Koch record, what Ed Koch had done to public employees in the City of New York, and we had very concrete things that the Koch administration had done, so what we had was -- was a guy that was unknown but charismatic and could talk to working people.

His speeches were about the issues that they cared about. He spoke directly to them. And then he was running against a guy who, in office, had made public employees public enemy number one and had used his administration to attack public employees. So that's what we used to build the campaign and it was exciting because, since it was a gubernatorial race, whether you were in a school district local or a city local, whether you were in a state local, whether you were blue collar, white collar, it didn't matter.

This was the Governor and so you could involve everybody in the race, and so it was an opportunity, you know, and it was really a first opportunity since the merger to bring everybody together on -- on a statewide thing that affected everyone, and so it was a very exciting race because we were able to touch all facets of the Union and bring them together on it.

INTERVIEWER: For you as an AFSCME staffer, what -- what do you remember about Jerry McEntee's election as president of AFSCME and what role did CSEA play in that?

MR. DRAVES: Well, being in New York, what I remember is when that happened, you know, Gottbaum thought he was gonna win and he thought that he had the entire CSEA unit and, in fact, he didn't and CSEA split and Jerry McEntee won.

What I remember is being in our offices and Jerry coming through with Joe McDermott and them talking and looking at all the people and I remember that there was 28 of us before McEntee was elected and within three months there was 4 of us, so it was a traumatic time to be a New York State staffer.

The -- in my shop I had, I believe, six people and at the end of it Eileen Shaughnessy and myself were the only ones left in the state and the other ones were all gone and so we went from this huge, huge staff, which was really an organizing staff. That's what the level that we were doing it at, because that's what we were all intents and purposes doing is organizing CSEA to bring them in.

Even though they were an organization that had existed, we were organizing them and the amount of outreach and things we were doing

to a staff that was the kind of staff you'd see in a normal AFSCME state.

INTERVIEWER: What -- on a -- what was the reason? Was it like a purge of Wirf loyalists or Gottbaum -- potentially Gottbaum --

MR. DRAVES: No, I think it was -- what it really was about was the fact that when Jerry Wirf got sick, he made a determination that he wanted to change the structure of CSEA and the relationship of CSEA and its law firm and so he basically sent those of us that worked on the international staff to CSEA convention to basically, you know --

INTERVIEWER: Infiltrate.

MR. DRAVES: -- infiltrate and to also hand out lit and stuff and say basically, look it, the relationship that you currently have with your law firm and your leadership has with your law firm is not a good relationship. It's bad for you, it's bad for -- institutionally, and so all those staffers that went and did that were now basically, you know, had -- you know, were basically -- I don't know what the term you'd want to use, but they -- they basically --

what they'd done politically was a real problem and when Wirf was no longer there -- it was the mission of the International Union when Wirf was there. It was no longer the mission of the International Union to change the structure of CSEA, to change the relationship with the law firm.

That was -- and -- so when that happened, those people that had went on that and had aggressively gone on that campaign were -- were major political liabilities and so that's what happened.

INTERVIEWER: To come back to Mario Cuomo, after CSEA and AFSCME helped ensure that he is elected Governor of New York State, it seems that the relationship deteriorated. What do you remember about the early years of Cuomo Governorship and how that relationship changed?

MR. DRAVES: Well, the amazing thing was -- is that those of us who had been on the campaign, those people that had been out in those campaign headquarters in July, knew that the only reason that Mario Cuomo was Governor of the State of New York was because of the

commitment of public employee union and labor to make him Governor.

And his first budget came out, which is -- he had a State of the State and his first budget came out within 23 days of him taking office and it has major, major layoffs and cuts for public employees so, you know, public employee leadership, the CSEA leadership, went and met with the Governor and said, you know, you've been out there. You've told us all this rhetoric about how you care about working people, you care about, you know, our families, our jobs, making sure that we have, you know, secure jobs, good benefits, you know, good health care.

And the first thing you do is lay off thousands and thousands of us, and Cuomo said, well, I'm the Governor and this is what I have to do to balance the budget; not looking at any of the op...you know, this is what I have to do, and I'm hoping you'll support me because you've always been my supporters.

And the leadership is like incredulous; is like we're not gonna support

you. You know, we're gonna fight these cuts, we're gonna fight 'em as hard as we can, and so immediately going on the attack.

