The point I am trying to make is that in order to understand some of what I will say, or to understand the labor movement, you almost have to understand the philosophy that the labor movement comes out of. And the labor movement in America is unique...not like any other labor movement in the world. It's a labor movement that started with the AF of L, which started in 1870. Or if you went back to the Central Labor Union in Philadelphia, which goes back to 1828, which was the first central labor union in the country, that was really a workmen's association to run the system of all the on-through negotiations and everything else.

The Knights of Labor was one big union that took everybody in...d.idn't accept, I think....the only people that couldn't join the Knights of Labor were either...clergymen or lawyers, I think, were the only ones they didn't let in to the Knights of Labor. Anybody else had a right to be a member of the Knights of Labor. I may be wrong about that, but I'm pretty sure I've got it right.

And it was very fraternalistic, in a way, and it had a lot of procedures and you were sworn in in a particular way, and you were what they called "obligated in membership" and you swore to things almost as a semi-secret society, which it wasn't. But it had this fraternal type of situation. But they found out that it wasn't specific enough, and it disintegrated.

Then you found unions started to form along craft lines. And often craft lines along ethnic lines...that you actually could almost tell a person's nationality, and his religion and everything else by what craft he was in....to a significant degree. ...because the labor movement was not accepted...the principle when people had the right to join together and bargain collectively was not accepted in the United States as a principle of American democracy...that there was a constitution ...it was a legal privilege. It was really considered an illegal act of constraint of trade and some type of sinister group that was trying to uproot or disturb the American way.

But the people who originally came together in the AF of L decided that they were going to work within the system and they were, in essence, going to be a bread-and-butter type of trade union, rather than a philosophical type of trade union.
They were often charged with having no philosophy or social conscience, but that's much too broad a charge. I don't want to infer that we don't have that, because, as it goes on it shows that we've had that... and have influenced, through political action, most of the decent social legislation that's taken place in the country. But basically, people joined the trade union movement to band together and assist their trade... get an 8-hour day, and to get better wages. And it didn't make any difference whether they were Republican or a Democrat, or a liberal or a conservative or a socialist or anything else. You find the same people a member of the union with completely different political opinions... sit down at the same negotiating table.

But those first unions that were formed had a uniqueness that the people who were members of the union thought that their trade was part of their essence. What I mean is, you asked the person what he was, he told you he was a bricklayer, or a cloakmaker, or a tin-knocker... which was Joe Burke's... ... a sheetmetal worker... and always would keep his card and always would be connected to that trade... as against, as you see today, many people in the industrial unions, who are connected to a shop or plant or firm. Someone may now say... who's a member of the autoworkers', "I work for Budd". And if he stops working for Budd, he loses his connection with the auto industry; he may go into another industry altogether. And his knowledge about what he's talking about is generally connected to an employer and to an industry as a whole, rather than craft.

But if I were a carpenter or a plasterer, it didn't make any difference to me who I worked for. I may work for five contractors. I won't even remember who I work for. I always remember that my essence was a plasterer. And I move from one job to another job as a plasterer. It didn't make any difference who I worked for.

And those beginning unions were bound together by people who worked in craft, and often, who lived in the same area, and who trusted each other, because they either played cards together, or they were in the same social club, or religious organization, or even society. Some of these things actually got down to... in some parts of needle trades... where people were members of what they called the "Arbeitering", the "workmen's circle", et cetera. And if I was a member of the Arbeitering, you worked in the circle and I worked in the shop, this made it very easy for me to join a union and to get together because we trusted each other.

If I were an Irishman and a plasterer and I belonged to some
Irish associations and I lived in an Irish neighborhood, it would be much more easy for me to trust my fellow trade unionists who were fraternal...the type of fraternal organization and many of these started out as the "fraternal" order of this, or the benevolent association of that, and it was a very close in-group type of situation.

The reason that I bring these things out is that it was people who banded together, under great opposition, and under dangerous types of conditions where people often were black-balled and lost their jobs....they were working trade, and were very harshly treated when they decided to form a union. I don't want to get off on a wrong tangent on that, but we understand that and it existed.

Well the mentality that was created in the labor movement is...we weren't going to create any social upheaval, but we were going to get a bigger share, a more adequate or fair share of the American pie. That's what we came to this country for...to increase ourselves economically; we didn't come here to take America over....the American labor movement was very ethnically oriented because it was made up of primarily, the new arrival immigrants, rather than the natives forming the unions...the unions were being formed primarily by the immigrants who were arriving in the 1870's and the 1900's and right on through.

And they were very nationalistic about America ...they were very proud of America...very proud of its economic system. The labor movement was a way for them to move up in that system and to get a fair share of it...not to overthrow it.

Now, yes, there were some people who philosophically wanted to overthrow it...that didn't exist at all. Where that really showed its head was in the '20s after the revolution of the communists in Russia. There was a direct infiltration into the labor movement of people who didn't want workers to improve themselves within the system; they wanted to totally overthrow the system. And various unions were infiltrated.

