Henry Schmidt
SECONDARY LEADERSHIP IN THE ILWU, 1933-1966

With an Introduction by
Germain Bulcke

An Interview Conducted by
Miriam F. Stein
and
Estolv Ethan Ward
in

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It is recommended that this oral history be cited as follows:

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Oral History Series


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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This oral history stands as a monument to the determination of several persons that the history of labor in California, and particularly of the International Longshoremen's & Warehousemen's Union, should not be forgotten for lack of documentation, even though funding sources, both public and private, were looking elsewhere.

The first activist was Miriam Stein, an interviewer for the Regional Oral History Office, whose assignment to record events in the career of Earl Warren as District Attorney of Alameda County led her into the shipboard murder case, a labor-related case (King-Ramsey-Conner Case, 1936), and thence into circles of organized labor. One of the persons she talked to was Henry Schmidt. His career so intrigued her that, when no labor history series funding could be found, she and Henry Schmidt embarked on their own volunteer round of interviews, the tapes to remain untranscribed but donated to The Bancroft Library.

It was at that point that a new volunteer came forward, Angela Ward, herself a former labor organizer whose own oral history forms part of a University of Michigan project titled: "The Twentieth Century Trade Union Woman; Vehicle for Social Change." She and her husband, Estolv Ward, were old-time union companions of Henry Schmidt and his wife. The tapes were transcribed by Angela Ward, and the transcripts gone over by Henry Schmidt.

Again, the transcript sat in the file drawer, awaiting completion, while the Regional Oral History Office tried, year after year, in vain, to raise money to complete the Schmidt interview and to interview other leaders in the ILWU.

Again, luck and friendship stepped in. Estolv Ward, a retired labor journalist, took up the task of documenting the ILWU and interviewed ILWU Vice President Louis Goldblatt. When that oral history was completed, in 1981, Estolv Ward agreed to look over the Schmidt interview and to bring it up to date with several supplementary interviews. Over a period of two years Estolv Ward and Henry Schmidt worked together on the completion of the transcript and on collecting pictures and other supplementary materials. Anglea Ward took on the task of final typing, while Estolv Ward sought funding for the final out-of-pocket costs. He was aided in this particularly by Norman and Marjorie Leonard, Germain Bulcke, and George Kaye.

Despite the fact that it was hard times on the waterfront in 1982 and 1983, donations came from the ILWU unions Henry Schmidt had worked with for so many years. The International pledged to donate if enough locals would match to assure completion of the oral history. When the ILWU Pensioners discovered that their constitution allowed only a nominal donation, they
held a "tarpaulin muster" at their monthly meeting and the targeted sum was quickly raised by individual gifts. Local 10 honored Brother Schmidt, often its President during its formative years, by making a matching donation. Other friends gave individually. And so the volume was completed.

On behalf of future scholars, we thank these associates and friends of Henry Schmidt for making this oral history possible.

The Regional Oral History Office was established to tape the oral autobiographical interviews with persons significant in the history of the West and the nation. The Office is under the administration and supervision of James D. Hart, Director of The Bancroft Library.

Willa Baum  
Division Head  
Regional Oral History Office

1 June 1983  
Regional Oral History Office  
The Bancroft Library  
University of California at Berkeley
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INTRODUCTION

Born out of the struggles and contradictions of the great depression, the International Longshoremen's & Warehousemen's Union played a unique and historic role in shaping the course of the world.

The critical problems being faced demanded and developed strong leaders. Among the most staunch was Henry Schmidt. Born in Germany of working class parents, he came to the United States at an early age. From the 1930s on, his life has been tightly interwoven with the ILWU.

Both Schmidt and I had been on the waterfront for several years, but did not meet until 1936. During the strike of that year, Henry was present at a meeting of the Strike Committee at which I made a report. Attracted both by my presentation and by my Belgian accent, Schmidt sensed a kindred spirit. He approached me after the meeting with the words "Where the hell have you been all my life?". From that time on we became fast friends and a team in our work for the union.

Henry Schmidt served the Union in many capacities. He was President of Local 10, member of the Coast Committee, Trustee of the Welfare Fund, and more--yet he never lost intimate touch with the rank and file. He worked quietly and effectively, and throughout the years he was known for his absolute integrity and meticulous attention to detail. He had a sense of history, and an understanding of how the details fit into the larger picture. He also had a sharp, wry sense of humor, which often enabled him to cut through contentious debate or difficult negotiations.

In 1946 Henry, then an International Representative, was sent by President Bridges to Hawaii to help the Hawaiian members work through some difficult problems. He stayed in the Islands for several years, and came to be so loved by the people in Hawaii that they nicknamed him "Hanalei" (the name of a lovely town on the Island of Kauai) which they said was Hawaiian for Henry. To this day in Hawaii, "Hanalei" is spoken of with great affection and respect.

It is an honor and a great pleasure for me to present this brief picture of one of the finest leaders of the ILWU, a man who never sought personal glory, but worked unceasingly for the good of the organization to which his life was devoted. His memoirs constitute an important segment of the history of his time.

Germain Bulcke
Vice-President, ILWU, Retired

10 March 1983
San Francisco, California
INTERVIEW HISTORY

The distress signals which frequently emanate from this oral history of Henry Schmidt give forceful testimony to a fact of working class life—secondary leadership in a democratic trade union is often far from easy. Such a leader is ground between the upper and nether millstones of his organization; the top leadership which sets policy and issues orders, and the rank and file members who often dislike or have difficulty in understanding these policies and orders.

Time and again it was the distasteful task of Henry Schmidt, as president of the famous Local 10 of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union, and also in other capacities slightly beneath top leadership, to go down to the docks and explain to the men who were "shaking hands with the cargo" why they must do something that went against the grain.

Like going through a picket line set up by a sister local of their own union, for instance. Or telling the men they could no longer honor a picket line established by San Francisco Chinese just prior to World War II to protest the shipment of scrap iron to Japan.

The sweep of Henry's life is enormous; from Holland and Germany, the lands of his early childhood, to the docks of San Francisco, where he teamed up with Harry Bridges and other longshoremen to fight the shipowners and establish an honest and progressive organization in place of the previous "company" union.

Elected and re-elected several times as president of Local 10, Henry later became a member of the three-man coast committee which handled labor relations with the employers. He did two stints in Hawaii helping to organize workers in the longshore, sugar, and pineapple industries and providing experienced assistance in the landmark Longshore strike in the Islands in 1949.

Next came Henry's dramatic stand beside his old friend and fellow worker, Bridges, as co-defendant in Federal court in the so-called "conspiracy" case, the final governmental attempt to deport Bridges.

Henry's last working years were spent as director of the Longshore pension plan. Even in that comparatively placid job, the headaches were numerous.

Retirement came in 1966, and soon Henry was proving himself as militant in protecting the rights of pensioners as he had been in seeking benefits in the lives of the workers. By that time he had fallen into serious disagreement with Bridges on many issues, to the extent of becoming somewhat
of a consultant to fellow longshoremen who, for one reason or another, had become disillusioned with the president of the ILWU.

It was at this point that the bulk of the interviews constituting Henry's oral history was taped. The interviewer at that time was Mimi Stein, and during the course of this work the locale was changed as the Schmidts moved from Concord, Contra Costa County, to the more rural ambience of Boyes Hot Springs, Sonoma County.

During all the interviews, including those taken seven years later by myself, Fay Schmidt was at her husband's side, providing invaluable assistance in overcoming obstacles created by Henry's admittedly faulty memory. She was an amply qualified assistant, for she is the widow of a man who in his lifetime was very active in the affairs of the San Francisco waterfront workers, later had many years of employment in the ILWU welfare department, and then became the wife of Henry Schmidt during his service as pension director of the union. She had had a front seat, so to speak, at many of the dramas of the Bay Region working class; thus many of her comments were relevant and are sprinkled here and there throughout the interviews.

During Interview 6, one of those taken at the Schmidt home in Concord, a happenchance visitor took part in the dialogue. This was Hal Yanow, a longshoreman at least a quarter of a century younger than Henry, still active on the waterfront, and one of the most fiery of Bridges' opponents. His comments were illuminative and relevant, and were taped and included in the oral history.

The original interviews were taken in 1974 and 1975. In 1981, when I was asked to visit Henry and Fay and see what could be done about updating the original tapes, a startling change became evident. While still willing to admit that he had had many disagreements with Bridges, Henry expressed the wish to delete the adjective "horrible" in referring to them. He preferred to think of Bridges in the glow of the leadership Bridges gave during those days of struggle, proudly asserting that this leadership had been essential to the successes which were achieved.

In both sets of interviews, a technique was developed of reading to Henry, or by Henry, from various books, reports, and other documents to refresh his memories of events that took place nearly half a century ago.

The supplementary interviews took place in the calm and comfortable atmosphere of the Schmidts' Boyes Springs home. As will be evident to anyone listening to the tapes, the talk often wandered far afield from the topic at hand. And off-tape, the air was filled with a laughter sometimes tinged with sorrow as Fay and Henry and I chattered about those days in the Thirties, and who did what—to whom.
Then followed the editing, in which ILWU Librarian Carol Schwartz has been most helpful, providing correct spelling of names, identifying source material used to spark Henry's memory, and other necessary information.

Persons who wish to listen to the tapes are advised not to be concerned if the first few paragraphs on a tape do not coincide with their counterparts in the script, particularly at the start of interviews. In several instances portions of the taped verbiage have been edited out of the final script because of redundancies and irrelevancies.

Estolv Ethan Ward
Editor and Supplementary Interviewer

15 May 1983
Berkeley, California
I FAMILY BACKGROUND AND CHILDHOOD
(Interview 1: 18 October, 1974)
(Begin Tape 1, Side A)

The Parents

Stein: I thought we'd start at the beginning, which is a little bit on your background and your parents. Could you tell me a bit about your parents?

HS: All right. My mother was from Holland. She was born there, and my father was born in Germany. I guess there came a time when my father got out of the Prussian army, and he decided to leave Germany and he went to Holland and he wound up in -- I guess it must have been my grandmother's boarding house.

Stein: Why did he decide to leave, do you know?

HS: Well, I think he was anti-military. He was still a single man and I guess he had an inclination to see something other than just Germany, so he went to the country next door and there he wound up in my grandmother's boarding house. Then he found out that my grandmother had three daughters, and to make a long story short, -- I guess he got acquainted with all three of them -- he married one of them.

Her name was Adriana. That is related to a name that they use in this country, you know, Adrian? I think her name was Adriana Hendrika -- and my grandmother's maiden name was Hendrika van der Water, as they pronounce it in English -- (pronouncing now in Dutch) van der Water, you know. She hailed from Amsterdam.
Well, they were married in Holland and, believe it or not, I have the book register here which is issued by the county with all their names. I don't have any idea how long they continued to live in Holland after they were married, but I do know that they went back to Germany. Let's see, I was born in February of 1899. They were married about a year before that, on April 28th, 1898, in Velsen, Noord-Holland.

So, they went to live in Frankfurt, Frankfurt on the River Main. And then, after a while, I came along. Then, for some reason which I can't recall --

Early Childhood in Holland and Germany

Stein: Exactly when did you come along?

HS: On February the ninth, 1899. Just telling you how old a man I am.

So of course I don't know how long they lived in Germany. But they went back to Holland to live, because my brother was born there. He was born in 1902; he has a birthday coming up next week, lives in Boyes Hot Springs, over there in Sonoma County. He has been an electrician all his life.

Well, then, to the best of my memory, we seem to be moving back and forth between Frankfurt and this little village outside of Haarlem. The village is called Santpoort. It's derived from the word Santa Porta, because the Spaniards ruled Holland for about eighty or ninety years.

My father started to work for a German, a very wealthy man. He had a great estate. My father was a horse lover; he had been in the Prussian or German cavalry and this man had horses and carriages -- this is before automobiles. I remember this place.

So, I don't know how long he worked for this man, name of Wüste. I don't have any remembrance what this man looked like, or his family, because
HS: you don't see those kind of people when you're a member of the working class. They are up there in the higher echelon.

Stein: Yes.

HS: Oh, you might see them if you were living in this country. In any event, I don't know how long Papa worked there, but we went back to Germany again and reestablished ourselves in Frankfurt. He worked for an engineering concern, a concern that builds bridges, or whatever comes along, in Germany or any place. I can recall that they were talking about building a bridge in Turkey, and maybe there was some conversation that my father might go there, but that never occurred.

Anyhow, my brother and I, we went to school in Germany. Subsequently, we moved to Holland again. My grandfather had died and Mama wanted to go -- I'm sure she went to the funeral. I don't know whether she went without us or with us. But, in any event, after Grandfather died, we all moved to Holland again and my father tried to take over my grandfather's one-man milk business, which consisted of a cart which he pushed. The business was so poor that he wasn't even wealthy enough to take a dog to help pull the cart -- which was a very popular thing in Holland; you put a dog underneath or in a shaft just like you hitch up a horse.

We lived in the house in which my grandparents had lived. I don't seem to remember Grandmother walking around that place after we moved in. She must have gone and lived with some of the other sisters, because she lived until 1937. She was very close to one hundred.

In the meantime the other daughters were dead -- my grandmother's daughters I mean, my aunts. They were all dead except one. Subsequently, years and years later, Fay (Schmidt's wife) and I went over and got acquainted with this one woman that was left over, so to speak. Anyhow, Papa didn't like this business of going from door to door.

Stein: Where did the milk come from?
HS: He had to go to a farmer to pick up the milk in great big cans. I don't know how many liters those things held. And then he would go from door to door -- he had steady customers; it was the same route every day -- and sell the milk. Of course, Gus (his brother) and I were going to kindergarten and things like that.

Stein: There were just the two of you, just two children?

HS: Yes, there were never any more. This milk business was not much of a success. I do remember one bad thing. We had to bring milk to the estate where my father was formerly employed. It was a little bit out of the way, so he arranged for the manufacture of a small two-wheeled cart, and I would be sent from our house with a can of milk maybe that (gestures) big, you know. And the dog was hitched up in front -- it was a high-speed apparatus. I thought it was terrific!

Stein: So by that time you did have a dog?

HS: Yes, yes, and I could sit in the cart, and then I would drive towards Mr. Wüste's house and deliver the milk there. As I recall, I only made one delivery. I guess I must have had some difficulty driving the dog in the proper direction. But he knew his way home, and he galloped so hard that the cart went sidewise and I fell out and he kept on going and that was the end of that. (Laughter)

Papa said, "You're too young and too little to waste my time with this kind of business." What an adventure, you know! I was so frightened, came home all by myself and the dog was already there. Crazy, huh?

Stein: Yes! Were your parents angry?

HS: Well, I don't know. My father was a very stern man; he would occasionally smile, but not very often. In other words, he wasn't very outgoing. And of course my mother followed the usual pattern; she made excuses, you know, "How can you criticize the boy? He doesn't know how to drive the dog."
Stein: About how old were you at the time?

HS: Well, I was less than twelve, considerably less than twelve. Anyhow, we moved back to Germany again. Father went back to Holzman and Company (the engineering firm).

Emigrating to Canada

HS: And then something happened that upset everybody. My mother had a brother -- I've never met this man -- and he went to America before we even talked about it. He must have been her favorite brother -- maybe he was a favorite with the other sisters, too -- But while we were living in Germany he died, as a very young man, and he's buried in Wisconsin -- in Elkhorn, Wisconsin, maybe four hours driving with a car from Chicago.

So, then the talk began, "Amerika" and "Kanada", and literature came to the home from the Canadian Pacific Railway and the Canadian Immigration Department pointing out the opportunities in their great country. My father just got the fever, and he was bound to become an agriculturist, a farmer.

Stein: How did this literature get into your house?

HS: Oh, I don't know. There was a fellow by the name of Gottwaldt around who had been on that side of the water. He was around the house talking; maybe he was responsible. He had been in Canada, and he said he was gonna go back there. In other words, he was in Europe (only) temporarily. I don't remember the circumstances.

Well, there must have been some letter writing going on because communications came from the Canadian consulates, I guess. Mama got somewhat excited, and she was already thinking, "This will give me an opportunity to visit John's grave." She has never had that opportunity, but I've been there.
Stein: Well, at least someone in the family made it.

HS: Well, I had to go there because in recent years since 1960, I think I've made three or four trips to Europe. One of my aunts that was still alive said, "Haven't you been to Uncle John's grave yet?" You know, bawling me out as if I were a little fellow. So, next time I'd say, "Tante Gertrude, I'll go there." "You know where it is?" I said, "Yes, but it's a big country, you know, it's not like here in Holland."

Stein: I was going to say -- it's half way across the country!

HS: Well, of course. So, it happened that -- would you be interested to see that steamship ticket?

Stein: Sure!

HS: (Shows interviewer the steamship ticket). That ocean trip. Rough seas, must have been fourteen days, St. John's in New Brunswick, and then there's a St. John's on Prince Edward Island. I always get mixed up between those two places.

Stein: Let's just back up a second. You sailed from Antwerp, and this was in January, 1911, right?

HS: But didn't it (the ticket) say that we sailed on the eleventh?

Stein: Yes.

HS: By one month later, we could have been on this Canadian farm, so I guess my calculation is correct. It took us three days and three nights by rail from the Canadian East Coast to Winnipeg. There, for reasons that I never could figure out, we met this fellow Gottwaldt who had visited us in Frankfurt. He had made some arrangements for us to find a boarding house which was operated by German people.

Stein: Is that why you went to Winnipeg, then, because Gottwaldt was there?

HS: Yes, yes. You know, if you're wise, you establish some kind of contact.
Fourteen Months on a Manitoba Farm

HS: Well, Papa almost immediately got acquainted with some Holland people. I can remember a Mr. Voorsmit. I have a remembrance that my father became ill and the question of employment came up. Either Voorsmit or somebody must have advised my father that the Canadian Immigration Department -- apparently as a sort of side issue -- operated an employment department especially for young men to sign up to stay on a farm for a year or so.

Well, this was all explained to me and I didn't protest. I thought I was going to be a cowboy, you know, and I had read all that junk in the old country -- Buffalo Bill and -- (Laughter).

Stein: Really!

HS: Oh, sure. Buffalo Bill was a ten pfennig thing that you could buy any day in the week.

Stein: So, you were all ready to run out and buy your stirrups and saddle!

HS: The equipment didn't pan out that way. Anyhow, they took me to a government bureau near the railway station in Winnipeg. In the meantime my father got a job in that hotel, which is the Royal Alexandria; years later I worked there myself as a busboy. So, some papers were signed -- I don't remember if I had to sign anything.

A couple of days later I took off on a train. It (his destination) was about one hundred and eighty miles west of Winnipeg. I had a ticket on my coat, you know, "Immigrant. Does Not Speak English." And people would walk down the aisle of the car and they would stop and look and read and then shake their heads and go on.

But, somehow or another, I wasn't worried, except one thing: "Where do I have to get off?" And then I developed an idea that, "It's the end of the line; that's where this town is, so I can't make any mistake."
Well, then a fellow came down the aisle. He was an adult -- of course, I took him to be an elderly man; he might have been twenty-seven, you know. He looked and he says to me, in German, "You can speak German?" I said, "Yes!" I was ready to hug him! "Where are you going?" "Well," I said, "Here, read." Then I'm sure I asked him, "When do I get off?" It was snowing outside, and it was hot in the car. They were really firing up. I didn't realize that it was below zero outside.

So it got dark. This fellow was still there and he said, "This is the place." The name of the place is Hartney. Since then, you know, I've been there a couple of times, retraced my steps in recent years.

You were only twelve at the time, right?

I got there on the evening of my birthday. A father should never do a thing like that with a kid only that old. You know, I look at boys and I say, "How old are you?" They'll say eleven or twelve or thirteen. Then I see myself. But apparently the circumstances were such -- Mama and my brother were still back in Frankfurt.

I meant to ask about that, because on the ticket it was just your name and your father's name. You two came over first?

Yes, it was all money, you know. Fourteen months later Mama came over on another Red Star Line ship by the name of Lapland. She came to the port of New York.

So, I went to work on this farm. When I got off the train -- it was a wooden platform, no stones around -- there were two men standing there and they were wearing great big fur coats and big fur hats. Later on it turned out that one of them was named Roy and he was about eighteen, and the other one was named Charlie, and he might have been twenty-two. But when you're twelve, you know, those are grown men. And they talked and I couldn't understand.
HS: My ears started to burn and eventually there was no more feeling and then, of course, one of them said something to the other. Months later, they explained to me. They said, "Did you know what we were talkin' about?" I said, "No, I couldn't understand you." Roy said, "I told Charlie that your ears were frozen."

Then, after awhile, one said to the other -- he was telling me months later -- "I'll bet he's got old country shoes on." And I did, you know, leather shoes. Up in that climate, in the winter-time you use felt shoes with felt soles and then you put a big rubber thing over that.

Anyhow, I lived through it all. When I got to the house -- I didn't realize it, my ears had -- everybody was pointing to the kid's ears and laughing like everything. (Laughter)

Stein: That must have been quite an experience because you couldn't speak the language, you didn't know anybody, and here you were just a child.

HS: Yes. Mrs. Jasper had Roy, and Tommy was about my age, and Charlie, and Irvin, he was the eldest. He always amused himself with the hired girl, which became a sort of a, oh, I wouldn't say scandal, but everybody around the house knew about it. Sometimes myself, a small kid, I used to wonder, "Well, what're they chuckling about?"

So, they served the meal and I looked at Mrs. Jasper. She was a lady with snowwhite hair, so I looked around for her husband with snowwhite hair, and there wasn't anybody. Of course, I couldn't ask. Then, Mrs. Jasper, just to make conversation, she knew two words of German. She knew "schönes Mädchen". Know what it means?

Stein: No.

HS: It means pretty girl, and she would point at Grace and she'd say, "Schönes Mädchen." And then she would point at Elsie and she would say, "No schones Madchen." I'm pretty sure these kids didn't understand it.
Everybody was friendly and they were loose, you know, outgoing, talking. I kept thinking about the missing man. Well, he wasn't there and he didn't show up for a week or so, it seems to me. When he came he was almost as -- no, he was worse than my father.

He was not an outgoing man, he was stern, never smiled. He had an effect upon the conversation, because one evening he was there at the supper table. They used to talk all over the place and were having a good time, but once he sat down there was no more conversation. So, this had a terrific effect on me; I was frightened of this guy.

Stein: I can imagine.

Anyhow, I had a tough time there. Mrs. Jasper protected me. As time wore on, I began to understand and I began to talk. I read the funny paper, which was in the Winnipeg Free Press -- same kind of funny papers we have today, except some of the artists are dead, you know, but you could tell it came from the States. Mutt and Jeff was in there, and the Katzenjammer Kids -- no, you're too young to remember the Katzenjammer Kids.

Stein: I remember them.

I used to read the Katzenjammer Boys because there was a motion picture house in Frankfurt and once in a while our mother would give us a dime to go and see the pictures. On the outside, before you bought your ticket, there were American funny papers hanging there and we always looked at them. One of them was the Katzenjammer Boys. It was all in English.

Do you recall the conversations between Katzenjammer and his wife and those boys? It was all misspelled English to convey the thought that they were speaking half-German. Well, we didn't know from nothing, as they say. And I would say to Gus, "Isn't it funny, that Katzenjammer -- we understand that all right." It's a slang expression for a hangover, you know. When a fellow's had too much to drink the night before, he complains of having a katzenjammer, which means a yammering cat, you know.
HS: So, we said, "Wonder what language that is. Some are German words, and some are other kind of words, and once in awhile you see a word that seems to resemble Dutch." And we were just puzzled. So, once I got to this farm, the lights went on, right? The Katzenjammer kids, they come from America. What else!

I did the regular farm work, helped butcher calves and pigs, feed the animals in the wintertime, and drive a hayrack four or five miles, with the other fellows, out in the country to pick up hay and straw. The spring came and I lived through that, lived through the harvest. I drove a harvest rack to pick up the shocks in the field and bring them to the thrashing machine. I couldn't perform as much work as a grown man, but I did the same kind of work.

I know that once a couple of fellows arrived on horseback and one of them walked over to me and he said to me -- he spoke German, -- "Are you a German boy?" I said, "Yes." "Where do you come from?" I said, "From Frankfurt." "Well," he said, "I'm an Englishman, I've been in Canada a long time, but I used to live in Wien. Do you know where Wien is?" "Yes," I said, "I know where Wien is." Wien is Vienna. Vienna is an English expression. I think the Italians call the city of Wien Vienna, that's where the English picked it up, I guess.

Stein: Let me ask you one question. Were you going to school at all during this time?

HS: (Emphatically) No, no school. In all the time that I've been here, and I've been here for over sixty years, I have never been in an American or Canadian school as a student. I've been in the Mission High school in San Francisco when Lucia (his daughter Louise) was playing the fiddle in the orchestra, and when she graduated. But other than that, whatever I know about the lingo I just -- well, I picked it up on this farm.

Stein: Had you gone to school back in Europe?

HS: Oh, yes. I went to school in Holland and in Germany.
Stein: That's right, I saw your kindergarten picture. How far had you gotten?

HS: Well, I can remember going to school the first time in Germany and I was six years old. So, I must have had six years. When I got to the farm I was twelve, so I was going to school all this time either in Germany or in Holland.

It was a great advantage to hit those two countries because it helped to learn English much easier. There is a certain resemblance between -- if you know German, or especially if you know Dutch -- then English is not too difficult. In fact, there are some words which are exactly the same.

For example, "Ick had dorst" -- "I have thirst". "Drink water" (Dutch pronunciation) -- "drink water" (English pronunciation). Same spelling, little bit different pronunciation. "Ick had honger" -- "I have hunger." "This ate" -- "thus eat," you know.

Well, anyhow, Mama arrived in Winnipeg and she telephoned. Believe it or not they had a telephone on the farm. It was one of those things which they call the party line because they're always listening in. I didn't know what that was all about -- sometimes they were a little bit impatient because there were a number of Belgian farmers in the neighborhood who were French-speaking Belgians. They, of course, talked French and the Canadians couldn't understand them, you know. (Chuckles.) So they couldn't get the scandal or --

(End of tape 1, side A)

(Begin tape 1, side B)

HS: That was a real event when my mother telephoned. Bear in mind I had been there for fourteen months. The only old country talk that I had was in the middle of those fourteen months when this Englishman came along who said that he had learned German in Vienna. So, I was -- at least I thought I was --
flu.uent in English, and these other two languages
I couldn't talk any more. So, they were screaming
from the door, "Henry, Henry, your mother is on
the phone." So I went to the phone and oh, it
was horrible. Mama kept saying that -- no, I
guess the first thing that I said to her was,
"Mama, I understand everything you say, but I
cannot answer you." I said in English, "I don't
know the Holland language anymore." And of
course she couldn't understand that. You know,
it was terrible.

So she said, "Well just a minute, I'll ask
somebody." So, this Mr. Voorsmit came on the line
and he said, "Do you remember me?" I said, "Yes,
sir." "Well," he said, "I will act as a translator." So we had a good conversation.

And see, fourteen months, it must have been
springtime. Yes, I came there in February,
fourteen months, that will bring us into April
and May. So a few days later I departed from
this farm and took the train to Winnipeg and I was
reunited with -- I can't remember what kind of
occupation my father had. I guess he was working
in this Canadian Pacific Railway Hotel.

In any event, I got myself a job there, and Gus
went to school in Winnipeg. Of course, I had, in
a manner of speaking, the advantage. I could
speak English and I picked up the Dutch and the
German right away in two weeks; it just all comes
back. My brother, of course, he didn't know any
English and I used to tease him, but only for a
few days. And my mother, of course, she had to
learn.

She already had two languages, Dutch and
German. She had to learn German, of course, when
she came to Germany; she became very fluent in
that.
Trouble in Wartime

HS: So, then we lived in Winnipeg for awhile and, somehow or another -- well, I shouldn't say somehow or another -- World War I came along. And there we were with our Germanic name.

I don't remember if Papa was a citizen or not; Canadian citizen, that is. But I do remember that, even at that time, or sometime later, he came home one day -- he had passed the examination to become a Canadian -- and in jest he said, thumping his chest, "I am Englishman." I've got those Canadian papers of his in my paper box there.

But anyhow, somehow or another, they -- and I mean the authorities and the employers -- saw to it that people with Germanic names lost their jobs.

And I remember another thing. It became fall -- maybe I was in Winnipeg for a year or so -- and it was harvest time. I could remember having worked in the harvest before on the first farm that I worked at, the grain harvest. I hated the city.

So I went to a telephone in the railway station and put coins in the box and I called this farmer. "Well," he said, "if you want to come out and work in the harvest, okay." And then it's possible that he said, "I don't know what I'm going to pay you." Well, I went home and I told my parents that I was going to work in the harvest, and I was way below eighteen, but they let me go.

So, I went back to that same farm, isn't that crazy? I worked through the harvest and I guess I got a few dollars. I got into an argument with the farmer and, as I recall it, I got very fresh. In the labor movement they call that militant, you know.
Stein: Yes.

HS: He was hard to handle, and I guess he also found out that this boy seemed to be hard to handle. I don't know what happened. I must have communicated with my mother that things were not going so good. And you know what she did? She came on a train out to this farm to pick me up; took me back to Winnipeg. That's wonderful.

Then Canada got into the war and there was talk around the house, "What's to do?" I got a job as a busboy in a different hotel, a brand new hotel, Grand Trunk Railway Company's hotel. My father was having a hell of a time finding employment.

Anyhow, they began to talk about going to the States. It seems to me that about that time I went back to another farm, to get out of the way. While I was there, while I was on this second farm job -- it must have been 1914, because the British Empire was in the war by then -- the whole family moved to Minneapolis under very peculiar circumstances.

You know, if you get on the train in Winnipeg you ride for ten hours and you're in Minneapolis, it's that close. But before they went to Minneapolis in the proper manner, my father went there and walked across the border and made what they called an illegal entry into the United States. You go down the road, and the borders between the United States and Canada are not guarded. There's no fence, so if you think you're going the proper direction, well, one day you'll cross that invisible border.

Somebody in Minneapolis must have told him, "Look, you're going to get in trouble eventually and then they'll send you back. What you should do is to go back and then apply for a proper entrance at the American consulate in Winnipeg." So this he did.
When I left this second Canadian farm I went to Minneapolis. They (the parents) were already settled there. They were living in the basement apartment of a four unit apartment house and my father had a job as the custodian of these four buildings, full of tenants. The main job was in the wintertime to keep the fires burning -- a coal stoking central heating plant, you know -- and make himself generally useful.

Early Union Experiences

So, I went to work in a flour mill and I ran into union difficulties there.

Why did you choose a flour mill?

Minneapolis is full of flour mills, just like San Francisco is full of waterfront piers. The biggest flour mills in the world are in Minneapolis.

I didn't know that.

Yes, it's enormous. It's common labor, although when you get close to the machinery that is used to push the flour into wooden barrels or into cotton sacks, well, then there's a little bit of skill involved and you have to learn how to operate these machines.

You have to learn how to nail these barrels up, which all becomes a high speed job, and you have to also learn how to -- they were just introducing sewing machines and so I even learned how to sew these sacks shut by hand, you know, with a needle. It was amazing to see those fellows; I thought to myself, "I'll never be able to learn that."

Once you throw a loop around the ear, then your hand with the needle goes like this (demonstrates). And then you kick the sack on the belt, you know, and the belt takes it away and another man at the end of the belt picks the sacks up and puts them
HS: on a hand truck and they cart it away into box-cars. So, one day I got acquainted with the union in Minneapolis. We had a lunch hour between eleven and one or twelve and one, and one day an organizer came along. He started to make speeches from a soapbox across the railroad tracks. He was telling us that he was talking to the employees of the Washburn-Crosby Milling Company, or any other fellow who works in a flour mill.

He gave us some statistics and he said, among other things, "Do you realize that Washburn-Crosby turns out thirty-five thousand barrels of flour per day, and their profit is a dollar a barrel?" Quick arithmetic, you know, thirty-five thousand dollars a day! And he said, "You fellows ought to organize and demand higher wages."

Well, I got the bug right away, and I got in trouble, too.

Stein: How did that happen?

HS: He said, "We're going to have a meeting, and we're going to have handbills, and the meeting is on such and such a date. And I know there are bulletin boards in that flour mill over there where the floor boss writes information or orders for you fellows to follow. What you ought to do is get a piece of chalk and write on there that there's going to be a union meeting at such and such a time."

Well, I got caught in the act. The boss was standing right behind me; he says, "Wipe that out, otherwise I'll fire you." Or maybe he said, "I'll fire you anyway" -- which he did.

I sort of walked across the street and I went to work for another milling company with no difficulty because the organizational effort failed miserably. I didn't realize what was going on. I went to a meeting, and there might have been sixty or seventy people there. If the organizers had had better success there could have been hundreds of them there, you know, but the people were
all afraid. In those days, the employers, when they were confronted with an organizational campaign -- an effort to set up a union -- one of the popular things for them to do was to point out, through public relations, that these workers were just a bunch of IWW's. Industrial Workers of the World were considered to be very unpopular, you know.

And that, of course, is what happened. I can still see the organizer on the platform talking to us and trying to sign us up and then some guy -- and I didn't realize it at the time, but he must have been a disrupter and a stool pigeon -- he screamed and shouted. He said, "You're nothing but a bunch of god-damned IWW's, and you're probably pro-German, too," and so on and so forth. He raved and ranted. Man after man got up and walked out, and that's all this guy was there for. So that was the end of that.

Stein: Can you remember what union it was that was doing the organizing?

HS: Yes, it was something that had to do with -- it had a name this (gestures) long. International Union of Warehouse, Brewery Workers and Allied Industries -- flour mill workers, you know.

So, that's where I got the bug. I don't mean by that that I became terribly active immediately, but one thing leads to another.

When I came to San Francisco I looked around for a flour mill, not realizing that there are cities in this country where there are no flour mills at all. But I found one, right underneath Telegraph Hill, the Globe Milling Company, and I got a job there right away. From the second and third floor of that building I could see the ships because there was the Luckenbach pier. I used to say, "I wonder what they all do down there?" I could see the cargo booms and the loads being swung back and forth.

Stein: Now, to back up just a second, one thing I was wondering was, did any of your interest in unions come from your parents?
HS: No. No, Mama knew nothing about those things. Mama was a typical housewife -- "Raise my boys" -- and that was it; and establish a relationship with a few Holland people with a few Americans mixed in as friends. But anyway, unfortunately, she died in 1923 when she was only forty-nine years old.

Stein: She'd had a hard life up to then, moving back and forth and living under all kinds of circumstances.

The California Venture

Stein: The other thing I was wondering was how you made the decision to come to California and when that happened.

HS: Well, Mama had a roomer in that Minneapolis place. There was a sleeping room for somebody and that was Mama's venture -- make a few extra dollars. So, she rented a room. He was a man from Holland; he was a piano maker -- not a player. He knew how to build a piano from the ground up, with rather fine woodwork. He learned his trade in Germany, but he was from Holland.

He lived with us in Minneapolis. He and I became friends. One day he took off for California. He was talking about a place by the name of Westwood, not far from San Francisco. He was going to work in the forests there. I think I got a postcard from him raving about this great state, and he said, "Why don't you come out here, Henry?" Maybe he added something to the effect, "Do you want to get away from your father's house?"

So, I discussed it with my parents and they wouldn't hear of it. But I was working in the flour mill and I was making eighteen dollars a week and I wasn't spending all of that. So, one day I had enough money to pay my fare to San Francisco and I took off in the middle of the night.

Stein: How old were you?
I came here on the day before Christmas, 1917; so, I was eighteen. Well, then I got this job in the flour mill down there on Montgomery Street and looking at the waterfront. After about two or three years, my mother must have got tired of Minneapolis and she came out here to bring me home -- that was her intention. I don't have any idea how their marriage was getting along at that point. I fear it wasn't getting along too well. My father became somewhat embittered because his dream to become a farmer in Canada just collapsed completely, you know.

So, Mama arrived at the Oakland Mole one day. I was there waiting for her and I took her on a ferry boat. Of course, by this time I knew about the San Francisco bay and ferry boats, but she didn't. I had her on this big ship and all of a sudden she looked out of the window and says, "There's a sea here; where are we going?"

Stein: She thought you were taking her off to Japan or something!

HS: I said, "Mama, this is a ferry boat and pretty soon we will be in San Francisco, so don't worry."

Knowing of her coming here I had rented a flat on the three hundred block of Church Street, very close to Church and Market. You go up two flights of stairs and we had the upstairs flat.

From the front window you could see Twin Peaks, and that's what did it for Mama. She said, "Henry, it's just like Little Switzerland here. I'm going to write your father and your brother that I'm not coming to Minneapolis. They should come out here." And that's what they did.

And then once and awhile she'd say, "And now we've been here so long and I still haven't been to Uncle John's grave.* I said, "Mama when you were

*Schmidt later said his brother thinks Mama's statement was in error.
in Minneapolis you were fairly close to it." "How close?" "Well," I said, "maybe fourteen hours on the train." I said, "Here you had to sit three days and three nights to get to San Francisco." (laughs) We used to laugh about those things, you know -- the distances.

A Trip To Holland

So, let's see, when she came I was not working on the waterfront yet. I was still going from one mill to another. Then, of course, I had re-established my acquaintanceship with this fellow who wanted to come to Westwood, California. He didn't come to live with us in San Francisco, but we associated with each other. Then, he wanted to go back to Europe to see his parents and I don't think he had enough money to pay any fare, so, he started to look around and see if he could work his way on cargo vessels. And he did that.

So, he came back one time from one of these trips and he called me up and he said, "I'm going to sail on a cargo vessel which will go to Baltimore, and from Baltimore I'll catch another cargo vessel, and work my way over to Europe and see my parents again." And he said, "Why don't you try that?"

So, the thing was wide open. The unions had been smashed, and I knew very little about that. What you did, you went aboard the ship and you talked to the mate. My friend already had a job on a vessel and he said, "Why don't you go aboard and ask the mate." The mate said, "Well, have you ever been to sea before?" I said, "No, only as a passenger." Anyhow, he signed me on as an ordinary seaman. I went home, packed my suitcase, and, to the consternation and chagrin of my parents, I beat it again.

So we went. The ship took -- it seems to me it took almost three weeks to get to Baltimore through the Canal. Working conditions and all those things were horrible. In order to save money on crew members, what with the unions being
completely powerless, they had a thing aboard which they called "watch and watch." Working shifts on vessels are called watches. Well, for the ordinary seamen and the guys that work on deck the watch and watch was four on and four off. You work four hours and then you sleep four hours, and by the time you get to the third and fourth day you're so sleepy you -- you know, you never get a chance to sleep more than about three hours. That was real tough, you know.

We got off in Baltimore and we took a Norwegian ship. The ship was lying alongside of a grain mill and she took on about eight or nine thousand ton of wheat and off we went to Norway.

The captain says, "Well, I have a full crew, but if you want to go as a workaway, you'll have to work, there'll be no salary involved." A few questions back and forth. "Is it against the law?" He said, "No, as a result of having workaways the company will save money and you fellows will paint and do that kind of work, and by the time we get home, the ship will be nice and clean." But you don't know about these things and you say, "Gee, I'm going to get over there for nothing."

So, we took about eighteen days on the Atlantic and we wound up in Bergen, docked alongside a flour mill -- at which point I said, "Well, this looks familiar." (chuckles) We were in a fjord.

In the port of Bergen, we got off the ship. We tried to take the train. We wanted to take the train through Sweden, then to Denmark, and then through Germany, and then to Holland. But that didn't work out. The captain said, "I have to take you fellows to the police bureau because you are foreigners and it's my obligation to report you to the authorities." Nothing wrong with that, you know, because they keep track of everything.

Then we went to another authority and we made inquiries about: "What do we need to do, and what kind of papers do we need in order to get out of Norway, cross into Sweden, then over to Denmark, and then a piece of Germany, to get into Holland."