Now, for Cuomo, you were either loyal or you weren't loyal, and this was disloyalty. We had been with him, he was our guy, we should have trusted him and the decisions he made were the right decisions. He was doing what was best for the State and we were just being a special interest here, not the fact that the people he was laying off were the people who were handing out palm cards and doin' all those things for him less than four months ago.

So it immediately set this rift, and this is what happened during the entire Cuomo administration. Cuomo expected a hundred percent loyalty from his supporters, so when you deviated from that, whether you were an environmentalist, a unionist, whatever you were, once you said no to him then you were out. You were no longer part of the coalition, you were no longer part of his team and he saw each one of these as a personal affront and a personal act of disloyalty when you disagreed with him.

So we went from probably the most significant political triumph of the public employee labor movement in the state to going immediately to war with the guy that we put there.

INTERVIEWER: And what -- what lesson is to be learned from that?

MR. DRAVES: Well, the lesson -- the lesson that I -- I always tell, this is one of the first things that I always tell locals when we're endorsing is that you have to remember that when a guy becomes the office holder they become the boss, okay? They're a politician and they're a candidate now, but they're gonna become your boss and when they become the boss they're gonna do things that you like and there are gonna be things that you don't like. There's no boss that you like a hundred percent of the time.

Now certain bosses are better than other bosses but in the end they're all bosses, so you gotta remember: You can't, you know, believe that they're gonna be anything more than bosses. At the end, like 'em or hate 'em,

they're gonna be the boss.

Now, understand that they're gonna be the boss. There's better bosses and there's bad bosses, so you want to choose the best boss possible of the candidates you're given, and that's the thing that public employees have that no other union group has. You have the right to pick your boss, so what you have to do and why you want to be politically involved is you want to pick the best boss of those in the field possible.

INTERVIEWER: What -- as you look back at the Cuomo years, what do you think are some of the highlights in terms of what CSEA and AFSCME were able to achieve during that time frame?

MR. DRAVES: Well, I think that the Cuomo years in a lot of ways were very disappointing for public employees in the fact that this was a guy that I think had tremendous potential to be a great Governor, and he really wasn't a great Governor. I think that there's a lot more things we coulda done and again, this may be -- I may be very jaded by the fact that I

had to bump up against these guys every day and I saw lots of things that they coulda done for public employees that they didn't do.

And, you know, I mean I think we made some strides, made some strides on some pension things, we made some strides on some health -- health and safety issues, but it's almost like I see a -- that time period, the relationship between the public employee unions and Cuomo was never the same after that -- those layoffs. We were never welcomed back in the house as full participants again.

He toyed constantly with running for President of the United States and would, you know, go in and out of that but the thing that was really tough, was it was really tough from a lobbying point of view to deal with these guys because they just, on things that you would have thought would have been a natural for a, quote unquote, liberal northeastern Democrat were not easy to do with him.

So I don't look back at those years as great years for us. I -- I -- we did some good things, but the potential to do some great

things was, I think, lost.

INTERVIEWER: Now when George Pataki gets elected Governor in 1994 --

MR. DRAVES: Right.

INTERVIEWER: -- CSEA stays neutral --

MR. DRAVES: Right.

INTERVIEWER: -- in that race. I believe that 37 endorsed Cuomo.

MR. DRAVES: That's correct, yeah.

INTERVIEWER: But it was kind of a lukewarm --

MR. DRAVES: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: And it was --

MR. DRAVES: It was -- it was unenthusiastic.

INTERVIEWER: And it could probably be argued that CSEA staying neutral certainly had some impact in terms of why Pataki ended up being elected Governor, but basically both CSEA and AFSCME faced the same issue when Pataki comes into office that you're looking again at major cuts and major layoffs.

MR. DRAVES: Right.

INTERVIEWER: How did the two unions

respond and what was the outcome?

MR. DRAVES: Well, that was, I think, one of the most -- it was a -- it was a rough time but it was an exciting time because I think that that's when the unions really learned how to fight back and fight back aggressively. We brought thousands and thousands of workers into Albany to protest the layoffs and the cutbacks and we fought hard in the Legislature to try to reverse those. We weren't always successful. We lost, you know, a lot of members.

The thing that that fight taught us, though, and -- was to -- that we needed to have a public policy operation to rival the business councils. They had, you know, the business council and the, you know, Republican Party put out a lot of propaganda and a lot of numbers and a lot of things which we had no way to fight back.

