

Interviewer: Fred Adams

Interviewee: George Brown

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Operator: Joey Allen

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Fred Adams: This interview is part of the Iowa Labor Oral History Project. Today is November 1, 1993. I am interviewing George Brown, a long-time lobbyist for the Iowa State Education Association. I wonder if you could tell us a little bit about your background; how you got involved both with the ISEA and the relationship with the labor movement and the like.

George Brown: I am a native of Detroit. I was born there in 1930 so I had the opportunity to spend the Depression in an industrial city. I think it was an interesting place to grow up because of the labor strike that went on in the mid-30's in the city and in nearby communities like Flint and Saginaw and Lansing. My parents, being immigrants from Scotland, were pretty much pro-labor. My father came from a city where there was a history of labor activity - Aberdeen, a stone-cutting city. My mother's father was a plumber. So there was a trade union affiliation whether she knew it or not. I went to Wayne State University which at that time was a city college. I went there because the tuition was \$56.00 my first semester. It went up to \$62.00 the next semester and we picketed the place and so there was a compromise at \$60.00. A good portion of the students were there. At that time it rose to about 26,000 students while I was there with the influx of the GI's from the GI Bill of Rights.

F: So you were there right after the war - the second world war?

G: Yeah. So, it was an activist period in a way. We formed the first book store co-op in the city at that time. I believe it was in 1951 or 1952 when the book publishers increased their prices 40% from one book-buying season to another book-buying season. That was more than we could take so there was a very good student book co-operative which I understand still exists in an effort to get cheaper prices. Anyway, it was a good city to grow up, I think, from the point of view of being prepared to handle things that came along to me. I taught school first in Ferndale, the working man's suburb of Detroit.

F: What did you teach?

G: I taught English and Social Studies but I taught them together - American History and American Literature as one class. My concept was to teach history through literature - a thing that I really enjoyed. I also taught Geography because I have always been a great lover of Geography. I had some pretty interesting things, but five years was enough. I am not suitable for four-wall rigid discipline type occupations. I am not that well disciplined. Besides, I had a desire to go into the news business as a reporter, particularly with a wire service. I cast about for opportunities in the Detroit area and got no encouraging words so my wife and I (she wasn't quite my wife at that time - we married when we moved to Chicago) went to Chicago which was her home area. I got a job on a weekly newspaper inside the city of Chicago that served the south side and south suburban area. It was relatively illuminating learning about city hall under "The Mayor - The Boss" as Mike Royko called him. Still a damn good history buff of Mayor Daley's years. But, how the political system worked then, particularly on the south side and the suburbs' reactions to the city of Chicago. It was a good place to learn the business. The people at INS in Chicago had been pretty warm to me. They did not shut me out altogether so they shipped me off and said, "Go west, young man. Try Denver".

At Denver Harvey Kadish was the bureau manager, the state manager - and he might have been the only employee. He said to me, "I'll hire you. I like you. You will do a good job at wire services. You have the kind of background we like. I have no openings". So he planted me in a Casper, Wyoming paper and I labored there for five or six months before an opening came up. That opening was in Des Moines so Harvey sent me from Casper, Wyoming to Des Moines, Iowa and that is how I got here.

F: When was that?

G: March of 1957. Of course there was a legislative session going on and whereas INS here had legislative reporters I had to go up several times and substitute or add to their

coverage so it was good that I got my feet wet right away in the process. That became really one of my principal assignments, although I covered every major natural disaster and lots of great court trials and lots of other things, but I always kind of considered myself a political reporter and certainly that means the legislative bodies.

During that time - early '60's - I was transferred to Minneapolis and I didn't like that bureau as well as I liked Des Moines, although I liked the Twin Cities. But, I got an offer in 1964 - midsummer - to run a political campaign in Iowa for Bill Bump, the Republican candidate for attorney general. Since I was somewhat discontented with the news business anyway, I decided, "What the hell (to take a flyer)". So I applied for a leave of absence but they turned me down saying that they never granted leaves of absence to people who ran political campaigns. They felt that it was a compromise, which I suspect wasn't real outrageous. So I quit and I ran the political campaign. We were caught in the great Barry Goldwater landslide and we were buried sufficiently. So, it was back to the Twin Cities to work on the St. Paul Pioneer Press.