Whether they were transportation unions...and if you look at strikes in Philadelphia or in the city of New York, you'll find strikes in the '20s...mid '20s, '26, '27. Devastated the locals...broke them apart...internal strife that was unbelievable. You'll find it in the industry I come out of...the needle trades. Devastating strikes, where the union was totally decimated when it was all over, because there were forces within the union who didn't want to get good contracts or institutionalize the labor movement; they wanted to foment revolution amongst the American worker and eventually change the whole system.
But there were those in the labor movement who didn't want that to happen and resisted it. And you'll find out that they prevailed, but they didn't prevail easily. And you'll find, right on to this day, that there is almost an overreaction to communists by the old-time trade unionists. Some people think we're kind of an odd conservative business, but the people who were very anti-communist are often the most liberal people in the labor movement. They're not conservatives. You take Debinsky, who came out of my own union...was hell on wheels about communists, because he knew communists were the guys who were always wrecking the union and wrecking the industry and had nothing to do with wanting to improve the situation. So he was always...the Trotskyites and all the communists were forever ruining locals. Locals here in Philadelphia. There was a Local 50 and a Local 15...what they called the Waists and Dressmakers. They forever had to change the name of the local because the commies took over 50...they went to 15. When they took over 15, the charter went to 50...so that the commies couldn't grad a hold of it. So, on to this day, you'll find that of people who understand the labor movement...have a long connection to it, a great sensitivity to the influence of communism...because they felt that the feeling of the communists is not to build the American labor movement...not to enrich it and to have it work in the system, but was to foment difficulty so that there would be a revolt in the system.

Right on through today, you find Meany and the AFL-CIO very rigid about the war in Vietnam and all the other...all those opinions come right through from what I just described to you. Whether with a guy like Jay Lovestone...was Meany's advisor on foreign affairs 'til just recently...who was a commie, head of the communists... who finally decided the commies were wrong and who came over to this... You find that as a thread going through the American labor movement...where the American labor movement, no matter how anybody likes or dislikes it, whatever picture they paint of it, its basic principle is to make the American system work, and to make the system work so that we can have a better share of it...not to break the system or overthrow it. So that sort of...just to give you a....that's why, some of the other things that I might have answered about...is that strange that the labor movement is now wanting to co-operate with business, or is willing to co-operate with business? Are they now going against their principles? It's not, really.

(WMP: Do you know about this Greater Philadelphia Movement?)

Yes.

(WMP: Is that still going?)
The Greater Philadelphia Movement really is not like in the 50's, or....I'd say...on through to, I guess the '60s. The Greater Philadelphia Movement was called...the euphemism was the "movers and shakers". They were people of real influence, politically and economically, in the business community. There were people from the labor movement, especially Joe Burke, who was a member.

(WMP: Joe Heater.)

Joe Heater from the textile workers, yes. These people were part of it and played a role. But there was something about Philadelphia that was different from other cities, and we still haven't quite changed it, or come of age of it right now.

Philadelphia, in my own estimation, was different and behind...and for different reasons than any other city in the country that had a large industrial base. That's because Philadelphia never had the slums, nor the difficulties that other cities had. The tenements and real tough slum areas of New York never existed in Philadelphia. The real tough areas of Boston never existed in Philadelphia. The tough areas of...the back of the yards of Chicago never existed in Philadelphia.

(WMP: Why would that be so?)

The assimilation of the workers, the immigrants who built this city...now people don't want to realize that in 1870...1850...Philadelphia was a little postage stamp. It was only after these big influxes of immigrations that the city grew to be...say, 2,000,000. Philadelphia, if you check the statistics, you'd find out it was a rather contained little city. It wasn't a large metropolis. But industrialization was taking place and people were coming to Philadelphia. And Philadelphia was developing as what? What was its prime industry?

(WMP: Textiles.)

That was one of its prime industries. It wasn't a specific industry, like, maybe in Chicago you'd call it meatpacking, or now in Detroit, you'd call it automobiles. Or some other city was a rubber city, or another city was the garment city, like New York was the needle trades.

(HMcM: This was a book city, for one thing. There was a lot of publishing here.)

It was everything...that's what made the difference. It was needle trades...as far as manufacturing garments. It was textiles. It was rugs. It was steel...not basic steel, but steel-fabricated things. It was a shop town...with owner
management, not absentee management. Families owned and controlled shops.

And it did another thing. Its form of housing was different. It built little row houses and the poorest worker in this city owned a house. It may have been a $1,500 house or an $800 house. But he worked at a shop or a trade and he bought a home...and established a neighborhood. And was rather proud of that. Amongst many of the workers...and I come out of a Catholic background...people would always talk about what parish you came from, and could tell everything about you by telling what parish you came from in Philadelphia. They'd ask you, and you'd give them the name of the parish. And they knew exactly where you lived, the blocks where you lived, how much you made, what your trade was...and everything about you! And to this day in Philadelphia, when people in Philadelphia meet each other, they'll say, "what parish do you come from?" It exists in other cities, but more uniquely, that's unique about Philadelphia.