When we fought back against 'em it was the Union said this or the Union said that, and what really came out of that fight was the understanding that we needed to have a public policy think tank which eventually became the

Fiscal Policy Institute where progressives, whether they were in the nonprofit community, the religious community, the environmental community, the labor community, would have an operation that would look at statistics, look at numbers, look at the economy and come up with public policy programs that were not just Union-based, but much broader in appeal that had academic credentials to them that we could work with progressive legislators and give them -- and which had credibility in the press.

The other thing that happened there was it really was the labor movement, whether it was construction trades, public employees. The AFL-CIO as an institution worked hand in glove with public employees on that. Public employees were becoming a bigger and bigger percentage of the AFL-CIO and that was really when, for the first time, the entire labor movement coalesced around issues that were important to public employees on education and, you know, social service issues and fought together, and that fighting together led to better cooperation than there had ever been before.

So what comes out of that fight is a progressive think tank to come up with solutions to the problems that faced New York, which weren't just the meat ax. We were like in a budget hole. We gotta save. The fastest way to do it is cut personnel, so what you did is you came up with some progressive solutions to the problems, plus you had the entire trade union movement working together, fighting together, and that, you know, led to a greater level of cooperation than ever before --

(End of Side A of tape.)

MR. DRAVES: (Continuing) -- Pataki by being a right-wing Republican when he took over forced all of us to see New York State and New York State government in a different way than we'd ever seen it before, and we came up with new solutions to fight the Pataki administration and we were incredibly successful in that in the long term.

The short term we lost the battle, but in the long term we won the war because if you look at the Pataki administration, it continually moves to the center from being on

the far right. If you look at the New York State Senate, which came in with him which was seen as a right-wing senate, it continually moves to the center and that was because of the successful campaigns that we waged and the development of a public policy arm strengthened with a political thing -- with a political arm.

And if you looked at New York State Republicans, if you were to go to any other states, major AFSCME states, Ohio, Iowa, places like that, and you said this is the policies of the Governor and this is the policies of the Senate, they would think they were Democratic. They would not believe that they were Republican and we took a Republican party that would be considered now a red state Republican party and we moved them to the center because of vigorous political action and having a strategy that said we need to have policy solutions and then we can push those policy solutions into the general public and move forward on that. We're not just gonna be beaten up.

INTERVIEWER: Taking -- taking a step back a little bit earlier to 1992, what do you

remember -- even actually 1991, what do you remember about CSEA's endorsement of Bill Clinton for President?

MR. DRAVES: Well, that was an extremely exciting time. One of the things I remember Joe McDermott -- Mario Cuomo was getting ready to announce in '92 and McDermott had talked to McEntee and -- President McEntee and, you know, Cuomo was a known quantity and it was quite obvious New Yorkers did not -- New York AFSCME did not want Cuomo endorsed, and we wanted to hurt him immediately, so the night before Clinton was about to -- oh, Cuomo, excuse me. Cuomo was about to announce whether he was gonna run or not and we had no idea, Joe McDermott was hooked up with CNN, BBC, I mean all over.

There was -- you know, all the trucks that came to Albany to do the live coverage of the Cuomo announcement, Joe was doing interviews and saying, we don't like this guy. He's not good for public employees, he's not good for working people, he may be billing himself as a progressive Democrat but this guy's really a --

and meanwhile every New Yorker is like, oh, we love the Governor. We love that he's a great guy.

And Joe was resolutely going out there and hammering: He's not good for working people, he's not good for Union people. If he runs I'm goin' across this country. I'm gonna talk to workers about what he's done to workers in this state and that was a major, major thing. When -- when Cuomo talks about that he didn't want to run because he was gonna be tied up here in budget negotiations and he's gonna be tied here with Ralph Marino, another thing that's not talked about is that the New York unions, and especially CSEA, was gonna send out truth squads that was gonna be a real problem for this guy when he went out to run for President.

INTERVIEWER: On the flip side do you think it helped for Clinton to have the support of (inaudible) the labor movement in the Northeast?

MR. DRAVES: For Clinton, the AFSCME endorsement -- and I gotta tell you, when we first started this, before he was endorsed, you

know, he was very -- it was very skeptical about Bill Clinton, about whether or not he'd be good because he was a governor from a small southern state. You know, there were some really good things about him, but there were some real concerns about him, and the AFSCME endorsement was the first progressive major group that Clinton got.