One day Bob Ray, who was at that time Republican State Chairman, called me and asked if I would be interested in going to work for the Republican Party in Iowa to help rebuild. I was registered a Republican at that time because in the last gubernatorial election in Iowa I had registered as a Republican to vote for Jack Schroeder. Carelessly I had forgotten to shift my registration back to Independent which is what we news people were urged to do in those days, although most news people that I knew, particularly in the wires, leaned Democrat but I think the papers they leaned Republican. So, since I was registered that way and since it looked like an interesting kind of a job, I took it. That brought me back to Iowa and what I in effect was a lobbyist for the party.

F: Why do you suppose Bob Ray selected you?

G: I think that I got some recommendations from some people who were involved also in the Bump campaign that liked what I had done, felt that I had taken positions and had my

candidate take positions that were not in direct conflict with the national ticket, but at least were far enough away from it - more moderate - that they kind of liked. I had run into Ray several times during the campaign. He was State Chair and he would call together the various campaign managers and ask us to support certain efforts. We had always been willing to support those efforts. We, for example, participated in a fly-in around the state. That wasn't done much until the '60's. That cost some money from a campaign but it also puts a real strain on staff because you have to write a different press release for five or six stops a day. It wasn't difficult for me as a one-time reporter but it was a strain. So, anyway I was cooperative and I think I got some pretty good recommendations. I don't know all of them. I didn't interview him on why he picked me. I was kind of happy he did. It also brought a thousand or so more dollars than I was making as a newsman and since I had two young children, that wasn't unappealing either.

F: What did you do with the governor-to-be?

G: Primarily, I was to be a newsperson - write press releases and things like that - and I did a lot of that. I did it throughout my four years working for the party. I did a lot of writing as a matter of fact, but what really evolved was the necessity to work with the legislature - the few Republicans who were left in the legislature in that 1965 session - in an effort to retake control of one or both houses in the next 1966 elections (which by the way we did). The Republicans did get control in the House in 1966 although the Senate remained Democratic. I was to try to work with them [Ray provided] public opinion polls showing how the public came down on the major and some minor issues of the day. He would patiently go over them with the remaining Republicans who were in that House and the Senate. Let me tell you, some of them were really to left of Attila the Hun. I mean right of Attila the Hun. None of them were really left of anything. They were "leftover". There were a couple of sparks. There were a couple of really decent people who felt, "Hey, we should cooperate with the State Chairman".

I won't say that Bob Ray was an instant success with any of the really rock-ribbed terribly rural Republicans who were left in that body. He tried very hard. I remember he was explaining the results of one public opinion poll to the legislators at an early morning breakfast at the YMCA and I don't remember the question that showed that the public was really behind something -really strong - most of these people were opposed to. One of the Republican legislators - Grumpy Fisher is what we called him - said, "How many people do you ask questions of in this survey".

Ray replied, "Well about 604. That's considered a good sample".

[Grumpy retorted], "I betcha none of them live in my district".

That unfortunately was a majority point of view. It was tough sledding but I was surprised we managed to get - I worked with the platform committees of the party as it came to the convention season. The idea of trying to come up with a platform that represented some things that were more attuned to working people - a Wage Collection Law. Ray had an interesting technique. He had me, which he probably considered a "left voice" and he had an ad man, Walt Shotwell, whom I think he considered a "right voice" and who probably in the long run had a little bit more influence on him than I ever did because he ran a lot of the graphics of the campaigns and things like that. He would raise an issue and then I would get a chance to speak on it and then Shotwell would get a chance to speak on it and then we would all speak together. We had many a lunch like that in which there was a particular issue. I think the guy really wanted to run a moderate organization and I think while he was Governor, more or less, I think he truly a moderate Republican.