HS: Whoever he was, he said, "You're going to have great difficulty. As soon as you get to the Swedish frontier, they won't let you in." It was after World War I, but the regulations were still, you know --

Stein: I see. They hadn't gotten back to normal civilian --

HS: No. So, anyhow, to make a long story short, we took a Norwegian combination ship, passenger-freighter, and we paid our way, and the ship took us over to Newcastle upon Tyne, in England. That took eight or nine hours to get there. We had no difficulty getting into England.

We slept one night in London, and from London we could take a two and a half hour train ride to a place which is called Gravesend. I heard it mentioned on the TV the other night in connection with something.

Stein: I remember, they were interviewing people there about the British election; I saw the same thing.

HS: That's right. I was sitting here and I said, "That's the name of that place." That's where we took a Holland passenger ship which took us across the North Sea over to a place they call the Hook of Holland. In English they spell it h-o-o-k, as if it were a hook, which it isn't. In Holland they spell it h-o-e-k, which means corner. It really means the corner of Holland, the Hoek van Holland.

So, the next day we were in Holland and my friend said, "I'm going to go to Leiden to see my people; what are you going to do?" "Well," I said, "I'll go to Santpoort and see my people." My mother's sister for one, and so forth and so on. So that's what I did, I just walked in on them.

Stein: How did you get from where you landed to Santpoort?

HS: Oh, you take a railway into Rotterdam, and then you take another train from Rotterdam, to Amsterdam, to Haarlem. In Haarlem you walk around the back of
HS: the station and that's where there's a steam tram, a little railway engine which is about -- or was, I should say, it was running there when we were kids -- it's a little tram and the engine is about so high (gestures) and it's about from here to there. It drags two passenger cars. It's something like the cablecar in San Francisco.

I said to myself, "Now when I come out of the regular railway station, I go around the back and there's the steam tram." And by golly, it was there. You know I thought that I'd been in America for a half a century, but I'd only been over here for a little over ten years.

But in any event, I had been accustomed to big railroad engines in the States and in Canada; the regular steam trains in Europe are also big. So, these guys were shoving this little steam engine back and forth to get it from this end of the car to that end, you know, bring it around to go back.

I said to the guy in Dutch, "Did you make that thing smaller?" And he looked at me and he looked at my baggage and he said, "Well, I guess you've been away for awhile. No, it's the same thing." And you know what I thought? In my mind's eye, as a little boy I used to think this was a great big thing. (chuckles) I don't know why these things stick with you so long.

Stein: You'd just grown bigger; it hadn't grown smaller.

HS: So, I remember very distinctly that when we pulled into Santpoort, right in front of the -- there's a herberg, an inn. And I remembered that my Aunt Emma sat behind -- passed out the drinks to the customers. And by golly she was there. And she was the real aunt of the woman that I later married, Catherine, you know, the little girl? (chuckles)

I said, "Tante Emma?" She looked at me and she said something to the effect that I looked familiar. And she says, "Amerika?" And I said, "Yah." "Oh," she says, "you're the son of that German fellow that used to live here." She was the sister of my wife's father. Do you get the combination?
Stein: Yes.

HS: I said, "Where's Uncle John?" Because when we were kids Gus and I used to call him uncle. "Oh," she says, "he lives next door in the beer bottling plant. Don't you remember the beer bottling plant?" "Yes," I said, "I understand something about -- "

Well, in a few minutes, everybody knew that I was there and they came running from all corners.

Stein: They wanted to hear about America.

(End of Tape 1, side B)

(Begin Tape 2, side A)

HS: Yes. I talked to John. He said, "What are you going to do?" "Well," I said, "I'm going to look up the de Boer family, Hendrick de Boer and my Aunt Anna" -- that would be my mother's sister. They didn't have any telephone. I said, "I want to rent a room, because I don't want to walk in on them." So, they said I could walk up the street and then ring the bell and state my wants and they knew somebody had a room there.

So, I rented a room but I never got a chance to sleep there because, somehow or another, somebody grabbed a bicycle and rode out to Tante Anna's place. Their name is de Boer, which means the farmer. Dutch names go that way you know; my son-in-law's name is Vanderven -- it means "from the lake."

So, I wound up in the de Boer family's house. And in the meantime, I call your attention to Tante Emma who had a brother whose name is John, our Uncle John; he had two daughters and three sons. Catherine came out of the woodwork. She was my age, you know. She later came to America and we got married here. And all those folks back there, they thought it was terrific -- Catherine going to America.
Stein: Did she go to America to join you?

HS: Yes, yes. We reached understanding that we were in love and we were going to get married. I didn't have the guts to ask for her hand by approaching -- the European fashion, you know. And I said, "Well, we'll have to arrange this by letter. I don't know how to do that." I did get a strict sounding letter from her mother one day and she said, "It's customary to ask for the daughter's hand. Don't you know that, Henry?"

And that's something that one could give some thought. Because years later when my daughter went to South Africa I thought, "Oh, God, I'll never see her again." Look at the millions of people that came out of Europe and they knew that they would never see their parents again, and the parents knew that they would never see their children again. My father never got back; neither did my mother.

Stein: How long did you stay in Santpoort on that visit?

HS: Oh, several weeks. Then came the business of getting back here. Oh, boy. No money, you know, and I couldn't ask those people for money. Catherine and I had been going out on several bicycle tours.

Oh, I remember now. I went to the American consulate in Rotterdam, I believe, and made an inquiry about skippers dropping by looking for a crew member. That didn't work out.

As a matter of fact, that consul, he came out of the woodwork from the back of his office and he said to his secretary, "Who is this young man? I hear he's not talking English." And she says, "Well, when he came in he talked Dutch. But I interrogated him a little bit, and I understand that he was born in Germany."

At which point the consul pricked up his ears and said, "Yes? Does he speak English?" And I said, "Yes, sir, I speak English." And he listened and he said, "You speak English too damn good to
HS: suit me. Born in Germany -- don't care to do anything for you." And I made an argument about being a legal resident of the United States, which I could prove. "Oh, but you're not a citizen." Well, he was just a young fellow, probably no older than I was.

Stein: Petty bureaucrat.

HS: Yes, and he was on his way to being a petty clerk. So, anyhow, I communicated with my brother and he sent me some money so I could pay my fare, and then I went to the consulate in Amsterdam. It's only an hour's ride and that consul was an old-timer.

He said, "Yes, yes. I understand your predicament, young man. You have a legal right to reenter the United States, and I guess some day you will be a citizen. Your parents are over there?" He made some complimentary remark about my ability to speak American. "Well," he says, "I'm favorably impressed." And he signed his name on a piece of paper so I got across all right.

By this time, I knew my way around a little bit -- how to get aboard a ship. When I got to New York I went to Baltimore, looked around for a ship that might be going to Oakland or San Francisco, and I found one. I notified my mother that the ship was due in San Francisco as of a certain day. And one day we pulled into the pier, which, just by coincidence, was almost underneath that flour mill where I used to work.

And who was coming up the pier? My mother! And do you know what I was doing? Before we came alongside of the pier we had to up anchor. When you heave the anchor up it's usually full of mud. You're supposed to go over the side and stand on the anchor and with a strong hose -- a hose that's attached to the ship -- wash the anchor. Do you know about this process?

Stein: No.
HS: Well, sometimes you go over the side and you stand on the anchor -- it's hanging in its slot. My mother was standing down there on the pier and here was her son, standing on this dangerous thing washing the mud off the anchor.

Stein: So, you had worked your way back, then.

HS: Yes, I worked my way back.

Stein: Were you still an ordinary seaman?

HS: Yes, I'm still an ordinary -- and I got money. I forget how much it was. So, I had no difficulty. The commissioner came aboard and he signed me off. There was no difficulty at all.

In the meantime, my brother, he got the saltwater urge. He went away on an American ship one day. He was an alien. He came back after a couple of months and he ran into the authorities and, by golly, they went to the extent of sending one of those Pinkerton guards -- you know, they hire Pinkerton -- right up to the house where we lived.

We had him in for supper, Catherine and I, we had him in for supper along with my brother. And he said, "Well, I'm supposed to bring this young man back to the quarters. He can't stay here." So, we took -- the next day Gus was free. You know, sometimes you say to yourself, "Those fellows haven't got a hell of a lot to do."
II LONGSHORING PRIOR TO THE 1934 STRIKE

(Continuing Tape 2, side A)

Working Conditions

HS: When Catherine* and I made the trip to Holland -- at her father's expense -- it was 1927. I had already had a taste of the waterfront for a couple of short shifts. So when we got back into the house (in San Francisco) I went down to the waterfront and one day I got a job at the Admiral Line.

I had been going into that pier at the hiring hour any number of times. Finally, the stevedoring superintendent beckoned to me one morning, and he said, "Hey, haven't we got you in one of our gangs here?" I said, "No. I've just been standing around." "Well," he said, "go down the line there and get into Sam Hendrickson's gang, it's gang number three, and tell him that I sent you." So, there I was, home and dry in a steady gang.

Stein: This is for the Admiral Line?
HS: Yes. It was piers 16 and 18.

*For further family detail see Supplemental Interview 1: 21 August, 1981 (Tape 1, Side 1)
Stein: Did this gang do any particular kind of work? I know Harry Bridges was in a gang that worked mostly on steel.

HS: Yes, he was in a steel dock. No, we handled some steel, not much. We worked -- these were coastwise vessels. They had three or four passenger vessels, too, running coastwise. We had any kind of cargo that you can think of. Sugar would be loaded to be hauled to Seattle. Lumber would come back, oil in drums, anything that you see in the house.

Stein: At that point, what were working conditions like? When you unloaded and loaded cargo, were there winches then?

HS: Oh, yes, yes. They must have had winches on the Ark. Well, in those days I guess they carried the cargo up the gangplank on their backs, but winches have been around for a long time.

The work was all right for a person who was in good health and not too old. Sometimes we had to work some extremely long shifts, such as twenty-fours without going home, and sometimes even longer than that. And sometimes you wouldn't have a job for three or four days. I'm talking about a place now where I was in a steady gang. You didn't have to stand in front of the gate every day and have the boss come out and pick you.

Stein: That was the shape-up, right?

HS: That was the shape-up. That occurred at some other piers. And, of course, everybody was anxious to get a job with a stevedoring company which would have a rather modern system -- you were a steady employee, even though you didn't work every day -- ships come and go, you know.

Sometimes they would order you down and they'd say, "Well, sorry. The ship is late. You can hang around if you want to, or come back at two o'clock this afternoon." And, as I recall it, there was some pay for coming down, but it didn't amount to much. Then -- this may be a peculiar
HS: point of view -- you run into one of these extremely long shifts, and it sort of seems to make up for that loss. It does moneywise.

Stein: Would you get overtime pay then?

HS: It's all explained in there -- in the Blue Book on wages. Yes, the straight time was from eight in the morning until five in the afternoon. If you started to work at five or at six, it was overtime right off the bat, you didn't have to work for any straight time hours after dark, let us say.

So, if you came to work in the morning, and you worked twenty-four hours, you would get straight time from eight to five, you would get overtime for working through the night, and then sometime in the morning you would run into the straight time scheme again. Of course, we all protested that. I have a remembrance that the practice was eliminated.

Stein: Of overtime?

HS: No. The business of working through the night on overtime was not changed, and fresh gangs would come on at eight in the morning. The night gangs went home at 8 a.m. It would save them money, you see. When the pressure was on for more money, they could find ways and means.

So, I have worked, yes, I can talk about thirty-six hours without going home. And when you're thirty-three or thirty-four years old you can handle that. Then you go home and you don't get a job for a couple of days. But you rationalize. I'm talking about going to work on a Sunday evening and staying with it for thirty-six hours and you've got fifty-four dollars that you've made -- whatever it was. It was a pile of money. And you say, "Well, so I won't get a job for a couple of days. It's all right."

We would telephone in. We'd call up a dispatcher that worked for the company -- a woman -- and she would say, "Gang number three, did you say?" "Yes." "Well, I haven't got anything. Call up again tomorrow morning or tomorrow afternoon."
Stein: What would wages be like?

HS: I think when the 1934 award came down we got a nickel increase. Let's see what it was. (Looks in book)* It was less than a dollar. (Reads) "The basic rate of pay for longshore work shall be not less than ninety-five cents," -- per hour, of course, straight time -- "not less than a dollar forty per hour for overtime, provided however that for work which is now paid higher than the present basic rates, the differentials above the present basic rates shall be added to the basic rates established in this paragraph."

So, they gave us a nickel. Prior to the strike we got ninety cents an hour, that's the basic rate for ordinary longshore work. Winch drivers always got five cents or a dime more, and the gang boss, he got ten cents more. Then the ten cents became fifteen cents, in this case, when he worked overtime.

Stein: Who chose the gang boss?

HS: Well, when I went to work in Sam Hendrickson's gang, he was there. He was selected by the company.

So, we had our ups and downs. I can recall we also had to go out of town. We were sent up to Port Costa. We're closer to Port Costa here (Concord) than you are from San Francisco. Have you ever been to Port Costa?

Stein: No, I never have.

HS: The ships don't go there any more, but it's an odd place. Old, old, old in the American scheme of things. If a thing is a hundred years old, it's old, you know.

*Harry Bridges, The Rise and Fall of Radical Labor in the U. S., by Charles P. Larrowe, p. 91
HS: We took a seven o'clock ferry in the morning to go to Port Costa. When you arrived at the Oakland Mole they had a special steam train there which would run us to Port Costa -- all these longshoremen. When you got to Port Costa it was understood, well, it was either understood that you would sleep there at a place provided, or if the job was a short one you would go home in the evening on that train and the ferry.

Well, I can remember, this is the only time it ever happened to me, we started to leave the ferry at seven in the morning, I guess we got to Port Costa at half past eight. We worked -- we didn't work through the noon hour -- we worked through the afternoon, we worked to midnight, and then the walking boss hollered down the hatch that we're gonna work until one a.m. and that would finish the job.

Well, that's long enough, you know. It was packing barley sacks on your shoulder. That kind of work is not too hard because you build a bench out of full sacks in the middle of the hatch. The sling load would come down and the table would be level with your shoulder. You would roll it on your shoulder, and you'd walk a few paces and you'd drop it at your feet. That's what they call "flooring off". But there comes a time when you have to beam it up, and what you need to be is a robust longshoreman almost seven feet tall -- then you can handle that kind of cargo.

Stein: What did you do?

HS: Oh, I handled it all right, this was long before I did any office work. What I'm leading up to is this: we left the ship at one o'clock in the morning and when we got to the gangplank to go down to the dock there was the train that was going to take us back to Oakland Mole, and there would be a ferry to take us across to San Francisco; and when the walking boss was standing at the gangplank, he said, "Seven o'clock in the morning at Alameda."

I didn't say anything, but I thought, "My god, by the time I get home it'll be three in the morning, and by the time I hit the hay it might be
HS: half past three. I wouldn't sleep any more than an hour; then I'd have to get up to catch a ferry to go to Alameda in the morning. So, I never showed up. It was just too much. I think I could have managed it, I mean in the physical sense, but -- well, you work up a terrific anger against the employers.

Stein: I can imagine.

HS: Do you want descriptions of some more long shifts? Once in awhile you get a four hour shift and you've made a few dollars and you go home. Or they would say, "Well, come down and work the S.F. Admiral Peoples. Sunday morning, seven o'clock, don't need to go to church, you know." Wisecracks. And I'm sure that the good church people would go, maybe? I don't know; you can go five o'clock in the morning, can't you?

Well, sometimes I liked that. You worked the Admiral Peoples and it was potatoes that came down from Seattle, probably were grown in Idaho. They were a hundred pound sacks, or fifty pound sacks. By five or six o'clock in the evening the job was finished, and maybe they had a night gang. Sunday was all overtime. So, you probably had twenty-five dollars made, and you thought that was terrific, you know, as money was measured then.

But there were other conditions at other piers. For instance the Matson Navigation Company. They employed a lot of longshoremen steadily, but they always worked them in a manner that seemed to indicate that "You really haven't got a steady job here, brother," because when you knocked off in the evening they didn't say come back in the morning on this ship at seven o'clock or eight o'clock. The order would be "Out in front."

There would be all these men standing in front of the pier. And then they had a man there they called "the gorilla." He came out to pick and choose and he had a method; if you had worked there the day before he may not pick you on the second day. He'd say, "You, and you, and you." Or if he was in a hurry he's say, "All the guys that worked the ship yesterday, come on in."
HS: That's what everybody wanted to hear. But then sometimes he's say, "You, and you; no, not you." And then a man might say, "Well, I worked here yesterday." "That's all right. You worked here yesterday, but we don't want you today." He might give no answer at all, you know. A real slave market.

Stein: So, Matson had a pretty bad reputation?

HS: Oh, yes, yes. They had a strike there, too. They fired two guys and they got into real trouble. All of a sudden, everybody was militant.

Stein: That was a little bit later, though, wasn't it?

HS: Yes, I think so.

(Editor's note: The following insert is excerpted from Interview 15 which was taped out of sequence in the original interviews; Tape 1, side 2)

Stein: Well, then were you involved in the Matson strike in 1933, I guess it was -- after which there was the Blue Book bonfire?

HS: I was only involved in the Matson strike. I was working near there on the Admiral docks - which was only about a five-minute walk, and it's quite possible that during the lunch hour I walked up there and talked to some of the fellows, but I was not actively involved. I know there was some kind of settlement. It's in Chuck's (Larrowe's) book.

(Checks in that book) He mentions the name of the gentleman who was working in some capacity for the Department of Labor and acted as an arbitrator -- and those men, as I recall it, went back to work.

Stein: Were re-hired, yes.

HS: And that was a great big victory.

(End insert)
So I plugged along there, working as a longshoreman for a number of years. Then in 1933, it could have been in late 1932, the main office of the ILA sent an organizer out here. He didn't exactly set the waterfront on fire. He happened to be a man who used to work as a longshoreman prior to 1919.

Stein: Who was this?

HS: Lee J. Holman. Well, the main office in New York, they should have found a better man. He wanted to organize all right, but he had a mannerism about him which didn't set well with the fellows. Like making a talk from a podium and putting his hands over his heart and he said, "I love the longshoremen. I will die for the longshoremen." (chuckles)

Sling Load Limits and Speed-Up

Stein: Well, I want to back up a bit again before we get into Lee Holman and the ILA. First of all, you were talking about sling loads awhile back with the barley. Were there limits at that point on how much could be put into sling loads?

HS: Oh, there was a sling load limit all right, insofar as the safety factor was concerned from the employer's point of view. The sacks of barley were slung in a rope sling, and the rope sling was of a certain length. It held eighteen or twenty-two sacks, and that's about all it would hold.

In order to get more in there you have to get a longer sling, but they were of a standard length. And if you had -- well, I can think of twenty-four sacks. What's twenty-four times a hundred and twenty pounds? And the gear was rigged to hoist that.

And then there were other commodities where you didn't use rope slings; they used sling boards. Like forty cases of canned goods on what they called a board sling. Then there were slings that were used to hoist oil drums, drums full of oil; (gestures) they were about that high, this fat, and they were called chine hooks. I'll give you an example.
HS: An oil drum is about a thousand times as big as this beer can, and the oil drum has this (gestures).

Stein: A sort of a rim.

HS: Yes. And the chine hooks would just bite in there and come to a point like this. As soon as the winch driver picks up these four drums, which are sitting here on the dock floor, these hooks would bite into the metal without puncturing it. And then these things would go up, and down into the ship. Then as soon as they hit the hatches down below, these hooks would let go. The winch driver would lift the empty hooks right out on to the dock for another load.

Stein: And then the guys in the hold would roll the drums?

HS: We'd roll them, yes, and then you upend them. And then you constantly floor off. Hundreds and hundreds of drums, next to each other. And when you come up with the next few, you have to put lumber on top of these. They call that dunnage.

Stein: The dunnage refers to the lumber?

HS: Dunnage is lumber. It's one-inch boards. And between each tier of oil drums, you have to cover the heads of these drums with lumber, otherwise the cargo would slide and be very insecure. The ship is going to go out to sea and roll all over the place. The fact that there's wood in between these drums makes it rigged solid like a mountain.

Stein: How high up would it go, how many tiers up?

HS: Oh, they must have enormous strength because you go ten and twelve high.

Stein: How would you get the cans up that high? I mean once it's up more than two tiers it's up over your head.

HS: You floor off one high all over the hatch, then put dunnage on top all over; then get on top of the dunnage -- a smooth floor. The winch driver will then bring in more drums. You up-end them and floor off another tier all over the hatch.
HS: There is no such thing as picking up a drum of oil and lifting it up to place it on top of another drum. A man could do it with an empty drum, but not a full one.

Now, just imagine that this ceiling is not there. You look up and you see the sky.

Stein: Okay.

HS: You're down here in the lower hold. This sling load of oil drums comes down, and you can see it coming and you can also hear the winches run, and the winch driver might holler, "Look out below." Then you would -- as soon as he lets go they're free -- then you roll them into the wing. (demonstrates) When you get over here into the wing, you can see the overhead, as they call it aboard ship -- the decks -- but over here in the midship it's wide open to the top.

(End of Tape 2, side A)

(Begin Tape 2, side B)

Stein: Charles Larrowe, in his book on Bridges, talks about a speed-up in the mid-twenties, or late twenties. I wondered if you remembered that?

HS: Oh, yes, the employers were in full control and they were always speeding you up. They said, "Instead of putting on eighteen, put on twenty-two," or they would also give you an order to put on forty-four cases of salmon instead of forty.

And they would have a gang boss in every gang, and the gang boss might come down the ladder and say, "Look fellows, I just found out that the gang up in number two hatch is taking in four more loads per hour than we are. You want to hang onto our job here, we gotta step on it, fellows. And stuff like that.

Stein: Was there any way you could protest that?
HS: Yes, you could protest, but what good did -- we were completely unorganized. Everybody who knew anything knew that there had been a waterfront strike in 1919 and that we were members of a company controlled union at this point, and it was best to keep your mouth shut.

They even had fellows working in the gang who were very sympathetic towards the company. I can remember one man who -- maybe he was getting paid by the company, but his arguments were, "We've gotta speed it up because the company's not really making any money." Now, I don't know how the hell he knew that, but that's what he said.

Stein: I don't imagine that convinced you.
HS: Oh, not at all.

Work Gangs

Stein: About how many men would be in a gang?
HS: Well, there are fixed -- the number of men -- usually when we were loading a ship, we had eight men in the hold. We'd have two winch drivers who would spell each other -- one would tend hatch while the other one was driving the winches. Then some ships are rigged for single winches so you need two winch drivers and a hatch tender.

On most American ships a winch driver could stand here, or he'd fix himself a seat, and he would have two winch handles. He could drive two winches simultaneously, it would be coordinated to that extent. Just like a person driving a car; he can handle the clutch pedal, the brake pedal, the throttle, and steer -- do all these four things at one time and carry on a conversation, too. Well, the winch driver would have to go ahead on this lever, and come back on this one, and just go back and forth.

Now, when there were old-country ships, there would be a winch driver here and a winch driver there, and it would make employment for one more man.
HS: Maybe the unions in the old country were strong enough to prohibit this American invention of one man doing the work of two. But I've heard winch drivers argue that they personally prefer the job of driving both winches, because when one man is driving one winch, they're both hoisting the same load, you see, but one has to depend upon the other. And when you're doing it yourself you coordinate this thing. I don't know whether I'm making myself clear or not.

Stein: Yes, I can see the point. It's easier to balance it, if you do it yourself. Did the gangs tend to be made up of people of all the same nationalities?

HS: Well, I can recall that at the Luckenbach pier there was a white man, he was in charge of a black gang. He was a very big man and they called him Tiny, Tiny Klews. I think there might have been one more black gang around, but they were very, very much in the minority.

But it is true that -- well, you would find a gang that might have nearly all Slavonians. And you would find a gang that were all Americans. There were a few Italian gangs, but I say, by and large, they were -- oh, yes, and of course, the Northern Europeans were quite prominent, you know, Swedes, Danes, and Norwegians.

A considerable number of Finns, and they sort of flock together. If you look into their background -- by looking into their background, I mean their lives in the city of San Francisco -- you will find that they had fraternal organizations -- Danish, Norwegian, Swedes, Finns. The Finns were quite active in the left-wing movement in their fraternities. They even had an outfit in Berkeley which must have been a pain in the neck for the authorities.

Stein: What was that?

HS: Well, I think it was the kind of thing that the FBI would be watching, you know, that's just my supposition.
Stein: I seem to remember, at least in the Thirties, there was something called the Finnish Workers Order, or something like that.

HS: That's right. Yes, well, I didn't get very close to them, not being a Finn. I used to be very much interested in the Scandinavians. I didn't get very close to the Finns because their language has no relationship to anything except, somebody said, Hungarian. I can't figure out how that is so, because it must be a thousand miles from Helsinki to Budapest. (laughter)

Anyhow, then there were Scandinavian gangs. I wouldn't say that there were Swedish or Norwegian gangs. They would really co-mingle, I guess is the word.

Stein: What sort of men were in your gang?

HS: We were really mixed up. There was Sam Hendrickson, he was a Norwegian by birth, he's the boss. Then there were a couple of Danes, and some Americans, and myself. Oh, and we had a couple of Portuguese, yes. And an Irishman -- a Protestant Irishman. We had a Portuguese, and he always, instead of saying "mister," he could only say "meesta." And he always called me "Meesta." After I got to be an officer he would still call me Meesta." Many people have a terrific problem with the English language, you know.

Militance at the Admiral Line

Stein: Getting back to the shipping companies -- what sort of reputation did the other shipping companies have? You mentioned that Matson had a reputation of trying to make the gangs feel like they weren't steady. Admiral seems to have been, for the times, fairly -- sounds like one of the better places to work, in that they had steady gangs.

HS: Yes. I think maybe the men were inclined to congregate towards the Admiral, and it was not easy to get in there. But I wouldn't say that they
HS: were any better than the others, because there
came a time when they hired a new man, a new over-
seer, and we called him "Big Load Thompson."
He was a young fellow, and I don't know where in
the heck he got his education as a longshoreman,
but he increased the sling load to such an extent
that he had a revolt on his hands.

Stein: What happened?

HS: He would look over the hatchcombing -- he would be
up there and he would look down the hatch, and
he would give some outlandish order which in
practice wouldn't work out. You see, when you
get down into the ship and you are in the midship,
the decks or the floor are level, but when you get
into the number one hold there's a rise of a
certain degree because of the shape of the ship.

All right, the load of cargo comes down and
you're loading cargo and you land it on a four-
wheel truck. As long as you're on a perfect level
a couple of fellows can just push this thing with-
out any effort, even though there's two thousand
pounds on there. But when it's uphill, then you
have to build a track with lumber -- which consumes
time, the load has to hang there -- and then the
steeper it gets, the worse it gets.

So, you build a runway that goes downhill.
You see what I mean? If you leave it alone, you're
pushing uphill. Well, it takes time to build a
thing like this.

Stein: Yes, I can imagine.

HS: Big Load Thompson shouted over the combing one
day, and he said we ought to speed it up a little
bit, and "shove harder and get that thing up there."
Well, we just couldn't make it.

Sam Hendrickson went up the ladder and talked
to him very quietly and he said, "We have to build
a runway there because they haven't got the strength
to push that two thousand pounds uphill." The guy
apparently took a good look at it, and he realized
that that was an uphill thing which couldn't happen
in number two or number three hold. Do I make myself
clear?
Stein: Yes.

HS: Well, something happened one day that -- well, they can blame me for it, if they want to. We were working in the afterhatch. That is the hatch which is in the rear of the ship. And here again we're gonna get into difficulties with regard to the uphill explanation.

Stein: That's okay. You're doing very well so far.

HS: In the afterhatch you are bound to run into the shaft alley down below. Does this mean anything to you?

Stein: No, What's the shaft alley?

HS: Well, in the rear of the ship there's a great big propeller, which turns around in the water by reason of the fact that it's attached to a long shaft, which is attached to the engine which is in the middle of the ship. And the shaft, without exaggeration, is probably ten times the thickness of this can, because that propeller out there probably weighs five tons. It's that big.

        All right, that shaft alley -- when you're an oiler down below in the ship and you have to go down into the shaft alley, you walk like into a tunnel. Then you go along with an oil can and do whatever you need to do. But from a longshoreman's point of view, when he enters the afterhatch of the cargo vessel and goes down below, he runs into this shaft alley and to him it looks this way -- it's right in the middle, almost in the middle.

Stein: I see.

HS: And he knows that that's where the shaft is. He also knows that there might be a man in there who walks back and forth; a man he's never seen and will never know who he is.

        Well, we were loading some kind of material in small sacks, very heavy; I forget what it was. Big Load Thompson must have told something to Sam Hendrickson demanding that we do a better job. Well, you have to take into consideration that the shaft alley is round on top.
Stein: Then that creates a place where you can't load cargo.

HS: Well, you certainly can't land the sling load there because if the winch driver doesn't hang onto it, it'll spill all over the place, because the top of the shaft alley is round.

Stein: Yes, otherwise it'll roll off.

HS: It'll roll one way or the other. Well, that happened. And I saw it coming. I knew that it would eventually happen, and it did. I blew my top and I said, "That's enough, fellows, let's go." And up the ladder I went, and, by golly, they followed me. We tried to talk to the gangs that were working on the other hatches, but they didn't have any understanding of what our beef was, so they stayed aboard.

We got into trouble, of course. There must have been a big conversation between Big Load Thompson and Sam Hendrickson and the owner of the business, whose name I don't recall. Tom Farris was with me, and the Portuguese fellow who always called me "Meesta" -- they all came out.

But we didn't go back to work, and we didn't succeed in getting the other fellows to strike the ship -- that's what we were doing, you know, in a completely unorganized way. I didn't realize that maybe Big Load Thompson was doing all these things in order to get rid of some agitators, and maybe I was labeled; I don't know.

So, we didn't get back aboard the ship and we were off for two weeks. Every time we called up -- every time I called up -- the girl said, "No, nothing for gang number three." Well, then you begin to smell a rat, you know, that it's being done on purpose.

Then came the order, "Gang number three, Monday morning," on such and such a vessel. So, we were all there and then came the order to "Go ahead in." And then Sam Hendrickson came over to me and he said, "Henry, you're not going in." So there I was. I was through at the Admiral Line, but I was better known thereafter.
Stein: Can you remember about what year this was?

HS: It was a number of months before the 1934 strike. I started to line up at the Ferry Building where the big shape-up was. Harry (Bridges) had heard about my difficulty, and he was working on the front.

Stein: Had you known him before then?

HS: Yes, I had known him because there was this strike which we mentioned at the Matson dock, and he was agitating around there although he wasn't working there. He came down to the big shape-up one morning and he found me -- well, maybe he was looking for me. He says, "Well, I'll see what I can do."

Then he talked to a fellow by the name of John, -- they called him Pettyjohn, but his name was really the French name, Pettijean. He beckoned to me and said, "Come along with me. We're going over to Alameda today." So occasionally I got a job. But it was really what they call slim pickings on the waterfront.

Stein: This was already in the Depression?

HS: Oh, yes. I don't really remember how in the heck we made it at home.

Stein: Had your daughter been born by this time?

HS: Yes, yes. She was just a tyke, you know. And I think my father was dead. Well, I'm not so sure about that. For awhile Catherine and I and the little girl were living in Father's house. We were sort of his guests, or maybe he was our guest, I don't know. He warmed up a bit after the little girl was born. It was wonderful -- he even learned to smile. (chuckles)

Stein: It's a wonder what little children can teach people.

HS: Yes, it certainly is.
HS: It seems to me that the 1934 strike was not too far away when this incident took place, with the gang going back in and myself left out. I have a feeling that shortly thereafter the organizational drive took on a good swing. It seems to me that it took weeks from that day forward until we got to that coastwise convention which was held in February of 1933, or was it '34.

Stein: That was '34 in San Francisco.

HS: Well, maybe the incident with Thompson was in the latter part of '33.

Stein: Now, by that time were you in the Blue Book Union?* What had been your experience with the Blue Book Union?

HS: All I did was pay dues to the business agent whenever he caught us, or me. Or the stevedoring superintendent at the Admiral Line dock would say, "Listen, I've heard that you're not paying your dues. You better take care of it." That's how the company superintendent would take care of it.

Stein: How had you first joined?

HS: I had never been to a meeting. I knew where the office was, but everybody said, "Well, you just don't go. You just pay your dues to this guy."

Stein: Would you not have been hired if you --

HS: No, you would have been left out. Well, Julius Tillman, he hired me one morning. He said, "Haven't you been working here?" And I said, "I've just been standing around." Well, it was a foregone conclusion that somewhere along the line the business agent would contact me and I'd have to pay whatever the requirement was.

*The company union, so named because of the color of the cover of the membership book.
I didn't get back in the Admiral Line until after the strike was over. We had our convention, we had a coastwise vote that we would return to work on the last day of July under the same conditions that were prevalent prior to the strike, and that we would go back to the same places, and that the arbitration hearings would take place and we would get an award later on.

So, I went back to the Admiral Line, and by this time I guess I was a marked man. Went back to the Admiral Line and Sam Hendrickson was there and he gave me to understand that I was really asking for work at the wrong place because when the strike started, I wasn't working at the Admiral Line, I was working in Jean Pettijean's gang.

I guess I said to him, "But Sam, I was in your gang for a number of years. I was a steady employee." "Well," he says, "I can't take you in, I've already been told. The other guys are all going in." Well, they all went in and there was nobody left at the pier. It was not at the pierhead, it was just inside. You were on company property, or on the property of the state-owned pier. So, I said to myself, "Well, this is a fine how-do-you-do."

Then, all of a sudden, I saw a man coming down the line. He was coming from a ship. I recognized him as a man who was working in the hold and his gang boss's name was Emile Coleman. This man said to me, "Hey, Henry, aren't you working?" I said, "No." "Well," he says, "we're one man short, and Emile told me to come out here and get somebody." He looked at me and smiled -- he knew the combination, you know. "Well," I said, "let's go."

So I wound up in Emile Coleman's gang and I recall having had discussions with him prior to the strike and I was agitating for organization. Emile used to say to me, he says, "Schmidt, everything you say is wrong. All of this business about the union that you're talking about -- that crap, we've had all that, that's wrong."
HS: And he didn't know that his hold man had picked Schmidt out, you see, so I went on board when he wasn't looking. I was down below and started to do my job. Usually when the winches are running, you can't hear a thing, but there was a lull, and all of a sudden, I heard Emile say from on high -- not too high -- he says, "Holy Jesus, I got Henry Schmidt in my gang." (laughter) That did me a lot of good.

Stein: That's a great story.

HS: The little incidents, you know. And you know the experience that I had later on? This is much later now, but I better tell it while I think of it. The stevedoring superintendent whose name was Julius Tillman -- he was a terror in his mild sort of way. He stayed in there during the strike, and when the strike was over, the company realized that they couldn't use him anymore. We would get on his nerves, you know. So they let him go.

The months rolled by, and I got myself elected president of Local 10. All of a sudden a walking boss by the name of Tom McHugh came into my office and he said, "Henry, you know who's standing out there on the curb stone? Julius Tillman is out there and he hasn't got a job."

I said, "Well, you know why he hasn't got a job." "Well," he says, "I know." I said, "You were a walking boss, you came out, you're back on the job. But why are you telling me all of this?" "Julius thinks that you can do something for him to get him back on the job."

I said, exasperated, "Tom, if I tried it, the guys would run me out of this office." And they would, you know. "Well," he said, "I came in here to ask you." He was an Irishman with a brogue. (speaks in Irish brogue), "You're the president. But I understand what you're saying, so I'll go out and tell him."
HS: Well, I haven't seen Julius since that day, and it's possible that he's no longer alive. But I get a Christmas card from Tom McHugh every year. He became a pensioner. I see him once in awhile. He came down to the headquarters at Fisherman's Wharf one day and he had an elderly woman with him. I made the sad mistake of saying, "Is this your wife?" "No," he said (in brogue), "it's me daughter." (laughter) You know, he was way over eighty, she was probably sixty-four.

It's interesting to point out that when the fellows went back to work on the last day of July, 1934, the employers realized immediately that this was the same group of men, but they were different. And the guys themselves, they didn't immediately realize what power they had.

The gang and walkin' bosses were all very polite, very civil. A few of them got beat up, especially those who stayed in. But it was all to the good, this working class power, after a struggle like that. It was certainly good to see, good to experience.

Stein: I want to get back, just a second, to the shipping companies just to discover if there were any differences at all among them. Which were the biggest ones on the waterfront at that point?

HS: Well, there was the Dollar Line, of course, and they had a stevedoring contractor that was known as the Pacific Lighterage Company. Maybe one was a subsidiary of the other, you don't know.

And Matson was one of the greatest, and according to the constitution of the Pacific Maritime Association, I read one time that Matson had the largest block of votes in their voting scheme. Then there was California Stevedoring and Ballast -- must have been a big company. Then the Grace Line -- I don't recall what stevedoring company did their work.

Then, of course, foreign steamship lines became members of the Pacific Maritime Association.
Stein: Then it was called something else.

HS: It was called the Waterfront Employer's Union. It was a real phony because they were not -- well, they were union, yes, but an employers'union.

Stein: What about Swayne and Hoyt? Did you know anything about them?

HS: Yes, that was a steamship company -- "Sweat and Hurry," they were called. (chuckles)

(End of Tape 2, side B)

(End of interview)
III THE 1934 STRIKE
(Interview 2: 1 November, 1974)

(Begin Tape 3, side A)

Citizenship

Stein: At this time, prior to the 1934 strike, knowing that citizenship became such a problem with Harry Bridges, what was your status with citizenship?

HS: Oh, I was a naturalized citizen at the time.

Stein: When had you become naturalized? Was that when your father was --

HS: No, I became naturalized in 1927 in July. By the time the longshoremen got reorganized in 1933, I had been a citizen for, well, six years.

Stein: Then you never had the problem Bridges did of being hounded by the immigration people?

HS: No. Parenthetically, I might point out that when we had the coastwise convention prior to the 1934 strike in the Building Trades Temple on Guerrero Street -- I think it was in February -- there was a discussion among some of the fellows whether or not Harry should be a candidate to become president of the new Coastwise organization. He backed away from that question because he knew he was going to be attacked.
That brings to mind another incident. Harry prevailed upon me to be the candidate for the Coastwise secretaryship, or maybe it was the presidency, I don't know. I'm almost sure that I agreed to be the candidate, but personally I was opposed to it because I felt that I couldn't make it. I didn't make any effort to gather votes. If I'm not mistaken, Lewis -- who was known as "Burglar" Lewis -- became the president and he got more votes than I did, of course.

Reorganizing the ILA

Stein: To back up a second, how did the ILA get started? You told me last time that it was a pretty defunct organization.

HS: Yes. Well, the ILA Local 38-79 was active in San Francisco. It was a local of the whole, but it faded out of existence either in 1916 or in 1919. There was a longshore strike in San Francisco which was not won and the union just wrapped up its books and closed the door, so to speak. It was not reborn until 1933 when a man by the name of Lee J. Holman appeared. He had been appointed as an organizer.

Stein: By whom?

HS: By the main office in New York. It must have been Joe Ryan who was then the national president of the ILA; or international president, because the ILA had longshoremen organized in the Canadian ports.

It was the right time and the right place to attempt to reorganize the San Francisco longshoremen. If I'm not mistaken, he brought along an elderly man who had been a longshoreman years ago and his name was either King or Koenig. K-o-e-n-i-g is

*See Supplementary Interview 1 (Tape 30, side B)*
the German word for king, and I think this man went by the name of Koenig. He was already an elderly man and he shouldn't have been a secretary because he was not the type of man for the job. But apparently Holman convinced Ryan that, "Start out with him because he's an old-timer."