He was part of the Democratic Leadership Council. There was a war on in the Democratic party about how the DLC was gonna take the party too far to the center, so for this Institution of Public Employees with, you know, based in the Northeast and to do an endorsement was a huge, huge boost for that campaign. It said to progressives that one of the most progressive labor organizations says this guy is okay and believe in him and think he can win and he, up to that point, had no groups like that.

So it was -- it was the first major endorsement that started moving Clinton in a way that he could begin bringing progressives in 'cause you have to remember he's running against

(inaudible) and people like that. There were these real progressives in this race that people thought that's where labor's gonna go, and AFSCME stepping out and doing Clinton said, no, it's not necessarily where labor's gonna go and this guy does have progressive credentials.

INTERVIEWER: And how well in contrast to the description you've provided of Cuomo as soon as he became elected, how well did Clinton maintain the relationship with CSEA and AFSCME during his eight years in the White House?

MR. DRAVES: Well, the thing that I have to say is, you know, just being a New Yorker, I have to say that the -- during the eight years of the Clinton administration we were always listened to. We were always part of the discussion. We were always -- you know, we didn't win on every issue. You never win on every issue. But the White House was always, you know, accessible.

And partially that was because we had New Yorkers down there; guys like Harold Dickies and things like that, that were New Yorkers, and Donna Shilayla at HHS so, you know, some of the

folks that came out of New York, you know, were down there, part of that administration, in decision-making roles and responsive to the needs of New York. It was a completely different relationship and a much more positive relationship.

And I know from the membership point of view, people felt very proud that they'd worked on those campaigns and felt that the right person had won the office and it had been good for working people, not only in New York but across the country. It was an entirely different feel.

INTERVIEWER: Now, you also played a very significant role in Hilary Clinton's election to the Senate. Can you talk about how CSEA and AFSCME supported that campaign?

MR. DRAVES: Sure. I -- during the beginning of that campaign I was actually on AFSCME's staff and I took a leave of absence to become Senator Clinton's deputy campaign manager for Upstate New York, so I was the campaign manager from everything north of Westchester and again the labor movement, but especially CSEA

and AFSCME, were integral in making that campaign.

They were there from the beginning and they brought their organizational muscle and credibility to her campaign and the interesting thing is is that there's always this perception that everybody in the labor movement is a Democratic liberal. Look at the CSEA membership and especially that membership in Upstate New York. There's a lot of Republicans, there's some Democrats, there's moderates, there's liberals, there's conservatives, all over the lot.

The one thing that they do bring to the table is that they are involved and they're active and for Senator Clinton, who was coming in as the First Lady of the United States, a, quote unquote, carpetbagger for some folks, she came in and met with CSEA members across the state. She did a listening tour which I think if you want to talk about what made that campaign it was the listening tour which is the beginning of the campaign where Senator Clinton went and sat in groups of 50, 100, 200 and had

New Yorkers talk to her and our folks were always at those meetings and they were talking to her and she was listening to them and a connection developed between her and our folks and our folks and her.

And a great thing to me, I always describe to people, are what it's like working on the campaign with Senator Clinton is you drive up in the car and on one side there's people that are just ecstatic to see her and adulation, and on the other side of the car there are people that have their, you know, go home, Hilary; you know, just like absolute hatred at times.

One thing you learn very quickly is always which side of the car to get out of. You always got out (laughter) always go to the right. If you go to the left they may never see you again. In fact, I think there are still staffers out there that went to the left that we don't have any more.

But the thing about that was is that the CSEA folks, because their institution had a great relationship with the Clinton White House

and a great relationship. They believe in their institution. They're part of the endorsement process. They're part of the institution. We got Republicans, Conservatives, to listen to her and when they sat down and listened to her, they liked her and you had an institution that, you know, really believed, you know, saw her for her and that was a huge help and it was institutionally having the phone banks, having the -- having all those things was great.

But at the beginning, having those folks come to those listening things and getting out and talking to her was really, really important.

INTERVIEWER: Well, whether it was Hilary Clinton or Bill Clinton, talk a little bit about the dynamic when they come in for a personal appearance at an AFSCME or CSEA event and what happens, even with those folks who might not on the surface be supportive of them.