But I'm saying, there was an easier assimilation to the city by the people that came in. And there was also something else. There was a much stronger and...oh, fiercer, if anything else...old-line establishment.

(WMP: The industrialists, you mean?)

The...what we now call...the WASPs...were really imbedded, and some way connected to the life and blood of the city...more than in other cities.

I originally came from New York. In a flip way, somebody paraphrases someone else...he said, "Listen, you're going to Philadelphia. I'll tell you about it. In Boston they want to know what you know; in New York they want to know what you've got...how much dough you've got. That's all they care about. They don't give a damn what you know. But in Philadelphia they want to know who your grandfather was! You understand that sort of thing. Who your grandfather was is important!!!...down there. Not like where you are now. In New York they don't care who your grandfather was. It doesn't mean a damn thing. They want to know what you've got. Philadelphia is different".

So there was a very distinct tradition; that of obligation and control...and work towards the control. But yet, there wasn't the ferment or the degradation that caused other people to want to revolt against that control, in some way, or overthrow or change it. And if you study the political situation, you'll find out that the influence of different groups, disproportioned to their numbers, were different. You could say that the immigrants, the new arrivals in the city by 1910 or 1920, it should have been significant that they were a significant force and they should have been taking over the
positions of power. They weren't. They were, at best, just second-stringers in political organizations, primarily Republican, controlled by the elite group of Philadelphia.

It goes right on through. No two ways about it. If you look at it honestly and objectively...in the city of New York, the Irish in the 1870's owned the city politically. They 'd thrown the old guard out! In Boston, they'd thrown the old guard out, or were in the process of throwing it out. In Chicago they were on their way. But in Philadelphia, in 1950, it still existed....two or three generations after the changes...Philadelphia still had them. This was affected by the way things happened. It affected development and the role with the labor movement also played a part.

When I first became politically active in the labor movement, the trick was still to take a husband and wife and one would be registered Republican and one would be registered Democrat. You'd get the husband to register Democrat, but to protect the family, make sure the wife registers Republican so they've still got some edge to keep the thing safe.

And we understood that...that the husband, generally who was in the labor movement, would register Democrat, but to protect himself, she'd register Republican. If you check the records, you'll find these split arrangements because of the nature of the development of Philadelphia.

(WMP: We had our political bosses in that period you've spoken about.)

Yes, you had political bosses, but the political bosses of the worker, or the immigrant. They were the political bosses who were in connection with the Establishment. They were the political bosses of the Establishment and the old-line controls of the city. They were not the political bosses of the workers and the trade unions, wherein the other cities, the political bosses were the political bosses who had worked up from a coalition, often, with a fraternal group or an ethnic group, et cetera, et cetera, and were a different group. They had no connection, or no loyalty, or no control by the set, old-line Establishment. In Philadelphia, that existed right on through 1960. In no other city did that exist...like it existed in Philadelphia. And that affected how the labor movement developed, and eventually the labor movement was part of the group that assisted in ending that.

And when that happened, instead of it being an orderly transition, the old-line elitists of the town withdrew...withdrew with their real interest....and that was....I'm trying to
answer what happened to GPM...when this finally broke, the GPM ceased almost to begin to show a pre- eminent role...and much to the destruction of the city.

And I think that some of the decline in the city, took place when the real power elite, which was the Old Line control, found out that they no longer were singularly in control, and could now no longer do it by themselves. You have to share that power...with political leaders, who, in essence were there because of their allegiance and support that primarily often came out of the trade union movement. Some of them came directly out of the labor movement, or they went to school with a guy in the labor movement, or had been friends of the old connections.

And the labor movement, in co-operation with the Democratic party, were as an arm...a very strong and integral share of the Democratic party...was now establishing a new set of leaders...that owed truly no voting allegiance, nor loyalty, nor money, nor anything else, to the old Establishment. And that was the combination of Italians and Irish and Jews and Poles, et cetera. And it was creating a completely different atmosphere, and one that was unfortunate, because it, in my opinion, their arrogance and...if I put it personally...our arrogance, and our opinions that we go it alone...that we were rid of them, and the hell with them...we don't need them. Or the others were saying, "They don't belong to the same country club as me, they speak funny, they act funny, they dress funny. We really don't want to associate with them. We truly don't want to associate with them. And we'll pull in our horns and go our own way".

(WMP: You're talking about the labor leaders.)

No, I'm talking about the labor movement, who in arrogance said, "we don't like them. So let them go; we don't need them any longer".

