

Interview Date: 5/10/05

Subject: H. Carl McCall; Deputy Administrator, NYC Human Resources Administration, 1966-1969; NYS Senator, 1975-1979; U.N. Ambassador, 1979-1981; NYS Commissioner of Human Rights, 1983-1985; Vice President, Citicorp, 1985-1993; President, NYC Board of Education, 1991-1993, NYS Comptroller, 1993-2002; Board member, NYSE, 1999-2003; Board Member, TYCO International, 2003- ;

H. Carl McCall provided insights of his “good relationship” with CSEA’s members and employees throughout his career in public service. In his interview, he recalled his first experience working with CSEA in a statewide voter registration campaign aimed at minority voters. Next, McCall explained his experiences with CSEA while serving as New York State Senator from Harlem and later as New York State Comptroller.

When speaking of the State Pension Fund’s unprecedented success under his control, McCall detailed the lawsuits he had won against former Governor’s, Mario Cuomo, and George Pataki, for their roles in manipulating the State Pension program. McCall explained the impact of winning these decisions and mentioned CSEA’s role, especially advice from CSEA President, Danny Donohue, in the process of filing and subsequently winning the lawsuits.

While discussing his accomplishments as Comptroller, McCall mentioned the use of program audits to ensure the public’s money was being spent wisely, and spoke of the importance of a permanent COLA for the State’s retirees. He credited public employee unions (CSEA, PEF, and NYSUT) in helping obtain the COLA legislation.

McCall mentioned the role of CSEA in his 1994 and 1998 campaigns for State Comptroller, as well his 2002 campaign for Governor, where he referred to CSEA as a “true friend” for supporting him when other unions had turned their backs on him after being “bought off” by Governor Pataki.

McCall also explained his “friendship” with Danny Donohue, mentioning it was not just a political relationship. He mentioned Donohue’s strengths as a leader and also stated he and Donohue shared the same commitment to public service. When asked why CSEA has thrived for 100 years, McCall stated, because they are the “heart and soul of the State’s workforce” and are committed to public service.

Key Words

AFSCME

COLA

Comptroller

Court Of Appeals

District Council 37

HUD Secretary

Lieutenant Governor's Race

New York State Senator

New York State United Teachers (NYSUT)

Public Employee Federation (PEF)

Pension Fund

Political Campaigns

Program Audits

Public Employees

Retirees

State Legislature

Stock Market

State Supreme Court

Westchester Medical Center

Key People

Andrew Cuomo

Mario Cuomo

Danny Donohue

Victor Gottbaum

Bill McGowan

George Pataki

CSEA HISTORY PROJECT

CARL McCALL INTERVIEW

5/10/05

INTERVIEWER: Carl, just for the record I wonder --

MR. McCALL: M-m h-m-m.

INTERVIEWER: -- if you would just, you know, state your name and what your affiliation with CSEA was over the years.

MR. McCALL: Well, my name is Carl McCall and I was in public service for quite a while as the comptroller of the State of New York and prior to that as a State Senator, and everything I've done in public -- my public life involved my working with CSEA in some way.

INTERVIEWER: Great. I wonder if you could recall when you first became aware of an organization called CSEA?

MR. McCALL: Well, it was quite a while ago. It was -- I was -- even before I ran for office I was involved in voter registration campaigns down in New York City which is where I'm from, and one of the -- in fact, the only union that came forward to support those voter registration efforts, because we were basically trying to register people in minority communities, african-Americans, Latinos, people

who didn't participate in politics.

And Victor Gottbaum of District -- DC 37 really was the one person who stepped up to help, and then he in turn introduced me to CSEA, but it was District Council 37 was right there working with me in the City and Victor said, you know, we oughta do this statewide, so we said okay and that's when we got in touch with CSEA and they, again, were the only union to help run a statewide voter registration campaign aimed at minority voters.

INTERVIEWER: And what -- what do you remember about that campaign?

MR. McCALL: Well, what I remembered about it, it was -- it was very successful. I mean we had a situation where you had people who were very affected by the political process who didn't participate in it, and so it was an educational process going out and explaining to people why they should register, why they should vote, and the fact that they could make a change. They could have some impact on the issues that affected them if they became registered voters.