MR. DRAVES: Well, that -- they're as close in this business as you get to rock stars. They are, you know, bigger than life. They are, you know, they're famous. They're bigger than

life. You see 'em on TV.

But the thing about them is is that they have a real connection to the trade union movement. Clinton carried a -- President Clinton carried an AFSCME card, you know, from Arkansas, so they come in and what happens over and over again is, I don't like them. I don't like them. You know, I see 'em on TV. I don't like them. I don't believe in them, but they come to a CSEA event, a convention.

Well, everybody's there whether you like them or not and then they come in and they speak and they start talkin' about the issues that are important to you. Well, I believe in that; I believe in that; I believe in that, and suddenly you're not looking at this caricature, which is what they try to make them into, cartoon characters.

They're no longer cartoon characters. They're somebody that's sitting there and talking to you and they're talking about issues that are important to you and that you actually believe in. I didn't know that; I didn't know that; I didn't know that.

And then when they do the one-on-one stuff, when they actually are able to take the time to -- to meet folks on the rope line, to talk to leaders one-on-one, they're incredibly engaging and so what you -- what you do, whether it's John Kerry and swift boats or these guys with White Water or all those things, they try to caricature them so that people can't listen to what their actual message is.

And the great thing about having an institution that allows you to come and see them without that stuff, but to see them and listen to their message, the message is all about the issues that we care about and that's why you'll see people who you would not normally believe supporting these folks. They support these folks because they see them in the setting, institutional setting, and they understand why -- why people support them because they're talking about the issues that are important to them.

INTERVIEWER: Another very important individual who had, I think, what you could term a special relationship with CSEA and AFSCME was

Carl McCall.

MR. DRAVES: Right.

INTERVIEWER: I wonder if you'd talk about how you saw him grow in office and really develop that relationship with CSEA and AFSCME.

MR. DRAVES: It's very interesting because when I first started lobbying and working for the Union, Ned Regan was the Comptroller of the State of New York and we had basically an adversarial relationship with that office. The comptroller, you know, has all of the -- you know, is basically the trustee for the money, the deferred wages of these thousands and thousands of public employees and he had an adversarial relationship with these folks.

He didn't try to help them to maximize their gain. He -- you know, it was a very, very strange relationship. He was not -- hell, he was more like a banker and that's the only way I could -- I could term it. He didn't care about, you know, if they said, well, we're concerned about how our funds are invested. Well, I'm doing what's fiduciarily responsible, and we'd say, well, there's more than one way to do

what's fiduciarly responsible and what's good for our members is to do this, and he would not listen, not listen.

Carl McCall comes in, and it was the most shocking thing I've ever seen in my life. We would sit down with him and we'd say, you know, Carl, we have a concern. Really? Let's talk about it. He saw more than one way to do things fiduciarly responsibly. He wanted to know what our members really wanted to do. He understood that this was their wages, that they weren't governmental monies. They were their wages that had been deferred so that they could retire.

His championing of the COLA was probably the, you know, major reason -- the unions had fought and fought and fought for COLA but having the comptroller say these people are right. They deserve this, was a hugely, hugely important factor in making that happen. The Senate, the Assembly, the Governor can no longer hide behind the comptroller who said, oh, I'm not sure if we can do this. This was a comptroller says, not only is it right, but we

must do it.

So there was no hiding any more and his -- he became, you know, an advocate which was very, very exciting to see a comptroller that understood what the retirees and the future retirees needed, what their dreams were, and said let's work together to make those dreams a possibility and the COLA victory is probably, you know, one of the most significant victories in the last 30 years.

Coming back to the Taylor Law, Taylor Law and COLA, those are absolutely landmark pieces of legislation, and COLA would not have been possible if Carl McCall hadn't stood shoulder to shoulder with CSEA and fought for it.

INTERVIEWER: M-m h-m-m. Let me get this -- I just want to ask you about some of the personalities you've encountered over the last close to 30 years now.

MR. DRAVES: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Tell me a little bit about Bill McGowan.

MR. DRAVES: Bill McGowan was a

members' leader. He was a guy that really had rose up from the rank and file and Bill never lost any of that, you know -- when he was dealing with members, the members felt like they were dealing with one of their own and that was, I think, his real strength as a leader. He knew where he came from.