F: Did the party itself change? You said that it took control of the House in '66. Were the moderates in control by then?

G: There were more moderates. Yes. There were moderates from the cities. I think that what really saved the party was the fact that we were lucky. It could have re-elected just a lot more of that old guard and gone back to what it was prior to the '64 elections. It didn't. There were enough new faces, younger faces, more moderate faces - men and women - that it did change the party for that period of time. It was interesting. It was fun work in a way. Of course obviously we were laying groundwork for a Ray candidacy (and I don't think I consciously knew this for a couple of years). Some people said, "He had that in mind when he hired you". I don't think so but I don't know. When you are given a job you seldom ask people questions as to why. Once he was elected I knew that it was time to move on. I didn't ever and still don't want to work for government. I wasn't the kind - again working for a governor would have put me back in a fishbowl situation - and again I am not the type to be in that kind of situation.

F: How did you find Ray on labor issues - attitude towards unions, attitude towards working class concerns?

G: I found him willing to listen. He had been born in the Grant School section of Des Moines (the neighborhood then certainly wasn't like the neighborhood now). He was not from a well-to-do family at all. He was from a working man family and lived in a working man neighborhood. I always found him pretty reasonable about labor issues. The problem with being a reasonable Republican very often is there is no mileage in it with Republicans so you are often standing out there by yourself not really getting a whole lot of mileage for it. I don't recall him ever saying that, but I think that that's where he was coming from. A lot of times when he would try to get the most moderate position he could and that did pay off for us when we finally passed the Collective Bargaining Act because he did support it.

F: So then you moved out of working for the Republican Party and into working for the Iowa State Education Association. How did that happen?

G: Well, they had hired contract lobbyists once or twice to represent them on certain issues. I guess that they had decided that they really should have a presence up there more or less every day so they had sent one of their management people - a former school superintendent, Duane Lodge; he was an assistant exec. One of the things he was assigned to was to go up and look at the legislature and watch it and see if he could lobby or see if we needed a lobbyist. I'm not exactly sure what his mission was. He did attempt to work with some people but not very many on particular issues. He seemed to be more observing. There were several times - because I had been around the Hill a lot - that he would come up and ask questions. Since I was working for the Republican Party he probably felt safe talking to me and he did. As it got close to the time for me to leave the party he asked if I would like to apply for a job at the ISEA. I don't ever remember filling out an application, but I do recall being invited out to meet with their executive board - late December of 1968 - and interviewed with them. By the way working with the Republican Party, working for Bob Ray, was not a detriment to getting hired.

F: No. I would imagine that it would be quite a plus.

G: Right. Because that was still the time when there were a lot of superintendents and principals still on the ISEA executive board. They were in the middle of the struggle of the teachers to take over the organization and that did pay off within a couple of years when it was fully in control of the teachers.

F: So, you were the first full-time lobbyist for the ISEA.

G: Yes.

F: Did you get at all involved (I don't suppose that you necessarily would) in the struggle that was going on within the association itself between the administrators on the one hand and the teachers on the other?

G: Only indirectly did I get involved. My boss, Duane Lodge - the one who had recommended me for it - was one of the casualties of that struggle. He had alienated the teachers members in every possible way that he could have (I think unwittingly in a lot of it). Duane had what I called the "superintendent's mind-set" that he could do any damn thing he wanted. So he got canned along the way and he was a casualty of that struggle. I took the position in the staff union that the staff union should support an appeal in his behalf because that's what staff unions should do. I won a hollow victory because they of course presented a half-hearted appeal but it gave me an opportunity to appear before the board and protest the summary firing of him. He was fired.

F: Obviously they keep you on as a lobbyist so you are not perceived to be a part of the enemy camp ("they" being the teachers). If you could go over some of the issues, what exactly were the grievances on the part of the teachers toward the leadership of the ISEA? Why did they feel they needed to take control of the organization? Was their objective to boot out the administrators or just once they got control the administrators left willingly? As I understand it for a long period of time the ISEA had in fact been controlled by the superintendents and the principals.