And we were quite successful in registering people throughout the state and it was probably one of the most successful voter registration drives we've ever had.

INTERVIEWER: And I believe in the 1970s you ran for State Senator.

MR. McCALL: I -- I did, yeah. My first -- I was first elected 1975 to represent a district that took in Harlem and the west side of Manhattan as a State Senator, and I spent five years here in Albany as -- representing that district and again worked with CSEA, worked with District Council 37, worked with AFSCME, even nationally, continuing to do voter registration, continuing to organize people to vote in campaigns. And again, whenever I needed help to do those kinds of things, CSEA was always there.

INTERVIEWER: M-m h-m-m. Do you remember any of the personalities you dealt with at that time?

MR. McCALL: The first person I remember with Victor Gottbaum was the (inaudible) of the City of course, and here is

McGowan. Was it Jim McGowan?

INTERVIEWER: Bill McGowan.

MR. McCALL: Bill McGowan, yeah. He was the -- he was the CSEA -- our president at that time, so he was the first official of CSEA that I -- that I dealt with. And then, of course, when I came back to Albany, after I left the Senate and came back and I was the State Comptroller, then Danny Donohue was the president and, as you know, we've had a very long and very good relationship. I consider him to be a real friend.

INTERVIEWER: Now, before you became comptroller --

MR. McCALL: M-m h-m-m.

INTERVIEWER: -- you actually ran for Lieutenant Governor in 1982.

MR. McCALL: In 1982 I did and CSEA supported me and we weren't successful that time, but again we were able to do well throughout the state, particularly in places in Upstate New York, and again I've always seen my own political campaigns as a way of organizing people and getting them involved in the

political process. Not just for me but because the political process needs this kind of participation of people, so I -- all of my campaigns have been about expanding the political clout and the political impact, particularly of people who typically have been left out of politics.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. When you were appointed as the State Comptroller --

MR. McCALL: M-m h-m-m.

INTERVIEWER: -- initially --

MR. McCALL: I was elected by the Legislature. The --

INTERVIEWER: Yeah.

MR. McCALL: -- fellow who had been here resigned and according to the Constitution it's up to the Legislature to meet in a Joint Session and elect someone and I was elected Comptroller back in 1993 by the Legislature.

INTERVIEWER: Even more so, I mean basically --

MR. McCALL: M-m h-m-m.

INTERVIEWER: -- between Governor Cuomo at that time and the Legislature --

MR. McCALL: M-m h-m-m.

INTERVIEWER: -- I mean, who basically put you into the position --

MR. McCALL: M-m h-m-m.

INTERVIEWER: -- you surprised a lot of people by turning around and -- and taking issue with some of the things that they were doing with the State Pension Fund.

MR. McCALL: Well, I --

INTERVIEWER: Could you tell us about that --

MR. McCALL: Well, sure. No. I actually ended up suing the Governor, I mean, because when I became Comptroller, again Danny Donohue and other representatives of public employee unions came to me and said the Governor, Mario Cuomo then, had done a terrible thing.

He had manipulated the pension program so that the funding really went to help bail out the State rather than providing benefits to retirees, and I took the position that the pension funds exist for the sole purpose of providing benefits to retirees. It was not a

slush fund to bail out the State. That was my position.

The unions supported that position, particularly CSEA, and the only recourse we had was to go to court, so we went to court and we prevailed. We were successful and CSEA helped us to identify people who were plaintiffs in that suit, retirees who were affected by that decision, so we went to court and, of course, we went to the Supreme Court and we won.

We had to go to the Appellate Division and finally we had to go to the highest court in the state, the Court of Appeals, but they upheld our position that the Governor had -- really, that as the Comptroller and the sole trustee of the pension fund, I was the only person who has the authority to change the funding formula. The Governor or the Legislature could not do that.

And that -- having won that battle, I think it's -- it was a very clear victory and a very clear sign to future Governors because, you know, George Pataki's interesting. You know, when we sued the Governor George Pataki was then

a legislator and he supported us. He thought that was a good thing that we did. Then he became Governor.