Holman was sort of sold on an idea. He was convinced that there was hardly anything better than an old-time longshoreman. He was always using that phrase. "I'm an old-time longshoreman. This fellow's an old-time longshoreman." Once he made a speech in the Labor Temple and he said that he would give his life for the old-time longshoreman. That was not the right thing to say on that particular evening because he didn't get any applause. It was a little bit overdone.

In any event, he came along in 1933. As I recall it, we sort of streamed into the office and put down the so-called initiation fee, which was fifty cents, got a book, and it was the right time and the right place. It also had something to do with that thing that was called the National Recovery Act, NRA.

Stein: That would have been section 7a.

HS: Yes, section 7a. Anyhow, it encouraged men to join unions because the Act gave the men to understand that employers would no longer be allowed -- or they would be confronted with the fact that they were engaged in an unlawful activity if they attempted to prevent workers from joining a union.

As I said, the men streamed into the office and put down their fifty cents, and it was necessary to arrange for a meeting. I can't remember just how a meeting was brought about. Apparently pressure was put on Holman by some of the fellows -- Holman wouldn't recognize these people as old-time longshoremen, but those were the fellows that put the pressure on him to call a membership meeting specifically for the purpose of initiating new members and giving them what they call the obligation.
I went to that meeting and this was where Holman made a few introductory remarks and became patriotic, in a manner of speaking, and said that he was willing to die for longshoreman.

I think that was the moment when Harry got up and said, "When are you going to initiate us and when are you going to give us the obligation? I guess Harry indicated that he had become impatient with the other things that Holman said.

Anyhow, we took the obligation and became members at that moment, and were made acquainted with the fact that there were certain obligations that we would have a meeting every month. This particular meeting took place in the Labor Temple at Sixteenth and Capp Street in San Francisco. As I recall it, about all the business that was transacted was that the people who filled the hall were given an obligation.

There was some discussion, as I recall, that we would make a demand upon the Waterfront Employers' Union for recognition of our union, and matters of that nature. I think that was referred to a future meeting. There might have been a discussion about election of officers.

In any event, the most important thing that happened thereafter -- it must have occurred at another meeting -- it was proposed that Local 38-79 contact other locals up and down the Coast, especially the local in Tacoma because that ILA local had never folded up during the years prior to 1934. It had continued to function in Tacoma, and they had some kind of hiring system which was controlled by the employers, as happened also to be the case in Seattle. The Coastwise secretary had an office in Tacoma. His name was Bjorglund, B-j-o-r-g-l-u-n-d.

Local 38-79 instructed President Holman to contact this man and ask if he would come down to San Francisco and give us a talk. He did and I can recall that he spoke to the executive board of the newly reorganized Local 38-79. I can recall that I was a member of the executive board, so there must have been an election.
HS: I can't recall exactly what the discussion was. Of course, it must have had to do with an attempt to set up a Coastwise organization; that steps would have to be taken to revive all of the locals in all the ports.

Secretary Bjorglund must have given us some some information with regard to whether or not some locals had gone out of existence, and called attention to those that had continued to live through these so-called lean years. He gave me the impression that he had been a leader in the trade union movement for many, many years, and I guess I was impressed by his ability to make a talk to a group of people.

In any event, there must have been some discussion about calling a Coastwise convention, and in relation thereto there must have been some discussion whether or not Local 38-79 could send some of its members on a Coastwise tour to talk to other locals. As I recall it, a fellow by the name of Eugene Detrich -- his name is in the book* -- he made a tour, and I'm pretty sure that Harry made a tour. This all happened before the strike. I do recall that, while the strike was on, they sent me up north to do some talking. I was very green in the business, and the question of addressing a large group of men was something that I --

(Interruption)

Stein: You were telling me about how green you were when you went on this speaking tour. I was about to ask you, when you mentioned the elections in the executive board: Chuck Larrowe mentioned that there were three factions competing for leadership in the union. One was Lee Holman, who had most of the Irish Catholics behind him: a second one was "Burglar Bill" Lewis and Fred West, and then a third faction was the Albion Hall group.

*Charles Larrowe, Harry Bridges
HS: Well, I don't know whether I can go along with that or not. First of all, Fred West might have had some influence, and he might have been present at some executive board meetings and made a talk, but he was not a longshoreman.

He was a window cleaner, and the window cleaners had a union in San Francisco, and undoubtedly he was a leader of that union. He had good speaking capabilities, and I think it's just possible that somebody in the labor council contacted Fred West, urged him to go down talk to the longshoremen.

The Albion Hall Group

HS: Harry got elected to that executive board. I think it's correct to say that the so-called Albion Hall group was influential.

(The following insert is excerpted from Interview 15, Tape 1, Side 2)

Stein: Okay. Then in 1933 you and Bridges were elected to the executive board of the ILA, is that correct?

HS: That's right.

Stein: Well, let's see, then you were also a member of the Albion Hall group.

HS: Yes. The Albion Hall group is -- I'll give you a background there that nobody -- first of all there was a saloon operated by some German fellows.

Stein: Where was it?

HS: Well, it had an entrance on Valencia Street near Sixteenth.

Stein: Oh, so, it was right near Albion Street.

HS: And Albion Street is half a block over, so to speak.
Stein: Yes.

HS: There is a funeral parlor there.

Stein: Yes. I think the funeral parlor's still there.

HS: Well, I know it is -- just waiting for me. Buried my father, buried my mother, well -- (laughter) Anyhow, about ninety years ago, a group of German immigrants established the Workmen's Benefit Fund. They established a branch in San Francisco and it rented offices in the Albion Hall; it was Branch 102. They started in New York. These fellows realized that there was no such thing automatically as a welfare fund, you know, free doctor, because they brought those ideas with them from Germany. So, they established it here.

Anyhow, they rented space in the Albion Hall and there was also what they thought was a sort of a leftwing singing society which sang German class conscious lieder. You know the word lieder?

Stein: Yes.

HS: Well, I joined that. And somehow or other the waterfront gang, they were looking for a place to meet. I don't remember that I dragged them in there, but somebody says, "We have to meet somewhere," and we wound up meeting in the Albion Hall.

So, somebody wanted to know, "What'd'ya know about this place?" I said, "Well, I belong to it." I still pay dues; I never use the doctor. Anyhow, that's what they call in German, "Arbeiter Krankung und Sterbetasse." Do you understand that lingo?

Stein: No. Not at all, you'll have to translate.

HS: Well, Arbeiter means worker, death and sick benefit establishment.

Stein: So, your two groups just occupied the same building. Was there any further relationship between the two?

HS: Between the singing society and the --
Stein: Between the Workmen's Benefit Fund and your --

HS: Oh, no. The Workmen's Benefit Fund didn't even know anything about us meeting there. They had no connection with the waterfront. I was familiar with the place because the Benefit Fund used to hold meetings there once a month, you know. And then the singing society would meet some other day.

Some people thought our longshore group was just a bunch of IWW's. Anyhow when we had the big trial,* you know, they tried to make capital out of this thing.

Stein: Oh, really.

HS: Oh, it was just a two-bit affair, you know, as things are measured.

Stein: Yes, I could see. They tried to make it into a big conspiracy, or something, you were going to overthrow the government, or something.

HS: Oh, God, yes.

(End of tape 1, side 2. Interview 15)

(End of Insert)

HS: There was a fellow there by the name of Curtis, Harry Curtis. He engaged in some talk at the executive board meetings and membership meetings. He wasn't very effective and he was an old-time longshoreman.

Stein: And he was part of this Albion Hall group?

HS: No, no, I don't think so.

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*The Bridges-Robertson-Schmidt "conspiracy" trial in 1950.
Stein: Larrowe mentions a fellow by the name of B. B. Jones.

HS: B. B. Jones was, as I recall, not there at that time. He popped up later on and he became an active longshoreman. He's a pensioner now, lives in Marin County.

Stein: Can you remember any other people in that group who used to meet at Albion Hall?

HS: Oh, well, there was a man there by the name of -- he was a very corpulent fellow and a winch driver at Matson; he was known as Fats McKenna. I never got acquainted with him, and the only thing that I do recall is that in the executive board meetings he would do considerable talking. One time during an executive board meeting he took exception because it was pointed out by somebody that longshoremen shouldn't really patronize the cafeteria which was located on the Matson dock.

Now, I don't know whether that cafeteria was a privately operated thing or whether it was actually operated by the Matson Navigation Company. But somebody pointed out that the men shouldn't patronize the company's cafeteria. "Get your lunch some other place." McKenna took offense at that and he said it couldn't do any harm to patronize the company's. He got quite vehement about it.

At one time McKenna had been a member of the Albion Hall group. He was one of those fellows who -- he lost his temper one day and he started to look around and got a little bit wild.

He said that, in his opinion, some of the people sitting around in this gathering were IWW's or maybe even Communists. I don't know whether he said "even Communists," but I know he used the word Communist. This started quite a lengthy conversation which led to nothing except that he didn't show up any more.

I don't recall B. B. Jones coming to that meeting. I was there, Harry was there. As I told you in an earlier session, a sort of a left-wing German singing society held forth there and I was attempting to use my melodious baritone in that group. (chuckles.)
Stein: You must have spent a good deal of your time there, then, in Albion Hall.

HS: Well, it was also a saloon which was operated as a concession. The operator of the saloon was working for himself, but his patrons were these people who belonged to this Germanic club, you see.

I can recall that after we got the tear gas treatment on the fifth of July, 1934, before I went home I went to the Albion Hall to lean up against the bar and get a drink. Somebody looked at me and said, "Henry, you got a bad cold?" I'm pretty sure I said, "No. This peculiar appearance is because some longshoremen were shot at by police shooting tear gas shells that causes your eyes to water and stuff." I recall very vividly he says, "Have you got a bad cold?" (chuckles)* Anyhow, we're jumping ahead on the calendar, aren't we?

The Marine Workers' Industrial Union

Stein: Right. Larrowe mentioned, as being part of the waterfront scene at that time, the Marine Workers' Industrial Union. Did you know of them, or were you familiar with the program at all?

HS: I got familiar with their program. It was to attempt to organize all of the seafaring men, even though these men might have been, or were at the time, members of the old, established seafaring unions, such as the Sailors' Union of the Pacific, the Marine Cooks and Stewards, the Marine Firemen, Oilers and Watertenders and whatnot --

Stein: -- and Wipers.

HS: -- and Wipers, yes, but we used to call them "what-nots," called them "the black gang" for short.

*For further detail on the Albion Hall group, see the Supplementary Interviews, tape 1, side 2 and tape 2, side 1.
HS: I don't think the MWIU attempted to organize the Marine Engineers, nor did they try to touch the Masters, Mates, and Pilots. Those people are licensed seafaring personnel and they are considered to be a couple of notches above the ordinary run of seafaring folk.

In any event, they had a hall somewhere. But there came a time when it was advocated that they fold up. I think this must have happened during the strike.

We came out on May 9, 1934 and we agitated considerably that the seafaring men should come off their ships as they entered the port, and that the Marine Workers should not attempt to organize these men; let these men go back to their old, established unions because, after all, we were back in the ILA, an AF of L organization. And that's what happened.

I do have a vague remembrance of their headquarters being smashed up by the authorities.

Stein: That was during the strike.

HS: Well, maybe that's a little bit too early to talk about that, so --

Stein: But did they have any contact with the longshoremen then?

HS: Oh, there was some kind of liaison. They distributed bulletins and we distributed bulletins. But after the strike started, as I recall it, they withdrew as an organization. If they had any members in the -- mention their initials again.

Stein: The MWIU?

HS: Yes -- they were urged to get back into the Firemen, or the SUP -- depending on whether you were sailing on deck or below decks -- or the Marine Cooks and Stewards. I don't recall them being very effective. Once the seafaring men came off their ships they went back into their old unions.
Maybe it's not right to say "back in", perhaps a goodly number of these fellows had been paying dues to the old, established unions all during the lean years; probably not going to any meetings or anything ....*

Stein: Was the MWIU's bulletin called The Waterfront Worker, or was that something else?

The ILA Program

HS: No, The Waterfront Worker was a longshoreman's sheet issued and produced, according to its own word -- usually printed at the bottom of the sheet -- by rank and file members of the longshoremen's union. As I recall it, it hit the piers long before the strike started.

Steve Murdock, the present editor of the (ILWU) Dispatcher, runs a column which he calls "Forty Years Ago." He calls attention -- he's reviewing the whole thing. Haven't you seen it lately?

Stein: No, I haven't.

(Interruption)

Stein: We were talking about The Waterfront Worker. What sort of program did the Waterfront Worker advocate?

HS: It advocated reorganization, advocated Coastwise unity, it advocated recognition by the employers on a Coastwise basis. It pointed out that the employers would probably resist Coastwise recognition, and they did.

Employers in San Francisco said they couldn't speak for the other ports because they were a San Francisco organization, "So why come around here and bother us with that kind of thing," was their comment.

*For further details on the MWIU, see Supplemental Interviews, tape 1, side 2.
HS: Of course, The Waterfront Worker advocated unity and racial equality, undoubtedly.

Stein: Why was the issue of Coastwise unity so important?

HS: Well, ships are like factories that can go from one place to another. A ship could come from New York, bring cargo through Los Angeles, San Diego, San Francisco, and every port on the coast and pick up cargo. So it was necessary to work together and be bound together because by so doing you become stronger.

I guess the best example is to point to that union which is composed of fifty states known as the United States of America — probably the most powerful union in the world, so we have been told. And of course it was pointed out that eventually you might have to strike and you cannot afford to strike port by port, because then the employers will be united on a Coastwise basis to pick you off port by port, which had happened before.

Stein: You mean they could just divert ships to other ports?

HS: Oh, yes, indeed. If San Francisco had gone on strike, the ship would have proceeded to another port and then the other ports would have worked the cargo. But by having a Coastwise organization the employers were confronted with this Coastwise thing which was, from their point of view, very difficult to handle and difficult to overcome.

Anyhow, as a result of the award being handed down on October 12, 1934, Coastwise recognition became a part of the deal.

Yes, The Waterfront Worker was rather effective. You know, it pointed to some of the horrible conditions that were prevalent on the waterfront — working conditions — not to mention the low wages, and the uncertainty of being employed, and the fact that we had a wide open port.
HS: Anybody could come down there and stand in front of a pier and be hired. The people -- the walking bosses -- who were engaged for the purpose of hiring and firing, they would notice that new faces would appear in the shape-up. Then, in order to carry out their program of intimidation, they would hire some of the newcomers.

(End of Tape 3, side A)

(HS: And of course, if a new man is hired he will be watched -- and he will be aware of that -- and he will do a real good job. Then the man who does the hiring will notice this new man in the shape-up again, and he will hire him, and he will leave another fellow out; some fellow that he doesn't like or he doesn't think is a good worker. This is the kind of manipulation that employer representatives were able to do.

Of course, the award took care of that in excellent fashion. It provided, among other things, that a joint labor relations committee shall be established in every port composed of equal representation, union and employer, and the joint labor relations committee shall prepare a list of all longshoremen of the port who had earned their living at longshore work for at least twelve months out of the three years immediately preceding the strike. You can get that out of the award.

Then it goes on to say "no other longshoreman shall be employed as long as there are men available who can be called out of this list" -- which of course stopped all this free hiring. Then it went on to say, "Set up a hiring hall which shall be jointly controlled."

Stein: One of the other items that Larrowe mentions as part of the ILA program then was six-hour day and thirty-hour week.

HS: Well, that's a provision of the award. The award goes on to say that, "First six hours between eight a.m. and three p.m. shall be at the straight
time rate, and the overtime shall start at three in the afternoon and carry on through the night."

Stein: I'm confused about that, because it seems to me in this period or at least not too long before this period, people had been fighting for an eight hour day. I wondered how the longshoremen managed to argue for a six-hour day.

HS: The eight-hour day, in a manner of speaking, had been established by the labor movement in America prior to 1934. It's true that if the employer wanted you to work more than eight hours, you did. But there were programs in effect throughout the country that eight hours was a day's work, and that overtime was demanded, in some places granted, if you worked more than eight hours.

But we just put in a demand for what we then called "six and two." The ship clerks on the Pacific Coast didn't care for that, so they settled for eight hours straight time.

But soon we learned that the employers were going to attempt to circumvent that whole deal because, all of a sudden, they instructed the hiring hall that these men would be employed on a ship from eight in the morning until three in the afternoon, and then they would be required to knock off.

They wanted the hiring hall to send fresh gangs at three o'clock, and those fresh gangs would work for straight time for the first two hours, from three until five. Of course, that was not very smart on the part of the employers because there was a war on right away. We revolted against that. You know, every man on the job pointed out, "All they want you to do is work for straight time -- they don't want to give you that overtime." Anyhow, the employers didn't force the issue.

Then our unhappiness also had something to do with the fact that, according to the award, the employers could request -- and the hiring hall should furnish them -- steady gangs. Employers would be free to hire unsteady gangs whenever, in
HS: their opinion, they required such unsteady gangs. But that's another subject -- maybe I'm getting ahead of you.

Stein: One of the reasons I'm interested in the six-hour day is that Larrowe says that it was a "spread-the-work measure," that it had evolved during the Depression period as a way of spreading the work. I wondered if you thought that was accurate.

HS: Prior to the strike it was customary, or putting it this way -- since the employer was in full control, he would work you through the night if he felt like it. The award provided that that had to stop. I guess from the point of view of the men it was a good thing because they realized that they were -- what they called -- going to get the big money at three o'clock now, instead of five."

In years gone by, after you had worked eight hours and the employer wanted you to work longer, you would get overtime from five o'clock onward. When a longshoreman goes to work at five o'clock in the evening, he gets overtime from the first hour. It's understood that all hours from five o'clock onward until the following morning at eight are overtime hours.

The new factor was that if a gang goes to work at eight o'clock in the morning and is required to work until five p.m., the men get overtime from three to five. They can be required to work until six under certain circumstances; that would also be overtime.

Then there are other provisions. For instance: if you work five hours and beyond, and you are required to work into a sixth hour without an opportunity to eat, you must get what they call penalty time, and I think that's still in existence. Some of these items I don't remember so well because by now it's over twenty years since I "shook hands" with the cargo. All these fine points that we are discussing are in that award, and you have it, don't you?
The Matson Incident

Stein: Yes. I brought Mike Quin's book with me --
*The Big Strike.* Continuing the story of the
ILA, Larrowe mentions the incident at the Matson
dock where several men were fired for wearing
ILA buttons, and a whole bunch of Blue Books were
burned. I wondered if you remembered that.

HS: I was working at the Admiral Line dock, and I did
not witness the burning of the Blue Books. I
think they burned the Blue Books elsewhere. But
there is this incident where some men at the Matson
Line came to work wearing the new union buttons
and got fired.

Then there was an uproar, or a small revolt,
men refused to continue to work, and they all
gathered at the gate. The thing wound up in the
lap of an arbitrator. He must have been an officer
that worked under the NRA (National Recovery Act).
He held a hearing.

I can remember going to that hearing as an
observer. I couldn't have testified there
because I didn't witness anything at Matson docks,
except that I walked up there one time and saw a
bit of a turmoil.

I remember that Fats McKenna testified at that
hearing. He was a Matson Line winch driver. He
was aware of the fact that he was talking to a
federal man, and of course he was impressed by
that.

Well, this arbitrator -- I read his name in
Paul Eliel's book**the other day -- he rendered an
award -- or a decision -- which the Matson
Navigation Company complied with, and reemployed
these men.

*The Big Strike*, Olema Press, 1949; pp. 255-8
**The Waterfront and General Strikes, San Francisco,
1934 (San Francisco, 1934)
HS: And, of course, that was a big victory. That news traveled up and down the waterfront and all of a sudden the fellows realized that they had some power.

Stein: How did that sense of power manifest itself at that point?

HS: I think that it manifested itself by more men coming into the union -- that is ILA Local 38-79 -- and going up to 113 Steuart Street and paying their fifty cents to either Holman or one of his assistants. I guess there came a day when nearly everybody was in -- let's put it that way.

The Coastwise Convention

HS: Then we worked towards that certain day -- and it must have been February of 1934 -- when we had a Coastwise convention and we got acquainted with people from other ports.

At that point, Holman did a bad thing. You see, the delegates from 38-79 were democratically elected, Harry was one, I was another, and Dutch Detrich, he was there. It's possible, we might have had ten or twelve delegates there. Holman had been a candidate to become a delegate, but he didn't get elected, which must have hurt his pride.

In any event, there came a time during this convention when he came to the convention hall and he brought with him credentials as if he were a delegate, which he himself had made out and signed, too.

That was a bad thing and I don't know who raised hell -- it must have been Harry. So naturally he wasn't seated. Subsequently this matter was taken up in a membership meeting of Local 38-79 and there must have been some kind of hearing and Holman was ousted -- but that's another story.
HS: Then there was a fellow by the name of Albin Kullberg. He was a Swede and a rather effective speaker, but later on he went sour and joined what we called the Steuart Street gang. This was when we went CIO -- that's still another story.

Stein: I'll make a note of that, and remember to bring it up when we get to that point!

   We were talking about the convention. Larrowe said that Bridges and a Holman man had toured the Northwest to encourage the locals to send rank and file delegates. Do you remember that?

HS: That Harry had gone on a tour? Yes, I do recall that he went.

Stein: Was that when Detrich also went?

HS: Well, that could be. There was a fellow by the name of (Ted) Starr, I believe, who was in the Bargemen. I know one time Harry got word from the northwest to come there in a hurry, and the business of grabbing a plane any time of the day or night was not prevalent at that time. This fellow Starr offered to drive him, and they drove all day and all night to go somewhere up there. I think this fellow Starr was the President of the Bargemen's local, which must have been Local 22.

   Yes, it follows, just naturally, that Harry would want to make a trip for the purpose of convincing the other locals to go through the process of electing delegates to this convention. Apparently he was concerned that officers might appoint themselves or appoint others to make the journey to San Francisco.

   As a matter of fact, some officers of the district -- Pacific Coast being a district of the whole International -- came; I think Bjorglund came to that convention. The secretary of the Seattle local came to that convention -- I don't know whether he was elected or not. A fellow by the name of Paddy Morris, who was a sort of an Irish character from Tacoma, he came.
It came to a satisfactory development. I recall that most of the delegates who were there were elected by membership meetings in the other ports, which was also the case in Local 38-79.

And, of course, 38-79 just had been re-established. The initiation fee was fifty cents, and the monthly dues were very low, so there was no money to pay the delegates. I think they managed to pay us two dollars and fifty cents a day, which was, as far as I was concerned, "gravy" as they call it on the waterfront, because I was out of a job down there anyway.

Later on, after we came home -- that convention was over and we had made our reports -- there was some kind of resolution adopted that we should be given some additional monies. I don't know what that amounted to.

But the program that came out of the convention, as I recall it, was a demand for Coastwise recognition, an increase in money -- I think we demanded at least a dollar an hour -- overtime at three o'clock, and all of these other goodies which you apparently have in your records already: also the hiring hall -- of course we demanded a union hiring hall, completely controlled by the union.

It's a good thing that the award said "joint hiring hall" because if we had been granted a union hiring hall it would have cost twice as much; we'd have to pay all the expenses. I think we might have thrown in closed shop.

Stein: Yes, I think you did.

And so on and so forth. Well, we also went on record in this convention that if the employers did not negotiate in good faith and acquiesce to these demands, that we would then take a strike vote on the Coast.

Now, this proposal was misinterpreted by some of the delegates who were present. It was also misunderstood by the public because the press didn't put it out correctly in the beginning, because it simply provided that we take a vote on
HS: a Coastwise basis to enforce our demands. It didn't say that we would go on strike. I can recall a delegate from Local 38-79, he went to the podium and he made a talk against taking a strike vote because he misunderstood. His song and dance was that, "Here you are, you're asking me to go out on strike, and I've got to make a living, and I don't know whether I can go out on strike or not." He made a real scabby speech. He recently died as a pensioner, but he was straightened out with regard to the misunderstanding that he developed.

Well, then some negotiations took place. In the meantime, as I recall it, we still had Holman, and he took a group along to see the waterfront employers of San Francisco. Of course, the first thing that they (the employers) did was to reject that demand, which was Coastwise recognition of our union.

I'm pretty sure that Harry went along on these negotiations. I don't recall that I went along, and I think I was quite satisfied not to go along because the whole thing frightened me a little bit. You know, meet these employers and plow a new furrow.

Stein: It's a tremendous responsibility.

HS: Oh, yes. And I soon learned that once you get elected to something, especially in that union, as soon as you get elected, even as a member of the executive board, you're suspect. You know, the guys treat you as if you'd already stolen the kitty dry. (Chuckles)

Stein: Did "Burglar Bill" Lewis have any more experience than you had had at administrating?

HS: During all the years that we were in limbo -- for fourteen years the union existed in a manner of speaking, but there was nothing to do -- he was working on the waterfront and of course he was a marked man, he couldn't get much work, that's true.
Stein: But he hadn't had any experience in administration of union affairs?

HS: I'm sure he didn't. He had no office; he carried his office around in his vest pocket.

Stein: One of the things that also came out of that convention was a new constitution, wasn't it?

HS: Yes. I don't have any recollection what kind of constitution we worked under when we first started, and it seems to me that I didn't have anything to do with rewriting a new one. So there's not much use to go into that at this point.

Years later, when we were ILWU, I did a little work with regard to constitutional changes. But much to my chagrin, some recent events show that constitutions don't get much attention. You just go along and do as you please. (Ironic laugh)

Stein: Who else beside "Burglar Bill" were elected officers?

HS: Well, there was a man by the name of Cartwright. He had been a business agent in Seattle, he was an old timer, and he was an experienced speaker. On the basis of his ability to speak, he was elected business agent of Local 38-79. And of course he loved to talk about his experiences in Seattle. As I recall it, there was a general strike in Seattle years ago.

Stein: There was.

HS: It was the Seattle longshoremen who, on one occasion, refused to load cargo for the American military -- cargoes being shipped to Siberia where we had troops in support of the White Russians.

Stein: What was the appeal of someone like "Burglar Bill?" Why would people vote for him rather than for you?

HS: He was known. He was known as the district president. Mr. Bjorglund, who was secretary in Tacoma, probably communicated with the locals and refreshed our memory that Lewis was a president and had been for a number of years, that he was not
HS: on the payroll, as Bjorglund was, and that here was a wonderful opportunity to revive the union. In fact, the union had been revived, and I guess that he could point out that, among other things, that this man should be given an opportunity. I don't remember whether they tried to make capital out of the fact that he was native born; as far as Harry was concerned they were anxious to point out that he was an alien.

I can't say that Lewis had any capabilities. Harry became a much better speaker than Lewis ever was.

Anyhow, one of the factors that it might be difficult to understand is -- and I'm going to have difficulty describing this -- you see, when we took part in that organizational campaign and began to use the microphone, we became known to all of the fellows who came to meetings. In a manner of speaking you became a marked person. Lewis they didn't know any more.

The other thing that was an important ingredient in the pudding is that we were all of one mark; we all went through the struggle of 1934 together and went through the reorganizational campaign prior to '34 together.

When the strike was over and the award was in our pockets it became known that we had been an army, that the army had developed some leaders, and that we'd all come through victorious. We had a place in the sun. We had some power. And there was nobody around who didn't take part in this struggle.

The longshoremen have a comment or a popular usage with regard to certain types of cargo. For instance, a ship might come in with twenty thousand cases of pineapple from Hawaii and it's all one mark going to one consignee; you don't have to do any segregating. So, the men referred to themselves as to this type of job: "We are all of one mark." We were bound together.
HS: These things change, you know. For instance, the contrast is great; now we have old-timers who are retired, we have old-timers who are on the brink of retirement, we have newcomers. And the newcomers are anxious to take over, as we were anxious to take over in 1934. We looked down the end of our noses against the fellows who were old-timers then.

I can recall one gang boss on the Admiral Line, Portuguese fellow; he says, "I hope that when we elect our people that we elect nothing but conservative people and get conservative lawyers." Well, I didn't pay too much attention to that comment, but later on I thought, "Holy smoke, that certainly would have been a mistake to elect nothing but conservatives and conservative lawyers." His pitch was, "Get a conservative lawyer to do your negotiating for you."

Stein: At the convention there had been a motion to call a strike if the employers refused to accept the union's demands?

HS: Yes, well, the proposition was that we would arrange for a strike vote, and that was done. The district office made arrangements to prevail upon all the locals on the coast to vote for strike, yes or no, giving authority to pull the pin as of a certain day if our demands were not granted.

Once the vote was in, and I presume that the district office sent ballots to all the locals up and down the coast with a request to return the ballots as of a certain date and arrange for a count; there's no question about it, the Coastwise membership voted to strike as of a certain date.

Then the negotiations went on and the negotiating committee had this clout. The employers were made aware of this. But they still refused. Then the committee had to make a decision as to when they would pull the pin. I think they decided to make
HS: it a certain date in March of 1934. Then the authorities were advised. I'm pretty sure that Madame Perkins was Secretary of Labor at that time.

Stein: That's right.

(End of Tape 3, side B)

(The Crucial Date)

Stein: You had set a strike date for sometime in March.

HS: Yes, we got a message from Roosevelt, who was floating around on the Pacific Ocean on the cruiser Houston. I don't know whether the wire came from him or from him via the White House, but he requested that the strike should be delayed in order to give appropriate authority time to look into the matter. I can recall having a meeting of the strike committee.

Stein: You were on the strike committee?

HS: Yes, we had a strike committee set up. It was an enlarged executive board. We had a visit, and I think it was Dr. Henry Grady.

Stein: Edward F. McGrady?

HS: No, that's another guy. That's "Ferocious" McGrady who was Assistant Secretary of Labor.

Stein: Oh, I didn't realize that's what you called him.

HS: Yes, we called him that. He was an old labor skate, as they called them.

This other gentleman's name was (Henry F.) Grady, and he subsequently became ambassador
HS: to India and to Greece, or -- what's the name of the country where the capital is Tehran? It was in the paper this morning.

Stein: Iran?

HS: Iran. -- Shah of Iran.

Stein: (Reads from Quin, The Big Strike, p. 43): "President Roosevelt appointed a mediation board consisting of Charles A. Reynolds of Seattle, Henry F. Grady of San Francisco, and J. L. Leonard of Los Angeles." They were the Regional Labor Board directors of their various cities.

HS: Let me see what Eliel has to say about this man. (Reading from index) "Grady, Henry Francis." That the same fellow? "Chairman, NRA Regional Labor Board of S. F.; Chairman, President's Fact-Finding Commission; Arbitrator in the Matson dock strike; appointed to the President's Fact-Finding Commission; statement concerning agreement of April 3; urged delay of strike action; arrives in San Francisco; comments on WEU" -- that's Waterfront Employers' Union -- "proposal of May 28, exhibit 5; confers with Federal officials."

If I'm not mistaken, he came to the strike committee one evening urging a delay in strike action, and he really painted a grim picture as to what we might be getting into. He pointed out, "There's liable to be violence. If you've studied the history of the labor movement in the United States you must realize that such things do happen." He said, "Some of you are liable to be killed, and some of you are liable to be hurt and injured. I urge you to delay it."

And I don't know how we -- the strike committee of San Francisco -- communicated with the rest of the Coast. But there was, again, "Burglar" Bill Lewis; he was the Coastwise president and he took authority to notify the Coast that we shouldn't go out because we had this request from President Roosevelt. So the thing was delayed.
Then, of course, there were more meetings and more Coastwise expressions. It was decided that if we didn't get satisfaction we would go out on May 10, and that is what happened.

The Big Strike Begins

Stein: The ninth.

HS: By golly, the ninth. That was forty years ago this year.

Stein: That's right, it was. What happened on May 9? What did you do?

HS: I'm pretty sure we had a strike committee meeting the evening before, but I don't recall it. We set up a publicity committee, and we elected a soup kitchen committee, and things of that nature. I know that I got elected on a publicity committee.

Stein: What did you do on the publicity committee?

HS: I was just going to say that I didn't look forward to doing that because I realized that the other two fellows and I would have to prepare bulletins. It was advocated that we get a bulletin out, if we could, every day. I didn't realize that I could write something. I guess the other two fellows had the same kind of point of view, but somehow or another, as they say in England, we muddled through.

The soup kitchen committee established a facility right around the corner from the union headquarters. That facility faced the Embarcadero. They put up, in due time, a very efficient thing -- must have fed hundreds of meals during that strike.

Stein: Where would they get their food?

HS: We had begging committees, and, of course, we sent out begging letters all over the nation.
Especially, we in San Francisco contacted the labor movement and it was quite successful. A fellow came down from the Chauffeurs' Union and he said, "I don't know how much money we've got in the treasury, but we're going to send you fifteen hundred dollars a week as long as it lasts." And they did. I don't know how long it lasted.

The fact of the matter is that when the strike was over we had more money in Local 38-79's treasury than we did when it started.

And we put up a good fight in spite of the tear gas and the cops and the guns. One of the things that happened, somebody said to me, "We've got to keep these guys busy, have to give them something to do. This business of you going down there and holding an open-air meeting across the street from the union headquarters"—there was a gasoline station there and there was some space—"that won't do. You have to have more things to do."

I guess it was pointed out to this fellow that we had fourteen or seventeen people working the soup kitchen, but the answer was, "That keeps those guys busy. The other guys have to picket."

There were people around who were, in their opinion, experienced scab chasers. They would do their stuff in the middle of the night, or whenever.

I don't know where I got the idea, but I know that I did talk to a fellow by the name of Johnny Olsen (who later became vice-president of Local 10) and I said, "What about parading up and down the waterfront and taking a soap box along and when we get to the end of the line get up on there and make a speech?" John said, "Well, let's try it." He said that he was a pretty good drummer boy to keep tempo.
HS: So we started off and marched up and down the waterfront, maybe not exactly in step, but in column. We would march from the Ferry Building to Fisherman's Wharf, or from the Ferry Building in the other direction towards the Dollar docks, which would be Pier 48. We would be marching, if we went south, against the automobile traffic, but if we marched towards Fisherman's Wharf we would be marching with the traffic.

So we decided to march on the sidewalk, and then the police got orders to chase us off the sidewalk. Those were just traps, you know, because they were looking for opportunity to break up these marches. Every once in a while we would go over on the sidewalk and they would raise hell. There would be some horse cops around and they would ride into us and scatter us all over the place. Then they would arrest some people.

Of course, we had what we called the legal committee to bail fellows out. Dutch Detrich, he was one of the guys and he was up at the Hall of Justice all the time bailing people out.

Stein: Was the ILD involved in that? The International Labor Defense?

HS: Yes, they were active on that. I don't know where in the heck all the money came from. I don't know how much Dutch Detrich had to put up in order to bail these fellows out.

Then, of course, they had to have lawyers, and lawyers came around to help for free. That's how our friends (Richard) Gladstein, (Aubrey) Grossman, (George) Andersen, et cetera, all got started.

And a doctor came around because every once in awhile when somebody in the union headquarters would need medical attention. The doctor is dead now. I forget his name.
There were things to do every day, and once in awhile this business got quite serious. One day we started out to march south from the Ferry Building. I was not at the head, I was marching with Johnny Olsen with about fourteen or fifteen marchers ahead of us. And then there was the flag, and the guys up in front swung onto the sidewalk.

It came as if it were prearranged -- horse cops from all directions and just rode into us. Schomaker got beat up and Willie Christensen got beat up -- he was too heavy to get out of the way, anyway -- and we were scattered in all directions. Then they shot at us. There was an empty lot alongside the Seaboard Hotel and many of us ran through that lot towards Steuart Street. I was really running; I fell flat on my face on purpose because I could hear the bullets flying over my head -- or maybe I thought I did, you know.

You don't stop to think about it at a time like that.

So after a little bit, I started to walk back towards the headquarters, just sauntering around. The fellows were coming from all directions. You had to walk up a stairs to get to the union office on the second floor. All of a sudden I was confronted by a couple of gentlemen in civilian clothes; they stopped me and one of them started to point his index finger at me and he said, "Hey, Schmidt, you're supposed to be the leader, why didn't you go out there and take it?"

I should have tried to tear the cop from his horse, that's what he meant -- get myself clubbed. I don't know what kind of a reply I made. I guess I didn't say anything. If I had said anything, they would have probably arrested me for obstructing an officer. Isn't that what they call it?

These men were policemen in plain clothes?
HS: Sure, sure. Anxious to make an arrest.

Stein: When they did arrest people, what were they arrested for? Was it violating the anti-picketing ordinance?

HS: No. They would say "Obstructing traffic, marching on the sidewalk, disobeying the orders of a policeman." I think if you speak harshly to a policeman that's interpreted to mean disobeying his orders. There might have been fourteen or fifteen fellows that wound up in the cooler that morning.

On another occasion we marched all the way to Fisherman's Wharf and had no difficulty. When we were there I got up on the soap box and I was looking at about fourteen or fifteen policemen, all of them mounted -- all of these horses.

I happened to remember that the policemen in the city of Boston struck one time years ago when (Calvin) Coolidge was governor of the State of Massachusetts. I didn't belabor these cops, but I spoke to our guys. "These policemen, they ought to join a union and join us instead of sitting there and looking at us on their horses." They didn't do anything that morning. That's how I got my start in the labor movement.

Defense Against Strikebreakers

Stein: You mentioned strike breakers before. Larrowe says that they were put up on the Diana Dollar and the Wilhelmina.

HS: Yes, the Diana Dollar was alongside of one of the Admiral Line docks, and I think the Wilhelmina, also a Matson ship, was made fast to an adjoining pier. These ships became hotels for the strikebreakers. Launches would come alongside in the morning and take the strikebreakers off and take them to ships that were being loaded and unloaded. They would just stay there, day after day and night after night. There was nothing we could do
HS: about it, and they had similar experiences in other ports. The ships were being worked, and of course the employers saw to it that the press was supplied with press releases every day that they were working so many ships, they had employed so many men. The strikers were being replaced, and things were going on as normal -- which was undoubtedly somewhat exaggerated.

The shipowners got real bold and opened up a strikebreaker recruiting office down near the waterfront, perhaps three or four blocks up from the Embarcadero between Mission and Market. Our guys organized a parade and I think we went up Market Street and then turned left into this particular street.

The dope was, "Don't do anything, just march by there. When there's notice that this great big body of men is coming along it will intimidate the people that are in this recruiting office and they will notice that, somewhere along the line, there -- "

No, I know what happened. I can't recall how many of us were marching, maybe seven hundred or so -- after we peacefully marched past this place and turned the corner to the left and were marching back towards the waterfront, the police attacked us. The only man that got a real good head injury was an elderly Slavonian; I can't recall his name. Of course, that made headlines in the paper: "Strikers attempt to close recruiting office," and that kind of thing. There were almost daily incidents.

Phony Settlement Offers

Stein: Then in the middle of May, I guess, things had come to the point where Washington was concerned and they sent McGrady out.

HS: Yes, McGrady undoubtedly met with Bill Lewis and maybe with Harry. I don't recall coming to any meeting where he was present.
And then Joe Ryan came out in late May, and McGrady called a meeting of Ryan and several of the West Coast longshore officials -- but not Bridges and the shipowners.

This was the May -- first there was the May 28th agreement that came out of this meeting that McGrady called.

This is all in Larrowe, so I really don't need to go over it in detail here, but it called for "the employers would recognize the union as a bargaining agent on a port by port basis, hiring halls would be established at the employers' expense in which union and non-union men would be hired without preference, employers and the union in each port would negotiate the rules governing registration and dispatching longshoremen, the union could have one of its members in the hiring hall to see that there was no discrimination against its members, and wages and hours would be settled later by arbitration."

The plan was shouted down by the longshoremen.

Yes. In waterfront language, it was "dumped," especially in our local.

The San Francisco local took a referendum on May 31, according to Larrowe.