G: Since its beginning. No question about it. At that time it was 100 years old already. Since the beginning it had been started by the superintendents and the principals. Frankly in those days if you walked into a school and were hired the superintendent would tell you that one of the things you shall do will be to join the Iowa State Education Association - and you did or you didn't get the job. You talk about a company union. I suspect there were several motives depending upon which group of teachers you were referring to. They wanted control of the organization because by this time the movement was for getting some collective bargaining legislation. The teachers felt that they should have collective bargaining, but the major issue was money. They felt that they weren't getting a big enough piece of the pie. They had tried to bargain with the school boards at the local level and some locals had granted them the right - Davenport, Keokuk. I think there were 15, 20, 25 places in the state where there were some kinds of pretty limited

negotiations going on and principally over wages. So I think that was the impetus for the teachers, you know, recognizing their numbers. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to understand that 90%+ of the membership were teachers and they were paying the bulk of the dues and they were having almost no say in the operation of the organization. There were a number of superintendents - and if you read the histories of the ISEA - who really believed the teachers were right. I don't think that they envisioned bargaining in the same way that you and I envision it as it's reflected in the bill that was passed. So that was I think the impetus for the teachers taking over the organization. I suspect - in fact a couple of them who were active at that time told me - that I was a little bit of an unknown quantity. They were concerned that I had worked for Republicans. They were concerned that I had been hired by these reactionaries on the board to be a lobbyist. They were watching me very carefully. When they asked about forming a political action committee I said, "Fine". In fact I had kind of urged it because it was obvious to me that you weren't going to be successful as a lobbyist for teachers unless you had some political clout. Again, I was looking at the clout in the Republican Party of the Farm Bureau. When you are given that role model, if this is the way to success (certainly Farm Bureau had been successful) then you have to get a political arm. The Farm Bureau took them a long time to get a political arm but in those early days they had kind of an insidious effect upon candidates. So, they had political weight if not a political action committee that donated money.

F: When you tell me that it was part of the same process by which the teachers take control of the organization they are also moving at the same time to try to get a bill to allow collective bargaining.

G: They had appointed a staff committee of mostly managers (well, that's about all there were at that time was just managers; there were very few of us who weren't management). Even before I got there they had had a committee that came up with a kind of a bargaining bill and I think they called it professional negotiations even at that time. That was to mollify the people who were scared of the union words collective bargaining.

They had taken it to the school board association and to the principals' organizations to see if they would approve it and go along with it. They of course had turned it down and wanted no part of it. So, they had attempted to come up with a bill. They took it to the legislature and they got it introduced and that was the end of it. It never even got a decent hearing any place. So, the teachers were anxious to get a decent hearing on a bill and I guess they felt that I was going to be an asset to that cause, not a detriment. It was apparent to me pretty early on that I had been hired to get that bill passed.

F: Now the impetus for the bill is in large part wages, you believe. Are there any other reasons that teachers were pushing for collective bargaining?

G: Yeah. It became stronger as the impetus grew. You just didn't hear money. You heard then, "We should have the right to be an equal in contract negotiations." In other words some school district had given them the right to negotiate with them but were not getting any place close to treating them as equals. So, from out of these places where bargaining had occurred there became this strong desire to be on an equal footing and they knew they weren't. So, in many respects to a lot of people across the state (I called "The Little Old Ladies in Tennis Shoes") the backbone of the organization -the females, their age (I don't recall what their average age was at that time). They had been long-time community members and they felt that the equality issue appealed to a great many of those people. But there have also been a lot of unjust dismissals of teachers for just petty things and so that became a focus. There were a lot of things. Once you started this ball rolling a lot of things came along.

F: Do you have any idea what size the membership was by the early 1970's?

G: I think its high point was around 32,000 and it represented over 90% of the actual classroom teachers in the state (who) were members. It was a strong grass-roots organization. I'm sure when the AFL-CIO and the ISEA finally got together one of the

things that appealed to the AFL-CIO was that we had that stronger base everywhere. We were truly ubiquitous.

F: You had school districts throughout the state.