Then, of course, he tried to raid the pension fund, so then we had to turn around and sue Governor Pataki, but once more we were upheld and the principle is now very clear: that Governors and Legislators cannot manipulate the pension fund. The pension fund's integrity and independence is solid and it's there just to provide benefits to retirees, which is what it should do.

INTERVIEWER: That was a very courageous stand that you --

MR. McCALL: M-m h-m-m.

INTERVIEWER: -- had to take very early in -- in your tenure. Was it a difficult decision to make?

MR. McCALL: It was difficult but it was the right thing to do. And again, you know, I got a lot of advice from -- from Danny Donohue and other Union leaders who thought this was important. We went out and got good lawyers to represent us but it was -- you know, that's what

you have to do in public service. You have to take a stand and do what is right and it pays off.

I mean I think I enjoyed a very good relationship, ongoing relationship with members of CSEA and other unions because they knew that it was very clear that I was there representing them and that I was gonna stand up for the things that they deserved.

INTERVIEWER: Tell us a little bit more about the crux of that decision --

MR. McCALL: M-m h-m-m.

INTERVIEWER: -- when you were talking about the fact that it was very important to maintain clearly that the Comptroller was the sole trustee of the fund --

MR. McCALL: M-m h-m-m.

INTERVIEWER: -- but in terms of the integrity of the fund, what did your lawsuit really do in terms of the long-term interest of the fund?

MR. McCALL: Yeah. Well, it really established the fact that the funding of -- for the pension fund, the amount of money that the

State put into the fund, that that had to be determined by the Comptroller, based on what was the best thing to do from an actuarial point of view, so that the pension fund could be adequately funded, and it meant that the State couldn't change that formula in such a way that they were putting in less money than was necessary to keep the fund solvent.

And we were in a situation that if we had not done that, this process could have continued and they could have gone through a long process of taking more and more money out of the fund, which could eventually affect the benefits that retirees would receive, and we were able to make sure that there was enough money so that there were benefits. And, in fact, as you know we even expanded the benefits that were available to retirees.

INTERVIEWER: This is a very complex issue, though.

MR. McCALL: M-m-m.

INTERVIEWER: Number one, it's not very easy --

MR. McCALL: No.

INTERVIEWER: -- to explain to the public or even some of the interested parties. How did you go about doing that?

MR. McCALL: Well, by keeping it very simple. As I said, the slogan was that the pension fund's purpose was to provide benefits to retirees. It wasn't a slush fund for the State. People understood that. They understood that, you know, that it was either there to bail out the State when things were tough or it was there to provide benefits to retirees, and I came down on the position that it's there to help the retirees.

So people didn't need to know the details. They just needed to know the big picture: That the pension fund was being raided and the pension fund was being misused and the pension fund -- its independence was being questioned. And retirees and public employees and the public generally understood that. We had a lot of public support for this position.

INTERVIEWER: M-m-m. When you ran for re-election --

MR. McCALL: M-m h-m-m.

INTERVIEWER: -- as Comptroller in
1994 and 1998 --

MR. McCALL: M-m h-m-m.

INTERVIEWER: -- what role did CSEA
play in your campaigns and how important was
that?

MR. McCALL: It was very important.
They played a big role. They were early in
endorsing me in '94 and in '98 and, you see, the
thing about CSEA since it's a statewide union, I
mean, it's really important to have them with
you because it means in every community where
you go, where you're running, every community
where you're organizing, you've got CSEA people
in those communities. Every city, town,
village, there's CSEA people and there are very
few unions that have that kind of reach.

So the fact that CSEA was with me, it
meant that I had CSEA people working for me
throughout the state in every important
jurisdiction, and as a result of that in '94 --
I'm a Democrat, as you know, and in '94 I was
the only Democrat to win statewide. Governor
Cuomo was defeated, the Attorney General was

defeated. I was the only person to -- Democrat to win statewide.