On that particular issue?

On that particular proposal.

Does it say that Ryan was present at that time?

No, Ryan at this point had left for the Northwest to try to drum up --

I see. Well, it must have been a few evenings earlier when we had an interesting incident take place.

What was that?
We were holding a meeting in the Eagles' Hall on Golden Gate Avenue and it no doubt had something to do with that particular proposal. Of course, everybody knew that it wouldn't get past the rank and file. Ryan came to that meeting and he was on the podium, talking Brooklynese. We had a fellow by the name of John Larsen who was known as "Pirate" Larsen because he had only one eye and he wore a patch. He sort of looked like -- wasn't it John Silver, that mythical character, the pirate?

I don't know who was supposed to be the chairman, but I can still see John standing up there at the microphone and Joe Ryan was alongside of him. There was a bit of a pause and "Pirate" Larsen said, "You know, fellows, this guy is nothing but a fink and he's trying to fink all of us." (laughter) And that finished Joe Ryan. He probably never recovered from it.

The whole proposition was just ludicrous. I don't know how those gentlemen who were high in the councils of the Department of Labor could be so stupid as to come along with a proposition like that.

Port by port, hiring halls controlled by the employer, and the union would be allowed to have a man in the hiring hall to see to it things were on the up and up.

Well, the first thing the shipowners would do is to pay this guy off so he couldn't see anything, you know. We have some of those characters in the hiring hall right now.

On May 31, which is the day that the referendum rejected Ryan's proposal, there was also a Youth Day parade that had been organized by the Communist party. The story is in Larrowe. Briefly, it was this: for some reason or another, the young people hadn't gotten a permit for the parade and you, as I remember, witnessed the police brutality against the young people.
HS: Yes. I was standing at the second floor window and I guess I had been told that these people were going to come down the street. They were moving towards the waterfront and when the incident took place they were at Steuart and Mission, meaning that they were only about one short block from the waterfront.

I don't recall how many there were, but it was an opportunity for the horse cops to ride into them and club some of them. I was standing in the office window watching all this. There was a fellow by the name of Norman standing alongside of me; he was a striker. I started to complain about, "These damn so-and-so cops. Look how they're beating up on these kids. I guess they were all adults, but they were very young. And this fellow Norman said, "But they're only Communists." I told Larrowe that.

Then, something else happened, months later. I was standing at the same window. I don't know how it started, but strikers were running across the intersection of Steuart and Mission and they were running into an empty lot, and by running into that empty lot they ran into a fence -- a fence that an agile person would be able to get over.

Our guys were doing the running and the cops were shooting with buckshot. All of a sudden I saw my friend Norman; he was climbing over the fence and he got shot in the hindquarters. (laughter) I'm sure that must be in this book (Larrowe's). Well, maybe it was left out.

Stein: No, it's in the book. I suppose Norman changed his views about policemen after that.

HS: I hope so. Years later he became a pensioner and he started to become a card player in the pensioners' recreation room. One time I said, "Hello there, Norman," and I went over and squeezed his shoulder. I didn't say a word, you know, I know what I was thinking of. (laughter) I hope he was thinking of the same thing.
Stein: Well, at least it shows that he was finally able to sit down again. Okay, I think I'll stop right there and then we can start in next time with the June sixteenth agreement, if that's okay.

HS: Yes. June sixteenth, that must be when I just—I arrived back in San Francisco on the afternoon of that day.

Stein: Where had you been?

HS: I think I had been up in the Northwest. I was supposed to make a little bit of a tour and tell the people how we were doing in San Francisco.

Stein: That was the tour when you felt very green about public speaking.

HS: Yes, I did a horrible job.

Stein: What ports did you go to?

HS: I went to Portland and Seattle, and I don't know if I went to a small port or not.

(End of Tape 4, side A)

(End of Interview)
IV THROUGH TRAGEDY TO TRIUMPH

(Interview 3: 8 November, 1974)

(Begin Tape 5, side A)

Tear Gas and Teamsters

Stein: Is there anything on the first page (of the interview outline) that you thought needed adding to?

HS: (Reading from the outline): "San Francisco Police Chief lays in gas supply" -- Well, later it came out that the tear gas supply, and materials of that kind, were being supplied by a couple of manufacturing concerns that were located back East. There were two salesmen out here to contact the police and they succeeded in selling a goodly portion. It much, much later came out through the investigations of the Senate Education and Labor Committee, chaired by (Senator) Robert La Follette, that the shipowners paid the bill for that stuff; the city itself was not billed.

Then, much later I got a notice from a fellow by the name of (Harvey) Richards who lives in Atherton and who was a photographer of sorts. He sent me a clipping out of the newspaper which said that one of those fellows had died in the poor house in San Francisco -- one of those salesmen. His name was (Ignatius H.) McCarty.

Stein: Yes, McCarty was one of them.
HS: He died in Laguna Honda Home. (Reading from outline): "Did any ILA people go to the Teamsters to speak? I don't think I've said anything on that, but I do recall that the strike committee, or the executive board of ILA 38-79, suggested that somebody go to a meeting of the Teamsters executive board and make a talk there. By golly, they chose me. Of course, I had had no experience at that sort of thing, but I went anyway.

Stein: Why do you think they chose you?

HS: Oh, I don't know, I guess they thought I was a good-looking foreigner, (laughter) seems to have the gift of gab, and a little bit boastful, you know. The man that was chairing the meeting at the Teamsters' Hall was old Mike Casey, who was entitled to be famous, and the secretary was a fellow by the name of (John) McLaughlin.

They were the type of men who had relations at City Hall, if you know what I mean. One of the things that was suggested to me, it must have been by Harry, was that when I get over there and make my talk and ask for support, I suggest to my audience that they ought to set up a strike committee elected by their membership. So, I made some mention of that.

Old Mike Casey picked that up after I got through. He said, "We're mindful of the suggestion that the brother from the Longshoremen made, but we are accustomed to making our own arrangements, and we shall set up a committee perhaps by election and perhaps by some other means." You know, by putting men -- he would appoint them.

But we have that kind of system in the ILWU now, too. We go to the mayor and have the mayor appoint somebody to be a City Hall commissioner or the like of that. So, that's about all I have to say on that particular point.

Stein: Did the Teamsters, that evening, appoint a committee?
HS: You know, the polite thing to do is to excuse yourself and let them carry on with their business. They set up a committee, but I don't know whether they elected it or not. It's just possible that the chairman, Mike Casey, said to his assembled executive board, "If there's no objection, I will appoint the whole executive board as the strike committee," which is sort of customary. Executive board members are usually chosen.

Well, I think we have had sufficient conversation regarding May 9 to May 16. Then there was all kinds of excitement around the front. In mid-May, the other maritime unions went out on strike and their men came off the ships. Late May, Joseph Ryan arrived. I think we've covered that.

Stein: Yes, we covered that May 28 agreement.

HS: Well, that went out the window. Ryan went up north. The June 16 agreement was repudiated. (Reading from interview outline): "Strikers form joint strike committee with Bridges as chairman. Schmidt in any role? Settle in for long siege." I don't know why we called it a joint strike committee. I think it was just a strike committee representing ILA 38-79. At that point, we were not associated with any of the seamen yet, as I recall it.

Insofar as my role is concerned, I was just a member of this strike committee which met every day. And this is correct; Harry wound up being the chairman.

Speaking of joint maritime strike committees: we set that kind of thing up in the next strike, the 1936-'37 deal, because then we had an association and a relationship with the striking maritime unions. There was a committee representative of all of the maritime unions which, during that '36-'37 strike, met every day. There was a fellow by the name of Grady, who was an officer of the Masters, Mates, and Pilots, and he became the chairman.

Stein: That's a good thing to pick up later when we talk about the '36 strike.
HS: Well, I'm sure that these things are correct: the meeting in the mayor's office -- Ryan and ILA officials, not Bridges; I don't think he was there; three Teamsters -- that must have been Mike Casey and McLaughlin and (Dave) Beck; and I'm sure it's correct that Lewis didn't sign the June 16 Agreement. He had been to a number of strike committee meetings with Harry in the chair, and Harry was constantly explaining about rank and file control, so Lewis was not free to sign that agreement that they had arrived at in the mayor's office.

On the 26th of June you say that President Roosevelt appointed Archbishop Edward J. Hanna, O. K. Cushing, and Ed McGrady. With regard to the next sentence which is, "Board gets Industrial Association to postpone forced opening of the port," I don't recall that and I don't know if the Board was already holding hearings. But, even if they were not, they could have requested the Industrial Association not to try to open the port.

It's possible that McGrady was already here, out from Washington. Archbishop Hanna, of course, he resided here and so did Oscar Cushing, (a prominent local attorney). It is correct to say that the attempt to open the port was postponed.

Blasting the Port Open

HS: July second -- shall we go on to that?
Stein: Yes.
HS: The papers announced that the port would be opened. The attempt was made in the afternoon and it must have been the McCormick dock, which was at that time Pier 38. What they did was to bring a number of trucks in to the dock, and that's as far as the performance went on that particular day. The idea in mind was that they would load those trucks with cargo and attempt to bring them out the following day, which was July 3.
HS: Now I want to say something about the "brick incident." It so happened that near Pier 38, not in front of the pier but further up the street where it bends and takes you towards the Townsend Street Southern Pacific Railway station, somewhere along the line there was a large pile of bricks lying out in the open, loose.

They were not piled systematically one on top of the other; they were completely loose. Somebody mentioned at the (Longshore) Hall that those bricks were there, and if trucks were going to come out of Pier 38, they would undoubtedly be driven past that pile of bricks.

The order of the day was that we would gather around Pier 38 just to see what we could do. We went there with a substantial number of men. Some of them were standing across the street from Pier 38 and others were standing on the street near the bricks, perhaps right in front of the brick pile.

Bricks were thrown, there's no question about that, but apparently the police knew, or suspected, that something was going to happen there and they started chasing the men away from the brick pile. That's when they got the bricks. It's possible that if the police hadn't bothered us, some bricks might have been thrown at the trucks. Now they were so careless as to try to chase us away, so they got bricks thrown at them.

Stein: They were asking for it, in a sense.

HS: Yes. They should have worked the night before and removed the bricks.

Stein: Police don't seem to learn that sort of thing.

HS: Well, they are a certain type of human being. Once they put on that uniform, they associate with the establishment and they feel that they're safe. I don't know how many policemen were injured. Undoubtedly the news media got that information from the police headquarters.

Stein: That's what Larrowe says.
The trucks came out and they proceeded past the Southern Pacific station into Third Street looking for some warehouse to get rid of the load they had on the trucks. On their way up Third Street, the longshoremen tried to attack the trucks, but they didn't succeed very well. These vehicles were moving and they made it to the warehouse. There wasn't any damage done there that I can recall.

How were they going to attack the trucks?

Some of them had the thought they might be able to jump on the truck and get in there. As I recall it, the dope was that the trucks were coming out with sacks of rice. It didn't make any sense to me -- rice to be placed on the dock for the purpose of placing it on a ship to send it to some foreign port.

This rice was already on the dock. Maybe it was necessary to take it back to a warehouse. On the other hand, it was apparently the idea of the Industrial Association that it didn't make any difference whether the cargo went in or out; all they had to do is to indicate that they could open the port if they wanted to.

I guess they made an investigation and they learned that there was sacked rice on the dock, that there was a warehouse in the neighborhood not more than a quarter of a mile away, and with a movement like that, they could point out through the newspapers that the port is open, which they did.

It happened on the third of July; the next day was a national holiday and there was nothing doing. Everything was peaceful, but on the morning of the fifth the fun started. That, of course, is another story.
The Fifth of July

Stein: Let's get into that story.

HS: I don't know what time I got down to the waterfront. The soup kitchen faced the Embarcadero and the union headquarters were in the back of the soup kitchen. The entrance to the headquarters was at 113 Steuart Street and if you wanted to get to the Embarcadero all you had to do was come out of the front door on Steuart Street and walk around the corner and you'd be on the Embarcadero.

I took that walk to see what was going on and I saw small trucks and I saw tripods and cameras mounted on the truck beds and newspaper people all around. There were police, and they were there with their shooting apparatus. I'm pretty sure that I saw at least one of these tear gas salesmen who was all equipped with a face mask and all that sort of thing, and it was obvious that there was going to be some shooting.

I don't recall if any shooting and pushing the men around occurred that morning, but it was the idea of the strikers that there would be more trouble at Pier 38 or in that neighborhood. Somehow or another the word got around that there would be action on Rincon Hill. The (Bay) bridge was being built in those days, and Rincon Hill was one of those spots where one of those great pillars would arise.

(As an aside); all that steel that the bridge consumed all came in ships. We handled all that. Of course, they never unloaded any steel during that strike because the strikebreakers were all inexperienced people and they couldn't take a chance to move that steel because it's dangerous cargo.

In any event, it seemed that there were hundreds of men at the foot of Rincon Hill facing Pier 38 and there were at least dozens of us up on top of Rincon Hill. The police were aware of the
HS: fact that we were up on Rincon Hill and maybe they tried to figure out what we were doing there. We couldn't do much harm because we were too far from the pier. I don't remember seeing any trucks coming out of that pier, but I'm sure that some did.

The reason that I didn't see that is because the police learned that strikers were up on top of Rincon Hill, and they started to come after us on horseback. They succeeded in scattering us. We removed ourselves by running as fast as we could because they were on top of the hill, all of them on horseback.

I had driven my car from the union headquarters in the direction of Rincon Hill, parked it somewhere. When it was necessary to run, I thought it was best not to run towards my car, but I did run through the backyard of some residents up there and I climbed a fence. Somehow or another, I got back to the union headquarters. I went back to my car later on in the afternoon.

Many of the incidents took place down on the Embarcadero and around the piers; those I didn't witness. I don't remember what time it was when I made my way back to the headquarters. I know that we were scheduled to hold a strike committee meeting. I don't remember whether we managed that or not.

I don't remember what time it was when the shooting occurred in the square there at the foot of Mission Street and Embarcadero. There is in existence a photograph of a policeman who was standing in the middle of the square there, and the photograph was taken about a second after he was hit in the mouth by a brick that somebody threw at him. I think that photograph is in the union publication, Men and Ships.

Stein: Yes, the one that was put out, I guess, shortly after the '36 strike.

HS: Somewhere along the line. Have you seen it?

Stein: Yes, I have a copy of it.
HS: I know there's a picture in there of my daughter walking with a picket sign. Then there's a picture in that magazine of Lucia* and me at the microphone in the Civic Auditorium at a Christmas party. I'm helping her to sing "Oh Come All You Faithful." (laughter) Those are the things that you remember better than some other things.

The Dead and Wounded

HS: In any event, things got pretty warm around Mission and Embarcadero. Men were coming into the soup kitchen and people were constantly walking back and forth and shooting was going on. That's when it happened that Howard Sperry and a fellow by the name of Olsen came out of the soup kitchen to go to the union headquarters, which was a very short walk of about two minutes, for the purpose of getting their picket cards punched. Working in the soup kitchen was considered to be the same as picketing or writing bulletins, as I was trying to do.

Well, Howard Sperry was killed on the spot. They were both lying there. There's blood on the sidewalk; you can see that in the photograph. Olsen, however, contrary to what some publications still mention, did not die there; he recovered.

The second man killed was up the street. That was Nick Bordoise. He was not a longshoreman, but he was helping out. He came down to do picket duty. He was shot and killed about two blocks up the street, so he was not in the photograph.

When they speak of two men being killed that day, most everybody assumes that it was Olsen and Howard Sperry on that particular spot. Do you have the photograph in mind?

*his daughter.
Stein: I don't think so. I don't remember it.

HS: Olsen recovered. He went back to work. One day he became a pensioner and his name came across my desk. I looked at this name for awhile and I said to myself, "This must be the Olsen who was shot and was bleeding from the mouth and lying on the sidewalk there." He lives in San Carlos and, lo and behold, he lived on a street that's called Alameda de las Pulgas. Do you know any Spanish?

Stein: No.

HS: It means the Avenue of the Fleas. So I wrote him a note and I said, "Are you the Olsen? If you are, why don't you drop around and we'll talk a little bit and photograph you and we'll get your picture in The Dispatcher again." But he never came. I haven't seen him; by this time he might be dead.

Stein: That's too bad that he didn't ever come in.

HS: There was another man, as far as the shooting on the waterfront is concerned on that particular day, and his real name is James Engle. He worked on the Admiral Line docks and I knew him very well, but his nickname was "Kentucky." I suppose he got that name because people thought that he hailed from Kentucky, but he really hailed from Michigan.

He was standing on the curbstone in front of a hotel which is almost directly across the street from Pier 18 or Pier 16. That's where we used to work. These tear gas salesmen were very busy on that day demonstrating their wares. As I recall, newspaper photographers had their hand cameras there and some of them had them on tripods anchored to the floor of truck beds.
"Kentucky" got shot in the side of the head. According to Jimmy Dugan* who witnessed all this, and who later testified before the La Follette committee, "Kentucky" was lying on the sidewalk and he was kicking his limbs just like a chicken does after you cut off its head. He continued to kick for awhile. Jimmy testified that he thought the man was dead, or would die. Well, he also recovered.

The most unusual thing happened. "Kentucky" moved back to his home town in Michigan, recovered, and for a number of years he received a certain sum of money from the longshoremens' union to see him through, so to speak. I don't know how long that gift-giving lasted, but when it was terminated we didn't hear from him any more.

Then one day, years and years later, I had become the pension director, and my secretary came to my little office and she said, "There's a man outside. He wants to see you. He's not a longshoreman; it sounds like his name is Jim Engle, or something like that."

Well, I like to fall off my chair. There he was, completely recovered, just dropping in to say hello. If I'm not mistaken, he had his son with him. He had gone back to Michigan, got married, produced a family. So, I grabbed my camera and photographed him and he wound up in The Dispatcher. It was a big day in my life.

Stein: I can see that.

HS: These are all -- well, I was going to say little things, but they're not, you know. Human relations items, is that what they call them in the news media?

*In the report of this incident by the (Senator Robert) La Follette Committee on Education and Labor, No. 6, Part 3, entitled "Industrial Munitions" the name of this witness appears as "James A. Duggar"; p. 161
Stein: It's these little stories that make up history. Is Jimmy Engle the one who testified at the La Follette Committee?

HS: Yes.

(End of Tape 5, side A)

(Begin Tape 5, side B)

HS: In Chuck Larrowe's book it indicates that Jimmy Dugan testified.* I'm pretty sure that Engle also testified, and perhaps some others. The committee also obtained some written statements from the salesmen. They put into the record some congratulatory letters that these salesmen received from their employer for having done a nice job and selling a lot of goods.

The record shows that these items were all paid for by a man who worked for the American-Hawaiian Steamship Company. He (Ashfield Stow) was the man who brought the check to a certain place to pay for the gas. His name is in Chuck Larrowe's book.

Stein: Was that Roger Lapham?

HS: No, Roger Lapham became mayor; he wouldn't act as a messenger boy in a thing like that. Roger Lapham. He's the man that helped to make Harry famous.

Stein: How so?

HS: I think he did this before he became mayor. He sent a telegram through Madame Perkins and, in effect, said, "This alien is raising the dickens with our waterfront."

*For further detail on the shooting incidents, see Supplementary Interview 2, tape 2, side 2.
HS: I guess he went on to say that he thought the alien was a Communist and was attempting to ruin the American merchant marine, and since he's an Australian he was probably working for the British merchant marine -- words to that effect.

Lapham gave that to the press, so it was all over the nation. That's all in Chuck's book. That book is a treasure. Every time I'm looking for a name or an incident or a date -- It must have taken him ten years.

Stein: Getting back to July fifth, you were describing the men being shot down. Did you witness that attempt to chalk a square around the place that they fell.

HS: No. I didn't witness that and I didn't witness the actual shooting. The only thing that I did witness was in the intersection of Steuart and Mission. Steuart Street crosses Mission. If you keep on walking in a northerly direction one block, then you are out on Market Street. That was a very busy intersection on that particular day.

The thing that I'm leading up to must have been on July 5. I was walking around; things were calm and there was no need to run. There was a striker walking in front of me and we were walking through the intersection diagonally. There wasn't any vehicle traffic. I was leisurely heading for the door of the strike headquarters.

I noticed a man in front of me, and I figured that's a cop and he's got a shooting iron ready for action. Then I noticed another man in front of him. There was absolutely no reason for this policeman to do anything, but he raised his rifle, or whatever it was, and he shot this striker in the back. He went down like a load of lead.

I don't have any remembrance what happened immediately after that. I must have just blown my top. I don't know whether I engaged this policeman in any conversation or whether I called him names. I just don't.
HS: Somebody came with help for Alfonso Miller -- he was a man of German descent on his father's side and he was born in New Mexico. He talked English as if his mother tongue had been Spanish, which undoubtedly it was; brought up by a Spanish speaking lady in New Mexico. I recall that there was a session in court and I testified as a witness to the shooting. I think some testimony was taken from Brother Miller while he was lying in the hospital.

Anyhow, he recovered. The usual verdict came out. What do they call it? If the victim dies, usually there's a decision by a court, after "appropriate" investigation, that it was justifiable homicide. Then there's another word for -- what the heck do they call it if you do recover? Then they can't call it homicide. Well, this man wasn't doing anything; he was just walking towards the door.

It must have been the same afternoon that the calm at this particular intersection sort of disappeared and excitement developed again. Maybe it was because of this policeman shooting Alfonso in the back which resulted in another policeman, who was no more than fifty yards away, getting hit by a brick in the mouth. I didn't see that, but I heard later on.

Then there was the photograph. A photographer must have been on the spot and he photographed this policeman's face and his whole body while he was still standing up. You could tell that he had been hit in the mouth with a heavy object because you could see blood coming out, and sort of loose teeth, and he was reaching for his gun.

Anyway, I then resumed my steps towards the headquarters and ran up the stairs. There was a large room that was used for a meeting hall; it wouldn't accommodate more than a hundred people. I had a little difficulty getting those fellows to open the door because they didn't know who was knocking.
HS: The cops were shooting tear gas up the staircase. Then they let me in and they said, "Hurry up, close the door, keep the gas fumes out." A few minutes after they let me in, another face, or outline of a human being, appeared on the glass door. I think I've told you that it was this kind of material. (demonstrates)

Stein: Sort of opaque.

HS: You could tell there's a human -- and he rattled the door, and this person also used his voice. We should have recognized the voice, but somebody said, "Don't let him in, you don't know who it is, god damn it," or words to that effect.

All of a sudden, this individual out there gave us his profile. Then everybody recognized the long nose. (laughter) Everybody said simultaneously, "Let him in, it's the 'Limey.'" And here was Harry, crying like a kid -- tear gas. Those are the humorous incidents.

Stein: I can see that that would be a real problem because you didn't want to let anyone in who was going to be a troublemaker.

HS: It could have been a cop, there for the purpose of lobbing another shell into the room.

The Battle of Rincon Hill

Stein: To back up a second to Rincon Hill, Chuck Larrowe describes what he calls the battle of that hill. Were you part of that?

HS: The building of the barricades was really an attempt on my part, with the help of some fellows, to attempt to stop a streetcar. It wasn't a very constructive idea, but at the moment I thought, well, when there's a revolt like this you get on the barricades.
HS: But you have to have stuff to build a barricade. This was either Brannan Street or Bryant Street and streetcars were running on that particular street towards the waterfront over a sort of bridge. There was a street below this bridge. This was not a bridge across a body of water, but an overpass over another street.

Some of the fellows had noticed that the cops were running back and forth underneath this bridge in automobiles. They started to give them the rock treatment, which of course was useless because they never hit a thing. There was some construction going on; there was an empty lot there.

I saw stuff lying there that could be used to build, what I would call now, an imitation barricade. If we had had enough of it we could have placed it across the street on the tracks and then a motorman would have said, "Well, I can't run into that stuff, I might wreck the car."

So, I said, "Come on, fellows, let's build a barricade." We ran in there and got all kinds of lumber and fairly light timber and started to pile it on the street.

All of a sudden, we realized that the streetcar was coming down the street, and it had company -- a couple of squad cars with policemen. We gave up this job. I guess when I got back to the main office I made a sort of a boastful statement that we were building barricades that day. We were just boys, thirty-four years old. (laughter)

Just think, if the streetcar had stayed away for another hour and the cops hadn't come, we probably would have had a very large obstruction sitting there. The news photographers would have been able to take pictures. They could have said, "Communist strikers build barricades." (laughter)

Stein: That would have really been news!

HS: Printed all over the country.
Stein: Larrowe describes something that sounded like more of a real barricade on the hill itself, with the police charging up and shooting tear gas, then the strikers throwing bricks from behind this barricade. Then the policemen charged up again, and finally the strikers retreated.

HS: When this little group that I had urged to build these barricades, when we gave up on this idea, we ran over towards the peak of the hill. I guess we thought it's time to take a run because we were going to be surrounded. Anyhow, that's the thinking I had, and sure enough we ran towards the peak of the hill. Other fellows had run down the hill, heading for the waterfront or towards the S. P. station.

At that point I saw two horsemen come galloping up. When they saw us they put on the brakes, you know, they bridled their horses, and they made some kind of comment — I couldn't understand the words — about us being there. Then they came galloping towards us. We headed for some fences and climbed into people's backyards. The horses couldn't handle that; that's how we escaped.

I was wearing a conspicuous hat and I heard the cop say, "Let's get that guy with that hat." So, when we got over the fence, I took my hat off and put it in my pocket so they couldn't identify me anymore by the hat.

Stein: Larrowe also mentioned that the longshoremen used a giant slingshot made up of innertubes of a tire, or something.

HS: Yes, I noticed that in your outline. It's news to me. I never saw any giant slingshot. Absolutely not. Might have been there, but —

Stein: Did you remember the boxcar being set on fire, or was that somewhere else?

HS: No. That could have been anywhere. That could have been blocks away. I read that this morning and I thought to myself, "Well, I guess I don't remember." Here it is. (reads) "Firehoses turn on strikers." That didn't happen in my presence. I'm sure that it happened.
Stein: That's what Larrowe says, is that the fire trucks that were called in to put out the fire on the boxcar ended up turning their hoses on the strikers.

HS: Does the record show that it was on that day that the governor gave orders to call in the National Guard?

Stein: I think so.

HS: That's one of the items that you typed in here.

Stein: Do you have Chuck Larrowe's book handy, because I do want to make sure that we have a full story of Rincon Hill here.

HS: (Referring to Larrowe's book, p. 67): "We'd better build some barricades, boys!" No. I would say that that is somewhat exaggerated. I call your attention to this sentence: "He (Bridges) recalled that when the longshoremen retreated inland from Pier 38, Schmidt took charge of the men on Rincon Hill, Bridges himself taking charge of another group nearby." I don't remember seeing Harry around there at all.

You see, when he tried to get into the headquarters and we recognized his profile through that opaque glass door, that was hours after the Rincon Hill thing and I haven't got the slightest idea where he was. So, I don't think that I should try to embellish this thing in one way or the other. Okay?

Stein: Yes. Is there anything else that we haven't covered about July fifth?

HS: I'm pretty sure that we had an emergency strike committee meeting. We had two dead men on our hands, and the doctor was there taking care of the wounded. I guess somebody must have called up the undertaker. I think it was on the tenth that we had the big funeral.

Stein: The ninth.
HS: Yes, I don't recall what I had to do between the killing of these men and the funeral, but I was busy with this, that and the other. I know that we went on record in the committee to march up Market Street.

Somebody had to be sent to the Police Department to tell them that we were going to do this. You had to go and get a permit. The police were a little bit difficult, but we got permission and they also agreed with us that we could monitor our own men and they wouldn't have to put guards along the line of march to watch the parade. The cooperation was very good and there were no incidents.

In the meantime it was mentioned that somebody would have to make a speech, and who was going to do it? Somehow I remembered that I knew a man by the name of Alex Walthers who ran a grocery store at that time, but he had a brother working on the waterfront. I knew that he had been busy in the labor movement, and that he had worked on the waterfront before he became a grocer. He had taken part in the 1919 strike in San Francisco.

I contacted him and he agreed that he would make an appropriate talk out at the cemetery. I think he also talked in the union headquarters where both of these bodies were lying in state. Now, I don't know if both of the bodies were there, but I know that Sperry's body was there.

Of course, we saw to it that we used this for appropriate purposes, public relations, you know. We had a hearse going up the street with the American flag on it because Sperry was a war veteran. He was buried in the military cemetery at the Presidio. Nick Bordoise was taken out to a cemetery in Colma, and that's where the group gathered.

Whatever Alex said, it was appropriate. He told me later on that he used to work as a longshoreman in Hoboken, and then came to San Francisco.
He also explained to me as to why the 1919 strike was lost. He said to me, he said, "You know, Henry, I'm a left-winger, and you seem to be one, but sometimes under certain circumstances you mustn't go too far." He was leading up to something.

He said, "I took part in the 1919 strike and we were holding out very well, and then our strike committee prevailed upon the membership to make an additional demand. That is to demand something over and above wages and working conditions and the like, to demand that the union be given representation on the employer board!" (laughter)

And he said, "That, of course, was immediately rejected by the employers. Trying to get union men on their board. That helped to break us up." He's dead, of course, and his brother's dead.

Meanwhile the National Longshoremen's Board had begun its hearings. Did you testify at those hearings?

Not at those hearings. I'm pretty sure that Harry went up there; it must have been in the post office building. As far as I know, he was the only man who testified for the union at that time. I know that I was not there, but later on there were additional hearings after the longshoremen went back to work.

I testified at one of those hearings. I came there with an injured foot because I had been working longshore and a heavy object fell on my right foot and broke my god-darned toes. The lawyer for the shipowners, he tried to make light of that. He said, "Describe how you got hurt, Mr. Schmidt."

So, I gave him a rough description, I don't remember what I said, but I was very serious. I must have said something that gave him an opportunity to ask a question: "Well, then, as a matter of fact, you put your foot under that object and it came down on you." (laughter)
HS: Well, in a manner of speaking that was correct. The sling load comes down where you're loading. The sling load goes down and you walk over to it to help land it, and then you have to watch your feet, you see. Well, I didn't watch my foot close enough and the winch driver came down on it and put it right on my foot.

Stein: Meanwhile, there was talk, after July 5 of a general strike. What was your involvement in those early days of planning the strike?

The General Strike

HS: I was still working with two other fellows getting out the almost daily bulletin. It sort of kept us off the streets. Then we had the so-called fresh air meetings, gathering the guys together and having those marches. I suppose that we put something in the bulletin to the effect that the Teamsters had a second vote on going out on strike in support, because everybody was getting all excited on account of the big funeral. The whole world knew about the guys having been killed.

It was also announced that some longshoremen had been injured and killed in other ports. A fellow by the name of Parker, I believe, in San Pedro, and a couple of fellows up in Seattle.

Then, you say here (interview outline) that on May 9 and 13, other unions started voting on strike. There was a movement started to have the several local unions throughout the city declare themselves out on strike and so notify the Labor Council. They were all affiliated with the Labor Council. They all send delegates to the Labor Council meeting on Friday nights throughout the year.

Everybody began to understand that if the majority of the unions in the city were to declare themselves ready to strike, and so notified the Labor Council, there would have to be a meeting at the Labor Council to put this thing into motion.
HS: We were working towards that. I think at one of the Labor Council meetings they went on record that every union that declared itself in favor of a supporting strike would send additional delegates. That was done.

Then there came an afternoon when the die was cast. I can remember the telephone people who were in the Labor Council building installing extra telephones because newspaper reporters were all over the place. There was one room that was reserved for those fellows. They had attached some kind of a plank on the wall and that accommodation was just full of telephone instruments, so that whenever anything happened in the Labor Council all of these fellows would rush for the phone.

When the roll was read, union after union declared itself ready to strike provided the Labor Council would give the word, and finally that was done. It was very, very exciting. Everybody was talking: "The streetcars won't run, nothing will move. How many restaurants are going to be kept open?" And so on and so forth.

Then, as Chuck explains in his book, the Labor Council elected a strike committee. The strike committee was composed of what were then called the conservative labor leaders. I do recall, and I think Chuck Larrowe confirms it, that Harry got on that committee.

Stein: That's right. He wasn't an officer, but he got on a committee.

HS: Yes, he was chairman of the longshore strike committee. He was not the president of the union. If he had been the president perhaps he would have gotten on the Labor Council strike committee without any difficulty. (reads) Yes, here it says, "On July 14 was the meeting of the Central Labor Council. One hundred and fifteen unions were present, each represented by five delegates. Three hundred and fifteen delegates representing sixty-three unions voted to strike. 245 delegates,
HS: representing forty-nine abstained; reason: not authorized by their unions --" *

(End of Tape 5, side B)

(Begin Tape 6, side A)

HS: I became a member of that strike committee. I don't recall saying much. Harry did all the talking for the strikers.

Then the general strike began. The strike committee made arrangements for a number of restaurants to stay open. I couldn't for the life of me tell you where they were located.

Stein: That's not very important.

HS: Then there were some vigilante raids here and there. Personally, I didn't experience any of those, but I do remember an occasion which happened near the Civic Center. I think we had a march for the purpose of holding a meeting up there. It was a busy day. If I'm not mistaken, the People's World -- it had another name in those days -- had a sort of a loft office up there.

Stein: The Western Worker.

HS: We marched by there because that was on the way, and by word of mouth we heard the place had been wrecked. I don't think any of our fellows went in there to take a look, but we just marched by there and word of mouth got around that their offices had been wrecked. Some people indicated that the police had done it, but, as is usual, there was no proof as to who did it. I don't even remember if it was during that strike.

* Harry Bridges, p. 78
Stein: I know that during that strike the office of the Western Worker was raided and the presses, I think, were wrecked.

HS: The general strike shut down the streetcars for awhile. Of course, the papers pointed out every day what was going on, and also printed news that had to do with the thinking of people in the middle of the country. It seems that they had enough news to make it interesting reading, at least.

People in the middle of the country and back East said we had really started a revolt against the government here; and the food shortages and the runs on stores, everybody putting in provisions, and so on and so forth. Several exciting days; but it only lasted for a few days.

Then, the strike committee -- that must have been our strike committee, or maybe it came from the general strike committee -- suggested that the longshoremen should accept arbitration.

Stein: Yes, I think that's what Larrowe says.

HS: That makes sense. So, since we were members of the strike committee, and since we were the striking union, and since we were the outfit that went out first and had everybody else out in the street, we had to pay some attention to the suggestion that we ought to submit to arbitration. After all, it could be pointed out that the President of the United States had set up an arbitration board, and we ought to pay some attention to it.

There came an afternoon when there was a vote taken. I don't have sufficient clarity in my mind as to how it came about. The chances are that the strike committee had a sub-committee. Maybe the sub-committee came along with a recommendation to the committee of the whole that the longshoremen should agree to arbitrate.

The way things were being run by many trade unions in those days, it would have been customary that if the leaders or their executive boards agreed to arbitration they would be reluctant to take it to a membership meeting.
But we took the suggestion back to our strike committee on the waterfront. Harry advocated strongly that we put it to a referendum of the whole Coast, and that would have taken several days. That was done. The majority vote was -- and I don't remember the numerals -- to submit to arbitration, but it was not a big majority.

Of course, then we met with the operators, who apparently had been thinking the situation over. They were in no position to say no to a proposal to arbitrate, and agreement was arrived at.

But the seamen, you might say, were left out in the cold. What I mean to say is there was no agreement reached that the seamen's dispute with the same shipowners would also be submitted to arbitration, because I don't think that the seamen were ready to do that. Anyhow, that's my remembrance.

Hammering Out the Award

But then, our men voted in favor of arbitration. We went back to work on the last day of July with the understanding that we would resume work under the conditions that were prevalent prior to the strike, and that everybody would go back to his former employer, if he had one. That was a hard pill to swallow, but that was what was done.

That's when I went back to the Admiral Line and had a little difficulty getting back into the same gang.

Did you manage to get back onto that gang, or was that when you went to work -- ?

No. Sam Hendrickson came around and said, "I know, Henry, we're supposed to go back, but I just got orders from the chief stevedore that, not you." So, everybody went back to work on several ships, and there I was, all by myself.
HS: Then I saw a man coming towards the office. He came from his ship, we recognized each other, and he wanted to know if I was free: "Aren't you working?" I said, "No, they chose not to take me." He said, "Well, we're one man short, so come along with me." He was a hold man in Emile Coleman's gang.

Mr. Coleman was not a follower of my ideas, and I soon found myself on the outside working other docks. After working a few days and hurting my foot, I guess Harry must have thought, "Well, now as long as you got a bum foot and you can't work longshore, you might as well come up here and testify." So I went. I don't remember how long I was off the job. In any event, I couldn't work longshore so I must have received workmen's compensation. If you're hurt on the ship, you're covered under the United States Longshoremen and Harbor Worker's Act.

I continued to heal up. It took six weeks before I could tackle the job again. I must have returned to work before the award was announced, because the award didn't come down until October 12. Then we had to come to meetings where the provisions of the award were explained to us, and attention was called to the fact that we were compelled under the terms of the arbitration to set up what was called a joint labor relations committee.

I got elected to that committee. For some reason that I still can't understand, our membership decided to select four guys instead of three. The award said three from the employers and three from the union and they shall do this, that and the other. Their duties and obligations are all set forth in the body of the award.

We had George Wolff, who is dead, (Charles) Connors, who is dead, Captain (Fred) Knopf -- he had been a seafaring man and a master, but he started to do longshore work -- and myself. I'm the only one that's still alive.
To our great surprise and chagrin, one of the men that showed up on the employers' side was a man by the name of (J. B.) Jack Bryan, who had been the president of the company longshore union. He had been a longshoreman in his time; he had been a "Red Book" man.

When the 1919 strike smashed the union he collaborated with the employers to set up a company union, which got the name of San Francisco Longshoremen's Association, but everybody knew that it was controlled by the shipowners. Jack Bryan allowed himself to become president of that, a couple of other jokers became business agents, and they carried on for about thirteen years.

When our strike was over and we got this award, it was a natural for Jack Bryan to become a member of the joint labor relations committee, from the point of view of the employers. Here was Jack Bryan, he had been a longshoreman -- and incidentally, he was an Aussie (Australian), too; he talked like an American though. Now the employers needed somebody to function on this joint committee so they selected him.

So, there we were, every day. The committee met every day for weeks on end. We were paid a small amount of money by the local union.

Stein: This was after the award was handed down?

HS: It couldn't happen before.

Stein: Because that's how it set you up?

The End of "Casual" Employment

HS: Yes. One of the things that had to be done immediately, that is in obedience to the award,

*Refers to the color of the cover of the pre-1919 ILA union books.
was to establish a list of longshoremen. Anybody --
this is what the award said -- any longshoreman
who earned his living on the San Francisco water­
front and of course in the other ports, say, on
the Portland waterfront, or in the San Francisco
Bay Area, or wherever, for at least twelve months
during the three years immediately preceding the
strike, his name shall appear on the list.

Then it went on to say that no one whose name
does not appear on the list shall be employed as
a longshoreman, unless a shortage comes along, and
then the hiring shall be done by this joint
committee. No more of this loose stuff where the
employers would just come out of the gate and grab
you. That is what they called "taking the casual
aspect out of the longshore industry," casual
employment.

We set up an office in the Ferry Building,
advertised the fact that the men had to line up
in order to get their names on the list, made sure
that they had made their living for at least twelve
months during the three years preceding the strike.
We didn't enforce that to the letter. I learned
later on that one man got in and he admitted that
he had never worked on the waterfront, but he had
helped us picket. He told us that he fitted into
into the eligibility formula. (laughter) So,
that's all right.

This was a difficult procedure because our
fellows didn't trust this deal. They'd say, "Well,
Jesus, you're sitting there, but you've got those
three other guys from the employers. Who's going
to control the situation?"