And we realized in our own way that we out-copulated them. There were just more of us! Pure and simple! It didn't happen...it didn't happen because there was that philosophical emergence. It didn't happen for all the nonsense that people tell you about. It just happened one day...we realized that there were just skeen-teen more of us!!! And if we voted, and registered, we didn't have to pay any attention to them! And we finally did that and said, "Get lost! You've kept us hamstrung too long! Go get lost!!"

Now, but they themselves, instead of saying, "All right, it's changed. But you need us because we have brains and money and influence". They said, "We don't really care to be associated with you fellows, because you're rough around the edges; some of you we don't particularly like", and they went their own way. And there was this pulling-apart, which is very de-
structive to the fiber of this city. Both sides.

(WMP: When did that take place?)

1959.

(WMP: '59. Did it come to a climax or did it just gradually happen?)

It happened, say, in 1951. It began in '51.

(WMP: That's when Joe Clark became mayor.)

Well, say, in '48, when Dick Dilworth and Joe Clark ...

(WMP: ...got elected, yeah.)

But, you have to remember that the Democrats, instead of putting forth candidates who were really representing the majority of the voters who were going to vote for them, were still reaching back into the Old Line families to find a candidate, even though it was for...even though the people who were voting for them...weren't specifically matched up. ...I'm twisting the whole thing up.

If the majority of the people, if you do a survey, and say, "Now, I'm going to get a candidate"...the majority of the people are A-B-C...they're ethnic Catholics. Why shouldn't the candidate be an ethnic Catholic...or an ethnic Jew? ... ...et cetera, et cetera.

Philadelphia still felt that in order to break Republican control, the only way to break...there were 67 years in place, at that time...or 68 years...you would know better than I would at this...

(WMP: I've forgotten.)

It was in there...I might be a year or two off...it was 67 or 68 years...that they had to come up with a group, or leaders, who reflected the power that was already in. And the voters were coming out of a different group.

Now, that went on with the election of Joe Clark and the election of Dick Dilworth. But Joe Clark and Dick Dilworth, in my analysis, never cared to have anything to do with the political machinery. They were mayors of the city and ran the city and did a good job in running the city. But they never truly were connected to the political machinery.

(WMP: They had a man when Joe Clark was mayor...)  

Jim Finnegan. What was Finnegan's background? Was he a WASP or what?
An Irish Catholic, right?

And then when it went from Finnegan, who'd it go to?

Mike Bradley...or a Kelly, et cetera, huh?

And then from Finnegan, it went to Green.

So now you find that the party machine was left to this crowd. But the executive office, or the administrative office, initially, the change in it, was led by another group, hmmm?

Now, while there was a said friendship in relationship between Joe Clark and Dick Dilworth, their true connection to the guys in the labor movement was remote. It was not personal and friendly. The guys in the labor movement could not say they were a personal friend, a warm, back-slapping, have-a-drink, tell-a-story-friend to Joe Clark.

They were not. They knew him and they co-operated with him...were friendly with him.

The same for Dilworth. And each one of them had their connecting link to the crowd. Joe Clark had a very fine guy...Mike Byrne...who came out of being a ward leader for the 19th ward...who was the connector. Whether they did that intellectually...they had a link...

I think they knew what they were doing. But, how am I supposed to make the subjective judgment about what somebody else did or didn't do...I can just tell you what I observed...and they had the connecting link.
Sure, I know that...you know better than I do.

(WMP: You're right...that's all.)

But the connecting link between...now, you say, what does this have to do with the labor movement. The connecting link to the Democratic administration was via the organization. Because the guys at the organization knew and understood and were close to the guys in the labor movement...background...often lived in the same neighborhoods...often went to the same schools...their kids went to the same schools. They were not the same country club set as the mayor or the controller at that time, but the party leaders were connected in the sub-culture, or the main culture, or whatever culture you want. The main culture was there...the private life. The private life sub-culture...away from the city power...were the same...the labor movement and the party machinery...very similar.

And even the Republican party did that by having Aus Meehan. He was filling their role, and that's how they would keep their connecting links to these people.

(WMP: That's right.)

Now, that went on until Dilworth decided to run for governor in 1955....no, he ran for mayor in '55 and governor in what year? The last term he started was '55. '58? '57?

(WMP: He followed Clark.)

He followed Clark.

(HMcM: He ran for a second term in '59.)

'59. I said '59 before. And then Jim Tate was president of the City Council.

(HMcM: How long was Dilworth mayor before he resigned to run for governor?)

Oh, a very short time.

(HMcM: Just a year or two?)

Very short a time. He was in and out.

(WMP: That's right, because Jim Tate was in there for a long time.)

Now, what you get in Jim Tate...Jim Tate was not moved up by the City Charter, not by the election. Now what was Jim Tate? In essence, an Irish Catholic...first Catholic mayor
in the city of Philadelphia. 1959.