And then when I ran for re-election in 1998, again CSEA was with me and I got more votes than any other candidate and more votes than the Governor and anybody else running in 1998, so CSEA support, that's one thing.

When CSEA supports you they really go all out for you. They have the field operation, they have the workers, they have the skill to really help a campaign to be effective.

INTERVIEWER: During your term as Comptroller, the pension system saw unprecedented success.

MR. McCALL: M-m h-m-m.

INTERVIEWER: That provided a great deal of flexibility to New York and its localities on budget issues but recent experience for the economy in general and the pension system in particular has not been as good and there's been a lot of criticism of your stewardship --

MR. McCALL: M-m-m.

INTERVIEWER: -- of the system as a

result. How do you respond to those critics?

MR. McCALL: Well, people like to find somebody to blame, you know, and -- but the fact is that we had unprecedented success with the pension fund and I -- when I -- while I was managing the pension fund we outperformed every other large pension fund in the country, so I -- you know, I think we -- we did a good job because we diversified the pension fund. We had it in a variety of what we call asset classes. We had, you know, we had stocks and we had bonds and we had real estate. We invested both nationally and internationally and the diversification made a big difference.

Now the fact is that a pension fund of this size, it's over a hundred billion dollars, you have to put a good portion of it into the stock market. I mean that's one of the places where you put money and when the stock market's doing well, you do well. When the stock market isn't doing well, you don't do as well. So the criticism is really unfounded.

It's really -- it's the result of market forces. Over the last few years the

stock market has not done as well and therefore the pension fund hasn't done as well. It's done well enough to meet its obligations and, you know, some of the people who were complaining and criticizing are the local officials who have to contribute more to the pension fund.

But these were the same people who for four years didn't have to contribute anything and that was unprecedented. They didn't make any contribution whatsoever for four years, so now for the last four years they're contributing a little more.

And you know, one thing about the stock market. It goes up; it goes down. Now it's -- it's kind of on the uptake. It's coming back again and as a result of that the contributions from the localities will be less so, you know, people forget the good times. When they are bad times they try to be critical and they forget about the things you've done for them in the past.

INTERVIEWER: M-m-m. Well, one of the things that you were able to do as a result of the success in managing the fund was to enact a

permanent COLA --

MR. McCALL: M-m h-m-m.

INTERVIEWER: -- for retirees and I think it's fair to say that CSEA would look at that as one of the most significant accomplishments in the Union's history.

I wonder if you would talk about how that came about and what role CSEA leaders had in that -- in that action?

MR. McCALL: Well, when I became Comptroller I spent time listening to, first of all, the people in my own office, CSEA people in my own office, who were proud of the local chapter there. They talked to me about what their concerns were. Danny Donohue and other officers talked to me, and it was clear to me that they needed to have a good pension system, had to have the ability to increase its benefits as the cost of living went up.

I mean, you can't be on -- live on a fixed income, which is what a pension is, if nothing else is fixed. So if the cost of living is going up and you're paying more for your basic services and goods, you've gotta -- the

pension has to reflect that, give you that same flexibility, so we came up with this notion that we had to have a COLA, a cost-of-living allowance, so that as the cost of living went up pension benefits would go up.

And we were in a position, because the pension fund was doing so well, do do that. It was quite a fight because we had to get that approved by the Legislature. We had to get it approved by the Governor. We had to get the public to support it, you know, to do things. You really don't want the public to think you're doing something for public employees that they don't deserve.

And we were able to go around the state to talk to -- through the media to the public to say, look, this happens in private companies. It oughta happen in the public sector as well, and we were able to point out that a lot of people who have retired quite a while ago at low wages were now getting a pension benefit that hardly -- they were still living in poverty, so they -- they needed this additional help and we had to have this system

where your benefits could, in fact, go up to keep up with inflation and the cost of living.

And it was a battle. We had to convince a number of people to do it. In fact, we never -- I forget how we got the Governor on board. The Governor was a little reluctant to support this. Well, Danny Donohue, CSEA, PEF, the Teachers' Union, all the public union -- public employee unions got together, had a massive rally right here in Albany, and they had thousands of people out in front of the State Capitol, demanding that we pass this legislation, the Legislature pass this legislation, to give them a permanent COLA.