G: That's right and that therefore we could bring some pressure on lots more legislators than they could.

F: Maybe you could describe the relationship that was established between the AFL-CIO and the ISEA.

G: As long as we were dealing with things that we mutually wanted it was an excellent working relationship. I never remember it prior to this issue as being bad. I guess I don't know how long Al Maier and Hugh had been in office and up on the hill prior to my arrival. I don't remember them being around on a regular daily basis but I think one of them generally was. I think they had made the determination that they needed somebody up there each and every day a little bit before the ISEA did. Once it became apparent that we had to go all out for a bargaining bill we got together very quickly. I don't know which of us made the overture. Up on the hill there is an awful lot of time you spend just sitting around. I believe we had passed the annual sessions of the legislature. They had passed five constitutional amendments in the 1968 elections and one of them was calling for annual sessions of the legislature. I think that that began... Ray was elected to a two year term first (we had also gone for the four year term for governors). He was elected to a two-year term first. I think that the 1969 session was the first of the annual sessions. So we began working on a bill. The ISEA had had one that went to the legislature in '69. Nothing happened to it. We went back and we started working and reworking it. I think we started working with the AFL-CIO about 1971 and intensively it got greater to the bill that finally got introduced in 1973.

F: Was the original bill drafted by the ISEA? You come out of your annual convention? Did it go to the convention to be supported? It was probably drafted by a committee.

G: Yeah, it was drafted by a committee and O.K.'d by the assembly.

F: Then you are given that bill to go up and lobby for it. With what degree of freedom to make compromises?

G: That had never been discussed at that point. I guess I felt that that bill they had wasn't going anywhere so I didn't press for anything because it wasn't necessary. It was a relatively amateurish effort. It didn't have any teeth. If you don't have any teeth, you are not going to get anywhere. I suspect it wasn't until we really sat down with Hugh and Al, John Connors, and the firemen and others that we began talking about a bill.

F: Now when it's we, it's those three people and you. You are the sole ISEA representative?

G: No. We had a fellow working for us for higher education by the name of Ron Bush who came out of the state of New York. He had some good knowledge about bargaining and bargaining laws so he was involved in it. In fact he was a whole lot of help. That gave me somebody to talk with independently of the others. I recall that I think it was probably in New Years of 1972 or late in '72 (over the Christmas break) he went to Cornell University to do some checking and I went to the American Arbitration Association in New York to find out about this new thing that was happening out in Portland, Oregon with the firemen and in Canada with the Social Credit Party and others; this thing called final offer arbitration to find out what their attitudes were toward it. They were generally favorable, I might add. We came back and were trying to work for something that - when you are trying to create a labor bill in the farm belt (and Iowa was still a lot more in the farm belt than it is today) you have to find some things that look less laborish. I think that all of us were looking for something that would do for us

precisely what labor had in mind in bargaining but didn't look like it. So the bill that was drafted by us for the Senate was really a pure bargaining bill with the final offer arbitration.

F: What exactly is final offer arbitration?

G: Where both sides make their last proposal, their final offer, and then the arbitrator is compelled to choose one of them.

F: So you rely on an arbitrator, then to make the final decision.

G: Yes. This was really pretty explosive in Iowa because you were saying you're turning the decision over to not local people; to somebody from the outside and city and state and school districts. That was a really progressive thing. What we felt the final offer did - and I think Al and Hugh went along with it a little bit lukewarm, as I recall, because they were used to pure arbitration in the private sector - and they felt they were giving away the right to strike. What eventually happened was that that was the tradeoff and that was a big step for them to take. The working relationships were just magnificent. I can't say enough about that. I have a great deal of respect for both Hughie and Al. They played the game straight up. We all did and it worked.

F: For point of clarification Hugh is Hugh Clark. He's the head of the AFL-CIO.

G: He's elected President of the Iowa Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO.

F: And Al is the lobbyist for the Iowa Fed.

G: Yeah, but he's also elected. They had a title - vice-president or something like that. So he too was elected.