I'm not trying to overplay the Irish Catholic image. It just happened he was. It was really an emergence...it could easily have been a Jewish mayor. It probably wasn't going to be an Italian Catholic, because the Italian Catholics were still primarily connected to the Republican party at that time. So that the makeup of the strength of the Democratic party, at that time, was made up primarily of Irish and Jewish leaders of wards. If you took the names of the people who were running the wards in those days, and you took who were the ward leaders, there was a disproportionate number of Irish and Jewish names.

(WMP: And what about the Italians?)
The Italians were still...

(WMP: And the Polish?)
Poles were Democrats, but were pretty much in one ward, the 45th ward. They were not spread out over a large area. They were pretty much, in some effect, in some of the Kensington wards...the 31st and 35th...but primarily in Richmond section of the 45th. They were very centered in one area.

But you found Tate coming along, and Tate being a guy from that background...a guy who came from the 43rd ward, grew up in the area, went to school with....a very close connection, and a very close assimilation, and at ease to associate with guys in the labor movement, and them to associate with him. I don't think he had the same ability or trust to associate with the Old Line, and they were abrasive to him and he was abrasive to him. I think there was almost an "unsaid said" natural hostility...which I won't go into...but you could almost detect, when you saw them in a room.....I could see, as a kid, because I was young enough...I could see the hostility in him to them, and them to him. And I don't know who brought it on first, but it was there! You could see it...it was almost static electricity in the air! I watched it...and watched it, and watched it. Absolutely watched it!

(WMP: I wonder why Clark and Dilworth treated Jim Tate badly...not badly, but not as one of them.)

And I think that when Clark and Dilworth were finally not in the...say, executive position...that the real Establishment of the city, even if they didn't do it...specifically, or intentionally, or logically, they did it in manner and in custom, and almost...what some people write a book about...body language, or sign language, or the "unsaid says". It was there; it was obvious, at least to myself, who probably was more impressionable in those days than I am now...I could notice it.
(WMP: What were you doing in those days?)

I was an officer of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union and I was the political director...for the union. So I ....

(WMP: That was Charley Weinstein?)

No, that was Bill Ross.

(WMP: Bill Ross. That's right.)

Charley Weinstein, who is dead, was the Amalgamated. Bill Ross was the International Ladies' Garment Workers. And those two unions were very...oh, I could say...active political unions. And I was the political director for the Dress Joint Board.

(WMP: No wonder you're so knowledgeable.)

I know it's strange, because, to start with, I am the contradiction...that was primarily an Italian and Jewish union, and I shouldn't have been there, by ethnic background! But that was true. And I, at that time, was....I served...and there's a picture there I found just recently, going through things...when I was appointed by Dilworth to the Commission on Human Relations...goes back to that time, when Dilworth was still mayor. I think it's about '56 or '57. So that I was only a kid, and they didn't appoint me because I was Jim Mahoney, it was because I came out of a powerful group. That goes back...that's one of the first appointments I ever had...you know, the first time I was ever appointed by a mayor to anything...that's Sam Dash...and....

(WMP: Sam Dash is a good fellow. I haven't seen him for years.)

But now, I wasn't given that appointment because I was worthy of it; I was given that because I was connected to an influential organization...so he took somebody from that organization! I'm being honest with you! Jim Mahoney as a boy, in essence, was given that because I was from the labor movement, had been politically active, and was in a role...coming from a large union...representing about 25,000 people. So, that's how I would have been at these; it wasn't that I earned it, but from where I came from, I was given entrée to ability to provide some of this.

(WMP: Maybe you'll tell us how you used your position...in what causes...and what sort of problems did you have?)

Well, I've probably given you too much philosophical background, but if I don't...it's difficult to understand. During
that period, the labor movement was building a rather strong political machine. We were very effective.

(WMP: Very consciously and deliberately done.)

Deliberately......ward by ward, division by division. And we knew exactly what we did and we mapped it out by the city....to this day, we still operate that way. I went over the map....lay it out...punch it out by card....I just punch the wards and precincts in the campaign, and tell you....and that way I know I could tell you exactly who the co-ordinator is and what their trade and everything is....this is the 33rd ward...that would be the 33rd ward, 3rd precinct...it would be Jerry Lawless, Albert Merrara, John Schmidt....I'd be able to contact people in the 33rd ward.

(WMP: Are you still operating that way?)

Not....we should, but....we should.

(HMcM: What was the purpose, really, of doing that?...so that you'd be able to elect the people who'd be favorable to the unions?)

To be able to take our vote. Most elections...we realized that most elections are won or lost by 2 or 3% of the vote. You take a ward. We methodically lay it out...that'd be the 18th ward...and we eventually would find somebody for every precinct. And we had a contact person.

(WMP: So, you're running it like a political organization.)

Absolutely. We were exactly that same way, and co-ordinated with the Democratic committeemen, and sometimes were pretty much his runner or his legs....in that we would find out that we had....by checking the records...find out that we would have 15 or 20 or 50 or 100 or 400 members in that area.