He understood his members and what they expected and, you know, when you were with Bill McGowan you've -- you were dealing with a genuine rank-and-file guy that -- had moved his way up and was tryin' to do the best he could for his members and, you know, you never felt that Bill was trying to do anything but what was best for his members.

INTERVIEWER: Joe McDermott, a very different personality, what were some of his strengths and weaknesses?

MR. DRAVES: Joe McDermott was out of the PS&T unit. He was an engineer, I think, by training, wasn't he? Or worked in DOT, I know that. Much more intellectual, much -- Joe was very -- where McGowan was much more personality-wise, effervescent Irish kind a guy, Joe was

much quieter, much more reserved. Brilliant tactician, very smart, understood where he had to move the Union and didn't do it by personality but did it by strategically thinking how things -- how he wanted the Union to move forward and then working with people to get them to that spot. Strategically very, very bright.

INTERVIEWER: And from that same era, Irene Carr.

MR. DRAVES: Irene Carr was one of the nicest people I ever worked with institutionally, a person who genuinely cared about members and staff. I mean, when you were around Irene you felt like you were around your grandmother. You know, she gave -- she gave off that aura and I think that rank-and-file folks and leaders and staff all had the same relationship with her. They felt -- they felt that they could talk to her, they felt that she cared about them and, again, a person who really was all about making the institution a stronger institution and moving it forward and a real pleasure to work with.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. Danny Donohue.

MR. DRAVES: Danny is absolutely one of the most fun leaders I've worked with. He -- we used to have -- the AFSCME lobbyists used to call us the Munchkins because what are you Munchkins involved in now. Are you getting us into trouble? Are you not getting us into trouble?

I mean he -- he is a guy that has a strategic vision and also has a great personality and that, I think, has made him, you know, the leader that he is today. He -- he understands, and I've seen Danny -- the thing -- I've seen Danny, you know, working with local members. I've seen him working with staff and I'm seeing him working with the Governor and, you know, Presidents of the United States, and Danny is always Danny.

He understands who he is and understands what his organization is. He understands where he's tryin' to get and he's no different, which I think is the hardest thing in this business, if he's sitting down with the President of the United States or the Governor of the State of New York or a rank-and-file

member on Long Island, he's the same guy, the same personality, same person.

I think that's a really, really hard thing to do in this business and he knows who he is. He knows who his institution is and people know that when Danny says what he says, that that's the way it is. And he doesn't pull punches and he doesn't put on airs and he doesn't sugarcoat or he doesn't -- he's not a reel spinner. Danny just says it and that is a big thing.

So many people, and especially in politics, they spin, spin, spin, spin, spin. Danny just says: Here's where we are. Here's what we want. What are we gonna do? And that's -- that to me is Danny's, you know, Danny's strength as a leader.

INTERVIEWER: In a similar vein, talk a little bit about how you saw Jerry McEntee and Bill Lucey interact with CSEA over the years.

MR. DRAVES: McEntee understood, I think, implicitly the merger had occurred and he understood that a different relationship had to develop and he understood and started, you know,

the Wirf years had been a whole -- he was totally different than Jerry Wirf and he immediately developed a professional relationship with CSEA which said, look it, you guys are a big part of this institution. You have an independent history. I'm gonna respect that but I'm also gonna ask you to work in tandem with us.

And what McEntee did -- Wirf was in a hurry to make CSEA a part of AFSCME culturally. McEntee understood that there was an important culture in CSEA and an important culture in AFSCME and if you'd let the two blend together you'd have the best of both worlds, and he was disciplined enough and patient enough to let that occur and that's what's happened, is that both sides have brought some really important things to the table and he's let that, you know, come together, take the time to make that happen, and now you have the institutions that you have today which have blended together bringing the strengths of both traditions and he understood that and had the patience to allow that to occur and ended up with a stronger

institution because of it.

INTERVIEWER: How about Lucey?

MR. DRAVES: Bill always, you know, was a guy who came in -- and again, I think one of the things about Bill is, again, an inspiring speaker, a speaker that understands -- and I think especially because he's African-American, especially how workers, you know, especially public employee workers at times are treated as second-class citizens in both the labor movement and within their communities and understood that and used that to educate members that there was a -- there was another way.