F: So it is a pretty top priority for the Iowa Federation at this point.

G: Oh, yes. Yes. Yes. And the working relationships, as I say, I enjoyed them. We had a lot of fun getting it done and it was hard work. I learned a hell of a lot working with them and hopefully they learned a little bit working with us.

F: In terms of actually getting the bill through it was a long struggle. Could you describe a little bit the nature of the struggles that went on - the opposition to it, reasons for the opposition and how you overcame the opposition.

G: It came up through the Senate in 1973. Bill Rabedaux, a Republican from Wilton Junction who published a weekly newspaper, was chairman of the set up labor committee, and he backed the bill. The other principal Republican who was for it was John Murray, a young lawyer from Ames whose father had been active and who had run for governor twice as a matter of fact. John had served awhile as Ray's administrative assistant. They were the ramrods. It passed the Senate pretty easily. I think we had four, five, six vote margins - just a cup of tea. It was a pure bill. It didn't have any harsh strike penalties. It had final offer arbitration. It was really almost a model act.

F: Is the Democratic Party strongly behind the bill?

G: Yes.

F: Are the Democrats in the majority in the Senate at that time? Are they able to work coalitions with enough Republicans like the ones you mentioned - some of the prominent Republicans who came up?

G: Lee Gardinear would have been the principle Democrat. Frankly, it was the Republicans that carried the bill in the Senate with the votes of most of the Democrats if

not all of the Democrats. I think we probably needed pretty close to all of them to pass it. I don't really remember (I was going to check this and I forgot to find what the majority was at that time). I think the Senate was also Republican controlled.

F: 1972 was not a good year for Democrats nationally, certainly. Where did Ray stand on the bill?

G: He was for it. We had talked about it a couple of times and he had expressed support for it. Union people knew this and a lot of the Democrats would come to me and say, "The Governor has got to do more things." Finally I said to them, "Look, you give me a list of people you want him to contact and I think he will contact them all". They gave me a list of probably a dozen or so people. This was on the House side. The Senate side was really not a huge struggle. You knew you were in a battle.

It worked out that all of the traditional lobbying organizations - in those days you had to always state in your lobbyist's declaration what bills you were in favor of and what bills you were opposed to - and it came out that we were about the only ones in favor of it - the AFL-CIO and the ISEA. Oh, the firemen were for it. All those that represented public employees were in favor of it. Everybody else was against it who bothered to declare. So we knew what we were up against, but as I say it went through pretty easily. It went over to the House following its passage in 1973 in the Senate and it was fairly late in the session. I believe that the margin in the House at that time was 52 Republicans - 48 Democrats. So there was a strong undercurrent in the House all the time.

Daily the people would be pestering the majority leader in the House asking when were they going to let the bargaining bill out of the House Labor Committee. Finally in exasperation he said, "It will not come up this year" and he set it as a special order of business for February 20, 1974. I remember hearing that and I thought to myself, "You finally made a mistake" because in my mind now we had a focus. It was duck soup. It

could be done if we could focus all of our lobbying attention and that's what happened. We did focus it all. We were between the sessions.

We had an interesting coalition in the House. It was really an interesting coalition. Jerry Fitzgerald from Fort Dodge became the ramrod. He, I believe, was the minority leader. Bryce Oakley, a young Ray Republican from Clinton was the principle handler of it for us on the floor. The bill got revised extensively.

As it got closer to debate it became apparent to all of us that in order to get 51 votes we had to make some concessions. The concessions centered around two things. One was the scope of bargaining. That was a concession to pick up rural Democrats. If the Democrats are going to control the legislature in Iowa they are going to have to elect some from rural areas and they were less labor oriented. So as a result we had to make a deal with them.

It was Lowell Norland from Kensett (right up on the Minnesota border). He had a brother who was a principal of a school in Illinois. He called him and got this idea for creating a laundry list of negotiable subjects as opposed to the standard wages, hours and other terms and conditions of employment.

So we began what turned out to be a three or four night battle. You have to realize that this was all taking place at night while the session was going on even in '73 prior to that February 20th. We were meeting every night with the supporters, hashing over section by section, line by line the bill and making changes.