(WMP: What roles have you played in elections...of Mayor Tate...for instance?)

Well, I think that the significant role, and where we were at our zenith in that, was in the first election of Jim Tate and the second election of Jim Tate....where there was actually a complete alliance and connection between the political organization, the mayor, and the labor movement.

(WMP: Jim was pretty strong on politics. He knew....)

He knew the wards and precincts of this city, and he knew where we could be of effectiveness, and coached us. There was also another person who was around at that point....which was Bill Green. And I think the zenith of the power...or the
zenith of the political activity of the labor movement was in 1963. And it ended with Kennedy's death in November...what...20th or ...?

(HMcM: 22nd.)

...22nd?...and exactly one month later with the death of Bill Green on December 22nd. Both of them were in actuality...Kennedy on the national scene, and having a strong organization...were the door openers...as some people, I was reading, used the term that was used by Theodore White...were "gate-keepers"...they kicked the door open. And with the election of Kennedy, it meant one thing. It meant that this group that I've been talking about that were 2nd class in Philadelphia, could now be anything. They could be a board director of the bank; they weren't board directors of the bank. They could be more than a chief clerk. They could be more than that.

(WMP: Was it psychological or was it....it must have been primarily that.)

It was psychological, and it also was absolute, distinct discrimination.

(WMP: It had been before.)

It was distinct discrimination, and it was going to be overcome, and it was latently in the minds, I think, of the guys in the labor movement and many of the people that made up these groups that said..."We're going to get you one of these days!" And when a guy like Al Smith was defeated in 1928, there just weren't enough of them. And between '28 and '60, nothing happened to this country, except that the kids in diapers became voters. And they kicked that door open one day, and they said, "Here we are!!! We are here!! We have arrived!!! No longer do you tell us we can't be chairman of the board...or the mayor...or president of the university!!!"

And today you look around and you find Martin Meyerson. You find Yale; you find Columbia. Look at the names of the people who are the presidents! Different!!! Look at chairmen of the boards of large corporations. GMC...DuPont...Look at the names!!!

(HMcM: Ford...Iacocca.)

Ford. Look at the names!!! Kicked the door open!!!

(WMP: I think that's all good. That's terrific.)

Oh, I'm not against it. But the labor movement was playing
a role...and you say, what does this have to do with the labor movement. The labor movement was often one of the political organizers. This is a complex subject; we're part of political organizers that were delivering...methodically...or helping to deliver, and helping to institutionalize and coordinate this voting power. So that the labor movement, not only was the emergence of this group, economically, through its machinery and ability to organize politically, was assisting this group and their sons and daughters to emerge socially and every other way...into this society. So what I'm trying to say to you is that the American labor movement decided...either academically or intellectually or just by natural smell and instinct...to work within the American system, to deliver economic progress, and then social and political...political and social emergence. And the election of some of these people, and the power that the city organization had...to change it over...was part of the whole machinery that the labor movement...played a role...to work within the system, but primarily as a wing...especially in Philadelphia...of the Democratic party.

(WMP: And the labor movement had more voters than the people running things, I guess.)

Yes, that's what I meant by "we outbred them" really. We finally were smart enough...and sometimes I don't think we did it by sitting down...we just...I think most of the time we just had a good sense of smell...we had good instincts. And those instincts led us in the right way. And my only role was that I was part of the political organizers.

(WMP: When did you come on the scene?)

I came on the scene in 1955.

(HMcM: How is it you came from New York? Was there a mission that was here for you?)

Yes. I had graduated from college and I had worked...

(WMP: What college were you?)

I graduated from Mount Saint Mary's. And I had worked as a bus driver...as a member of the Amalgamated Association of Electric Motor Coach Street Operators. And I had made my money to go to school by driving a bus. I'd gone back; some time I'd taken off, and when I graduated from college, I went back to driving a bus...and made very good money...made more money than I could have...of course, I was asked by my professors...and people said to me...and all the interviews that came around..."What do you want to do in life?"
I remember taking an interview from somebody from IBM and I didn't really shave that morning. And I went to see IBM and they said....I might have been a decent salesman, but the person was nonplussed that I would be so cavalier not to come trembling ....that I would prep-up and look....with my tweed jacket and shaved and all shined up for him...he said...."What goes on with you?"...you know?

I said, "I thought it would be a good experience to have the interview. I really don't want your job! Not interested!! Wouldn't work for you!!! Not that you wouldn't have me, I wouldn't have you!!! So you want it straight?"

......Because I had discussed with people in college...I wanted to be a union organizer. I didn't want to go to work for a corporation. I didn't actually want to be... no way in the world would I want to go to work for a corporation...didn't feel like I wanted to. And...well, to make a long story short, at that time I had to decide to go home to work after you graduated. And when I discussed it, people had sent me down to Washington to speak to the old AFL. And they had said to me, "Well, Mahoney, there're two ways you can get into the labor movement. You can go into a union that's hiring organizers...that needs people, where you'll sit in your own union, and wait for the business agent to die and maybe in 15 or 16 years they'll elect you to the executive board, and maybe some day you'll get to be the business agent.