I spoke at the rally and others spoke and when I got back to my office the first phone call I got was from the Governor. He looked out his window. He saw all those people out there. He said, "Carl, I think we ought to work together to get a permanent COLA for public employees."

So it was the organizing, the advertising, the communication of letting people know why this was important and to have this

tremendous demonstration by public employees from all over the state who came here to say this is really important. This is something we need. This is something we deserve. We ought to have it, and that's how we achieved it.

INTERVIEWER: But certainly the pension system had been around for about 80 years --

MR. McCALL: M-m h-m-m.

INTERVIEWER: -- before COLA was -- was adopted --

MR. McCALL: True.

INTERVIEWER: -- and certainly others must have thought that this was a good idea. Yet you were able to make it actually come to pass.

MR. McCALL: Well, that's true, but I had a lot of help and we had good timing and the pension fund was doing very well and we were able to demonstrate, for instance, that -- we were able to demonstrate that the contributors, the towns -- the employers were getting tremendous benefits.

As I said, they were making no

contribution, so if the employers were getting great benefits from the pension fund, the employees should get benefits as well, and that's the case we tried to make and it was a major organizing effort, which is what you have to do to get things to change.

INTERVIEWER: The -- you mention the fact that CSEA and PEF and Teachers' --

MR. McCALL: M-m h-m-m.

INTERVIEWER: -- and other unions were involved in kind of coalescing support and that was something that was fairly --

MR. McCALL: Unusual.

(Simultaneous conversation.)

MR. McCALL: It was unusual but that did -- certainly made a difference, and everybody was on board. All the public employee unions from across the state: Police, fire, union, they all realized just -- this is important. This is something we've always wanted and, as I said, something that they needed and deserved and so that was the coalescing effort.

It really kind of brought everybody

together and that's what -- when the legislators and the Governor saw that kind of collective power, they said this is something we've gotta do, and that's how we achieved it.

INTERVIEWER: Has COLA been unfairly criticized in recent years as something that is an excessive cost for the system?

MR. McCALL: Sure. There are people who will do that, but I think people who are objective and look at it, it hasn't been that excessive. I mean the main thing that's happened with respect to the pension system now that -- that contributions have gone up is that the income, the interest income from the investments has diminished. It's not that the contributions, the benefits have gone up that much.

So people will always criticize something that's new, something that provides benefits to some people but, again, public employees don't make the kind of salaries that other people make in the private sector. They make a lot of sacrifices and they join public service because they believe that there will be

these benefits for them when they retire, and we have an obligation to provide those benefits.

INTERVIEWER: M-m h-m-m. Obviously between protecting the pension --

MR. McCALL: M-m h-m-m.

INTERVIEWER: -- system and helping to enact COLA, those are pretty significant accomplishments as Comptroller.

What are some of the other things that you're proud of?

MR. McCALL: Well, I'm proud of everything I've done in public service. As Comptroller the other thing we were able to do is audits to make sure that public money was being spent well, being spent wisely, make sure there was no fraud involved, and that was important to show the public; that public employees who are spending the money that people pay in taxes, that they're spending it well and they're spending it effectively and efficiently, so we did that.

And by doing more audits and by doing what we call program audits, not just to find out how the money's being spent but was it being

spent well, was it being spent in an effective way, so we were able to really change the audit system to make it more effective and more helpful in terms of pointing out the values of public service in government.

INTERVIEWER: Good. You certainly seem to have created a very positive relationship with the people in the Comptroller's Office --

MR. McCALL: M-m h-m-m.

INTERVIEWER: -- the CSEA members, the rank-and-file members who work. What did you do to try and foster that relationship?

MR. McCALL: Well, it flows from a -- from an understanding I have about management and that is if you are going to be a good manager, there are 2200 people who worked in the Comptroller's Office. It was a very important agency providing services throughout the state.

An effective manager is a manager who believes in people and recognizes that if the job is going to be done well, the people, the rank and file workers are the people you've got to count on. Therefore, you've got to show them

that you value them. You've got to show them that you appreciate what they do and you've gotta support them. You've gotta make sure they have the proper training, that they have the proper facilities and equipment.