F: The idea of the opponents was to narrow the scope of bargaining as much as possible.

G: To make it more - they hoped - acceptable back home in these rural areas where you had no labor history to speak of.

F: What was the other issue besides the scope of bargaining?

G: Strike. They wanted a strong no-strike clause. The principle backer of that was a guy by the name of David Stanley - a guy who had a reputation of being a moderate Republican. He was a moderate Republican in many respects. He had a price for his support and that was just some hellish anti-strike provisions. He might have been a moderate Republican but he was not a labor Republican.

F: Why was there such a push on the part of the Republicans to get this anti-strike provision in? In the Senate was the question of whether or not they could strike much of a debate?

G: Yeah, there had been some debate on it but it had gone through there all right. I think it was because of David Stanley. I don't believe he represented that many people. I don't believe that that produced any more votes for us other than his. I think it made it easier for Bryce Oakley and a few other Republicans in the House to support the bill - Joan Lipsky from Cedar Rapids and a couple of others whose votes we needed to pass the bill. So it [anti-strike provisions] went in but they were terrible. I don't think any of us liked those. They had high fines if the employee representative was involved in the strike or even if they struck and even we didn't want them to or they didn't.

I think part of those came out of the Keokuk teachers' strike that had happened a year or so earlier - the only strike we ever had in Iowa teachers (education) and still the only one. You are talking about a three or four day strike at best. They had jailed the leaders for 19 hours. They used that as their excuse. We had to accede to both the laundry list, but I think far more important, was the laundry list scope issue moreso than the strike.

F: So the opponents are trying to amend it and you are trying to alter the amendments that weighed more favorable to you, is that right?

G: This deal is cut between the supporters. Norland was part of the supporters of the bill but he had a price tag. That's not unknown in the history of legislation. His price tag was that. So you know the gun was at our head. I think the only thing we could do was to make sure that we had those things in that we really had to have to make it a bill. For example, I remember Al insisting you had to have dues deduction in there and if you don't have it we've got nothing. He carried the day with that and it was a good idea - a darn good thing.

F: Once the bill goes into effect did it work as well as the ISEA people had hoped that it would?

G: Yeah, it really did. I think we were not satisfied with the laundry list. We felt, again along with Al and Hugh that we would probably get it changed. I wasn't so sure that we would get it changed. I had been around long enough to know that once you went through the kind of Titanic battle - you know 19 days of floor action on this turkey; 200 roll call votes - people aren't anxious to revisit that. They would say, "Well, let's wait and see how it works". That's precisely what happened.

Everybody said, "Let's see how it works."

Finally after Ray is gone and we finally get enough votes to pass in the legislature (and we do twice and it gets vetoed by Governor Branstad). So, you know the AFL-CIO and the ISEA made this bill work and I think they should get everlasting credit for that. The two organizations made it work. They counseled their people. They worked with their people enough so that they understood the parameters of the bill and they knew the limits on the playing field.

F: So, the relationship between the two organizations are very good.

G: It was very good in those days.

F: Have they maintained this degree of cordiality?

G: No. I don't think to the same degree, but I don't think there's a great deal of animosity. Hughie retired. Al became Labor Commissioner. New faces moved in. Don Rowen became the principle lobbyist. He was a joy to work with. He worked closer with my coworker who by then was Jan Reineke, than he did with me, but Don and I always had cordial relations. I think where the strain occurred was in the political action area. You know at some point in time there we are fighting one another for convention suits, both the state convention in the urban areas and then eventually the national convention. I think it wasn't so much issues that drove us apart but rather the political activity. They had been involved in elections a lot longer. We were Johnny-Come-Latelys and I think they resented it, especially when we got our teachers out early on in the `72 elections and we got teachers elected to the party conventions.

F: So it's kind of a jockeying for influence within the Democratic Party. I have heard before that there was some concern with labor leaders that the ISEA might actually turn out to be more of a Republican organization.