This was also the complaint of the employers --
all through the years they say, "You fellows are
in absolute control; we can't do a thing," and by
and large they were right.

The award provided for the election of the
dispatchers by our members, and all kinds of good
things. The fact that the expenditures with regard
to the hiring hall were to be jointly paid was a
good thing because one of our demands had been a
union-controlled hiring hall. We wouldn't have
been able to pay the bill.
We had to look for a location -- that took months. All kinds of little chores. Disputes would arise. The committee was also empowered to attempt to settle disputes, and there were many of them. The men recognized some of the bosses that had scabbed, and those kind of bosses found out that the men were difficult to get along with. Those were the kind of difficulties that the employers ran into. Some of them eventually realized that they were themselves to blame.

As a matter of fact, after the strike was over somebody went to see Mr. T. G. Plant, an employer leader who got the nickname of "Tear Gas." I don't know exactly what the reporter asked him, but his reply was that, "It was possibly our own fault because our longshore work force on this waterfront was so efficient and so peaceful. Nothing ever happened, we didn't even realize that they were down there." All they had to see to was that each man got his paycheck on Friday.*

I'm trying to think if it was necessary to go to some other port to see what they were doing, but I don't think so. We messed around for weeks on end -- on the payroll. The fellows were getting impatient with that, you know.

In the meantime Harry got elected president of Local 38-79 and we got an executive board. I got elected to the executive board, and being a member of the joint labor relations committee, meeting with the employers almost every day, we always had something to report at membership meetings.

And because we had to make all these reports, they constantly saw us and heard us talk. So we got to be very well known, and as a result of hitting the microphone all the time it makes it possible to get elected to something. Eventually

*For further detail, see Supplementary Interview 2, tape 2, side 1.
HS: I found myself, as far as the local was concerned, in the top seat. President -- my God, do I have to have a card printed? (laughter)

I said something about T. G. Plant just now. I never got well acquainted with Edward McGrady, I knew William "Burglar" Lewis very well, but didn't get too close to him. Sam Kagel I knew very well, Sam Garcia I didn't know very well.

Stein: What was Sam Kagel doing at this point?

HS: Sam Kagel was associated with a privately operated business which called itself the Pacific Coast Labor Bureau. The union engaged Mr. (Henry) Melnikow of this Labor Bureau and his working partner Sam Kagel in order to help us with the arbitration.

Both of these men had had considerable experience in handling the business of trade unions when the officers were not acquainted with their jobs, let's put it that way. They had been in this business for years and they received a retainer fee or they got paid by the job.

I got acquainted with Henry Melnikow and with Sam, especially later on when I got myself elected to the Coast committee and had to go up there and see them once in awhile to seek advice on this, that, and the other.

Stein: They continued, then, to work --

HS: They continued to serve the ILWU -- not in the capacity of lawyers because they were not lawyers; they had this business of --

For instance, after we went back to work and everything was running fairly smoothly, we had a port arbitrator and a Coast arbitrator. You attempt to settle these disputes by yourself without resorting to an arbitrator, but if you cannot, the agreement provides you can then go to the arbitrator.
HS: Then comes the business of developing the case, getting all aspects properly organized and submitting it to the arbitrator. Melnikow and company, they would handle that for you. They would also interrogate the witnesses that the employers might present, and tear their case to pieces. And the employers would have somebody to try to tear the union's case to pieces.

The employers usually had lawyers to handle their cases, but we had Melnikow and company and they were not lawyers, although Sam Kagel has been a lawyer for a number of years now. Henry Melnikow is dead.

The contact was almost daily. I went to see Henry Melnikow one time -- I don't recall the issue -- and I said, "How would you present the case in order to convince the local arbitrator." "Oh," he said, "I'll show you." So, he made a speech as if he were talking to the arbitrator. Then I said, "That's very good."

Then he said, "Would you like me to turn around and show you how I would argue the case if I were on the other side?" I laughed and I said, "Can you do that?" He said, "Of course." So, he made a seven or eight minute talk as if he were arguing the other side of the coin. And I said to myself, "That's really amazing." We both had a good laugh.

Stein: That's just like a lawyer. Now let's talk about the National Labor Relations Board, not the arbitrator.

HS: My impression is that the National Labor Relations Board has been, through the years, saturated with people who were pro-employer. That has been our union impression, and you sort of carry that with you for the rest of your life.

Although, now I remember that there was a man by the name of Ed Smith. He headed up the National Board years ago, and I met him in Mexico City. I was at a so-called international labor conference there. When he heard "Longshoreman from San Francisco," he came over and introduced
HS: himself and wanted to know, "Who are you?" I can't recall what he was doing there, but he was certainly acting as if he were a delegate. I learned later on that he got himself into difficulties. Maybe he was too union-oriented, but it's all very vague in my mind.

Meeting the Great Man

HS: The other thing that amused me, I met John L. Lewis' lawyer at that conference, and he was a young kid. He said, "Well, Brother Schmidt, would you like to meet the old man?" I said, "Yes, sure." So, he took me over to John L. Lewis and he called me "boy." I still remember that. (laughter) I guess I was around forty, you know.

Stein: But to him you were a boy?

HS: I guess so.

Stein: What sort of reputation did John L. Lewis have among longshoremen?

HS: I don't think that by and large the longshoremen knew enough about him, but he got the buildup by word of mouth from Harry through the years. So I think that they had a lot of respect for the man; I know I did.

There was a lot of difficulty, however, to convince the fellows to go along with John L. Lewis' proposal that we not vote for Roosevelt. Lewis proposed that perhaps we should consider Willkie. That got Harry into a mess of trouble -- but that really has nothing to do with this, does it?

Stein: Maybe we ought to get that story now, or does that come later? Which election was that?

HS: It was the second or third time that Roosevelt wanted to be President. Yes, Harry went to Seattle to try to talk to the men there; he didn't have much success. Then, if I'm not mistaken, I read

...
HS: a passage in Chuck's (Larrows') book yesterday that Lewis said that he hadn't made up his mind, but he was definitely against Roosevelt. Does that make any sense?

Stein: I don't remember reading that.

(End of Tape 6, side A. Side B not recorded)

(End of Interview 3)
Tying the Employers' Hands

HS: There were certain instructions set forth in the award, including one to prepare a list of longshoremen that were to be hired for work through a joint hiring hall. There was a formula by which it was understood that as long as there were men on this list able and willing to work, the employer had no right to go on the outside to hire new people.

It also provided that the business of hiring and firing should become a matter of joint concern so that no single employer could fire a man out of the industry. A single stevedoring company could dismiss a longshoreman for cause and then that longshoreman would just go to the hiring hall and he would be sent out to another employer. He might work on the pier next to the one that he was fired from the day before, and so on.

So you could only be fired out of the industry if this joint labor relations committee agreed to dismiss you -- which as far as I know has hardly ever happened. When the three employer men propose that Johnny Jones be dismissed for this, that and the other, the union men will not agree to it; the matter becomes deadlocked, they have to take it to an arbitrator, and the union usually wins. The employers bitterly complain that no matter what the men do they can continue to work.
But there are exceptions, of course. There was a man who was beaten up by a gang boss one night down on the pier and after he had received a good beating and a kicking, he went home to think things over. He went back before daylight, took a gun with him, and when he got to the pier he shot and killed his assailant.

The committee didn't have to agree to dismiss him. He was taken by the law and he wound up in San Quentin. He was paroled after a number of years. I guess they didn't charge him with murder one, (first degree murder) as they call it; anyway he was in there seven or eight years. He was a Russian.

The employers tried to deregister him. That term means that when the joint committee agrees to your demand for a place in the industry, you receive a number and that is your registration number. You have been registered by agreement between the parties. Without having been registered you're not supposed to work. And if the committee ever agrees to deregister you for cause then you're through.

Well, while Nick was in San Quentin, the employers would propose every once in a while that he be deregistered because, in their view, he was not fit to be a longshoreman because he had killed somebody. The union guys didn't agree to the deregistration.

So, one day he came out and he presented himself to the joint committee, and the committee had to agree that deregistration did not take place. There's the well known statement: "He has paid his debt to society," and our guys proposed that he be allowed to work, which he did. He became a pensioner and one day he came to visit me and he said, "Henry, you going to give me my pension?" (laughter)

He was quite handy with a whittling knife; he made a chess set, and he made the pieces all by hand. He gave that set to me, but I gave that away because I'm no chess player. So, that's the story on Nick -- can't think of his last name.
Stein: You said last week that you served on this joint committee.

HS: Yes. We took a look at the award. We went to the membership and explained some of these passages. Such joint labor relations committees had to be elected in every port.

Stein: Every port had its own committee?

HS: Its own joint labor relations committee. The committee had to, among other things, establish a revolving fund to pay the expenses of the hiring hall -- which are not inconsiderable -- lay down certain rules, locate a hiring hall.

Then the committee had to go to the union and say, "Now according to the award, you're privileged to elect from your own ranks guys who will become the dispatchers for a period of twelve months, and they can be reelected; but once they've served their twenty-four months they are constituted out. Then if they go down on the front and work cargo for twelve months, they can become candidates for these offices again, if they want to. They can also run for other union offices." And there's where the politics come in.

Playing Games

HS: A man might get very well known for one reason or another while he was a dispatcher, because he's meeting his public all the time. He can practice favoritism -- whatever they call these things -- and then after he serves a couple of years as dispatcher he retreats to the waterfront and shakes hands with the cargo.

Then after twelve months he decides to run for secretary. This time, everybody knows him. Well, he might have been a good dispatcher, but whether he was fit to be a secretary, whether or not he had any qualities, was an unknown quantity, of course. Usually it worked out very badly.
Stein: How often did that happen?

HS: You mean that we elected a bad secretary?

Stein: No, that the dispatcher would then run for secretary. Was that something fairly frequent?

HS: He might not run for secretary; he might run for business agent. Then he'd get his whole salary from the union. While he was dispatcher it was a fifty-fifty deal, and politics enter into that because, for some reason or another, the dispatchers were allowed to make out their own payroll and submit it to the joint committee. They always got paid.

It has been alleged that they -- what do they call it -- "pad" the payroll. The partial explanation for that was that the shipowners don't care, they had lots of money, and if these guys indicated that they worked fourteen hours overtime, and employers paid half, the union paid half --

Stein: There was no other check on their work record?

HS: There was a check, but I'm afraid that it wasn't done very efficiently; although the employers, since they paid half the bill, kept track of this revolving fund. They must have had a very, very accurate record, because that would be their business.

These kind of records that I'm talking about now would be kept by somebody in the office of the PMA (Pacific Maritime Association). When I'm talking about the individual employer I'm talking about a stevedoring company that is a member of the PMA, just like an individual longshoreman is a member of the union. You have to differentiate in your own mind.

I can recall that we had a man who was first a dispatcher. Only a few weeks ago I said to somebody, "How in the heck did he get into the industry in the first place?" They said, "Well, he was a baseball player, that's why." And not being a baseball or a football enthusiast I don't
HS: understand these things, but when you have a bit of a name as a baseball player and you can no longer play and you have to go out and make a living, I guess you can worm your way into something.

Stein: That's certainly been the case. Baseball players turn up in the oddest places.

HS: So we had this man (William Kirby) who became a dispatcher. He got very well known. He ran for secretary and got elected. When he had his twenty-four months he was constituted out of office. Then, for reasons which I can't remember, he was offered a job by the ILWU-PMA welfare fund, which is an adjunct to the pension fund and is governed by trustees, three from the union and three from the employers.

They're way up there, these six trustees, welfare and/or pension, and they have the right to hire administrative help -- that's how I got to be appointed as pension director. I didn't know how to administrate anything.

Kirby was paid by the fund -- he was no longer paid by the union -- but most of the members didn't understand that, and he was given office space at Local 10. He became the welfare director and he was supposed to read the welfare agreement and explain to the men what they were eligible for and also explain to them that the coverage was not one hundred percent.

There was a Kaiser Hospital plan; there was also an insurance plan, but you didn't have to belong to Kaiser if you preferred the insurance plan, and so forth. He was -- what do they call it -- a suave sort of gentleman, he was always well dressed and many of our men took it for granted that he was highly educated, which was not the case. Well, Kirby started to prey on elderly men. He was always at bedside, looking after these fellows.

One time he made the sad mistake of allowing an elderly longshoreman to write a new will and got a lawyer to give a hand; and this pensioner,
who expired some days later, left his entire fortune to Kirby. In due time this business surfaced and all hell broke loose. The welfare fund trustees approached him and they suggested he resign for the good of the order, which he did.

That was misunderstood down on the waterfront among the ranks, and lo and behold Kirby thought, "Well, everybody sympathizes with my predicament, here I am back on the waterfront driving winches and I used to be the welfare director and they don't understand what's going on." So, he sort of blamed it on the higher-ups. And then Kirby had the courage -- or audacity, I guess is the word -- to declare himself a candidate for the presidency of Local 10, and he got elected.

Then I went to my superiors and I said, "How can we allow this man to become president when we know how he robbed that old man and robbed others and he's got that money?" So I preferred charges against him and I was told that I should withdraw the charges, that I might destroy myself if I went ahead with it.

Stein: Who told you to withdraw the charges?
HS: I don't want to mention the name, is that all right with you?

Stein: It's okay. But people within the union?
HS: Somebody outside of the union couldn't do that. Anyhow, I refused, and the man went on trial. I had to clear it with the executive board. I got somebody to help me to present all of the facts to the executive board, and the executive board went on record that the man was certainly worthy of a trial. So that was arranged for.

And then our friend the number one man (Harry Bridges) got all excited about it and went to a subsequent executive board meeting, which I didn't attend, and he prevailed upon the executive board that I and another fellow shouldn't be allowed to handle the trial. He got the executive board to vote that he should handle the trial.
HS: Anyhow, the man was found guilty by the trial committee. He demanded all his constitutional rights, requiring that the recommendation of the trial committee should go to a membership meeting. The membership meeting took a voice vote and concurred in the recommendation of the trial committee. Then he had one more opportunity and he demanded a referendum, which is provided for under the constitution. He got that and he was voted out of office.

Stein: That's an interesting provision in the constitution.

HS: You get all the chances in the world. The pensioners were allowed to vote and doing a little arithmetic on the voting results, I said to myself, "If the pensioners had been prohibited from voting he would have won. He would have continued and finished his term as a president."

So he departed and went back to work on the waterfront and some months later he actually died. He was just a young guy. There were endless discussions in the Local 10 executive board about this man and his deeds.

And, you know, there are men who indicated by their comments and their tone of voice that they didn't think that Kirby was bad. One fellow got up, he said, "I'd like to get ahold of some of these old stiffs and get their stuff — worldly goods; like Brother Schmidt says." I just haven't got the capacity to follow the thinking of those kind of people.

Well, there was a lady in the background. She was from one of the Baltic states, and she must have been this man's (the old longshoreman) girl friend at one time. She called me up and she says, "I have a will, and Mr. So-and-so left all of his goods and worldly goods to me. What is this that I've heard?" "Well," I said, "what have you heard?"

"I understand that Mr. So-and-so has made another will and I've talked to a man who is a lawyer who is now an assistant district attorney and he tells me that I'm out of luck." I said, "That might well be so."
That's the way it turned out. Anyhow, she wanted to go all the way and find out if she was really out of luck. She got a lawyer and we had a court session. I was subpoenaed and I testified there, and Kirby was there of course, and this woman was there.

The judge found that she was no longer eligible for this man's fortune, if you want to call it that, because the most recent will is the one that counts. The man who preyed on elderly men was on the stand and this woman's lawyer was asking questions which were unnecessary, but the judge allowed it. The lawyer asked, "What did you do with the money?" Kirby said, "I put it in the bank." "And how much was it again?" I think he said $22,000. "And what's it doing in the bank?" The answer was, "It's drawing interest for me." (laughter) Well, it's some story isn't it?

It's an interesting little window on the down-to-earth events that go on in the union.

There's one more incident. Kirby departed from the union platform; he knew that he was through and was all through with his presidency. He was compelled to go back on the waterfront, which he did. He had been on a good social relationship with an elderly man who was a pensioner; but one day Kirby died.

Weeks and weeks afterward, I learned that the pensioner, and his name was Jensen, had also died. I thought to myself, "Bill Kirby was in a very good relationship with this man, and it's just possible that Jensen wrote a will in favor of our friend."

I went to the City Hall and said I'd like to see the papers concerning Mr. Tom Jensen and the clerk said, "Look in here." So there was Jensen's will. It hadn't been probated yet, but he said that he was leaving all his worldly goods to a certain lady by the name of so-and-so, and "if she predeceases me then I'll give it to the other guy."

Our friend?
Yes. Then there was a bill in there; the funeral hadn't been paid for. I was standing there and shaking my head. I said, "How is it possible? We ousted Kirby as president, and after that he did it one more time. He got hold of old Tom Jensen and prevailed upon him. But, Kirby didn't collect because he died first! (laughter)"

Stein: That was justice!

**The Two-Year Rule**

Stein: I was interested in the union constitution that provided for a mechanism for the membership to monitor the activities of its officers. Was that the constitution that dated from 1934?

HS: No. We have to be careful. Are we talking about a local's constitution, or are we talking about the Pacific Coast constitution, or the other thing which is called the International constitution. Local 6, which is the warehouse local in San Francisco and the Bay Area, doesn't place any restrictions on its officers with respect to the length of term. Every year there's an election and if Joe Blow wants to be a candidate for re-election and he gets enough votes, he's back in.

But Harry, being a prominent member of Local 10 and having been president of the local, and believing in all these democratic measures, proposed that a man shouldn't stay in office year after year. He should get back down on the front and, as they say, shake hands with the cargo, learn again what work is like. So, Local 10, even while it was still Local 38-79, amended its constitution to the effect that one could not stay in office year after year, even if you got enough votes.

But peculiar situations developed because the fellows used to say, "Hank, you and Germain (Bulcke) are nothing but in-and-outers, when you get out, Gerry comes in, and the next time around, you're in again."
HS: I would say, "Well, on one occasion we were both in." People forget. "What do you mean?" I was president and Germain Bulcke was vice-president. We were both in there." It is true that it went on for quite a number of years in that particular regard. I can get the constitution of Local 10 and read that provision, if you like. It's very brief.

Stein: Okay, that might be useful. (Pause) You found it?

HS: Yes, it's Section 5 of Article 6. Quote: "Any salaried elective officer who has served two full, consecutive terms of one year each, shall not be eligible again to hold office in this local until the expiration of one year."

It's a good thing for a man to get back into the ranks and put up with all the kidding, and if you're young enough to be capable of doing the work you have no difficulty. But it also opens the door to somebody to get elected who should have stayed down in the ranks and continued to be a longshoreman.

This has happened. I don't want to say that Germain Bulcke and myself are the most brilliant guys that ever went down there, but when you compare yourself with some of the fellows that succeeded me, it was cumbersome.

The new president was running into difficulties and he was looking down into the ranks of a membership meeting and he saw Germain and myself sitting there; well, on one occasion he did say, "We're going to have a meeting with the shipowners tomorrow and I think I'd better get Gerry and Henry to come along." That's all right, you know.

But some of those characters that got in there, like (Chester) "Pop" Hardister. Gosh, the man could hardly even read nor write; always supporting the United States no matter what its foreign policy was. Of course he would have been very happy if Harry had been deported. Those were some of the things that these fellows were very interested in.
I see that it was adopted in 1963, but I assume that just means that it had been revised then.

It's been revised in many respects, but not in this respect.

And you say that's from --

This probably dates from when Local 38-79 was reestablished in 1933; maybe several months thereafter this provision was submitted and adopted.

I've heard the argument made that one of the problems with that is that it doesn't establish continuity in leadership, so that policy keeps changing every two years and that makes for difficulties in negotiating with the shipowners, and even in relating to other unions.

I think that might be said insofar as the International constitution is concerned. Those are the people that negotiate for the Coast. The basic negotiating committee comes out of the International executive board, but it may be enlarged by each local electing additions thereto.

If you were to enforce this with regard to the International officers, there would have been very frequent changes and the history of the union would be entirely different. I'm happy that it wasn't placed in the International constitution.

There's no denying the fact that Harry did a tremendous job for the working class of this country, even though I'm in horrible disagreement with him right now. Some of his worst enemies make those kind of comments, you know. So, you have to give credit where credit is due.

I think even shipowners have made that comment that they may not have appreciated having to have him to deal with, but that he is certainly doing a good job for the membership.
HS: Oh, yes. Then, of course, we have this principle -- we still adhere to it -- that the salaries are not high. Recently there was a thing published in the *U.S. News and World Report* which had a schedule and names of -- --

(End of Tape 7, side A)

(Begin Tape 7, side B)

HS: -- all these highly priced union officers, and, Frank Fitzsimmons and George Meany head the top of the list. It's just scandalous the money that Fitzsimmons makes, $125,000 a year.

Harry was down next to the bottom with $24,000 and an expense account -- but you have to give an accounting to Brother (Lou) Goldblatt (ILWU Secretary-Treasurer) about this expense account, you know; there's a maximum provided. There was something in Herb Caen's column about three or four months ago which was very erroneous insofar as Harry's salary is concerned. Herb made it read as if Harry had a tremendous expense account.

Stein: I think I remember that.

HS: As a matter of fact, they were running short of money because Local 10 wasn't paying its dues, its per capita tax. Some other locals get in the same bind.

Stein: I had a couple more questions about the constitution. Do other locals up and down the Coast have similar provisions about officers having only two-year terms?

HS: Similar. I understand Portland, Oregon, Local 8 allows a guy to be elected for twelve months and then he's through. He has to go back on the waterfront and make a living or -- well, he doesn't have to go down there and work if he doesn't want to, but if he wants to live he has to go down and work. The fellows, they like to see him, you know. I think that's really ridiculous. One year, and
HS: you barely learn your job and you get booted out. Some of these men never become candidates again. "It's easier to work the waterfront," they say. If they can get a gang boss' job where they don't have to do any hard work then that's even better. All you have to do is be able to walk and climb ladders.

Local 6, which is the biggest local that we have outside of the big local in Hawaii, has no restrictions. The only restriction is if you don't get enough votes then you don't get in, at the end of the year.

In Hawaii there's no restriction. We have one local in Hawaii, Local 142, separated into units so that when the longshoremen hold a meeting the plantation workers are not coming to the same meeting, because, in a manner of speaking, they don't have anything in common -- or the sugar workers.

There's a fellow down there who is vice-president, he gets elected year after year. He's on the payroll (Constantine Samson). We all call him Sammy. He's a Filipino, and since the majority of the workers down there in the ILWU are Filipino, the Filipinos don't have any difficulty getting elected -- which is another bad factor, the guy may not be able to read.

Stein: What about the Southern California locals?

HS: I just got through talking to the president of the pensioner's club down there; I think they have a restriction, but I don't know what it amounts to.

They also have a group down there who think they can do everything themselves. When the benefit fund engaged a man to become a welfare director down there, they -- Local 13 -- wouldn't have anything to do with him. If the welfare officer of Local 13 wants to get some information he has to go and see this man on the Q.T., sort of, because guys in the ranks think that he is an employer agent. It's really ridiculous.
HS: Well, honestly, I can't tell you how many locals there are that have restrictions. I think the tightest restriction is right here in Local 10.

Stein: And you say that that was largely Bridges' influence?

HS: There's no question about that. In fact, I voted for this myself. I thought, "That's all right." When I got constituted out I wasn't angry at anybody, but afterwards I saw some of the results.

I don't know what the fellows do up in British Columbia, but every once in a while you see new faces around here when they come to the International convention. Apparently they don't have that provision. Or maybe these fellows that I see and I don't see, next time they run they don't get enough votes and are no longer in for that reason. You see those fellows every other year if you yourself get elected to go to a convention.

One Way to Eat

HS: It gets very involved. Sometimes I hear people say, "Why don't these unions do so and so?" People who are not members of unions -- and they only think about it when a union is on strike -- if they are inconvenienced by that strike, they want to talk about it.

Of course it follows that the striking worker is more inconvenienced than anybody, even if he gets a strike benefit. He has to do strike duty, he has to keep track of things, he has to go to meetings, he doesn't get any wages, he can't get any unemployment benefits because that would be against the law, and if his union has no strike fund, he won't get any strike benefits. I've been through all that.

In fact during the 1934 strike there was a handout, which must have been organized under the auspices of the city -- but maybe the funds were federal funds -- which provided for a handout of
HS: a box of groceries. The point of distribution was that big square near the City Hall. There was no underground garage there in those days. To get these groceries the provision was that you were taken out of town in trucks and you were provided with pick and shovel and you had to do some work.

Harry and I went up there one day to see if we could get a box of groceries. We were on strike and we were on the strike committee. There was a man in charge and all kinds of people milling around.

We said, "We're on strike and the strike committee meets every day and we have lots to do. If you're going to insist that we go with this truck every day and do pick and shovel work we can't do our duty as members of the strike committee." He allowed it; I don't know what authority he had, but he said, "Let them take their box." I don't know how often we did that.

Stein: Other longshoremen could also go up and get their food?

HS: Sure. If they didn't have anything to do, the only excuse that they would come forward with was to say, "Look, we have to do picket duty." Maybe they got away with that, I don't know.

Job Actions

Stein: I would like to move on to the period after the strike, which is how we got talking about the constitution in the first place. Let's talk about some of the major issues that were important after the strike.

HS: Immediately after the strike?

Stein: Yes, in the two years between the strike in '34 and and the strike in '36. I listed a couple in the outline that I sent you.
(Reads from outline.) "Job action, dispute between Bridges and Lundeberg culminating in Maritime Federation resolution on job action."

Stein: Quin's book, The Big Strike, has the resolution in the back.

HS: I don't remember its content.

Stein: Actually, I just wondered what you remembered about the whole job action question.

HS: Bear in mind that the first thing that had to be done was to set up that hiring hall. The joint labor relations committee met every day. We were doing business with real estate guys who showed us places that we could rent for a hiring hall, had to make reports to the membership. They wanted to know if we were on the payroll. We were getting a small amount of pay.

Some of them, sarcastic guys, they'd say, "Well, you guys are okay now, you're wearing a business suit, and you're a picard," and all that sort of thing.

We just muddled through, and in the meantime a job action program developed on the waterfront. It had been described often enough, like Harry or somebody else would explain the methods that the IWW's used: they just slowed up on the job or ceased work altogether, and by so doing tried to kick the employer into line or better their working conditions.

It happened that while men were working they would arbitrarily reduce the size of the sling load or, by using other methods, make their work lighter.

*Job actions were protests, such as slowdowns or work stoppages, done spontaneously, without formal union approval, at the site of the grievance.
HS: For instance, a sling load of cement sacks -- I think these sacks of cement weigh ninety pounds apiece, and if an employer had his way he would insist on putting thirty sacks on a sling load. This means that out on the dock two men would take thirty cement sacks weighing ninety pounds each and build a load on a sling board. Then this thing would be hoisted into the hold and there the hold man would take these sacks off the sling board one by one and stow them.

Sometimes this work is very, very easy because you land this sling board on a bench, a bench that you build with sacks. It's about this high, (demonstrates) so you drag the sack off and you carry it a few paces and you drop it at your feet. That's what they call "flooring off." But there comes a time when you get up to the beams. You can't leave any space. Then you have to put these things on your shoulder and "beam" them up. The taller you are, the easier it is.

Stein: Might it sometimes even be over your head?

HS: Yes. With barley sacks some of these big guys developed a movement with the upper part of their body. They would throw it; it would go up there (demonstrating).

The guys got very arbitrary. They would call a slowdown or work stoppage themselves without consulting anybody. And then of course the gang boss would immediately get the devil from the walking boss. He wanted to know, "What's going on here?" The answer was, "Well, they don't want to hoist loads of that size. After all, we're back from a long strike." "Yes, but you're supposed to go back under the conditions that were prevalent before you went on strike." That was one answer.

The other answer was, "You've got an award now, and if you question this business of working under the same conditions that were prevalent before the strike, you've got a joint committee and you have to take it up there." Some of them had an explanation for that. They said, "Well, that's not a real rank and file decision."
So, among other things, we set up a steward system. There was supposed to be a steward in every gang. He was the union representative on the job. In connection with that, a stewards' council was set up. They met once a week and all they had to do was discuss conditions on the job.

There it would happen that somebody would make a motion that, starting tomorrow morning, we send out the word that instead of hoisting twenty-three sacks we cut it down to eighteen. The fellows would insist that that was a democratically arrived at situation, "Didn't we vote on it?"

I would have to tell them, "Fellows, some day you may own these ships, and then you can do whatever you please, but there are still shipowners and we have an award. It doesn't say that you can do these things." "Ahhhh," they'd say, they'd give you hell.

I recall an incident. This is what you call newsprint (demonstrates) and it comes in great big rolls. There are short ones about this high, and they are this fat, but there are also tall ones. They are a little big higher than I am. You have to pull them over. When they are in the ship they are standing up like so. You have to put your claws on them, like this.

There's a man sitting up there — one row is next higher — and he's pushing with his heels against this roll of paper because you have to pull it over on its side, so that you can roll it on top of a rope sling. They all weigh over fifteen hundred pounds, and some of them weigh seventeen hundred. Of course you don't have to lift them, you can't lift them. You have to maneuver them around.

One day I had a telephone call from the employers' office; the caller was Frank Gregory. He said, "There's some fellows down there on the ship and they're hoisting only one roll instead of two. You know that's not allowed, that's not provided for in the contract. It's customary to hoist two. It was customary to do that before
the strike and there's been no agreement to reduce it. You better go down there and see what you can do." I went down there and the fellows said, "Well, what you don't know is because you didn't come to the council meeting last night. Last night we voted that if any of these rolls weigh more than seventeen hundred pounds we'll hoist only one."

I said, "Do you think it's a safety measure?" One of them said, "You might say that." "Will the gear carry away?" That means break, part. One guy said, "It might." This kind of an argument. I said, "It won't work, fellows; it's a violation of the agreement and it's something that we have to negotiate during the next negotiation. This kind of job action is very interesting, and I don't blame you for doing it, but we can't make it stick."

As I recall they gave me hell, but they turned to again and worked, hoisting two rolls. Of course one roll makes the job last longer so it costs the employers more money. There's only one instead of two.

The sling goes around two of them, the two rolls go up against each other and they're tight, they can't roll out. They go up and down on the dock, and there, in the old days, two of these things would be landed on a truck which two men could push away quite easily. Later on things were electrified, gasoline jitneys were brought into play. You run into things like that all the time.

Stein: Were there ever any cases where the men won their demand in a job action?

HS: There might have been. It all depends on the circumstances. If the walking boss was what they call a reasonable fellow, and maybe he calculated that the job will get done by this evening anyway, and he didn't want any trouble, he would let the fellows go ahead.

But there's always a boss over a boss. The superintendent would come along and he'd say to the walking boss, "Now what are you allowing these
fellows to do? Pretty soon they'll be running the whole industry." This kind of talk. I guess the walking boss would say, "They won't do what I tell them, you go and tell them." And then things got kind of rough, you know.

These things were a constant headache. When you're in the office you have to do a lot of running around.

Stein: It sounds like you were running down to the ships with some degree of regularity.

HS: And of course, politically it's a bad thing because they always say, "You represent us. What do you mean coming down here talking against us?"

Stein: But somehow your popularity remained intact.

HS: I ran for the presidency a fifth time and I got defeated. It was the Korean war. I was too outspoken, you know. I went along with a resolution to refer the matter to the United Nations. Everybody was more or less patriotic, so a fellow by the name of Phil Sandeen made it.

He became so important as president of Local 10 that -- I can't remember the dispute that developed -- but he actually got a telegram from the secretary to the President of the United States requesting that he come to Washington, and he did. He didn't speak to his executive board or anything, he just said to his secretary, "Give me some money, and I'm off to Washington."

When he came home some of us started to raise hell with him. "You should clear these things with the membership before you make a trip like that. It's unheard of." Words to that effect. He said, "Look here, fellows, when the President of the United States tells you to come to Washington, you go." (laughter) It was the right thing to say under those circumstances.
The S. S. California Incident

HS: Madame Perkins* called me one day and said, "Mr. Schmidt, those fellows that are striking that ship down in San Pedro, they're your people. Can't you get them to go back to work?" (laughter) That's another story.

Stein: When was this story, the Madame Perkins story?

HS: There was a passenger ship, California, and Joe Curran was a sailor on it.

Stein: Yes, I've heard about that.

HS: The fact that he tied up that ship -- I don't know what the conditions on this ship were, but they were not satisfactory insofar as that crew was concerned. Joe Curran became a leader. I don't know where Harry was -- maybe he was in Washington or someplace -- but as I recall he was the Pacific Coast president. We heard that the ship had been tied up by the crew, lots of passengers, and all kinds of inconveniences.

Stein: Was that the case where the crew was an East Coast crew and they were demanding West Coast conditions?

HS: That's it, that's it. It got lots of publicity, lots of passengers were interviewed and they bellyached about the inconvenience. They wanted to keep on sailing, go to San Francisco; maybe the ship's destination was Seattle.

Madame Perkins was not acquainted with the set-up, longshore locals, the Coastwise longshore union, a warehouse local, and then there was the Sailors' Union of the Pacific. So instead of calling our office, she should have called the Sailors' Union of the Pacific, Harry Lundeberg. She gave me a message. She said, "Mr. Schmidt, they're your kind of people, can't you do something?"

* Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins
HS: I had to tell her that they were members of a seafaring union and all of our guys only go down to the ship to handle cargo. In other words, what I tried to tell her was that I had no jurisdiction. I guess that was the end of the conversation. I never met the lady. It would have been nice if I could have met her later on and reminded her of the conversation. (laughter)

Fay: I was just thinking of Madame Perkins, the pictures I've seen of her. She was quite an elderly woman at that time, wasn't she?

HS: Yes.

Stein: Was that all you had to do, then, with the California incident?

HS: Yes. I don't recall how the thing wound up. I don't recall whether they got West Coast wages. Some kind of an adjustment was made and the ship sailed homeward after a while. It probably got back to New York three or four weeks later.

Then something happened to the organization and Joe Curran was on his way to becoming the leader of the East Coast union of seafaring men, the National Maritime Union. He did a terrific job for his people and he also did a terrific job for himself. In fact, his pension was so big that a group of his rank and file took the matter to court to see if they couldn't get the amount reduced.

It was in the papers here about a couple of years ago. He went home and he did just as well as Jimmy Hoffa (former president of the Teamsters' Union) did. A pension fund which was a lump sum, if you put it in the bank at five percent interest, he would have to really live high to consume the interest. That's fantastic, isn't it?

Stein: It's very ironic because he started in as a big rank and file man himself, sort of the East Coast Harry Bridges. My recollection of the end of the California incident was that Madame Perkins finally spoke to the appropriate parties and got them to
Stein: agree to continue to sail the ship with the understanding that the issue would be negotiated, probably in their favor. They did go back to work, and the issue was later negotiated. I believe they did not get the wage hike that they had hoped for.

HS: Maybe got a lesser amount.

Stein: Yes, it was a situation that didn't resolve totally satisfactorily. From what I've read of that period, it also sounds to me like there was sort of an ongoing dispute, or difference of opinion, between the longshoremen on the one hand and primarily the sailors, but also some of the other seafaring unions, on the other. Lundeberg was job action happy, so to speak.

Jurisdictional Headaches

HS: Yes. We got into an argument with the Sailors' Union of the Pacific because of the cargo handling on small vessels which sail up and down the Pacific Coast; they are called steam schooners. It has been understood for years and years that if the steam schooner had three hatches to work, that one hatch, as far as the cargo is concerned, would be worked by the sailors of that vessel.

Of course, the longshoremen started to complain that "The sailors are doing our work. Why doesn't the owner of the vessel continue to have them do whatever sailors do when a ship is in port, scrape and paint and other things like that?"

The sailors were in favor of handling the cargo because it was extra pay for them. They said, "To hell with it. Traditionally we have worked this cargo on one of the hatches and we're not going to give it up."

That was all very well and good. I don't have any recollection as to what finally happened. The big vessels outnumbered the steam schooners.
HS: The steam schooners usually carried any type of cargo when they went north and they brought lumber back; sometimes we even took the lumber out and put it on a big ship. I don't know what the score is now.

Then there was an attempt made to define a steam schooner. First of all it comes to mind that it is a small ship, it has to go into some shallow harbors, and it's a certain size. Its dimensions are set forth -- if they ever did arrive at a definition. It was also understood that it travelled only to certain ports on the Pacific Coast and never went overseas.

But there came a time when we got into a dispute with the Matson Line. They run big vessels on a triangular voyage, namely from Los Angeles to Honolulu and back to the Coast. Once you come back to the Coast you put in to San Francisco; from San Francisco to Los Angeles, then follow this triangle all the time. Matson wanted the sailors to work cargo on these big ships. "It's a steam schooner. It's just bigger but it travels to three USA ports."

(End of Tape 7, side B)

(Begin Tape 8, side A)

HS: We had this disagreement and apparently somebody speaking for Matson decided to wrap it up and do nothing about it because it was so ridiculous. The question arose, "How can you take the S.S. Lurline and call it a steam schooner?"

There's a typical steam schooner alongside that Maritime Museum down at Fisherman's Wharf. It's a short vessel. I think it only has two sets of gear, maybe three. That means that there are three opportunities to hoist cargo. There'd be two winches at each hatch, so there'd be six winches and two booms. It's just sitting there for tourists to take a look at.
Stein: That must be something to see it as a museum!

I know there were some other incidents that involved job action. There was one with the S.S. Santa Rosa.

HS: I just remembered one. I don't recall the name of the ship. Wayne Morse (who later became a U.S. Senator from Oregon) came into the dispute as an arbitrator, came down from Oregon. The chances are that it was the California again. It was a big passenger ship, and she was made fast to the pier down near Telegraph Hill.

A dispute arose between the ship clerks and their employer with regard to how the cargo would be checked, cargo that was either coming off the ship or going into it. They couldn't reach agreement so they decided to picket. Of course, the longshoremen respected the picket line and came out, standing around.

Frank Gregory called me up. I went down to have a look. I had to admit that our guys were refusing to work. They were respecting the picket line of their brother trade unionists, the ship clerks, and the shipowners pointed out that is a violation of the Longshore agreement. "Mr. Schmidt, you ought to go down and tell those fellows to go to work."

I didn't want to do that, and I didn't. Of course the operators said, "We'll have to call in the arbitrator." So they immediately wired Wayne Morse up at Salem, Oregon. He never did want to fly, so he came down on the train and he was ready to go the next morning.

We went up to a building — I think it was the Federal Building in which the shipowners had rented space — and the hearing was held. The operators presented their case. I think we had Henry Melnikow present our case, with some testimony by myself. Eventually the arbitrator said, "Is the case in?"
Both sides agreed it was and the gentlemen representing the shipowners pressed the arbitrator for an almost immediate decision. They said, "After all, this ship is sitting there idle; we're losing a lot of money," and so on and so forth. Morse said, "Yes, gentlemen, I will write an almost immediate decision."

It was early in the day and I think what he meant was that he would write it during the lunch hour, what they call an interim decision. The operators had argued that there was collusion between the longshoremen and the ship clerks in this particular case. This kind of collusion or conspiracy is frowned upon, let us say. After a couple of hours we came back and Wayne Morse was sitting there. We all thought he was a terrific arbitrator.

His decision was that an officer representing the Longshoremen's Union should go to the ship down there and prevail upon the longshoremen to go to work, meaning that they should go through the picket line. So I went. Of course they said, "Mr. Schmidt, will you take care of that?" Being the president, what else could I do?

I told the guys that the arbitrator had made an award, that some items from the award would be reviewed later on, "but his decision is that you go to work." I explained it the best way I could. Of course they argued: "What is the matter with the traditional point of view that you don't go through a picket line, especially when your brother trade unionists are picketing? Would you go through the picket line?" This question came from a fellow by the name of Fred Heiner.