And what happened is ...I went home and I realized that in the local I came out of...and I think the business agent is still there, if not, just retired in the last year...so I would have had a long wait!!! But if I stayed in my own local, I would neither have had the inclination nor the ability to defeat that particular business agent...because he was a good business agent. Nobody could have defeated him. In fact, he lasted for about 25 - 30 years...to prove that he wasn't bad. And the International Ladies' Garment Workers at that time, were hiring organizers, and training people in a school that had been put together which was called sort of the West Point of the labor movement, in those days, which was a training institute. They were actually training union officials.

I started to come here as an organizer. We were organizing a shop at 521 Vine at the foot of the Ben Franklin Bridge, there. And I came here to organize; I went back to New York to work as an organizer, worked in Patterson, New Jersey and, with other things, I was sent back to Philadelphia again in '56...and with a lot of other details, but I won't go into that. And I came back as an organizer, and as education director and political director. I became business agent in all the other jobs on through the unions and up, but I still...if I
had any job to do in the labor movement, I'd rather be an organizer. It's the best job in the labor movement, only most people don't look upon it that way.

But that's pretty much how I came to Philadelphia...and came via...being sent and trained by the International Ladies' Garment Workers and coming here to be an officer.

(WMP: What sort of issues...civic matters....life of the city and the future of the city...have you been involved in?)

Well, the issues in those days were very important were civil rights...whether we were going to have entree, both into the labor movement and into the field of the economy of many blacks who had come during the war...as Philadelphia we described had changed in the 1870's and 1850's, it also changed during the '40s, during the war, when large groups of people came. Now, were these people truly going to be assimilated...honestly...into the labor movement...into membership in the labor movement and authority in the labor movement...and into really full citizenship in Philadelphia? And now it seems very insignificant, but back in 1955, that was a very tender, frail emergence...that was taking place.

(WMP: Were you on the scene when there were threatened riots?)

I was the hearing officer for the Commission on Human Relations in '63 when the old Philadelphia Plan...the emergence of the riots out at 10th and Vine...and everything took place. It was a very interesting period. I think it was one that the labor movement had a very difficult time with...I think the black community had a difficult time with it...and the city had a difficult time with it.

And I think, on base, we came out of it and succeeded pretty well...not perfectly, but fair. I was part of, really...I would think, the political development of Philadelphia from being a hard-core Republican city...though I was not there with the initial burst of it, I was there with the real changing of it into being a tough, hard-core Democratic city. And I was there to observe the break-up of the city...the break-up of where everybody went their own way. And I hope I'll be here to observe and play a role in the coming-back to the city.

As for some of the questions you have there concerning MILRITE and there are other things.

(HMcM: Was this your own idea?)

MILRITE...yes, I invented that acronym. It means to Make Industry and Labor Right in Today's Economy. What happened is...what we've been talking about...these powers...and I
call them the "powers elite", decided to go their own way. And while there was a great connection between the administrator...the executive end of the city...and the said business and Old Line community...it broke down...after Jim Tate. And that connection became loose to the labor movement and the executive. And the other people, in essence, removed themselves from the scene completely.

(WMP: The other people being....)

I call the "Old Line Establishment"...the "movers and shakers", as we knew them in say, 1940...'45..and say, even the mid-50's. Removed themselves truly from the workings of the operation...just absolutely removed themselves.

(WMP: What about this partnership?)

I think that it's...of no real substance...like that was before. Not like the old GPM had....and there was real commitment. There were people from manufacturing and industrialists, et cetera. The best you have today are some retailers...made up of retailers and service people...not the guts of the city...not the industrialists. And there was also a change in our losing our labor intensive jobs. We were losing our job base. And this was happening because of the change in technology...the change in foreign imports...and many complex changes that were taking place. So that we woke up one day and we found out that we could no longer afford to go our own way. Whether I like them, or they like me...no longer mattered. We had a commonality of selfish interest.

(WMP: Who is "they"?)

What I mean...let me say anything about "they"...these personal pronouns...thats a politician's personal pronoun, so you never can say what he had to say...'cause you have to assume what he said. That's a trick of people!

"They" actually means the "Old Establishment" and captains of industry, and people who had the ability to put capital investment in. Rather than try to catagorize people by a class, calling them a "wasp" or "rich", or such, the true people who had the ownership and the ability to put new capital investment in. There was a great correlation between the Old Line Establishment and those with that ability. Great correlation...and there still is a great correlation today...not as much as it was, but still a great correlation there.

(WMP: How do you work with them today?)

I think very well, because I think that there is a different
group there, there are people who couldn't accept me years ago, because it was just either their breeding or my breeding that we just weren't going to get along. By "me", I mean others of my type.