In fact, one of the things we did while I was Comptroller, our main office in Albany was in the Smith Building, which is a building that was built many, many years ago. It was in terrible shape, so I built a new building.

We went and built a new building in downtown Albany, gave them the kind of facilities that they deserved, so the relationship I developed with the CSEA members is the kind of relationship I had with all of our workers: That you are the people who will deliver for this agency. You are the people who have to carry out the responsibilities of this agency.

And therefore, you know, I'm with you. I want to listen to you. I want to work with you. I want to support you so that you can do the job that this agency has to do.

INTERVIEWER: That relationship also seemed to really broaden out on a statewide basis with CSEA.

MR. McCALL: M-m h-m-m.

INTERVIEWER: That while you were Comptroller I don't think you ever missed a CSEA convention and there was always a very warm reception.

MR. McCALL: (Laughter.) It was a -- it was always a good reception and again these are the people who often are unappreciated. You know, public servants and public employees aren't always appreciated. I tried to show people throughout the state that they are appreciated, they're valued and I tried to connect with them. I tried to meet with them and listen to their concerns and I tried to address the things that they brought to me which were their ideas about how we could do a better job of serving the public.

INTERVIEWER: I'm gonna ask you a difficult question --

MR. McCALL: M-m h-m-m. They've all been difficult. Why now?

(Laughter.)

INTERVIEWER: When you -- when you ran
for Governor --

MR. McCALL: M-m h-m-m.

INTERVIEWER: -- in 2002 --

MR. McCALL: M-m h-m-m.

INTERVIEWER: -- what did it mean to
you that CSEA supported you when a lot of other
folks who really should have been with you did
not?

MR. McCALL: Well, it meant that CSA
-- CSEA stood by their friends, you know? I've
been a friend of labor. I've been a friend of
working people all of my life, and CSEA
understood that and they came out early and
supported me and it's true. Some other unions
didn't. Other unions with whom I'd had the same
kind of longstanding relationship and support
but, I mean, let's be very frank. Some of them
were bought off.

I mean the Governor made deals with
some other unions and gave them certain things
and, you know, CSEA was willing to stand up and
say that this is somebody who had been with

them, fought with them, fought for them and, therefore, they should be with me, and I certainly appreciate that.

And I think it pays off. I think that says a lot about CSEA. And I think that many of the unions that abandoned me because they made deals, those deals didn't work out very well. Some of those same unions were back just a few months later demonstrating against the Governor that they supported.

And, you know, what I used to say to the unions is: You gotta make a distinction between your true friends and your new friends. Your new friends are people who come around just at election time. They want to be your friends. They want to give you something. But your true friends are people who have been with you over a long period of time, who share your principles, who share your values, and who really are going to be with you over the long haul.

And CSEA recognized that I was a true friend. Some other unions felt that the Governor was their new friend and that was a mistake.

INTERVIEWER: M-m h-m-m.

Disappointing to you?

MR. McCALL: Oh, yes, it was disappointing. It was disappointing because you feel if you do the right thing and you support people, you do expect them to support you but, you know, you learn from that and the unions learn from that, I think. A number of those unions and their leaders have come back and told me and admitted that they made a mistake and they're sorry about it.

It doesn't help me, but at least the point is that it was a good lesson that a lot of people learned.

INTERVIEWER: M-m h-m-m. I think what one of the things I remember very strongly --

MR. McCALL: M-m h-m-m.

INTERVIEWER: -- about that campaign was you coming to the CSEA convention the day after the so-called primary --

MR. McCALL: M-m h-m-m.

INTERVIEWER: -- and then kind of this whirlwind tour --

MR. McCALL: M-m-m.

INTERVIEWER: -- across the state that really seemed to be building up a lot --

MR. McCALL: M-m-m.

INTERVIEWER: -- of momentum, do you remember that?