"Well," I said, "I'm standing here in my business suit. The chances are that if I was standing here in my working clothes and a hook in my pocket, I probably wouldn't." They said, "There you are."

So I repaired back to the Federal Building. All these characters were sitting around waiting for me. Wayne Morse was a terrific human being. I liked him. "Well," he said, "Mr. Schmidt, have you accomplished your mission?"
I said, "No, Mr. Arbitrator, I have not. The picket line will continue to picket and the longshoremen will observe it." He said, "I will immediately send my resignation to Madame Perkins because under these circumstances I cannot continue to function." Which is what he did.

As I recall it, the picket line continued through the day and the night. It was thought that the loss of this arbitrator would be quite something. I think both sides thought that. Then the wheels went to work. Morse sent word that he would resume his duties as an arbitrator "provided, however, that the interim award would be observed." As I recall it, that is what we did. I'm pretty sure that we must have had an executive board meeting and a membership meeting.

I don't remember Harry talking to the guys, but he must have. He carried more weight than I did. He probably said, "Look, this is one of those things where you have to grit your teeth and go to work. You can't win them all." Words to that effect.

The guys were in such a frame of mind they were willing to tie up ships every day. It's true, you can't continue with that. Eventually, they get tired of it because they lose money. You can't demand money when you're not working.

Stein: What put them in that frame of mind?

HS: Whatever happened on the job. Here in this particular case the longshoremen didn't care what the clerks were beefing about. They said, "The clerks are picketing." So you don't go through. Put the pressure on the shipowners to capitulate; but they don't always capitulate.

Fay: You were heady with success, too.

HS: Yes. The whole thing reminds me of a decision that Morse made one time which was published on the front page of the Honolulu Advertiser because we had tied up a ship down there. I called the press and I made the press in Honolulu acquainted with this particular decision.
It's to this effect: Morse was talking to the shipowners on the Pacific Coast and he was clearing them up with regard to picket lines and their meaning and the fact that the workers are accustomed to respect such picket lines.

His decision was something like this: "Ever since time immemorial, since ships have been operating and since longshoremen and seafaring men have been working the cargo, when disputes have arisen the employers know, or should have known, that there comes a time when these workers will picket and other workers will respect the picket line irrespective of any provisions to the contrary in the contract."

That had a terrific effect down in Honolulu. The Honolulu Advertiser put it on the front page and Morse got to be known. The employers decided that they would never, never agree to arbitrate in disputes of such dimensions. And especially they don't want "any mainlanders to come over here and tell us what to do."

Stein: Meaning mostly Wayne Morse.

HS: Malihinis.*

(End of Tape 8, side A)

(End of Interview)

*A Hawaiian word meaning "newcomer".
Many Arbitrations

Stein: Do you have anything more you want to say about job actions?

HS: I think I already said that job action became a rather popular thing. It seems that many of the men didn't want to -- or couldn't -- understand why it was considered to be a violation of the labor agreements, especially by the employers. I guess some of them began to realize that we couldn't continue to engage in job action as a steady thing from now on into eternity. Eventually it was tapered off; however, there were quite a number of incidents.

I guess it's proper to say at this time that eventually job action was not altogether eliminated. It did happen every once in awhile. I'm sure that the employers took a number of these disputes to the arbitrator. The arbitrator, on the basis of the record that was made before him and taking into account that he had to read the agreement from the four corners, would usually rule that the union was in violation of the agreement by taking this job action.

Now I'm beginning to think about the words, "work as directed." It seems to me that after that, when a new contract was negotiated these employers succeeded in the union agreeing to put the words "work as directed" into the labor agreement; meaning work as directed by the employer except when it was a question of safety to the individual employee.
HS: In spite of that the men would refuse to work as directed every once in awhile and then provisions were made to have a port arbitrator come down on the job and check on the situation and make an on-the-job interim decision. Most of the time the men would comply with his decision. So eventually, but not altogether, the job action thing sort of died a death. It didn't die altogether and I don't suppose it ever will.

Stein: There are still job actions being called?

HS: It happens every once in awhile. You pick up the Local 10 bulletin and you will read that an arbitrator was called down and he ruled that under the circumstances he found the man had a right to quit work until the condition that they were complaining about was adjudicated.

Sometimes the bulletin will go into detail about what was going on, sometimes it will just indicate it in a few words, not even saying what the adjudication amounted to. But on the other hand if it was a serious case, the writer would give some explanation.

Stein: One of the troublesome issues in this period was the hot cargo issue. Do you remember that at all?

HS: Do you mean the hot cargo boxcar?

Stein: No, this was with ships. In 1935 there was a longshore strike in British Columbia and ships loaded by scabs would come down to the West Coast ports and longshoremen would refuse to unload them. Then there was a Gulf Coast longshore strike in '35 in which the same thing happened.

HS: I'm calling on my memory. It seems to me that a number of those cases went to an arbitrator, either the port arbitrator or perhaps the Coast arbitrator. I don't think that we won any of them. It's quite possible that occasionally we might have, but -- -- I'm pretty sure there was an American ship which had brought some cargo down here from British Columbia. We got into a big dispute about it.
Stein: The S. S. Point Clear?

HS: I'm sorry, the circumstances are way back there and I can't grab them.

Stein: They're in the newspapers, so if someone really wanted to check it out they could go look there. In that particular case Judge (M.C.) Sloss was called in and I wondered if that name rang a bell.

HS: Yes. If I'm not mistaken the arbitration board appointed Judge Sloss and he accepted. That could be checked.

Stein: I know that Judge Sloss ruled in several cases. Do you remember what the union felt about him?

HS: Personally, I had never heard of the man until I heard his name mentioned. I don't know at this point what he was a judge of, superior court, municipal, or federal. It seemed to me that he was an elderly man then, but that is a careless statement, of course. I was thirty-five or thirty-six years old and anybody who looked over forty-five to me was an old man. (laughter)

Stein: Yes. One's perspective changes, doesn't it?

HS: Yes, indeed.

Stein: Then there was the S. S. Santa Rosa incident in April of 1936. That was an East Coast ship which had been staffed with non-union, Gulf Coast men when the East Coast seamen on board went on strike to equalize conditions with the West Coast men. When the ship arrived in San Francisco it was met by a huge picket line of seamen and the longshoremen refused to unload it. The employers locked out the port; they closed the port.

HS: That was a Grace Line ship. Yes, I'm certain that is correct, but I would have to read something to bring myself up to date.
VI PERPETUAL STRUGGLE

(Interview 5, continued; 29 November, 1974)
(Continuing Tape 9, side A)

Attack on Bridges

Stein: According to Larowe's description, on page 108 (of Harry Bridges) the employers used that opportunity to try to get rid of Harry Bridges by saying that they would not reopen the port unless the union ousted him. Bridges was terribly upset and eventually went to Sam Kagel, who helped draft a resolution. Is that approximately how you recall the incident?

HS: Yes. I have a vague remembrance of it now and I'm pretty sure that I was in the Labor Council when the motion was presented by Mike Casey. As I recall it, there wasn't much discussion on it for the simple reason that all of the delegates were pretty well educated in the principles of the labor unions. The waterfront was shut down.

The employers were taking a position telling one waterfront union, "Get rid of your elected president." The issue was clear. The employers probably consulted their lawyers. They must have realized that the jig was up, so that took care of that. Harry was walking on cloud nine by that time, I'm sure.

Stein: You were a delegate to the Central Labor Council?
HS: Yes, but I was very inconspicuous in those days.

Stein: On the Central Labor Council?

HS: No. In the affairs of the longshoremen's union. I'm pretty sure I was working on the waterfront. Later on I became president of the local.

Stein: You were chairman of the publicity committee at some point.

HS: Yes, during the 1934 strike, but there were two other fellows with me.

Stein: After the strike was over did you leave the publicity committee?

HS: The publicity committee was dissolved. It was a strike publicity committee and whatever bulletins were put out thereafter -- and I think they didn't become a regular thing -- were prepared by the local officers.

Stein: One of the other big issues in '35 was the tanker strike. That was mostly a seamen's issue, but I wonder if you remembered that at all.

HS: The seafaring unions had difficulty organizing the tankers; in other words, the tankers were sailing with non-union seamen. I think that the Sailors' Union of the Pacific and its affiliates were striking the Standard Oil tankers, perhaps all of them.

Stein: Was the ILA involved in that strike at all?

HS: No, because the tankers only handle fluid oil. You pump that aboard or off the ship by mechanical means with large pipes and hoses. It's just a question of opening the valves. It's possible that occasionally -- but again I'm not certain -- longshoremen are hired to open the valves. I think it's normally the ship's engineers or ship's crew.

Then there are shore crews. The docks where the oil is discharged are industrial docks, in this case owned by the oil company. The oil companies were not parties to the longshore labor agreement.
Stein: They weren't?

HS: There's no cargo to handle, except --

Stein: Who worked the shoreside end of unloading the oil?

HS: Probably some men that were steadily employed by Standard Oil, or whatever oil company owned the dock.

The regular longshore work of handling cargo just didn't exist on those kind of ships. When you're talking about an oil tanker you're talking about a ship that is loaded with thousands of barrels of fluid oil -- you mustn't confuse the word "barrel" with the possibility that the oil is in a barrel.

Stein: In 1935 the longshore awards came up for renewal. That was when "Burglar Bill" Lewis was still head of the Pacific Coast ILA. The awards were renewed. I wondered if you remember that.

HS: It is the Pacific Coast award; it's not in the plural. That award expired. I guess it was good for one year, so it expired on October 12, 1935. I'm sure there were negotiations. You were in the position where you were attempting to negotiate an agreement between the Pacific Coast Waterfront Employers' Union - now known as the PMA (Pacific Maritime Association) and the Pacific Coast District of the ILA. I'm pretty sure that we wound up with an agreement. I don't think we called in an arbitrator.

Stein: No, you didn't. There was, as I remember from reading, a certain amount of criticism of the longshoremen for renewing the award so readily, because the seamen did not want to renew. They wanted to demand changes in the awards to each of their unions, but they couldn't do it if the longshoremen renewed right away.

HS: The Pacific Coast ports were shut down from the fall of 1936, I think, until a certain date in February of 1937. We didn't shut down in the latter part of 1935; we wound up in agreement.
I don't remember how the seafaring men fared in that particular period. I'm pretty sure there wasn't any tie-up. There must have been a threat of a tie-up. It's quite likely that seafaring unions were critical of the longshoremen's performance, whatever that amounted to at that time.

More About Steam Schooners

I guess we might take into account the fact that the seafaring unions were nearly always somewhat critical of the longshoremen.

Why was that?

As I told you before, the main issue was the steam schooners. About the only way that that situation could be adjudicated is to do away with steam schooners, which is not easy to do. There must still be some of them operating. It's also possible that some of those small ports are no longer in existence.

Those small ports were called "dog holes" by the skippers. They hauled lumber out of those ports and provisions to these ports. Now we're talking about years ago when they probably didn't have any roads to speak of, primitive times -- a hundred years ago, eighty years ago.

Then you have as an additional factor that the shore workers increased in numbers as the ports got larger and the cities along the coast got bigger. Everything increases in size, so the group of men who sought work on the waterfront as shore-workers increased in numbers.

Many of them were former seafaring men and they realized that it's more to their liking to establish a home, or try to establish a home, in a certain port and work ships, rather than going to sea and being away for three or four months and even longer. Of course, these men
HS: would remember their seafaring days. They would also remember the days that they worked cargo, but now they were shore workers and this other thing was no longer a matter of concern.

Self preservation being the first law of nature, the shore worker would say, "Well, I'm not a seafaring man any more. I've got to protect myself. Let the sailor do sailor's work, and let the cargo work be reserved for me, exclusively." This is where the friction develops.

I don't know whether that explains that or not. I certainly never took a ride on a steam schooner.

Stein: I would imagine that some of the problem would have been solved as steam schooners became more rare. I don't suppose there are as many of them now as there once were.

HS: Yes, I don't think the problem exists any more. (laughing) I ought to go down to the waterfront and ask a few questions, I guess.

The Union Recreation Center

Stein: Do you remember the Union Recreation Center? Actually, I'm probably jumping a little bit ahead in the story, but that was set up probably in early 1936 on the waterfront. Miriam Dinkin worked there.

HS: Dinkin, yes.

Stein: And Gus Brown was the director of it.

HS: I don't remember such a man. In spite of its name, it was not established by the union. I have a feeling that it was established by the Western Worker, but for a time its building was diagonally across the street from 27 Clay Street. That's where Local 38-79 of the longshore union's office was.
Stein: Did you have much to do with the Union Recreation Center?

HS: No. I went over there occasionally to talk to somebody. I don't know what on. I know that they invited people to come and join classes.

Stein: What sort of classes?

HS: I didn't attend any of them. I recall that I was president of Local 38-79 at the time. Guys would come around and ask me, "What's it all about? Is this part of our establishment? What goes on in there?"

So occasionally I went over there to find out. Among other things they taught matters that had to do with the development of the trade union movement in this country. It's just possible that while going over there and maybe getting a hold of some literature that I first heard the term "cordwainer".

Early in the last century, some shoemakers who went by the name of cordwainers made an attempt to set up a union in order to better their conditions and get more for their work. Apparently there were some employers who were hiring these men; in other words, they were shoe manufacturers.

It happened in Philadelphia and the surrounding territories about 1823 or 1826 or thereabouts. The workers struck. They probably were not very well organized. The employers took them to court and they succeeded in getting a decision by this court, and by other courts in the surrounding territory, including some courts in the state of New York, that these men were engaged in a conspiracy to take away from their employer his right to operate as he saw fit to make profit, and so forth and so on.

The result was that their program to better their conditions failed absolutely. This was the beginning of an attempt to organize trade unions in this great nation, prior to 1830.
**Election Changes**

Stein: Let's move on to the changes in Local 38-79. In 1936, Harry Bridges was elected Pacific Coast district president.

(End of Tape 9, side A)

(Begin Tape 9, side B)

HS: I'm just looking at a little bit of printed matter here.* "They'd have to change the election procedure. Convention delegates should be allowed to nominate candidates for district office, but the final election should be put in the hands of the membership, who would then elect the officers in a referendum vote. They were wildly successful. Their procedure was adopted, Bridges was nominated and elected in a Coastwise referendum by a handsome majority."

I think the difference was that in former days it was customary to elect delegates from the ranks to go to a convention. There, as delegates, they had the right to nominate a candidate and elect him at that convention. So the only vote that the rank and file man ever had was to elect delegates from among his people to go to a convention -- with the understanding that those delegates would assume the authority that was granted them under the then constitution.

It's something like electing somebody to go to the Congress. After you've elected him he does his job. He raises your taxes, he can vote for war or against war, and it doesn't go back to the people.

Stein: At any rate, with Bridges taking over leadership at the Pacific Coast district, that created a vacancy in the local.

*Larrowe, *Harry Bridges*, p. 109
Schmidt Becomes President

HS: Yes. The vice-president of Local 38-79 was a man by the name of William Marlowe, who had been a dispatcher. He was also a working longshoreman. When Harry went up into the district office, Bill Marlowe took over his desk in Local 38-79 as acting president.

I don't know how long his term lasted, but I succeeded him. Shortly before an election took place - and Marlowe did not put his name in as a candidate to succeed himself -- I put my name in. I got the backing of Bridges and what I call the Bridges forces. A man by the name of Henry Schrimpf was my opponent and he didn't get elected.

Fay: With two names like that there must have been a lot of differences in men because they sure as heck could confuse the names.

HS: He and Harry became bitter enemies. Schrimpf was also an Australian. Later on he appeared in the big trial* and testified against Harry.

Schrimpf didn't make it; I don't know how many more votes I got than he did, but I know that the man was angry. I guess he had a feeling that Harry should have backed him.

Stein: Why, because he was an Australian?

HS: No. I don't think that he was that provincial.

Stein: Here, I have it. From the Western Worker, September 17, 1936: you received 1,679 votes and Schrimpf** received 977.

HS: Not so much different, is it?

Stein: It's seven hundred votes.

* The 1950 Bridges-Robertson-Schmidt case.
** For further detail on Schrimpf, see Supplementary Interview 2, tape 2, side 1.
In any event, about two or three weeks before the election took place there was a rumor going around that Marlowe was not interested in succeeding himself and that he was going to go to work for the shipowners, believe it or not.

That's an interesting progression.

Yes.

What was he going to do for the shipowners?

Well, I'll get around to that.

In those days the shipowners' main office was in the Federal Reserve Bank Building. The shipowners just rented space. They had almost an entire floor. The election took place -- Schmidt versus Schrimpf, Marlowe not participating -- and then there was the business of installing the newly elected officers, which took place at a membership meeting. I don't recall that installation very vividly.

But in any event when that evening was over it was proper to come to the office the next morning and take over, so to speak. I had never held a job like that before and I was a little bit concerned about it, having to learn a new thing.

I walked in and Bill Marlowe was sitting behind his desk for the last time. He said, "Henry, I guess you've heard that I'm a phoney." I said, "Yes, I've heard all kinds of rumors. What are the facts?" He said, "I'm going up the street now and I'm going to go to work for the employers."

I don't remember what I said. I hope I gasped. I said, "All right, I guess the time has come." "Yes," he said, "it has, and I've got the desk all cleaned up." Words to that effect. I said, "Is there anything you want to tell me about this job that you think that I should know?" He said, "No. I'm not going to tell you anything. When I first got this job I had to learn and you'll just have to pick it up as you go along."
HS: I sat down after he left the office and said to myself, "What'll I do now?" (laughing) But in the meantime I had studied a little bit about the rules of order at a membership meeting and I learned how to rap the gavel. By this time I knew that I could talk a little better than some other guys, and carried on fairly well, I presume, because twelve months later I got re-elected.

Stein: What help was Bridges to you in learning the job?

HS: Very good. No difficulty at all. There came a time, not in the first year of my so-called presidency, but perhaps in the second, when I had accumulated some knowledge; and I don't know whether the word is agility or not.

Every once in awhile we had difficulty with uptown politicians and I had learned a trick or two from Harry. If you want to take a politician to task, or if you want to make your opinions known or advertise the position of your union with regard to certain national, or even international, issues such as fascism, it was best to communicate with a congressman, or the President of the United States, or the mayor of a city and then send copies to the press.

Almost inevitably the matter would get publicity. Then of course along with it would come the name of Henry Schmidt in the paper. Harry recognized this.

On one occasion I communicated with Mayor Rossi and took him to task for supporting the German Bundt, the Nazi organizations in this country. They had held a meeting uptown somewhere and we had picketed. As I recall, our pickets got into trouble with the police. I sent a sharp telegram to Mayor Rossi and copies to the press, criticized him for not stopping the police from bothering our pickets, or in other words supporting the Nazi Bundt.

I recall a telephone conversation with Harry. I don't know what the words were that were exchanged between him and me on the phone, but I
HS: gathered from his comments that it would have been more appropriate if he had sent the wire. He was the uptown president and I was the local president. He was a member of Local 10 and so was I, but it was our pickets that demonstrated at that meeting place and I think it was the California Hall, which prior to World War I had been known as the German House.

I caught on. By this I don't mean that thereafter we had friction, because that wouldn't be correct. Of course he was operating at a different level, more complicated, different, and difficult. Coastwise. At that point it's possible that he still didn't have the assistance of a Coast Committee.

Years later, if I'm not mistaken, the convention went on record, and the Longshore Coastwise caucus went on record, that there ought to be a couple of guys in the San Francisco office elected from the ranks who would be called Coast committee men. They would attempt to administer the affairs of a Coastwise longshore contract.

They wouldn't be concerned about sugar or warehouse or anything else that was non-longshore. They would be on the payroll being paid by monies raised by all of the Longshore and Shipclerks locals on the Coast. This was so as to not overload the Coastwise president. Along with that, subsequently came the fact that we went into the CIO, and the ILWU was established.

At that point there was a declaration that the ILWU would be a brand new union and therefore Bridges became the president of the whole, namely the International Longshore and Warehousemen's Union. That, of course, is another tale of woe.

So as far as friction between Harry and myself in those years is concerned, just an occasional flash in the pan.

Stein: Would he give you advice about how to run the local?
Yes. Once in a while I'd go up and see him. He always had an answer. I can recall one occasion, I don't know what the issue was; he said, "Hank, you have to take into account, how will this affect the union? Then you come up with an idea so that your decision will be helpful to the union." Well, that was pretty obvious. You're not going to sit there and dream up something that's hurtful to the union.

I came across something that I wanted you to comment on because I thought you'd be amused by it. I think I got this from the LaFollette Committee hearings. It's a report from one of the Industrial Association's undercover agents, a confidential report in September of 1936.

He says, "However, the real man behind the throne is Henry Schmidt, in charge of the publicity department of the ILA. He is contact man between the Communist party and Harry Bridges. It is through him that all orders are received from the party and in turn he issues the orders on the waterfront with the exception that Harry Bridges gets the credit for these. Schmidt is also drawing wages from the party for the work he is doing."

(laughing) This is the first time I heard of that. I didn't report that to the IRS (Internal Revenue Service) about getting wages. Holy smoke!

It may be out of context, but it would be interesting to give you a similar incident. There used to be a newspaper on lower Market Street, published in an office almost directly across the street from the Palace Hotel. The thing had two names, The Newspaper and the Wasp. It was a paper that came out twice a month, or perhaps weekly, and it had the shape of this Sunset Magazine, but it was not quite as thick. It was very, very critical of our union.
HS: It came out at a time when the maritime unions were out on strike. We had ousted Lee Holman and Holman had been busy with the shipowners. It must have been in the '36 Coastwise work stoppage that he tried to organize another union; he didn't succeed. He was backed by this publication.

One day we heard that The Newspaper and the Wasp had invited Holman to come to their office on Market Street and they would provide a sound system so that he could speak from one of their windows, facing Market Street. We took it up in the Maritime strike committee, which was representative of all of the unions.

Mervyn Rathborne of the American Communications Association proposed that we hold a council meeting in the open air on Market Street directly underneath the window where Holman was going to speak as the guest of the publication. Everybody thought this was a whoop-de-doo motion and everybody voted for it. We alerted the men and we tied up the street. The streetcars couldn't come through.

There was a man there with a sound system and he had a truck in which his apparatus was set up. I engaged him in conversation and asked, "Have you been hired by someone?" He said, "Yes, those fellows up there." I asked him if Mr. Holman was going to pay the bill and he said, "Yes."

I said, "I don't want to discourage you, and I'm pretty sure that you don't quite understand what's going on here, but all of these people tying up the street are waterfront strikers and they are not anxious to hear that man speak. It might be good policy if you would wrap up your gear and go away." So he did that.

There was Holman without the sound system. When the man departed on his little truck with his gear wrapped up the pickets all shouted hooray. Some of them started to shout for Holman to come out and speak. And he did. He spoke through a megaphone. He tried to hold a megaphone to his mouth this way, and he was waving a small American flag with the other.
HS: I forgot to point out that this publication was very, very patriotic. Instead of "Deutschland Uber Alles" it was screaming "Amerika Uber Alles." Somebody threw an egg and made a bullseye. It went right into the microphone and it burst all over Holman's face. There he was. He had to put the microphone down and I'm sure that he had an inclination to use the little flag as a cloth, but he didn't dare do that. (laughter) Nobody heard what the hell he said.

After that incident took place we all watched for the next issue of The Newspaper and the Wasp. They really gave me the works. The most insulting thing that it said was that I had been born in Germany and hadn't been in this country too long.

I don't think they said anything about my citizenship because by that time I had been a citizen for over ten years. However, they took pains to point out that I was educated in the University of Frankfurt am Main in Germany, "a mediocre educational establishment." (laughter) So, that was the end of me.

Stein: It's really wonderful where they get these bits of information!

HS: They had learned where I was born, of course. Then they learned that there's a university in Frankfurt. It's probably been there for four hundred years, so it's mediocre.

Stein: I guess they just assumed that you must have gone there.

HS: Yes. If they only knew the real facts, they could have pointed out that the man has had no education whatsoever.

Fay: Not only that, you left Europe when you were only twelve years old. You couldn't have gotten very far in the university. (laughing)

HS: That's right. I was on this side of the water by the time I was twelve, so --
Stein: Either that or they were saying that you were really super brilliant to have been going to the university at the age of ten. Do you know who financed the newspaper?

HS: No, I have no idea. It's just possible that they got some financial assistance from the Industrial Association or the shipowners.

Stein: How long did that little newspaper continue to publish?

HS: I really don't know.

Stein: I assume that Lee Holman's attempts to organize a new union were not successful.

HS: No. The tie-up was terminated. Of course the shipowners had taken the position throughout the whole time that it was useless to do any business with Holman. Later on we found out that they told him, in effect, "We have had contractual relationships with the ILWU or the ILA since October 12, 1934, and we have no desire to change it. We know that you're a former longshoreman, that you came here to reorganize the union in '33, but we just can't see our way clear."

He had a headquarters of his newly organized union set up on Mission Street, somewhere around Twelfth and Thirteenth Streets. He had hundreds of men here, many of them blacks. He had placed ads in the want ad sections of the papers of the deep South, "Old-time longshoremen come to San Francisco. There's a possibility of getting jobs here."

Of course he had to -- I think there's a federal law that you had to advertise the fact that the men would be going to work under strike conditions, but nevertheless the men came. I don't know where he got the money to set up a headquarters. He got his name in the paper every once in awhile, that he was trying to make a comeback and he had all these men.

The strike was terminated and people were going back to work on the front. Maybe seven or eight days after our fellows had resumed work
HS: I was sitting in my office at number 27 Clay Street and one of the fellows came running in from the hiring hall. He said, "Henry, take a look through your window."

I had a little cubbyhole of an office and in order to look out in the street I had to walk into another room. I looked out and Clay Street was black with black workers. There was no difficulty in trying to understand what it was all about.

I went outside and sure enough there was a spokesman. I guess I said to him, "What do you want?" He said, "We want work." He indicated that Mr. Holman had sent them down and that's the reason that they were there. As I looked up Clay Street; the traffic couldn't go through. They were shoulder to shoulder right in the middle of the street; must have been hundreds of them.

I got frightened. I thought, "Holy smoke!" The harbor police station was just around the corner in the next street, it's only about a hundred yards away.

I telephoned and said, "Look, I've got this thing here. Can you come with somebody and persuade these people to go away because word is going down to the ships and the guys are leaving their jobs and they're coming here to take care of their union office, you know."

Stein: Were the men on the ships afraid that all these --

HS: The word got around that, "Somebody's down at the office," and they were all kind of worried. "Black people," and probably some of them said, "Niggers". There's no question about that. I noticed that some fellows came running and they were out of breath, and they said, "We're from the ships." "Oh," I said.

Anyhow, a couple of policemen showed up. I don't know how they got near my door. They had to shoulder their way in. I said, "Can't you get rid of these people?"
HS: The cop looked at me in consternation. He said, "There's only two of us, mister." (laughter) I don't know how they managed it, but they must have gotten a little bit of help up the line. These men went away, guided by the cops into this little police station. Of course they couldn't all get in there, so the remainder stayed outside.

I called up Frank Gregory who was one of the three men who represented the shipowners on the Joint Labor Relations Committee and I said, "Frank, I think it's advisable that you come down here and look at the situation. These men think that they're going to get work down here, and you know that's impossible."

He said, "All right." When he got to my office I said, "Perhaps we should go to the police station and speak to the guys that are now apparently locked up."

So we did that. We found the spokesman again and I introduced myself as the president of the local. I guess I told him that I was acquainted with Mr. Holman and that they had been sold a bill of goods and there was just no possibility of them getting work here.

Then Frank Gregory made a few appropriate remarks. He said, "Yes, Mr. Schmidt is correct. I represent the employers and there is no chance of you getting work here. We have renewed the contract and the striking workers are all back on the job."

Stein: You mean that they couldn't get a job because they weren't members of the union, or because there weren't enough jobs?

HS: There weren't enough jobs. All of our guys went back to work. The other reason that they couldn't get a job was because it wouldn't be safe. There was this animosity towards potential strike breakers. And Holman was the leader. That's like waving a red flag in front of the bull.
The police had no room to hold these fellows so they let them out and these men, in sort of a single file, started to walk away, heading for the headquarters on upper Mission Street. They had to cross Market Street.

By that time a lot of our men had left their jobs on the ships and run after these fellows and a few attacked a few of them. I can understand their thinking. "Here we are on strike for ninety days, we get another contract and these outsiders come and try to get our jobs."

(End of Tape 9, side B)

(Begin Tape 10, side A)

I don't know who went to the authorities, but somebody must have told the mayor that he ought to call a conference and call Holman in and Schmidt in, and that's what happened.

I went up to City Hall and entered the mayor's office. The names of gentlemen who hold jobs in the city structure, such as Police Commissioner, were mentioned. Holman was there. I don't recall any black men being in the audience, so he didn't bring any of his members with him. And the press was there.

Mayor (Angelo) Rossi started the conversation going and he wanted me to explain why these men couldn't get work, and so on and so forth. Somewhere along the line Holman interrupted me. He was very excited; he was almost foaming at the mouth. The main effect of his statement was, "Mr. Mayor, you just ask that man. He's a member -- he's a Communist. You just ask him. He'll tell you that he's a communist."

I'm sure that even Rossi and all the rest of these guys didn't misunderstand that kind of attack. A couple of reporters asked questions and I answered, or the mayor did. The mayor seemed to indicate that he really wasn't acquainted with the facts. Finally he handed the hot potato to me.
He said, "Mr. Schmidt, what do you think Mr. Holman should do?" I said, "Mr. Holman should fold his tents and steal away like the Arabs in the night." (laughter) As I remember it, Rossi leaned over towards Holman and said that was a good idea, just go away. Holman must have gone away, because I haven't heard of him since. There was a piece in the paper some time ago, somebody told me, that he had died.

We don't know what became of all those men. I hope they all went back to the Southern States. But it's just possible that when we had additional registration -- added men to the work force in subsequent years -- some of them may have heard about it and come to San Francisco.

They might be working on the waterfront now. It's so long ago that if they did, they might be on pension by now, you can't tell. They're not going to tell you that they came here on the basis of having read an ad in some port on the Gulf. So, that's that.

I was wondering if any of them could have been parents or relatives of some of the men on the waterfront now.

Could be. I can recall three or four years ago when there was a heavy picket line around San Francisco State (University). What is the name of that Japanese fellow who used to be -- Hayakawa? (Later U. S. Senator Sam Hayakawa), I used to go out there and picket.

I was retired and didn't have as much to do as I used to. The first morning that I showed up at the picket line -- the press was there every day -- some guy who was carrying a camera and a pad to write on screamed at me, "Hey, hey, Henry Schmidt. Come here." I didn't recognize him. He said, "The last time I saw you was in Mayor Rossi's office. Do you remember that day?" (laughter) Twenty-five or more years ago.

That's incredible. He was still with the press?

Yes.
Birth of the Maritime Federation

Stein: This might be a good time to bring up the Maritime Federation of the Pacific, which was formed at about this time. I believe the organizational meeting was held in Seattle in April of 1935.

HS: Yes, that makes sense. I assume that the resolution to set up such an organization was adopted in Local 38-79 and it made the rounds and finally agreement was reached. Harry Lundeberg of the Sailors' Union of the Pacific was then unknown, but his union and the other seafaring unions agreed to come to a conference in Seattle for the purpose of attempting to set up a maritime workers' federation. That was done.

I know that Earl King from the Marine Firemen was there and there were delegates from several other unions. Nearly every longshore local on the Coast sent delegates. They kicked the ball around for a number of days. I don't recall myself saying a great deal. Most of the talking was done by Harry (Bridges) and by Lundeberg, who became known before that session ended.

There was a kind of a flare-up one day. This meeting was held in the Seattle Labor Temple. Some reactionary delegate from one of the northwest locals made an anti-IWW speech pointing out that we should be careful not to have any of "those kind of people" in our ranks. He didn't get any place.

He didn't mention any names, nor did he point his finger at any of the delegates that were present during this convention, but I think he probably was thinking of Lundeberg. He probably thought, "Maybe this guy Lundeberg claims to be a seafaring man, maybe he used to work in the woods, and maybe he's one of those Wobblies." I couldn't tell. But it was just a flare-up.

Arrangements were made to select a committee to write a draft constitution. To make a long story short, Lundeberg was nominated for president
by Harry Bridges, and he was elected. I don't know whether there was another candidate for the presidency. I think at that time Lundeberg was the secretary of the Sailors' Union so he already had an office job. It was agreed that the main office of the Federation should be set up in San Francisco. I guess Lundeberg made his office at the Sailors' Union of the Pacific, also the office of the Maritime Federation.

I remember that shortly thereafter, Harry Bridges wound up in the hospital. He had a very serious stomach operation. I went to see him in the hospital one evening and Lundeberg either was there when I entered or came in after I visited Harry for awhile. I don't think Harry was in very good shape to do much talking.

The constitution of the Federation provided that councils should be set up in every large port and these councils should be representative of all the unions who had affiliated themselves with this newly established Maritime Federation of the Pacific. So there was a council in southern California, there was a council here, and then one in Portland, and one in Seattle. These bodies met every month or so, discussing various and sundry businesses.

Friction Between the Two Harrys

Somehow or other friction developed between the two Harrys. I can't for the life of me remember what started it off. Perhaps they were both vying for position: "Who's going to be the big wheel here?"

I suspect that was true, from what I've read.

Harry Lundeberg did the, then, popular thing. He started to scream "Communism." That, of course, didn't help to heal the cleavage.
Stein: I know there were a couple of issues that I read about in the dispute between the two. One of them was the editorship of the newspaper, *Voice of the Federation*. A man by the name of Barney Mayes got into office who was known as a Trotskyite. I understand that Bridges was not particularly in favor of Barney Mayes because he didn't feel that the longshoremen were getting fair coverage, that the sailors were getting all the publicity in the *Voice*.

HS: That's possible, but it didn't make any impression on me. I can't remember who had the authority to engage an editor.

In any event, I got fairly well acquainted with Barney Mayes once he became editor of the *Voice of the Federation*. I think the paper came out once a month. The Federation also had a banner and a section in the Labor Day parade. I had a feeling, not very strong, that Barney was not too friendly towards the longshoremen. All that is so long ago.

But Barney got himself into real trouble with the longshoremen while we were out on a strike. I can't remember which strike this was. He used a headline in the federation paper which was very misleading. I think it was, "Strike Won." I know that Harry blew up.

Stein: That was the '36 strike.

HS: Of course the fact of the matter was that at the time there was some indication that the strike might be terminated and the unions might get better contracts, but it was certainly in error to put out a piece saying that it had been won.

Well, Harry went after Mayes and as I recall it we had a great big meeting in the Dreamland Auditorium at Post and Steiner Streets. I was the chairman, so it must have been a longshore meeting. It could be that it was a Federation meeting because, somehow or other, I also wound up being the president of the Maritime Federation Council in San Francisco.
Sometimes they can't find anybody and they just hand it to you. It didn't mean any extra money or anything. More headaches.

Anyhow, Barney Mayes was requested to come to that meeting. He was on the platform and discussion developed and he was taken to task. I don't know if Harry was on the platform. It wasn't an easy meeting to handle.

On one occasion Barney was standing right behind me and he wanted the microphone. He said something which was not exactly complimentary and I repeated it to the audience. I also said to the audience, "Barney's right behind me." I forget what the hell he said but my repeating it to the audience didn't do him any good.

I'm leading up to something. I recall that during Bloody Thursday I made a talk some place and I pointed out that on the prior day everything was peaceful on the waterfront -- that would be the fourth of July -- and that that dove of peace hovered everywhere.

Somebody had remembered that comment of mine and they had rigged up a deal to have a bunch of doves, or pigeons, at this Dreamland Auditorium meeting where Barney was to speak. I didn't know anything about it. It's awfully difficult to describe it. The criticism was flowing towards the platform giving this editor hell because of his misrepresentation that the strike had been won. Two words.

I didn't repeat this comment about "The dove of peace hovers everywhere," but somebody pushed the button and I don't know where all these pigeons came from. (laughter) They were fluttering all over the inside of this building. I guess at that point I said, "The doves of peace." It took care of the meeting, it took care of Barney Mayes, and it took care of everything. To this day I don't know who in the hell brought in a package of pigeons.

Stein: That's a sure way to disrupt a meeting.
HS: Yes. I don't know how many more papers Barney was allowed to -- I'm pretty sure that he got the sack. I don't recall how that was done. I don't think that he had any contractual rights. He couldn't say, "You can't fire me. I have to have severance pay." He didn't belong to the (laughing) right kind of union, I think.

Have you read anything that has to do with the details as to why he disappeared, or what happened to him? I heard that he was the manager of a motel on upper Market Street right there where Valencia and Market Streets meet. Gee whiz. I never saw him again. He was a difficult man to talk to, anyway.

Stein: How so?

HS: I couldn't carry on a conversation with him. I guess I had a prejudice against him.

Stein: Another name that I've come across is the dispute between Bridges and Lundeberg about Norma Perry. Do you remember her?

HS: Yes. I remember when she arrived at the Longshore strike committee headquarters in 1934, but I didn't know who she was. All of a sudden a woman was sitting there. I was just a member of the publicity committee. I don't know who engaged her in conversation, but information was passed around that she came in as a volunteer worker.

She was a typist. She worked without pay, just like Dr. So-and-So did. I can't remember that doctor's name, who would take care of the wounded in case we had any; and just like the lawyers who are now famous. Some of those fellows came down and offered their services.

She went to work there and it turns out that she was Norma Perry. Of course, pretty soon the word was passed around that "she's just another Commie trying to come in here." This kind of talk went around. She would help the publicity committee type up the stuff, correct the rough language that we used in our writings, and make it
HS: presentable to the public, because those were bulletins that we distributed to the waterfront strikers. Then, by golly, after the strike was over she was retained as an employee of Local 38-79. She was there every day and getting a salary. I don't know how long. Gee, maybe I'm wrong in that. I think Mary Sargeant and her friend Marie were already in the office, and I don't know what we would do with a third woman.

In any event, the circumstances that surrounded the situation were such that it was appropriate for Lundeberg to drop in at my office there. Or maybe Harry was still president of Local 38-79 and perhaps I would be in there for something. Norma Perry and Lundeberg got acquainted. The dope was that Norma Perry and Lundeberg were --

Stein: Didn't she finally go to work for Lundeberg?

HS: I don't know. It's possible that she was employed in his office as the secretary of the Sailors' Union of the Pacific.

Stein: I read that one of the sources of disputes between Bridges and Lundeberg centered around Norma Perry, that she had first been with Bridges and then Lundeberg had stolen her away, and there was some sort of jealousy.

HS: Yes, I've heard that, but I don't know of any evidence whether that is so or not. To the best of my knowledge I never saw Norma and Harry together -- either Harry. So that, I guess, has to remain a big secret. I wonder if that woman is still alive.

Stein: I think she is.

HS: Yes. She was married to a guy -- I can't recall his last name, but he must be in this book (Larrowe's Harry Bridges). He turned out to be a stool pigeon for the police, as I recall.

Stein: Arthur Margolis? He's named here.
HS: Yes. The Margolis I know used to be with the law firm, but his name was not Arthur. That's this fellow's name?

Stein: Yes, that's what Larrowe mentions here.

HS: How in the world did Larrowe learn all these things? Holy smoke! No wonder it took him ten years.

Stein: This he gets from the Angel Island hearing, the Dean Landis hearing, page 161, "Sapiro was followed"—to the stand, I suppose—"by Joseph Marcus, who, in the middle thirties had been the manager of Pierre's Chateau, a restaurant and bar near Golden Gate Park, not far from the Presidio. Marcus testified that when Bridges came to Pierre's, he usually sat with Arthur Margolis, the son of the owner, and Arthur's wife, Norma Perry, who was Bridges' secretary."