G: I am sure that that was in their minds. They said that. They wondered where we were going to wind up coming down, but so did many Democrats who were supporting the bill - the leadership in the house. They said right straight out to me (Don Avenson) we expect to see you guys after the election. And interestingly enough, not one person who supported that bill lost a re-election title, which is kind of interesting. We were active and we did mount a hell of an effort in those `74 elections.

F: How about in subsequent years?

G: We remained active in politics and the organization is still active in politics today but we support the bulk of Democrats all along with one notable exception - we supported

Terry Branstad. I was against that and I think that's where I really began thinking about retiring as I think back to my own mind-set that this was such an idiotic thing to do.

F: Branstad had not exactly been a friend of collective bargaining in the public sector as I understand.

G: He had been one of the bitterest opponents. He was a member of the House of Representatives. He gave us not one vote out of the 20 some odd that we had catalogued in our voting record as the "must" votes. He supported not one of them. We had a lot of Republicans who did support six, seven, nine, a dozen or so, maybe. There are about seven or eight that we considered absolute votes that we would have to have. You have to realize that it passed and then had to go back to the Senate and the Senate version get approved. That was quite a battle. It didn't take so long - it never does in the Senate - but boy it was tense. You have to remember this bill passes by the minimum in both houses. It gets 26 votes when it goes back to the Senate and it gets 51 votes to pass in the House.

F: That's pretty narrow.

G: Yeah. We had issues in that House debate which were settled by untie votes. We got one Republican to miss a vote in order to maintain a 49-49 tie on whether or not state employees would be covered by the bill. That's how close that was. An awful lot of people forget that. So, you know the effort involved by the two organizations to pass this bill is beyond anything that had been known up to that time with the possible exception of the oleomargarine thing which preceded my tenure there, thankfully. It was an epic battle.

F: As far as the ISEA goes - vis a vis the labor movement - do you see it as a union or do you see it as something different from the union?

G: I see it differently. I think it's a professional organization of teachers that perform some union functions. I don't think there's anything magical that makes it union for collective bargaining. What's magic? True, labor unions have used the instrument of collective bargaining far better than anybody else but that's not something that is necessarily reserved or the preserve of a union. The ISEA remains a professional organization because it caters to interests of its members beyond that of wages, hours and other terms and conditions of employment. It caters to its professional responsibilities. In order to make sure that it did, the organization actually performed more things catering to the professionalism of the teachers. It ran teaching clinics called MISTLS (Mobile In-service Teacher Labs) all over this state helping teachers with their professional concerns, their professional responsibilities. From a budget point of view we were probably spending far more money on collective bargaining than we were on anything else. I think that there was no question about it. We were taking care of the professional responsibilities to a greater degree but that we were still spending a majority of our time and efforts on collective bargaining. That's because it's dealing with your money and your insurance and all those other goodies.

F: The ISEA became actively politically involved from the early '70's on and the level of political involvement has remained the same.

G: It has had certain ebbs and flows. It has had some highs and some lows. We had years where it has been difficult to collect as much money. It was difficult to get the interest up. Yeah, it has remained active in politics and I think it is going to remain active. I don't see anything that is going to diminish it. The organization wanted to have a combination of support for Democrats and Republicans. It always sought to do that. It was very difficult. There was a period of time when frankly, you just couldn't find a Republican that would agree with us on any issue, so there were very few Republicans supported. But the organization really did try for a long time to maintain a real balance between but it always came out 80, 85, 90% support when you counted up all of the endorsements - they went that heavily to Democrats even in the years when the

Democrats thought we were leaning too much in favor of Republicans. The year they favored Branstad I think they supported only four or five Republican candidates for legislature.

F: The fears of it being a Republican organization then were not to be.

G: I think were relatively unfounded except of course to Don Avenson who saw his arch opponent, Branstad, supported by the organization he had supported all those years.

F: Well, we are almost out of tape. I can put another one on if you would like.

G: I never want to deface another tape.

F: Well, thank you very much. I enjoyed it. Take care.

G: I did too.