The people who are now merging are often, sometimes, because of this gate-keeping or door-kicking, you'll find out that when I speak to someone from a large corporation now, his mother or father may have worked in the needle trades, or his father may have been a bricklayer. And he's now really the chief executive officer of the firm. Now that's not always the case, but oftentimes I'll find that.

Or the person who is the chief executive officer, or the money person, no longer is so concerned that I don't meet him at his social club...or...I'm not socially connected to him...I'm not the same...you know, social strata or even connecting influence. And even if they don't do that, I have realized, and I think they have realized that we have a commonality of selfish interests, which is called survival. I recognized when I got here there were 25,000 garment workers. There are only 13,000 in my own jurisdiction. There were 50,000 or 60, or 70,000...or 80,000 when I got here, and it's about 20, or 30,000 down...and falling every day. I know that there was a textile industry...it no longer exists. I knew that there was a full-fashioned hosiery industry...that no longer exists. I knew there was an electronics industry...Philco Ford and RCA...the center of electronics in the country...no longer exists.

(WMP: Why did that happen?)

It's a complicated answer. It happened because of changes in technology...it happened because of an aging process...it happened because we weren't about ourselves.

(WMP: There were some strikes that slowed it down.)

The strikes...the Apex hosiery...yes...in the full-fashioned industry...caused it. But that was more of a manifestation of the difficulties, rather than the cause of the difficulties. In other words, the emergence of the sore, rather than the cause of the disease. The diseases were there. They were there because the plants were aging and people weren't putting in the capital investment. Too much capital investment was drained out...and had been drained out. It's not just true in Philadelphia; it's true across the whole state. And no money was being put in R&D and no money was being put back in. We were drawing our money out and making ourselves look good in the Stock Market, by paying dividends that shouldn't have been paid, and pouring it back, and doing the R&D in basic development.
The labor movement on its own side, instead of trying to do away with crazy work rules, et cetera, thought that...they'll always be here...and we didn't worry about productivity. We thought that productivity was just a guy with a stopwatch trying to take advantage of us. He was, but he wasn't either. So that now we have...we're realizing that...I'm a failure...I'm a failure...and every industrialist is a failure. Because when I go to my retirement and they go to their retirement...and I've told them this...they're going to have to admit they've been a failure.

When they give me my gold watch, I can tell you how active I've been, and all I've accomplished and how hard I've worked, but I failed.

(WMP: And what was your goal?)

What was my goal? To have maintained and continued the employment of the people I represented. That was my real goal. And when I find out that 50 or 60% of the people who I originally served as a trade unionist, no longer exist, I can't say...or give the standard retirement speech. What's the standard retirement speech? The organization owes me nothing, I owe it much, but at least it's better for my going and my coming. I've got to give it differently. I have to say..."the organization owes me nothing. But it's worse for my coming and my going. I don't know what the hell I did!!"

Now businessmen, if they're honest, have to give the same thing. The president of Bell Tel would have to give the same speech. The president of Philadelphia Electric would have to give the same speech. The president of Budd would have to give the same speech. The president of Philco would have to give the same speech. The president of any large garment shop would have to give the same speech. The president of every bank in this city would have to give the same speech. They are no longer in the same preeminent position as when they became either the chief executive officer or the policy person or the directing person. And the longer they stay, the more the failure they are. Because they are of less significance...and have been able to contribute less to the specific people who they are supposed to serve, if they measure it by the amount they've done and the numbers they've done it for...which is the way that most...we in America mostly judge success.

(WMP: What has been the impact on your unions and so on, of the move of industry out of the city into the industrial districts in the suburbs?)

We've been injured by the move towards the suburban ring of the city. But I don't think that that's been the real difficulty. That's just a happening. Because if you study statistics, you'd be shocked to find out that since 1970, Chelten-
ham and Abington have lost as many people as the city of Philadelphia. The population of Cheltenham is down 25%.

(WMP: So it's a regional problem we've got here.)

Something's happening that nobody understands and I don't understand it. I think that we're losing people from the city. Instead of the city being 1,700,000...the city, if you took the people who just lived in the city 10 years ago, it would be down to a million four, or a million five. But what's happened is that those people have left and gone and disappeared and the people from the suburbs have moved into the city. Now it is not apparent because we have more households. See at one time, we had 7 and 8 people living in the same house...of two or three families...multi-family living. Now you find children living in one apartment, and parents living in another, and grandparents living in another. So what used to be one household is now 3 households. So that when you look around the suburbs and you look around the area, it looks like they're all fine. Because households are bigger....more numerous. But when you go to the real number of people, something is happening that no one understands....don't quite understand...because the city is being propped up, artificially, by some people reversing the pattern of moving out....of moving back into the city. And if you take an area like Lower Moreland...check my figures....say, Upper Merion, affluent area...the thing must be booming. Cheltenham and Abington...take those figures and look them up.