HS: I remember the first time I heard of this Pierre restaurant was when I read that book. I never wound up there. I wonder if it's still there. Gee whiz!

Stein: Another of the sources of tension between Bridges and Lundeberg was over the issue of the Farmer-Labor Party, which existed at that time. Lundeberg opposed any kind of support of it and Bridges was in favor of supporting a Farmer-Labor Party.

HS: That's quite possible, but I'm not in the position to discuss that. I have a feeling that Lundeberg was probably not in favor of any political action. I think he was a job action man. It's also just possible that he may have felt that the Farmer-Labor Party, inasmuch as it was apparently designed to be a political party, was an offspring of the Communist party. Of course, for that reason he would say "hands off."

His delegates, a couple of them, at least, whenever they came to the Maritime Federation Council meeting in San Francisco— I don't recall Lundeberg ever coming there; I guess he didn't
HS: consider the council important enough -- would have the Council in an uproar or in stitches with laughter because, every once in awhile, they would say that they are going to expose the Communists this evening. One of them had a very thick Scandinavian accent and he would say, "Ve gonna put the finger on them before the night 'tis over." (laughter)

(End of Tape 10, side A)

(End of Interview 5)
VII THE 1936 STRIKE
(Interview 6:  6 December, 1974)

(Begin Tape 11, side A)

Another Version of the Holman Row

Stein: I came across a letter which I think refers to this Holman incident, from Phyllis Edmond, who was the secretary of the King-Ramsay-Conner Defense Committee.* She's writing to Frank Conner in San Quentin in February, 1937. She said, "They had some fun on the front this morning, with about three hundred Holman Negroes marching down in a body to take over the ILA hall.

"One or two of them stated in the police station that the Waterfront Employers’ Association -- one of its representatives -- had told them to come down there this morning as there was going to be work for them. Anyway, there was quite a little fracas over the whole thing. One member of the ILA was stabbed, the knife going into his kidney -- stabbed in the back as usual -- and one business manager for the ILA was damaged about the head with a brick.

*This committee was organized by Bay Area unions to defend Earl King, Ernest Ramsay, and Frank Conner of the Marine Firemen's union against charges of murder. The letter, dated 2/15/37, is in the Gladstein, Andersen, Leonard and Patsey papers in the Bancroft Library, University of California.
"Several other more minor injuries were incurred. It seems that these Negroes, when they were taken into the police station, took a couple of pokes at Captain Healy and a lieutenant of his. Several of the Negroes were beaten up by sailors and firemen, and the papers had something to make headlines about.

"Brother H. Schmidt, of the ILA, has made a formal request of the Chief of Police that the Holman outfit be disbanded. This business this morning could have led to almost anything. The leaders of the ILA cautioned the men against undue violence, since everyone suspected that it was an attempt to start another frame-up on its merry way."

---

HS: Do you want me to comment on that?

Stein: Yes. Was that the story you told me last week of the Holman -- ?

HS: Yes, but this is the first time that I've heard of a statement to the effect that representatives of the Waterfront Employers' Union urged those men to go down to Clay Street and demand work. I had the impression -- in fact, at least one of the spokesmen for these Negroes said to me that Mr. Holman had sent them down to our office to demand work.

I don't remember having contacted the police and having made a request of the Chief that Holman's outfit should be disbanded, but it's probable that I did that. That is probably the reason that subsequently a meeting took place in Mayor Rossi's office where Holman was present, and of course myself. The press was well represented, the Mayor, of course, police commissioner, and people of that caliber.

That is the occasion when Rossi said to me, "Mr. Schmidt, what do you think should be done about this?" That's where I made what I thought was a good statement, "Mr. Holman should fold his tents and steal away like the Arabs in the night."
HS: Now, insofar as any of our ILA men getting injured during that thing, I don't remember any of it. And since nobody reported any injuries to our guys, to my office, it's quite possible that it didn't happen. I never heard of anybody getting stabbed in the kidney or any other part of the anatomy.

Stein: That may have been something that was in the newspapers that she picked up.

HS: That could be. I do recall very clearly that these men were escorted into that small police station and at first there wasn't room enough to hold them all. That's where Frank Gregory of the shipowners and myself spoke to them and tried to explain to them that there wouldn't be any work for them because our people had returned to work because we had succeeded in getting a new contract with the Shipowners' Association.

This little note indicates how things that never happened can take on the appearance as if it did happen, an actual thing. I'm certain that if any of our men had been injured I would have heard about it.

The Strike Starts

Stein: Maybe this is a good time to get into the 1936 strike. That started in the fall of 1936.

HS: As I recall it, the Deputy Secretary of Labor by the last name of McGrady was out here. I vaguely remember him taking part in the negotiations, or working behind the scenes.

Stein: You, at this time, were president of the local?

HS: Yes, I was president of the local.

Stein: What role did you play in the negotiations?

HS: I was either a member of the negotiating committee or I sat there as an observer, which means that I was not exactly a spokesman.
HS: Harry was the main spokesman, and then there were certain members of the International executive board who came from other ports in order to make it a representative body; almost every port had a man there. They all stayed at the Lincoln Hotel, which was almost across the street from ILA headquarters.

Stein: What were the principal issues that you were negotiating over?

HS: We had been working under the terms of the 1934 award, which established the hiring hall and what we call the six-hour day, "six and two." Everybody knew what that meant.

Suppose a ship comes in at half past eleven. Then gangs can be called at twelve o'clock to go to work, and they're warned to have their lunch before they go to work -- I think that was allowed in those days. Then we could work until five o'clock and then there wouldn't be any overtime pay from three to five, because it wouldn't be in excess of six.

I think a wage increase was demanded, of course.

Stein: Were you asking for full control over the hiring hall?

HS: No, the full control of the hiring hall was something that we demanded during the 1934 strike, and the award did not grant that. Having lived with the award a period of months, we found out that we could fairly well get along with a jointly controlled hiring hall, especially since the award provided that the dispatchers would be chosen by the union membership by referendum election in each port.

The shipowners had to pay half of the expense of operating it. This meant that the dispatchers were getting what we call the "fifty-fifty salary," half of it paid by their local union and the other half by the shipowners.
In order to administer the hiring halls, a revolving fund was established which had to be kept up to a certain level. That money was used to pay the dispatchers their salary, other janitorial expenses, the Pacific Gas and Electric bill, the water, and all those things.

I don't recall what kind of a wage increase we were demanding. Undoubtedly we demanded one. I think we struck until sometime through February of the following year. Shall we look into Chuck Larrowe's book and see what the demands were?

Here it is: (reading) "The longshoremen wanted to formalize their de facto operation of the hiring halls into full union control. The shipowners were equally anxious to regain the power to choose their workers."*

Offhand, I would say that that first sentence of that particular paragraph is not correct.

(Reading) "The shipowners were equally anxious to regain the power to choose their workers." The shipowners had been complaining all the time that, inasmuch as the membership had the right to elect the dispatchers, for that reason alone, they alleged, the union had full control of the hiring hall. There is some truth in that because the dispatchers, after they get acquainted with their jobs, can juggle the gangs around.

There was a time when the shipowners were entitled, according to certain paragraphs of the award, to have steady gangs working for them. Of course, those steady gangs would not be bothered about the hiring hall, except where told, "There won't be anything to do for you for a couple of days. Use the telephone, call the hiring hall"—instead of calling the company directly. The employers were also hoping to get rid of an expensive feature of the Longshore agreement (611) **, which they viewed as a depression spread.

* p. 112

** The contract clause calling for 6 hours at straight time and two hours at overtime.
Stein: Spread-the-work measure?

HS: Yes, and the longshoremen were unwilling to give that up.

(Reading from Larrowe's book) "Early in September, Frances Perkins sent Ed McGrady out." Specifically, what were you interested in?

Stein: On the next page, in the middle of page 113, or even earlier than that, "The shipowners, confident that this time, unlike 1934, they had public opinion with them, offered to arbitrate. The unions, convinced that the employers' assessment was correct and that an arbitrator's decision would go against them, turned the offer down." The union said that they would negotiate, but they wouldn't arbitrate.

HS: According to that, even before the strike started we must have said, "We'll negotiate, but we won't arbitrate."

Stein: What happened, from what I've read, is that sometime during that summer, T. G. Plant sent a letter to the ILA saying that he was willing to open negotiations on the award and that any issues not settled by September 30 would be subject to arbitration.

HS: That was his proposal to the union.

Stein: That was his proposal. The union offered a counter proposal which was that they would be very happy to negotiate, and that if September 30 came and went without an agreement being reached, that the union would be willing to continue to work under the old award until a settlement could be reached by negotiation. But the union added that it was refusing to put certain issues, which it considered basic, up to arbitration.

HS: That sounds as if that was the program.

Stein: Then the strike was put off for a month when the Maritime Commission, which was the --
HS: You mean (reading) "Harry held the strike off for a month" -- This is in the middle of the page on 113?

Stein: The sentence before that. (Reading) "They put the strike off for a month, however, when FDR's newly established Maritime Commission asked for a chance to try its hand at mediation."

HS: That sounds reasonable, although --

Stein: Do you remember the Maritime Commission at all?

HS: I have a remembrance that their chairman, and maybe some of his deputies, came to the Coast one time, but I don't remember which year it was. We held a meeting and we met this gentleman with uniform and everything.

Stein: Admiral Harry Hamlet?

HS: That's right. We were in the Sir Francis Drake Hotel. I can remember those gentlemen. The Admiral was not in civvies. He was wearing all his medals.

Stein: I suppose that was to impress you. Then Larrowe says something about Harry Bridges being pro-Roosevelt at that point. I wondered if that was an issue in the union.

HS: I don't think it was an issue, Willkie was not in the picture at that time. Willkie came into the picture at a subsequent election, when Harry allied himself with John L. Lewis on the Willkie issue, - and he took an awful beating, of course.

Stein: (Reading from Larrowe's book, p. 113) "Just before the strike was to start, twenty-seven Eastern and foreign steamship companies offered the longshoremen a separate peace, on the union's terms."

HS: What one has to check on with respect to this sentence is whether or not the East Coast longshoremen were out on strike and they were receiving an offer. Keep in mind the fact that we were still in the ILA then. This is a very interesting sentence.
Stein: I know just the book to look at, and I don't have it with me. It's a book called *The Maritime Story*, by Joseph P. Goldberg.*

There are several aspects to the strike that interest me. One of them is that there was absolutely no violence at all. Is that right?

**No Scabs, Little Violence**

HS: Yes. One of the reasons that that was so is that the shipowners didn't bother to hire any strikebreakers. There was no reason to get excited and look for strikebreakers because they were not present.

But Holman was around and there were little spots of violence. Our pickets were pretty loyal, and they picketed at night, even though there was nothing to picket, so to speak. They'd have an empty oil barrel and they'd put wood in there, and fuel, and it helped to keep them warm.

On a number of occasions they were attacked by some of Holman's men. You know, the police didn't come down there and protect the pickets. Nobody got seriously hurt, as I recall. Nobody got killed. But it was Holman's outfit that was trying to intimidate our pickets.

Stein: There was a lot of publicity from both sides, I think, in that strike. I wondered if you remembered that, the talks on the radio and newspapers.

HS: Yes, I think it made the front page every day. and there was lots of radio publicity.

* (Cambridge, 1958)
Stein: Then there was a big parade in December. Do you remember that? There are pictures of that in "Men and Ships,"* including a photo of one of the floats portraying a shipowner.

HS: And he was wearing a stovepipe hat. He was the typical capitalist and there was a tow rope attached to his vehicle and some slave was being dragged by the neck, walking behind the thing. (laughing) Yes, it's very clear in my mind.

Stein: Did you play any role in organizing that parade?

HS: I think so, but the details escape me. I probably was on a committee. Everybody collaborated, seafaring unions. I think that the fellow who sat there with the stovepipe hat in that freakish coat was one of our strikers.

In connection with that, we had a big meeting up in the Civic Auditorium and we had a great big party for the strikers' kids. I don't know where in the world they got all the presents which were handed out to the kids. They were asked to come up on the platform.

I know my daughter was there. She and I went to the microphone up on the platform and we tried to sing "Oh Come All Ye Faithful." I hope we did pretty good. (laughter) There's a little photograph of her and me in that publication.

I was just going to say that Mayor Roger Lapham came to that meeting, but I would be wrong because he became mayor of the city much later, in a subsequent strike.

Stein: Yes, but he did come to a meeting. There was a big meeting where he agreed to debate Bridges, I think.

* "Men and Ships," A Pictorial of the Maritime Industry, issued by the San Francisco Bay Area District Council, No. 2, Maritime Federation of the Pacific Coast, 1937.
HS: Yes, there was a big meeting. He put his foot in his mouth because he said, "We really don't want to control hiring. All we want to do is to control the hiring hall." That was a real mouthful and he got booed from all over the place; in fact the booing was so strong that I asked the chairman of that meeting if I could come to the microphone and try to say something to our people to stop it. So I did. Maybe Lapham said something to the effect that he shouldn't have said that. But anyhow, this has nothing to do with this event that we're discussing, the 1936 show, does it?

Stein: Lapham did come to a meeting. It's in Mike Quin's book, The Big Strike.

The Sailors' Union Pulls Out

Stein: Anyway, you were saying that in December Lundeberg made a separate peace with the shipowners.

HS: It must have been the 1936-37 deal.

Stein: Yes, it was.

HS: Suddenly it became known that Lundeberg had reached some kind of an accord with the employers. His lawyer was a fellow by the name of (Aaron) Sapiro. Of course, that changed the complexion of the whole thing.

As I recall it, there wasn't much sense for the sailors to go back to work, even though they had reached an accord, because we were still out on strike so there wouldn't be any cargo.

Stein: Did the sailors go back to work at that point?

HS: I think they made it known they had an agreement and were ready to resume work, but I don't think they got hired because they would have been compelled to go through our picket line. The question would arise, "Well, now that we're back
HS: on the job and the longshoremen refuse to handle any cargo, what are we going to do here?" Of course, they could do light repair work and wash the bulkheads. That's what they call "soojee, soojee", washing the bulkheads down with soda; the word soda becomes "soojee." It's just a word that they use aboard ship. Walls are called bulkheads, ceilings are called overheads, stairs are called companionways, and stuff like that there, nautical terms.

Stein: Sapiro testified at the Dean Landis hearing. (Larrowe's book, p. 157). What was the outcome of the '36 strike for the longshoremen? Do you remember that?

Who Won?

HS: We went back to work in February. There must have been some improvement in the new deal, but insofar as the details are concerned -- I know we hung onto the six hour day. There must have been an increase in wages.

(End of Tape 11, side A)

(Begin Tape 11, side B)

HS: The book (Larrowe) says on page 115, "After a month of negotiating, longshoremen voted in a coastwide referendum to accept a new contract, and on February 4th, the ships began moving. Who won the '36 strike? The shipowners thought they did.

"'In my mind there was absolutely no cause for it,' Roger Lapham said later. 'Except the wish of Bridges to extend his power. As I recall, the longshoremen got nothing out of the strike.' Lapham was right in one way, wrong in another. The strike was a test of power, and Bridges did wish to extend the power of the union. He was
Stein: What's that?

HS: Preference of employment by reason of the fact that you belong to a union is well and good, but we have a thing on the Pacific Coast waterfronts which has been in the contract because it was awarded us by the award in 1934.

It's an instruction set forth in the award by that arbitration board that the parties must establish a registration list and that certain people would be placed on that registration list -- and there's no reference made in that particular sentence having to do with membership. Whenever the list is completed, registration shall be granted by the parties to each individual. He's then a registered longshoreman of the port. And then it goes on to say, "No person whose name is not on the registration list shall be employed as a longshoreman as long as there are such people available." Now that one I remember and I can quote it almost verbatim.

Later on, when the union preference was kicked out of the contract, we still retained registration. Some longshoremen are aware of the fact that as long as they have registration granted by the parties as set forth in the contract they must have preference of employment even if they do not belong to the union. Some of them are wised up to that.

Of course from the point of view of principle and from the point of view of trying to get along with your fellow worker, if you're a registered longshoreman and your fellow worker finds out that you don't belong to the union, you're just going to have a bad time.

In connection with that, there's a sentence in the contract that says that a registered longshoreman who is not a member of the union shall pay to the union an amount each month equivalent to the amount that the union member has to pay; except that the non-member cannot be obliged to pay anything to the union like political assessments. He must pay his share
also hoping to strengthen the Maritime Federation. And it was true that the longshoremen did not achieve their main objective of gaining complete control of the hiring halls. Nor did they get a wage increase."

I think that is correct. But I can recall that one of the reasons we went out on strike was because we were supporting the seafaring unions, because in the 1934 strike they didn't do so well. So when they got ready to go under the banner of the Maritime Federation we followed the principle of "out with them," and with the idea of getting whatever we could.

But I don't recall that we made a demand to get complete control of the hiring hall because the financial aspect of the thing should have been in our minds. It's just possible that it was thrown in as a demand with the silent understanding that eventually you might have to withdraw it and say to yourself, "This operation is not so bad. We've got the hiring hall. The dispatchers are elected by our membership and the expenses of operation are shared equally."

Are you at the bottom of page 115? (Larrowe) There's something very interesting there.

Stein: Yes. (Reading) "The new contract gave them both job security and more control over the hiring halls. They retained the right to elect the dispatchers from their own ranks, and they kept their six-hour day . . . ."

HS: That's what I --

Stein: (Reading) "They also spread the work by limiting sling loads to 2,100 pounds. Moreover, in the new contract employers agreed to give union members preference in employment."

HS: Yes, that was a substantial gain. Of course, some years later legislation was passed in Congress which declared this preference for union membership as illegal. But we still wound up with having registration preference in the contract, which is a different thing.
for the upkeep of the hiring hall, which is the instrument that gives him the job.

You say you had two bad experiences with two guys who were not union members?

They belonged to the union, but they were requested to give up their union membership because they wouldn't do their strike duty. Right now I don't know which strike I'm talking about. One of them was called George Clark. He joined the Father Divine movement and assumed the name of True Knowledge. His name is actually on the registration record as True Knowledge.

There was another man, Roosevelt Stafford. He also saw fit to leave the union. Both of these brothers, because they had this registration granted to them by the parties in accordance with provisions of the contract, continued to work.

(Editor's note: At this point in the interview a visitor named Harold Yanow, a longshoreman, about 25 years younger than the Narrator, intervened with a series of questions and comments. These, being relevant to the interview's theme of longshore activities on the San Francisco waterfront during the Thirties and Forties, are included verbatim.)

Henry, I think you should expand on the reason why Roosevelt was thrown out of the union. He refused to observe some of the grievance procedures. I remember he was fined -- I forget exactly what for -- but he refused to follow the punishment meted out by the grievance committee. Finally he was thrown out of the union because of that reason. Of course the employers never did go along with us and he kept his registration.

Did he get work?
Yanow: He didn't work for some time because of the so-called threats against him by -- as Henry pointed out, if you're not a union member, your life is likely to be difficult. That is bird-wait, you know, a sort of intimidation process. At any rate, he finally was successful in suing the union and he got quite a bit of money from the union because of the fact that he didn't work for a period of time.

Stein: A lost pay kind of thing.

Yanow: Yes.

Stein: What sort of punishment was it that he was refusing to carry out?

Yanow: I think it's so many days off. Thirty days off for violation of hiring hall rules.

HS: Something like that. And True Knowledge, he refused to do strike duty because he said that it was against his religion, or some lame excuse like that. So when the strike was over he had a tough time getting back on the job, and with a name like that everybody gets to know you. True Knowledge. How can you help but become known?

Yanow: This was despite the fact that the union was agreeable that, "Well, all right, your religion prohibits you from doing picket duty." But we had the soup kitchen and he could do that sort of duty, and he even refused to do that. So fundamentally he was against the union. That's what it was.

Stein: I was going to ask what he was doing in the union in the first place.

Yanow: Well! (laughter)

HS: The windup of that is that for a substantial length of time, these two men did not work on the waterfront. We can assume that they contacted lawyers and the lawyers probably said to them, "We'll handle your case and we'll straighten this thing out."
It's quite possible that the lawyers told them, "Don't try to work anymore." But in any event, they went to the National Labor Relations Board. Of course the union's lawyer got into the picture and the decision of the board went to court, as I recall it. The decision was confirmed and the union was penalized for having caused these men to suffer a long period of unemployment and ordered that they should be reimbursed.

So there came an evening when Norman Leonard* came to the membership meeting and explained the whole deal. He was forced by the circumstances surrounding the case to tell the union membership the facts of life. He said that the court had fixed the sum. These men if they had been allowed to work would have earned so much. Norm said, "That is what you gentlemen will have to pay." I don't think he said "gentlemen", because those lawyers have been with us for so long that he probably said, "You brothers."

Stein: This is just Local 10 that's involved?

HS: Yes. The long and short of it is that in order to raise the money, each member of Local 10 had to come up with two dollars. But the explanation that was made by Norm Leonard didn't suit everybody.

There was one man in the audience who asked a question. He wanted to know, "After we pay these guys the two dollars and they pick up their money, are you saying, Mr. Attorney, that these guys are going to come down on the waterfront and we have to work with them?" And Norm Leonard said, "That's right." (Laughter) Do you recall that?

Yanow: No. But the fact of the matter is that Roosevelt Stafford was finally accepted because by that time we had many, many blacks on the waterfront -- even

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*Member of the law firm of Gladstein, Andersen, Leonard and Patsey, representing the ILWU.
though it was probably sporadically here and there -- and he finally got pensioned off. Of course, one's pension does not depend on union membership, but on registration.

I didn't know that also the pension is tied to registration.

You have to be a registered longshoreman.

That also. That's the main point. Your union membership has nothing to do with it.

Right.

That would be a terrible hook in the hands of a union. Oh, my. You know, pull everybody into line.

Given the current state of things in the ILWU, I could see where that could be a real problem.

That's right, very true.

If it's of any interest, one day when I had the fancy job of a pension director, True Knowledge came to see me. He brought his son along. His son was a very black black man. His name was True Obedience. In the discussion they started to talk about "Mother."

Too bad that doesn't apply to some of our children. (laughter)

I started to look at True Knowledge and I said to myself, "You look like a Caucasian. This fellow you brought here is your son. He's very, very black." But I didn't say anything, you know. I didn't give words to my thoughts. They started to talk about "Mother" and True Knowledge came up with her name and I can't recall what he called her, but it was True something.

True Obedience, I think.

Maybe the woman's name was True Obedience, and the boy's name was --
Yanow: That's okay too. (laughter)

Stein: The women will get you for that one.

Yanow: "You chauvinist pig, you." (laughing)

Fay: I'm just assuming it was, I don't know. (laughing)

HS: I think he was already on pension. He came in to inquire whether or not he was entitled to the money that was paid to the eligibles under the Mechanization and Modernization plan. A certain group of longshoremen on the Pacific Coast called the "eligibles" get money out of the mechanization fund.

Stein: I don't think we did go into this. Why don't --

HS: It would be a long explanation to explain why some of them didn't get it, but here are two who did get it. Hundreds of others got it. The maximum amount was thirteen thousand dollars, over and above the pension. Anyhow, that's a separate subject.

True Knowledge was eligible for this. I think he came in a few weeks after he started to get his first pension check. Of course, the fact that he became a pensioner got to be known on the waterfront and I had a few telephone calls from guys who wanted to know how in the hell is it possible for a man like that to get pensions and "mech" money too, as they call it.

There was a doubt in his mind whether or not he should accept that mech money. He went into a rather lengthy explanation about his beliefs, and perhaps he shouldn't accept it, and he sought advice from me. I don't remember exactly what I told him, but my explanation was on sort of a materialistic basis: "For a material reason you ought to take it. Other fellows are taking it. It might be said that you earned it."

In any event, he had to think it over. I guess he went home, and after a few days he came back and said that he was ready to accept the
mechanization fund check. I'm pretty sure I told him that he could have it in a lump sum, but if he took it that way he would be hit by the income tax and he ought to take it by the month. I think that was his decision. It's just a case of one man out of thousands who had a peculiar case.

Another part of this story has to do with the beginning of Brother Clark's career as a longshoreman at the time when he apparently changed his name from Clark to True Knowledge. He came to the joint labor relations committee meeting one day. Frank Gregory was the chairman on the side of the employers. I sat there with Charlie Conners and Captain Knopf and George Wolff.

Yanow: At his initial registration?

HS: No. He had been working on the waterfront as Clark and all of a sudden he joined the movement of Father Divine, and he wanted his name changed. It must have been about the time that Social Security went into effect and you had to have a number. We didn't know what True Knowledge was coming to the meeting for. He addressed himself mostly to the employers. He recognized us and I suppose he anticipated he was going to have some difficulty with the other gentlemen.

Frank Gregory developed a negative attitude and didn't want to accommodate him. He said, among other things, "Well, your real name is George Clark, isn't it?" And True Knowledge got very hostile and said, "My name is True Knowledge and I wish you would quit calling me George Clark; I want the record changed."

Gregory said, "What are we going to do about the Social Security number?" True Knowledge's answer was, "Don't you be concerned about my Social Security number, Mr. Gregory; I will take that up with the Social Security people." (laughing) Frank Gregory finally gave up, so he's on the record, and still is, as True Knowledge. God, that's a long time ago.
Leftwing Politics

Yanow: Yes, it is. If you're interested in getting some other viewpoints, briefly, --

HS: Mention Selden Osborne.*

Yanow: Yes, Selden Osborne for one. You would find him most interesting. He has a Masters from Stanford. He's on pension too now, after twenty-five years on the waterfront. Another is Asher Harrer.

HS: Do you recall if Selden caught the tail end of the mech fund dividend?

Yanow: No.

HS: I guess he's getting three hundred and fifty plus a hundred and fifty.

Yanow: Yes, He's getting the "bridge". Asher Harrer used to be a member of the Socialist Workers' party and he was involved with the political struggle within the union.

Stein: What role did Selden Osborne play in the political struggles in the union?

Yanow: He wasn't even as much as the loyal opposition. (laughter)

Stein: He was the disloyal opposition?

Yanow: Oh, my, yes. Bitter critic. And Asher Harrer was too, on political grounds. But they (the International officers) have a much, much better knowledge of the political struggles within the union. I wasn't involved with it, but I listened to both sides.

*For further detail on Osborne, see Supplemental Interview 1, tape 1, side 1.
Stein: Was Osborne a Socialist Workers' party person also, or was he to the right of that?

Yanow: Oh, God no. (laughter) I think he was a Socialist Workers' party man at one time. I find him most interesting, because he tells me of the -- well, I just got through reading the struggles of the Minneapolis strike in 1934. That was a tremendous strike. There's a lot of similarities between that '34 strike and the Pacific Coast waterfront '34 strike. Here -- these are my views -- the strike was run by the Communist party and there the strike was run by the Socialist Workers' party. They were using the same tactics and they were successful.

HS: The capitalist press condemned both of them.

Yanow: Yes, that's right.

Stein: Barney Mayes was Socialist Workers' party, wasn't he?

HS: Yes.

Yanow: Now there's a name that strikes a chord in my memory. Do you remember him? I don't.

Stein: He was editor of the Voice of the Federation for awhile. There was a big dispute about him being editor. Bridges was very much opposed to him and was getting up and knocking him at meetings.

Yanow: That's right. I remember now.

HS: Don't you remember the meeting with the doves flying all over the place? In Dreamland Auditorium? Did you bring those pigeons in that place?

Yanow: (Laughter)

HS: Don't you remember?

Yanow: No, I don't.

(End of Tape 11, side B)

(End of Interview)
A Night of Terror

HS: A meeting which is publicized in the Examiner of December 18, 1936, had to do with this strike. It was held in the Oakland Auditorium where a shipowner representative by the name of Frazier Bailey made a talk and I was speaking for the union. It was, from my point of view, not a very good meeting.

It was a big auditorium and I think it was my first experience talking to such a rather large crowd. I still have a feeling that the other officers pushed me into this because, I guess, they felt that everybody should have an opportunity to speak to rather large crowds, and in main auditoriums. My feeling is now, that I didn't do very well. Might as well confess it.

Stein: It's interesting because the impression from the article is that the Examiner reporter thought you did very well. He wrote more about what you said than what Bailey said.

HS: He might have been a class conscious fellow.

Stein: When you say the other officers wanted you to do it, do you mean the International officers?

HS: Sure. None other. I think (Eugene) Paton was secretary of the International at that time. Or maybe they were busy that evening. Who knows?

I was president of the big longshore local on the coast and after awhile people begin to figure that you're supposed to handle anything that comes along.
Stein: Being in a position of authority like that you're automatically supposed to have all those skills?

HS: Sure. I can recall when I first became president I was scared of the job. You can't go to any school to learn about presidency of a trade union. I'm not one of those fellows who says, "I'm not afraid of anything," because that would be a lie.

Stein: It's good to admit it.

HS: I think there are some individuals who can truthfully say they are not afraid of anything. So, maybe they want to go to the zoo and fight with a tiger.

Stein: I think leading the largest local on the West Coast was an awesome job in that period. You had a lot to fight for and a lot of resistance.

HS: There's a factor in there that would say that what you just said is not quite correct. You see, I, and a number of other people, we grew up with that local union. We helped to reestablish it, and we all went through that strike with the other fellows. We were on the picket line or doing some other strike duty.

We were acquainted with each other and whenever the men were sitting in their chairs in the large auditorium, wherever we held meetings, they looked to the platform and there they saw men who were on the picket line with them -- their equals.

It's not like becoming a member of a well-established union and you sit down on the bench or in the chairs and you see some fellows on the platform. You learn that they are the president, the vice-president, and the secretary. Maybe you hold them in awe, but you shouldn't. But some of that feeling undoubtedly develops in a person.

Stein: I have one more question about the strike. You told me a story that I want to get on tape, which you thought came from the '36 strike. It was a night of terror that you and your family lived through; there were several attempts to intimidate you during the night.
As far as that particular incident is concerned, I've developed the habit of calling it a night of terror. That might be an exaggeration. But my then wife and my daughter, who was a little girl at that time -- let's see, she was born in 1928 so she might have been eight years old -- and I were living at 1156 Sanchez Street, a flat in San Francisco. It was the type of house where when you drive in to the garage, the house is above you.

In other words the garage is level with the street and in order to get to the first floor you have to walk up a short flight of stairs. There're thousands of houses like that in San Francisco. The two bedrooms were facing the street; they were over the garage. So whenever you looked through the window of either one of these bedrooms you saw the street.

I may not be accurate on whether this took place during the strike or whether the strike was approaching. But in any event, we had a few threatening phone calls at the house. People -- they would never identify themselves -- would make nasty remarks. Once there was a phone call and the voice said, "We represent the Irish-American element on the waterfront and if you goddam Reds are going to have another strike we're going to come out and get you." Something like that.

On this particular night we were all in bed. I think midnight was approaching. We were all asleep, Catherine and I in one room and Lucia in the other bedroom. There was a sliding door between the two rooms.

All of a sudden we were awakened by a horrible crash. I thought somebody must have come driving down the street, jumped the curb, and hit the garage door with the front end of his car, or the right front fender. So I looked through the window and there was nothing in sight, nothing in sight, nothing.

But I thought I saw something lying on the sidewalk, so I slipped on a bathrobe and went outside. I saw there was a brick lying there;
I picked it up. Then I realized what had happened. Somebody had attempted to throw a brick through the window, either through the window that was our bedroom, or my daughter's bedroom, and missed and hit the side of the house and made an awful crash.

I brought the brick into the house. Catherine and I talked about the situation. We didn't get a sound from Lucia, and we didn't wake her up. But years and years later, after she had become an adult, she heard me relate the story one time and she said, "You know, Dad, you didn't hear anything from me, but I woke up and I heard you and Mama talking, but I couldn't tell what you were talking about." So the little rascal --

Catherine and I were discussing whether it would be wise to call the police. I had an inclination to call, so I did. A couple of policemen showed up after a while. I heard their car approaching. The door bell rang and I let them in. What did I want? What was the trouble? I showed them the brick, and one of them said, "What is your occupation?" I said, "I'm a longshoreman." That didn't make much sense. Then I added, "I happen to be the president of Local 38-79." One of them said, "Oh, well, you've got enemies." They indicated that they were going to cruise around and keep an eye on the house. Perhaps they did, I don't know.

We were both very much on the alert. We might have fallen asleep, but not completely asleep. Again, I heard an engine running. I was aware of the fact that it was stopped. I jumped up and looked through the window and I noticed that it was a PG&E truck.

I heard men talking and then, sure enough, they came up the little steps and rang the bell. I opened the door and the man said that he was from the PG&E and that they had a telephone call to the effect that there was a gas leak in this house, and he came to inspect the situation.
I told him that we had made no call, and I knew that there wasn't any gas leak. But he said, "We have to come in, mister, because we are here now, and complete our errand." So, he came into the kitchen and looked at the stove and at the gas heater. He said, "You haven't got any leak. It must be a mistake." I said, "Yes, I think so." So, he departed.

That was the second automobile that stopped in front of the house. I don't know how much later, but eventually there came another similar sound. I could hear a motor running, noticed that it stopped. The door bell rang. I went to the window and looked and it was an ambulance. The legend on the side of the car read, "American Ambulance Company."

I was getting a little bit impatient. I don't know exactly what I said. I might have said, "What do you want?" He said, "I'm from the American Ambulance and we came in response to a phone call. I understand there's a Mr. Schmidt here who is ill and has to be taken to a hospital," or words to that effect. I indicated that I was well, but I was getting angry. He apologized and departed.

Well, then we waited a little while and just about dawn, the same sound -- an automobile approached, the motor stopped, the doorbell rang. By this time, I was getting good and mad.

Then I remembered that somebody who anticipated strike trouble had given me a rifle which I had in the clothes closet. I grabbed it and when this man rang the bell, just about the very moment that he put his finger on the bell button, I opened the door. I pointed the rifle at him and said, "Now what in the hell do you want?"

He was somewhat taken aback and he said, "I'm from so-and-so mortician, and we've been advised that Mr. Schmidt expired and we came to . . ." I said, "You can plainly see that I'm standing on my feet." Whatever I said, it was something that he didn't like at the moment. (laughter) The corpse was standing on its feet pointing a rifle and was getting mad.
HS: But it was quite serious at that point. So he departed and I guess that's the end of the story, except that in the meantime I had become rather well acquainted with a fellow by the name of Jim Rieden who was the city editor of the Chronicle. I called him up and he thought this was quite a story. It didn't make the Chronicle front page that morning, but it did the next morning.

Stein: How had you become friends with him?

HS: He used to call up. There was a strike abrewing and, "What's the situation?" He would always mention his name. I would tell him -- maybe we had a membership meeting the night before and adopted some resolutions -- public relations stuff.

I can recall one time I went up to see him. There must have been a membership meeting. I went down to the Chronicle and found him behind his desk. That's how I got acquainted with a city editor. I think later he was the night city editor.

(End of Chapter 7)
VIII UNION YARNS AND PERSONALITIES
(Interview 7: 3 January, 1975)
(Continuing Tape 12, side A)

The Stockton Situation

HS: Years later I wound up in that same Chronicle building talking to Paul Smith. He was the editor. He was the man who had something to do with the hot boxcar. That's another story.

Stein: Maybe this would be a good time to take up the hot boxcar and the March Inland.

HS: The only thing that I can give a fairly accurate report on is the fact that Paul Smith agreed to attempt to settle the thing. I think that's mentioned in Chuck Larrowe's book. Paton sat down with Sam Kagel in a drinking establishment and they decided they would call Paul Smith up because Smith was quite critical about the situation, the hot boxcar.

I guess he was writing a daily piece in the paper. I think they said to him, "Since you seem to know so much about it, why don't you offer your services as a mediator or an arbitrator." That's what finally worked out, and the conclusion was successful.

Stein: Okay. I have a couple of other questions that a researcher asked me to ask you. His name is Gerald Rose, and he has been studying the cannery strike in Stockton. One of the questions he wondered was why the ILWU did not totally support the cannery union in Stockton by closing the port. This would have been in about 1936 or '37.
HS: I don't think I can answer that. I can just make a statement that the port of Stockton was, at that time, a party to the Coastwise longshore agreement. With the emphasis on "Coast" all of the ports were under that contract. At that time, I don't think we had any clauses in the contract which would permit us to back up other unions, no matter where or when, to the extent of shutting down the port. There's no question about it, you run into difficulties.

For instance, we refused to handle scrap iron because it was going to Japan; I'm now talking about the San Francisco port. Most of us knew we could make that a demonstration to let the world know what we were doing, but we wouldn't be able to stop the movement altogether.

The employers made public statements to the effect that if they were to stand by and let this occur, why then eventually -- I think what they meant to say was -- "the longshoremen can tie up the world." Our reaction to that might have been, "So what? Stop wars. Good idea."

Stein: So, Stockton was organized by the ILWU, and that was another local?

HS: Yes. They became Local 54 of the ILWU, but they must have been in the ILA before that. It's all so long ago. I've lived in California now for over a half a century, and it took me over thirty-five or forty years to ever get to Sacramento, not to mention Stockton. Too much to do here.

Stein: Gerald Rose gave me some names he wanted me to ask you about. How about George Wolff?

HS: Oh, yes. We also had a little guy by the name of (Albert) Lindenbaum. Well, he was a smallish man, I don't know what he was doing on the waterfront in longshore work. He wound up being a dispatcher. He was so small -- he might have been an inch or two taller than you are. He was a flag waver, the best, the best. After some years he got a little bit vocal on the question of patriotism and Commies all over the place.
Years and years later, after he'd been a delegate to an ILWU convention which was held in Astoria, Oregon, he must have got into difficulties with the immigration -- it came out that he was Polish, that he was still an alien. Of course the fact that his name was Lindenbaum indicates that he was Jewish, which has nothing to do with the case but here was this guy waving the flag all the time. He must have left the waterfront, because I don't know where he went.

Sorry, that was just an aside. George Wolff, yes. I knew him well. He's dead, you know.

Stein: Was he in the longshore union?

HS: Yes. During the 1934 strike he was a member of the longshore union. When we got the 1934 award, providing for the establishment of a joint labor relations committee, Wolff was elected to serve on it. Wolff served along with Charlie Conners, myself and Captain Knopf. He was German; his name was always funny to me because it means "button."

Wolff made his contribution in the joint labor relations committee. It seems to me that Henry Schrimpf was on there too, but there never were five of us.

Schrimpf got very angry one day and resigned from the committee. He had an argument with Harry. I don't know what the nature of the argument was. This quartet functioned for quite a number of years on the union side. We met almost every day with the employers. Of course, we were obliged to report verbally to the union membership. We used to report every week in those days; we were all fresh in these kinds of negotiations.
Telling It to the Membership

HS: It was not an easy matter to report all these goings on to the membership who were then back on the job. It goes without saying that many a man had never read the award, and not having read the award, he could only depend on verbal statements that he had heard from the platform, which in my estimation is not sufficient. Things get mixed up and at loose ends.

Knopf, he being a nautical man and a licensed skipper and having enjoyed an education that many a longshoreman hadn't had the opportunity to obtain -- and maybe his Germanic background had something to do with his superior attitude -- blew up one night while he was making a report at a membership meeting because whatever he was saying didn't register with some of the listeners.

And he talked with an accent, which the fellows didn't appreciate. I appreciate it, because I think that to hear a fellow talk with a German accent is humorous. (laughing)

So Fred -- we called him Fred -- blew up and he said, "You guys don't know about these things. You got to listen to us and you might as well do what we say because you're not educated well enough to grasp these things." He didn't use the word "grasp", but that's what he meant.

That was sort of the end of him. He just exterminated his own effectiveness. Stamped his foot and thought he was in the wheelhouse of a steam schooner telling the man at the wheel, "Christ, man, you're off the course."