If you stayed together and you organized together, that you could do that, and I think that was, you know -- I've seen him speak numerous times and Bill always says: Look it, this is where we are and if we work together we gotta get someplace else, but very, you know, always about moving forward. That wherever we are right now is not where we should be; that there's a better place that we can get to and that you have to confront your enemies.

And, you know, that's -- that's what I

think he was very good at, in bringing a message to, you know, New Yorkers. He is, look it, it's -- you may think that things are okay right now, but there's a better place you can get to and you have to realize that even if you think you're okay right now, there are people out there that are gonna take that -- try to take that away from you and they may be nationally, they may be locally, but you have to realize that they're there and you have to fight those people.

INTERVIEWER: Tell me about the best thing and the worst thing that happened to you in your experiences with CSEA.

MR. DRAVES: I think the best thing was probably working with the political directors that have been here. Larry, especially Fran Turner, just some really good, incredibly talented people that have been -- turned out to be some of my, you know, best friends. People that work so hard for the rank and file, that love their jobs, that are talented, work incredible hours, and we had fun together.

In this job we laughed, we -- we fought like hell in campaigns and stuff, we worked a zillion hours conspiring over in the Legislature, but working with those folks was absolutely the best, the best part of this job.

I think the worst part was when Wirf died and we thought we were all gonna get fired. Eileen and I had just gotten engaged. We'd just bought a house and we thought, well, we're gonna have to sell the house and move to Iowa. That was probably the worst. I -- probably the worst actual moment was during that convention Joe Dolan was the executive director, and we were told -- he told the AFSCME staff not to come to the bar, the convention that we infiltrated, and I didn't get the memo that we weren't supposed to go to the bar.

So I went down and we had three women on my staff and myself and walked in and Joe said to leave. And I said to Joe, it's a public bar. I'm an AFSCME International representative. This is your convention. I can stay here, and he said, Eddie, you gotta leave. I said, Joe, I'm not gonna leave. I gotta stay

here because I thought that's what the mission we were supposed to do.

He said, Eddie, I'm gonna tell ya for the last time. Ya gotta leave the bar. I said, Joe, I'm not going to, so he hauled off and punched me and knocked me over a table and the girls picked me up and I left and then I found out we weren't supposed to be there, so that was pretty funny (laughter), so I guess that's kind of funny.

But, yeah, I think that the -- you know, we've had some great campaigns and the people, you know, the members, the leadership, that's what makes an institution. That's what -- that's what it's really all about, and we just had fun out there. We had fun workin' on those campaigns and we had fun winnin' and we won more than we lost and that was the good part.

INTERVIEWER: M-m h-m-m. Tell me, give me what you think might be some of the important context for the CSEA affiliation with AFSCME in terms of watershed events, for the labor movement in New York State.

MR. DRAVES: I think probably, as far as public employees in New York go, the -- you know, obviously the Taylor Law and the organization DC-37 is important, but the affiliation of CSEA with AFSCME is, I think, the most important thing that's happened in labor history in New York because it took two very diverse organizations, merged them together.

Each brought a strength to that merger and what came out of it was probably the strongest state public employee labor movement in the country, a movement that is so strong that it's impacted all facets of life in New York State and how the people in the state are governed and how services are delivered and that, to me, would not have been possible if these institutions had stayed separate.

Those coming together, each bringing their strength, allowed the organizations to develop in the way that they did which has made, you know, a tremendous, tremendous organization for public employees in New York.

INTERVIEWER: One final question. Why do you think CSEA has been able to endure for

those -- for a hundred years?

MR. DRAVES: I think that they've been able to endure for a hundred years because workers have the right to be organized and workers have the right to have a say in their jobs and whether a hundred years ago it was getting together to make sure that you had insurance, to make sure that you were taken care of -- you know, when you died you had a death benefit or things like that, or whether it's sitting down as a shop steward bargaining a contract or being represented in the New York Legislature, public employees have always understood that they were stronger together than by themselves and they came together and they formed CSEA and they were never, ever gonna be turned around from that.

No matter what happened they were gonna stay together. They were gonna have an institution and that institution was gonna reflect them and their needs and as long as CSEA continued to do that, it's never gonna go away, and it's -- and that's why it's been around for a hundred years, because it's reflected the

needs of its membership.

Is that good?

INTERVIEWER: Yeah. Fabulous.

Perfect timing, too.

(Whereupon, the interview of Ed Draves
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