MR. McCALL: I remember that. No. Well, you know, we had a primary which is something that happens to Democrats. We can't give that -- get over that and my primary was a tough one. I was running against Andrew Cuomo whose father had been Governor, he had been a Secretary of HUD, and he had a lot of resources. He was then married to a Kennedy. He had a lot going for him.

But, you know, I had people. People I'd been with, people I've supported and, you know, we got so much support early on that he dropped out a few days before the primary. That didn't help me because we had to spend a lot of money. I wish he had dropped out earlier or not been in.

But at any rate, so the primary wasn't, you know, real because he dropped out but still we counted an overwhelming number of

votes in support and, you know, we went out to continue to sort of rev up the troops and to keep going toward the general election.

And again, it was the CSEA and others who were out front in every part of the state working, trying to keep that momentum going.

INTERVIEWER: Tell me, do you remember Joe McDermott? Did you have any interactions with Joe McDermott as president of CSEA?

MR. McCALL: I do -- I did. I don't remember as well. I remember McGowan and McDermott. I had some contact with him. I used to run into -- I think he used to live up in Saratoga Springs --

INTERVIEWER: Right.

MR. McCALL: -- which is where I lived, and I used to run into him every now and then, yes.

INTERVIEWER: Well, tell me about your relationship with Danny Donohue.

MR. McCALL: Well, when I said -- as I said, I didn't know Danny until I came back here. When I became Comptroller in 1993 Danny was the president and, again, this was the

biggest union. I had a very large contingent of CSEA workers in my own building and they -- they were kind of my, you know, my advocates. I think they kind of came to Danny and said, "Here's somebody you ought to support," and so Danny and I got together and we -- we just hit it off well. I mean it wasn't just a political relationship.

It was really a friendship because I saw him as a unique labor leader. Here was a person who really shared my commitment to public service. I mean he was really out working, trying to make this union an important player in the state for the good of people.

Like, for instance, just this morning I heard a CSEA commercial on the radio in New York. It's about a fight that CSEA is now involved in with the Westchester Medical Center. And you know, the commercial was not about the fact that there were CSEA jobs, you know, at the Westchester Medical Center.

It was about the value of the Westchester Medical Center to the population; the fact that this was an important facility

that the people of the -- of north of Westchester needed and so CSEA's campaign to keep this place open, to keep it solvent, isn't about CSEA. It's about public service. It's about the fact that the public needs this kind of facility. They need this kind of service and CSEA is using its capital and its resources to promote the idea that this facility has to stay open. It has to be there because the people need it.

INTERVIEWER: M-m h-m-m. What do you see as some of Danny Donohue's strengths as a -- as a labor leader?

MR. McCALL: Well, he's a down-to-earth kind of guy. I mean he's a guy -- he's approachable, he's somebody who hasn't forgotten where he came from. I mean he started out as a union organizer and he still does that. He's able to do that. He's very articulate. He's able to express the concerns and needs of his members very well, and he's -- he knows how to operate within the political arena.

And as I said, the thing I learned, he's loyal and that's really important and

that's -- you don't get that kind of quality on the part of a lot of leaders, but the fact is he's loyal to his friends, the people who support him, the people who've been with him. He's with them. You can count on Danny Donohue. He will be there with you.

INTERVIEWER: Why do you think CSEA has been able to survive and thrive for close to a hundred years?

MR. McCALL: That's a good question. I think that -- that CSEA looks at public service the way I do; that it's a very important quality. It's an important kind of mission to serve the public, and the people of CSEA, that's what they're about. They're about serving the public. They're about meeting the needs of people in hospitals, people in facilities, people who need service, people who rely on -- and everybody does.

Every taxpayer relies on the government, whether it's the state, local or municipal government, to provide a service to them. And CSEA, they're the heart and soul of the State work force. These are the people who

are there every single day providing vital service and people appreciate that. They need it and that's why CSEA has been successful for a hundred years, because they've been committed to public service for a hundred years.

INTERVIEWER: Great, Carl. Thank you. This was a pleasure.

MR. McCALL: My pleasure. Thank you. And all the questions were tough.

INTERVIEWER: Good.

(Conclusion of interview of Carl
McCall.)