Stein: What sort of positions did George Wolff take? Was he in the radical end of the thing?

HS: I wouldn't say that. He finally got off the joint labor relations committee because --

(End of Tape 12, side A)

(Begin Tape 12, side B)
Stein: He got acquainted with the Ship Scalers, that's right.

HS: Whenever we went back to our headquarters we walked past the headquarters or storefront that was occupied by the Scalers. They were ILA Local 2. They did scaling work, cleaning up on ships. The worst kind of job that was available.

Lo and behold, they were impressed with his ability to talk. They were the kind of people who had language difficulties of their own. Most of them were Spanish surnamed fellows and there were some American blacks among them. They hired him to be their negotiator.

Fay: Marvelous speaker.

HS: Yes. Along with that, about the same time, he got acquainted with the men who travelled to Alaska on windjammers whenever the salmon catching season approached. He became their negotiator, and quite a leader. He sort of separated himself from the longshore local -- not to the extent that he gave up his membership. He became the number one man in the Scalers. I think he felt that he had reached the heights. That's all right.

He came back to longshoring and eventually he became a pensioner. He became very ill and he was almost completely incapacitated. I don't know what his ailment was. He finally wound up in a cheap lodging establishment down on Skid Row, on Howard Street, I believe, and we never used to see him any more. Then he became active in something else. You know all of those cheap hotels which were to be vacated?

Stein: Yes, by the Yerba Buena project?

HS: Yes. He became the number one man. It was the only thing that would make George happy, to become the number one man. He was fighting for those guys who were being thrown out of their rooms.
HS: He would get on TV and have his picture in the paper. It was good for his health. He became the fighting demon out there.

Fay: He was always a fighter.

HS: Yes. And he made very good efforts to improve his language. Whenever he made a speech he'd always throw in at least three new words that he had picked up. Sometimes people wouldn't know what in the hell they meant. (laughter)

Stein: He was getting as bad as Captain Knopf?

HS: Yes.

The King-Ramsay-Conner Case

Stein: One of the reasons I asked about his politics was his name pops up in the King-Ramsay-Conner case.

HS: It does?

Stein: Yes. There's an accusation that he's a Communist.

HS: I can't make that accusation.

Stein: I don't know whether you remember the case well enough, but since I'm embroiled in the middle of it right now all the details are on the top of my head. Albert Murphy, A. M. Murphy, who was the assistant secretary-treasurer of the Marine Firemen, turned State's evidence. He was one of the big witnesses against the men at the trial.

HS: That's King, Ramsay and Conner?

Stein: Yes.

HS: Gee, I don't remember that guy. Did he say something uncomplimentary about George Wolff?
Stein: Yes. Murphy had tried to help George Wallace to get out of the country.

HS: Now who is George Wallace?

Stein: George Wallace was one of the other defendants. It was actually King-Ramsay-Conner and Wallace, but Wallace confessed and turned State's evidence, so nobody was really interested in him.

HS: What did he confess to?

Stein: He confessed that he had been at the Marine Firemen's headquarters and had been called into (Earl) King's office and King and Ramsay were there; that Ramsay had called George Alberts -- who was murdered -- a fink who needed to be taught a lesson; and King told Wallace to go on a "job," to go over to the S. S. Point Lobos and tamp up on Alberts. It was essentially Wallace's confession which pulled everybody in.

HS: Did I understand you correctly that Wallace confessed to the effect that he did the tamping?

Stein: No, he was smart enough to blame it on somebody else, to say that he went over with somebody else and they did the tamping and he just acted as a lookout.

Wallace wasn't very bright and didn't have sense enough to stay away from San Francisco after the murder. He kept coming back to San Francisco. At one time he came back when King was away at the Maritime Federation Convention in San Pedro, but Murphy was in town. Wallace ran into Murphy and asked for money to get out of the country, or something. Murphy said he didn't know what to do with Wallace so Murphy asked George Wolff of the Ship Scalers how to get in touch with Lawrence Ross.

The reason he asked Wolff, said Murphy, was that he knew Wolff was a Communist and would know how to get in touch with Lawrence Ross, who was also a Communist. It all gets very complicated, but that's how it is.
HS: Could that be the same Ross who later started to work for a publication in the State of Tennessee? He testified in the Bridges-Robertson-Schmidt trial. Is it the same man? Was his name Lawrence?

Stein: Yes. He was editor of the *Western Worker* in the thirties.

HS: I'm just trying to figure out if we're talking about the same man.

Stein: That's right. As a matter of fact he turned up later at the trial. He had had this whole long story that he had been brought up in the South, that he was from Virginia aristocracy and he had broken with his southern heritage to become this radical. In fact, he was the son of a Jewish garment maker in New York City.

HS: Yes, where have I heard all that? He said he was born in Kentucky in our trial, and that his father was a planter in Kentucky. I don't know whether he said cotton planter or tobacco planter. Later on it turned out to be a great big lie, and that he came from the Bronx.

Stein: Yes, he was from New York.

HS: His father had been in the garment industry. He pointed out that he was of Jewish descent and I leaned over and said to somebody, "That guy's name is not Ross, I bet it's Rosenstock, or Rosenbaum, or Rosenthal." And that's what it turned out to be. I didn't know that he was mixed up in this King-Ramsay-Conner deal, no memory of that all.

Stein: Did you know any of the principals in the King-Ramsay-Conner case? Did you know King?

HS: Yes. I got acquainted with King at the Maritime Federation Convention in Seattle, where the convention was born. He was an officer of the (Marine) Firemen's Union. He identified himself as a Canadian. I guess he must have been a naturalized American at that time. Thereafter I hardly saw him.
He was immediately recognized at the convention as a man who had been in the trade union movement for some time, because he had the ability to speak and his language was the language of a trade union officer. I can remember years later going to San Quentin a couple of times to visit with him. He's no longer alive, is he?

Stein: No, he died.

Miriam (Dinkin) was secretary of their defense committee and she, as I recall, used to go to San Quentin quite regularly. I went along with her one day.

Stein: Did you testify at the King-Ramsay-Conner trial?

It seems to me that the trial was in Alameda County because the ship -- yes, I have a remembrance that I -- I can see myself in the witness chair, and if I'm not mistaken the District Attorney was the man who later became Chief Justice of the Supreme Court -- Warren. Not Warren Burger, but Earl Warren.

Earl Warren, Earl King, and now we're talking about a fellow by the name of Murphy.

Do you remember anything else about the case?

No. They were eventually released. Maybe you have the year of their release.

It was '41. It was just about the same time as Pearl Harbor, just before.

That's over thirty years ago.

Joining the CIO

Let's turn to the, what did you say -- what was that little song? "Fight for Harry Bridges and join the CIO?"
HS: I can't recall the rest of the words, but it has something to do with -- there's some line in there that "Fifty-thousand union men can't be wrong."

That was the time when John L. Lewis was setting up the CIO. Harry was appointed CIO Director for the Pacific Coast states, in addition to the job he already had. He proposed that we disassociate ourselves from the ILA and go into the CIO.

As I recall it, Lou Goldblatt (of ILWU Local 6) became secretary of the California CIO. He functioned in that capacity for a number of years before he became secretary of the ILWU.

There was a CIO convention in San Francisco. John L. Lewis (of the Mine Workers) was there. Phil Murray (of the Steelworkers) became president later on.

Stein: He was at that convention also?

HS: Sure. He being the vice-president of CIO, he had to be there. I've got a picture of Murray and Lewis and Harry and myself and Paton. Harry was insistent we had to go on a platform and have our picture taken with those big wheels. Harry said, "You don't want to?" I said, "No, it's embarrassing to go." He said, "We have to go." He held some of those fellows in awe, and don't you ever forget it.

Stein: To have your picture taken with them must have been quite an honor. Do you still have that picture?

HS: Yes.

Stein: To finish up that CIO, what do you remember of the debate about whether to join the CIO?

HS: Do you mean the verbal explanation that a man like Harry might have made from a platform?

Stein: Yes. I know, for instance, it was an issue with the Maritime Federation convention in 1937, in Portland.
I don't remember that. The thing that I remember most clearly is a meeting, either in the Dreamland Auditorium or at the Eagles' Hall in San Francisco, where Harry was explaining the issue. He didn't have to do much explaining about continuing our membership in the ILA because the main office in New York, with Joe Ryan heading the thing up, was quite unpopular with the men on the West Coast, especially in San Francisco. During the 1934 strike we had a visit from Joe. We practically chased him out of the city.

Harry was explaining the advantages of joining this new thing and industrial unionization -- that it would work better. We, and especially Harry, had to overcome some opposition by people who were subscribing to the Communist scare, which was very popular. For instance, some of our members took the initials of International Longshoremen's Association, ILA, and they made little placards and translated it into, "I love America."

When the CIO was getting lots of publicity with union bulletins and union publications as well as the press, some fellows made little placards which they attached to walls and also on board ships. Instead of saying Committee of Industrial Organization, CIO, they'd say, "Communist Industrial Organization." Those little placards were pasted up here and there.

Finally the membership voted to disaffiliate with ILA and affiliate with the ILWU (CIO). There was some kind of conference in Seattle that had to do with the name that we should adopt. I guess the Coastwise executive board went to Seattle to discuss that. Harry had proposed ILWU. I can still see myself sitting in one of the office rooms up there in Seattle with the other fellows. Harry had not yet arrived. I put Harry's proposal on the table and some of them didn't agree to it. It wasn't a big thing. I said, "Let's wait until he gets here."
HS: Some of the fellows were opposed to this warehouse thing in our name. They thought that we longshoremen might lose our identity because if we went out and organized all the warehousemen that we could find, they would outnumber us longshoremen.* They would become the big thing in this organization. That was the kind of propaganda that the opposition put out. But it was to no avail. We finally got a charter.

Once the thing was established it was clear sailing. There was no more opposition. The fellows who were opposed to CIO sort of gave up. It didn't matter much as I recall.

The Steuart Street Gang

Stein: You mentioned once the Steuart Street gang.

HS: That's something else again.

Stein: What's that about?

HS: There were a number of longshoremen in ILA 38-79, which was the original group, who were opposed to going CIO. There might have been a dozen, or fifteen, or twenty of them who decided that they were not going to go along. They remembered that original headquarters were at 113 Steuart Street. That's where our strike headquarters were during the strike, that's where we established ourselves as ILA 38-79 before the strike. We carried on there for awhile after the strike, but we eventually moved to 49 Clay Street. That became the ILWU Local 10 office.

*For further detail see Supplementary Interview 2 tape 2, side 1.
There was a group of men who made a declaration to the effect that they were going to continue in the ILA, that they would continue to sit on the old charter. They picked it up -- we had a CIO charter -- and they hung the ILA charter on the wall at 113 Steuart Street.

They rented that place and they made a declaration to the effect that "We're in business." They were hoping that the men would come streaming back to them, which didn't occur. They were just a group of disrupters and they were called the Steuart Street gang.

There was a similar type group in San Pedro and they were called the Dirty Dozen because there were only about a dozen of them who couldn't understand that we should go into the CIO. They thought it was a Communist organization. That was the song and dance at that time.

Stein: Did this Steuart Street gang try in any way to contend that their contract with the employers was a binding one?

HS: Yes. They put out leaflets to that effect. But they had to live with the unpleasant situation -- from their point of view -- that the headquarters of the longshoremen was at Forty-nine Clay Street and the jointly controlled hiring hall was right next door. The employers were doing business with us. The Steuart Street gang only represented a handful of men. They didn't get any place with that.

I guess they were hoping that maybe the thing would go to court, that maybe the court would make a declaration to the effect that the contract was their property. But, as far as I can recall, they didn't make that attempt.

Some of them came over to see me. I was president at that time. I'm pretty sure there was a motion passed at a membership meeting that if those guys were going to establish themselves over at the old hall on Steuart Street and make trouble, we might as well put our foot down and
HS: tell them that they couldn't work on the waterfront. I had the unpleasant job of telling them that, "There's no use for you to come into this hiring hall or into my office because you don't belong here anymore, and there's no use for you to try to work on this waterfront." Of course they immediately thought that I was issuing the orders. I made it clear to them that there was a resolution adopted. They tried some legal maneuver with that, but that didn't get any place.

One of them was somewhat of a fighter and he got into a fight almost in front of the union office on Clay Street with a man by the name of Axel Anderson. He was a young man then. His father was on the waterfront, too. Somebody came running into my office and said, "There's a couple of guys out there fighting."

I went to see and here was Axel Anderson fighting with this man. I made an attempt to separate them and I got a little help and they were separated. The man that was fighting with Axel Anderson was one of the Steuart Street members. I don't know who started the fight. He went to the police and he swore out a warrant for my arrest. He charged me with having assaulted him. (laughing) All I did was try to separate them.

I got a telephone call from the police department. The voice said that he was speaking for Inspector so-and-so. He said, "They want you to come up here." I got ahold of a lawyer. "What am I supposed to do?" I explained the background, the attempt to separate these two fellows that were fighting and what they were fighting about. I think the lawyer said, "You might as well go to the Hall of Justice and see what they want."

Stein: That would have been (Richard) Gladstein, or one of his partners?

HS: It might have been Richie, it might have been Norm Leonard or George Andersen. I went and I got fingerprinted and nothing ever came of it. I guess they must have dropped the case because I didn't appear before any court.
The Steuart Street gang finally gave up, folded their tents. They never got back on the waterfront. They never did make a case out of it. Some of them must be dead.

Do you remember some of the people in the Steuart Street gang?

I mentioned a fellow before by the name of Albin Kullberg who was a very active man when the union was reestablished in 1933. He decided that he'd join the Steuart Street gang. He came to the window one morning and he wanted to see me. It was the window where you pay your dues.

I'm pretty sure that he said, "I just came around to indicate to you that I'm not joining that gang." I said, "Are you going to stay with the CIO?" He said yes, but subsequently he came back again and he said, "I changed my mind again. I'm going to go with that gang." And he did. That's the last time I saw him, as I can recall.

I also mentioned a fellow by the name of White; had the nickname of "Dirty Shirt" White. He always had a bushel of newspapers in his pocket and he was always stopping people in the street and showing them articles that he thought they should read. He took the trouble to raise hell about Communists and call attention to the Socialist party. Since he wasn't very clean looking, people didn't have any patience to chat with him.

I can see them. I can see their faces. There was a fellow by the name of Lawrence Mallen. They called him "Cocky" because one of his eyes was way off. That, of course, was not his fault. He never came back to the waterfront.

He had several brothers who did stay: Emmett Mallen, he became a pensioner, and then there was another Mallen who became secretary of the walking bosses, another ILWU local.

* For further detail, see Supplementary Interview 2, tape 2, side 1.
HS: He stayed with the ILWU-CIO although he was opposed to it. I guess he realized which side of the bread the butter was spread.

The Steuart Street gang made no progress whatsoever. It's a leaf or two in the book, but it's not very important. They distributed a bulletin, and they must have financed it, of course. They took a swipe at the officers of the new CIO local, including myself. I don't know what else I could tell you about that incident.

Stein: There was something in -- (reading) "The affiliation of the ILWU to the CIO in 1937 immediately raised questions as to the coverage of the previous contract negotiated by the union under the name of the ILA. The situation was complicated further by the decision of the longshoremen in four small Puget Sound ports to remain in the ILA. These groups and certain individuals in various other ports had ILA and AF of L support and succeeded in bringing into court the question of contract rights and union treasury.

"The Waterfront Employers' Association, fearing an ILA suit if the ILWU was supported as the coast bargaining representative, refused to recognize the ILWU for nearly a year after the membership had voted to affiliate with the CIO. The employers' position before the NLRB was that the appropriate unit for collective bargaining should be the men in the employ of each employer in each port.

"On June 21st, 1938, the NLRB found that the entire Pacific coast was the appropriate collective bargaining unit and that the ILWU was the exclusive representative of the longshoremen and entitled to administer the existing contract.

"Subsequently the ILWU and the Waterfront Employers' Association entered into an agreement substituting the name of the ILWU for the ILA. An exception was made for the four Puget Sound ports."

(End of Tape 12, side B)
(Begin Tape 13, side A)

Stein: You were saying, "Subsequently -- "

HS: Subsequently the other ports, that is the so-called ILA ports, the small ports including Tacoma, decided to come over. I don't know what the arrangements were, but they must have taken a membership vote. They decided to step out of the ILA and they changed their banner from ILA to ILWU.

It's quite possible that the pension program had something to do with this because those men found out that the pensions the ILWU had obtained through negotiations were a little bit better than the pensions that were granted to the ILA ports. I think that was a factor in the change. These locals are now in the ILWU and have been for years.

There are still papers in the files having to do with the change in the general scheme of pensions, showing that the ILWU-PMA pension fund was taking over the rights and the obligations of that other pension fund that was functioning for those other ILA locals.

Stein: Is there anything else about the CIO that we ought to get on tape?

HS: I can't think of anything right now.

The "Bug" in Harry's Room

Stein: The other thing I wanted to ask you about was the Maritime Federation Convention in 1937 in Portland, among the events of which was the discovery that Harry Bridges' room in the Multnomah Hotel had been bugged.

HS: Yes, I know about that. What is it you want me to describe?

Stein: The incident, if you remember it.
As I recall it, Harry was staying in the Multnomah Hotel which was then, and might still be, the largest hotel in Portland. There was a recess in the proceedings -- it might have been the noon hour and I came back into the lobby, having been out on the street in some lunchroom. I saw a group of the delegates standing around; they were talking about having heard that Harry's room had been bugged.

I can't recall who all was standing there discussing this subject. Harry was there, some of the delegates, and I joined them. John Schomaker was there. He stands out because he's an extremely tall individual. He was a delegate from Local 10. And there was a man there from the seagoing radio operators. I think we called them ARTA.

His name doesn't come to me, but it's in Chuck's book (Charles Krolek). He was standing there and he eventually volunteered to go up and perhaps he could find it.

We entered Harry's room and as soon as we were all in there Schomaker made a wisecrack. He said something about the instructions from Moscow, and this is where you pick them up, and so on and so forth -- in Harry's room, you know. I don't think the group that entered the room approved of that.

We looked around. Nobody knew where to look. Then this ARTA man started to go around and he put his -- what I thought -- sensitive fingers at certain places, including the baseboard of the room. All of a sudden I saw very clearly he seemed to find a soft spot.

He managed to puncture the paper. As the paper was punctured one could see a thing move away from you and disappear into the next room. Everybody was surprised as hell that this man had been able to find it. I made the conclusion that he was a radio man and he probably was equipped with more sensitive fingers than other people.
HS: Then somebody went out in the hall and knocked on the room next door. Somebody came to it, opened the door. It was a man in shirtsleeves. The fellows started a conversation with this fellow, but they didn't press their idea of entering and the man didn't want them in, so that didn't become an issue.

For years and years I had a great admiration for this radio operator because he'd found this tiny microphone. I didn't even know that there were such tiny microphones in existence. One day we had a session in the courthouse in San Francisco, the Bridges-Robertson-Schmidt case. The court clerk calls a name and, lo and behold, it is the name of that particular ARTA radio man and he is a witness for the prosecution.

I saw him enter. I recognized him right away, and so did Harry. I poked Harry in the ribs and I said, "What the hell is he going to tell. That's the guy that found that microphone in the wall in your room." He said, "Yeah."

Anyhow, the man took the stand. He was testifying for the government, for the prosecution. He wound up the explanation. Vincent Hallinan cross-examined him. Hallinan finally said, "Why was it possible for you to find that microphone?" He said, "I'm the man that installed it for the Portland police department." (laughing) I thought to myself, "Now I've seen and heard everything."

Stein: You had no idea that he was working for the Portland police?

HS: I had no idea. I believed all these years that he was a clever fellow, knew his business, and that he wasn't working for the police department of Portland. I think the other fellows had the same idea because nobody ever said anything that he was a stool.

Stein: Do you think Harry also trusted him then?
HS: I don't remember Harry ever saying anything to the contrary. I can't recall what all Krolek testified to, but he did admit that he planted that instrument in the wall.

Stein: Do you remember if they ever said that they got anything incriminating from the microphone?

HS: No, I don't remember. Now, I may be mixed up but one day long before the B-R-S trial I was sauntering on Market Street and I'm pretty sure I wound up in front of a radio store show window, looking at all the things that were on exhibit. All of a sudden, I realized that this same man was standing alongside of me. I guess I said, "What are you doing here?" I think he said that he was on Governor (Culbert) Olson's (then Governor of California) staff. I don't recall in what capacity. I suppose we talked very briefly about the incident in Portland. (laughing) Oh, boy.

Now they have instruments, according to Harold Lipset, who's a private eye in San Francisco, that you don't need to bug anybody's room. You can sit here and if you have the listening devices here and if you have installed something across the street that goes by shortwave, you can listen to the conversation.

Stein: Was there anything else memorable about that Maritime Federation convention?

HS: I know that the authorities were around. Gee, it must be the same convention, it was in Portland. Henry Schrimpf came back from lunch one day and he said he was late because he had been picked up by, I think he said, the FBI and they had bothered him and interrogated him for quite some time and he was just asking for the floor of this convention to point out why he had been away. After he explained what it was all about he sat down and took his place as a delegate.

But, later on, in the B-R-S trial, he testified against Harry.
Stein: Who else were delegates?

HS: There was Harry and myself, Henry Schrimpf, John Schomaker.

Stein: That's about all the questions I had for today.

(End of Tape 13, side A)

(End of interview)
Approaching World War Two

HS: There came a time when Bridges tried to persuade Local 10 to drop its one year restriction on officers and was voted down.

I can recall that that took place. I don't think that I bothered to take part in the discussion, but it was at a membership meeting. The members did not go for the proposal to remove the constitutional prohibition which has to do with the term of paid officers.

Regarding World War II, it could be pointed out that once the Soviet Union got into the thing there was more enthusiasm on the part of certain people who theretofore were not so enthusiastic about the war. There was a slogan around one time which said, "The Yanks are not coming." Then later on it was changed to the old slogan which was prevalent during World War I that said, "The Yanks are coming."

Stein: Talking about World War II, what were your own feelings at the time about what the role of the union should have been.

HS: I think I was sufficiently alert and knowledgeable to be anti-Hitler. I guess I was shocked, and I didn't understand, when the Hitlerites and the Soviets signed -- I guess they call it --
a peace pact. This later on was dissolved because there came a day subsequently when Hitler ordered his armies into Poland and drove right through into the Soviet Union.

It wasn't very hard to choose sides as far as I was concerned, even though once in awhile I had conversations with people, and they said, "You admit that you were born in Germany. Aren't you German?" Trying to find out whether or not I was pro-Hitler.

I have a good explanation. I don't think that this nationalism has ever gripped me. It's probably due to the fact that I left Europe too early, that my mother was a Hollander, that she developed sort of an attitude of impatience with our German relatives -- not because they were Germans, but because they were so religious and they tried to convert my mother. The aunts used to drop around and say, "You have married Gustav (Schmidt's father) and he is of Deutschland."

I guess they tried to tell her that she should believe in the Kaiser and become a good German and believe in this religion that they were adhering to. She got very impatient and she said, "I have Queen Wilhemina (of Holland) hanging there on the wall. That's my queen." The other guys (Schmidt's German aunts) were disturbed about that. (laughter)

Scrap Iron To Japan

Stein: You once started telling me the story of the incident that occurred a little before the United States joined the war where the longshoremen refused to load scrap iron for Japan, and the Chinese children --

HS: Yes. There was a time when the business of shipping scrap iron to Japan became a subject of discussion in the local union. It came to a head when prominent Chinese who lived in San Francisco began to demonstrate and we refused to load some scrap iron.
HS: I remember distinctly that it happened when I was president of the local, but I don't know which term. There was much enthusiasm for our refusal. But it was pointed out, and inwardly some of us realized it, that we couldn't make it stick for good. It was thought that we wouldn't be able to get the public support sufficiently because "business is business."

So there came a time -- and I think the International officers probably had forewarned the Chinese leadership that eventually it would have to be called off -- when I had the unhappy chore of going down to the piers down near Fisherman's Wharf and dragging a microphone along and making a speech down there asking them to cease and desist.

As I recall it, a substantial number of these demonstrators, people who had been picketing the pier, took the trouble to march all the way back towards the ferry and past our offices on Clay Street shouting, "Thank you, longshoremen, thank you, longshoremen."

Stein: Norman Leonard mentioned a couple of people who were part of the Albion Hall group, Schomaker and a man named Herman Mann.

HS: It seems to me that those questions were asked during the B-R-S trial about people who testified. As I recall it, Herman Mann was not a witness. I don't recall whether Schomaker said anything about the Albion Hall group. As a matter of fact, I can't see him sitting there. He would stand out so prominently. He was way over six feet. And I don't think that Herman Mann was there.

Stein: No, Mr. Leonard said that he never testified against Bridges, although he was pressured; the government had him up before the grand jury. But Mr. Leonard said he was solid as a rock.
The Blacks Begin Joining

Stein: Mr. Leonard said an important part of the story would be the story of blacks in the union; that you might know when the first blacks joined the union.

HS: I can't tell you when the first blacks joined the union because there were some black men working on the waterfront before the 1934 strike started. I don't have any information as to when the first came, but I do know that before the 1934 strike started there were some efforts made by some of the fellows to contact these men.

There were only a few of them and they were working at the Luckenbach (Steamship Company) piers. There was a very, very large white man in charge of the black gang, as they used to call it. His name was Tiny Klews. I do vaguely remember that almost immediately after the 1934 strike started I went down to the Luckenbach pier and I got on a soapbox and made a talk. Some of those fellows came out. We had a man by the name of (James) Humphreys who was with me on this occasion. He did more talking on this point than I did.

As I recall it, we got through with our march that day, and our talk, and it's possible that on the same afternoon or the next day these Negro brothers who were working at the Luckenbach pier, came to the then union headquarters at 113 Steuart Street. I can still see them coming up the stairs and entering the premises. One of our officers engaged them in conversation. Somebody raised the question, "Why didn't you come earlier to join up?" They had a spokesman and one of them said, "We didn't know that you wanted us." So they were signed up.

As far as the longshore working corps is concerned, these men were very, very much in the minority. Many, many of our members were opposed to those people coming in. The typical, popular idea was that, "We shouldn't start with this."
Stein: I remember, I think, Revels Cayton (a black leader in the Marine Cooks and Stewards) told me that Bridges was the only one of the waterfront union leaders who allowed blacks in the union. I guess the Marine Cooks and Stewards had blacks.

HS: There's no question about that.

Stein: But the Sailors' Union and the Marine Firemen wouldn't take blacks in?

HS: Yes, they had a pure white policy.

The Marine Cooks and Stewards -- that's the kind of occupation that these people had to follow, non-whites. That's where they end up, in the kitchen and in the galley, stewards waiting on table, people of the black race and Filipinos.

I'm sure that Harry made himself quite popular by advocating this policy. I don't recall anybody in opposition ever getting up in our membership meeting and giving voice to his thoughts -- to keep the door closed. But at the curbstone --

We had some kind of beef with the Teamsters years later. It had to do with our union attempting to disassociate itself from the AF of L and go into the CIO. In order to prevent us from going into the CIO the Teamsters attempted to stop us and they accepted orders from their leadership not to haul to and from the waterfront.

They were also instructed to picket to keep us from working. They admitted that they had no dispute with their employers. Our position was that if you have a dispute with your employer you picket him; you don't picket another union.

In any event, we were gathered at a certain pier one morning trying to convince the Teamsters that they ought to let us go to work and there was a pushing and shoving thing. A Teamster's leader took me to task. He said, "You guys is worse than the niggers."
HS: We didn't have any Negroes around on this particular occasion that I can recall -- maybe a few. But I guess there were many people around -- or not many, but enough -- who shared that fellow's opinion.

That is something that really doesn't belong in this kind of an explanation, does it?

Stein: It's an interesting aside, an interesting insight into the people. Who are some of the black pensioners who have been around for awhile?

HS: Len Greer. He lives down around Palo Alto. He's way past ninety. I'm sure that he was retired with what we call the "first bunch." On July 1st, 1953, we retired on a Coastwise basis, around 1150 longshoremen and ship clerks. Eleven-hundred and fifty checks were sent out.

There came a time before the pension plan was accepted and okayed by Washington -- there was some kind of United States agency which sat on this thing, so to speak, and the word had gone out that we could not look forward to receiving any pension payments until this board or commission would okay the pension plan. The union found it necessary to send a committee to Washington, D. C. to discuss the situation with those gentlemen back there.

Len Greer was one of them. I think that he was accompanied by other pensioners and by some of the leading officers.

In any event, Washington, D. C. okayed the pension plan, so Len Greer went out with the "first bunch." He came to the pensioners' annual Christmas party last December here in San Francisco. According to the bulletin, he's quite hale and hearty.

I can recall that after he became a pensioner we did manage to get a parade together up Market Street towards Civic Center. I don't know what capacity I had -- I must have been pension
HS: director. I had Len Gomer with me at the head of the parade and between the two of us we managed to carry the banner.

Harry didn't join this parade at the Ferry Building. He joined it later on way up on McAllister Street. I guess he didn't care about the long walk. Later on he said, "I saw you coming up the street -- you and the old man fighting with that banner." You know, it was pretty windy. It must have been quite a jaunt for the old man. He must be twenty-five or thirty years older than I am.

Stein: How long had he been longshoring, do you know?

HS: He retired. He had his twenty-five or twenty-seven years in. When we retired them in 1952 you had to be at least sixty-five years old and you had to have at least twenty-five qualifying years on your back.

Stein: He would have been around since the late twenties.

HS: Yes.

Fay: He was one of the first black men in the union, wasn't he?

HS: I think so.

Stein: Who were some of the other old-timer black pensioners?

HS: A man called (James) "Sugar" Lane. He is a baseball fan and he likes to organize baseball teams, young kids. I haven't seen him around lately. I think maybe he's ill. Then there's a fellow by the name of Henry Massey who is quite active in the pensioners' club.

In recent years I notice that as more and more of them are being retired they join the pensioners' club and you see more black faces in the assembly which takes place once a month. They don't seem to want to be candidates for anything like the executive board of the pensioners,
or the board of trustees, or something like that, or try to become officers of the pensioners' club. The pensioners' club is a sort of an imitation of a trade union. It has a president, a vice-president, a secretary, an executive board and they sort of push themselves around as if they were a trade union. They also have a constitution which is used as a guideline, but there is nothing very concrete or strict about it.

Of course there is no pay involved, to speak of. The fellows who are serving as officers receive some kind of remuneration, but I don't know how much it is. Of course there're so few of them there it's practically a full time job. That is, they come in at ten and go home at two.

A workload has been wished upon them which they shouldn't have accepted. For instance, every month it happens to somebody that he doesn't get his pension check on time. Maybe he'll get it the next day. It's never the same guy. According to the local pension club officers, the only place these guys telephone is the club. And some of them actually believe that's where the check comes from. There's not a good enough educational campaign going on.

Bill Rutter tells them, "You're calling the wrong place, brother. Call the pension fund office." "Where is that?" "I'll give you the phone number. It's 1188 Franklin Street." "Who's there, Bridges?" "No, not Bridges. You talk to one of John Dee's (administrator of the ILWU-PMA pension fund) female employees and find out from them."

I can just hear Bill telling them, and the fund employees will say "You should wait until tomorrow or the next day and then your check might come." It happens to somebody every month, not necessarily to the same person."

They have very little knowledge as to the funding of the plan. In fact, at least once it's happened in my time when I was working there
HS: that the wife of a pensioner would call up. "He's been paying dues all these years. Isn't that where the money comes from?" It's probably the union's own fault.

Stein: Yes, you told me before that it's very difficult to persuade people that the money doesn't come from the union at all.

HS: That union, as powerful as it is -- and it's only a small union -- where would it get millions of dollars every month?

Fay: They don't think about that.

HS: I know they don't. Why should they?

Fay: They probably think that if they call the union, the union will see --

(End of Tape 14, side A)

(Begin Tape 14, side B)

Stein: The names you gave me of black old-timers are probably good names to start with.

HS: Henry Massey, Len Greer, "Sugar" Lane. There's a man by the name of John Williams who is a member of the executive board of the pensioners. As to the other ports, I can't help you there.

Stein: How about Bill Chester? Has he been around a long time?

HS: Yes. He's International vice president now. He also has a handle to his title. It's assistant to the president.

I'm going to corner him one of these days and tell him he's -- well, I wouldn't say, "You're Harry's boy," because when you call a black man "boy" you get quite a reaction. He does a good job of bringing letters down from Harry and reading them to the membership. (laughing)
Chester used to be a bargeman. Which reminds me that a few months ago I was in the office of the Laborers' Union of San Francisco to check on something that had to do with their pension plan and Mr. (C.R. "Bud") Johnson, the secretary said, "You have a lot of our fellows, former members of the Laborers' Union, on the waterfront now, haven't you?" He mentioned black people. He said, "Bill Chester came out of this union." That I didn't even know. Bill came to the waterfront to become a bargeman; he may have been a member of the Laborers' Union before that.

I was just doing some work this morning in order to refresh my own memory on the fringe benefits that (members of the) Laborers receive, like welfare, pensions, vacations, and the like. I found out that the hourly contribution that the employer must make into the pension, welfare, and vacation fund is higher in the Laborers' Union, when you compare it with the contributions of the shipowner employers.

In other words, our pension plan works this way. After the stevedoring contractor has paid his longshoremen the hourly wage that the men are entitled to, then on top of that, the employer must put money into the welfare and into the pension fund. When you put the two of them together, in our program it's just about two dollars per hour for pension and welfare.

I have a great deal of difficulty explaining this to the guys and getting them to believe it. They think, "They must be taking two dollars away from us."

I found out that as far as the Laborers' (Union) is concerned the hourly contribution is higher than in the longshore program. My discovery had to do with a fellow that was working as a janitor for our union. Our union was the employer. This janitor got an hourly wage of "x". Somehow or another the employer, my local union, had failed to make the contributions into
HS: the vacation, welfare, and pension fund for this man. It was so tremendous that the total was way over $4000.

The Trials of Harry Bridges

Stein: Let's talk about the Angel Island trial of Harry Bridges.

HS: Oh, the Dean (James) Landis hearing in 1939.

Yes, I testified in the (Judge Charles B.) Sears hearing, but I haven't the slightest idea what I said.

In the Dean Landis hearing I went to Angel Island. One day I took my daughter along. She was just a little girl then. Once in a while I would elbow one of Harry's lawyers and urge the lawyers to ask the witness so and so.

There was a pro-government witness there that engaged in some anti-union activities around the city, furnish strikebreakers. He worked for the Associated Farmers and his mission in life was to prevent unions from making any progress. I guess he testified, as I recall it, that Bridges was a Communist.

Lucia, my daughter, liked the boat ride. She didn't know what the score was, but just co-incidentally she took along a koala bear doll. Bridges being an Australian, she made the press that day. The reporters and photographers -- Henry Schmidt and his daughter, a koala bear doll -- (laughter).

There's something here about Ivan Cox.

Stein: Evidently he testified at the Sears hearing.

HS: I don't remember that. Ivan Cox was in those days the secretary of the longshore union in San Francisco. He was a very religious man and he
was one hundred percent honest, but he also had what some people sometimes call the "red horrors." It seems that this pro-government gentleman, whose name I don't recall, got ahold of Ivan.

Stein: Wasn't that Colonel (Henry) Sanborn?

HS: Yes, that's probably the fellow. But there was another man.

Stein: Harper Knowles?

HS: Yes. Harper Knowles was the Associated (Farmers) fellow. Sanborn published a paper which occasionally appeared around the financial district and it blasted our union. One or the other, they got ahold of Ivan. I guess among other things Ivan must have told these fellows that he was short in his accounts and that his books were all messed up. They must have convinced him that the Reds took care of this thing, helped themselves to the funds in his office.

I can still recall a big membership meeting in the Scottish Rite auditorium at Van Ness and Sutter Streets. I was the chairman and Ivan was the secretary, but he was late. I received word that he was coming in and would perform his function as secretary, but he would be a little bit late.

He eventually came. Later on it developed that he had been talking to one of these gentlemen, Harper Knowles or Colonel Sanborn. Cox came to this meeting to read a statement which one of these fellows had prepared for him. He was delivering it as if it was his own. He blasted the leadership. He blasted everybody from Bridges on down. Everybody was a Communist.

I think he also made some mention about his books being not in order and he blamed the Reds for that, and so on and so on. I think his concluding paragraph stated that he was walking out. He was resigning. As they say, he "took a powder." As far as the membership was concerned, they never saw him again, but I saw him again later on.
What's that story?

Senator (Robert) LaFollette, who's long dead, set up a United States Senate committee. I'm looking at a transcript which was put out in March of 1939. The title is -- it has to do with the Seventy-sixth Congress -- First Session, Report Number Six, Part Three, Title: "Violations of Free Speech and Rights of Labor, Report of the Committee on Education and Labor; A Resolution to Investigate Violations of the Right of Free Speech and Assembly and Interference with the Right of Labor to Organize and Bargain Collectively."

There's a sub-title which is called, "Industrial Munitions." If I'm not mistaken that refers to munitions which are used when there are industrial disputes such as strikes; these munitions are used to, shall we say, calm down the strikers. (laughter)

That's a kind way to put it. They often do more than just calm them down. They eliminate them entirely.

In any event, a man came to the Coast. He was a field worker for this committee. His name was Winstead. He came to my office, introduced himself, indicated that he was working for the committee, that he used to work for the United Automobile Workers, that he was now working for this committee.

His assignment at that point was to find out what he could about Ivan Cox. He indicated to me that it was necessary that he find Mr. Cox, and would I help him. He wanted to know, "Could you take some time off from your president's job and go on the road with me so we can look for this chap?"

I made the necessary arrangements, took some time off, and we travelled in Winstead's car. We had to go up in the direction of Eureka.

That's a long trip.
HS: If you push yourself you make it in seven or eight hours. I told Winstead that I had knowledge that, first of all, Ivan was a religious man, and that he followed a certain sect. Not a large outfit; they sort of had storefront meeting places in several cities.

I can't think of their name now, but I was able to tell Winstead the name of the outfit at that time. Winstead went to one of these storefront religious small organizations and they told him they knew of Brother Ivan and that he had been with them, but he had gone to some other town in the north. I think they mentioned that town in the region up in the north where they raise olives.

We drove north. We stopped in Stockton and we went to a number of other places. We finally wound up in a small town and made contact with one of these little religious organizations and somebody there told me that, yes, they knew of Brother Ivan and that he was working at a shingle mill in the direction of Eureka.

To make a long story short, before we got to Eureka we found the spot. We had to drive up into the woods. We came to a shingle mill. We walked in there and there I saw Ivan working. He recognized me immediately.

I introduced him to Mr. Winstead. Somehow or another, when I mentioned this committee, Ivan concluded erroneously that Winstead was a Senator from a certain state, and a member of this United States Senate committee. Mr. Winstead wanted to know if he, Ivan, could take some time off, that he wanted to interrogate him.

Ivan was more than anxious to talk because I guess he thought that he was going to get the load off his mind. Could he come to Eureka? Winstead apparently was authorized to pay the expenses. We all stayed at a certain hotel in Eureka. It wasn't the Eureka Inn. It was a place that was much older and less expensive.
We sat there a couple of evenings talking to Ivan. He talked and talked and made a clean breast of the whole thing, that he had been conned by these gentlemen, Sanborn and Harper Knowles. I think he also said he didn't think that the Reds took any of his money. As I recall, he also indicated that he agreed that his books were not in proper order. He wanted us to know that he didn't steal anything. I told him that I didn't think he did either, "because I think you're an honest man."

Winstead, of course, was constantly making notes. I don't know what kind of a report he made to the committee, but when I got back to San Francisco I had to make a verbal report to the membership. I got away with that all right. Nobody said, "Who in the hell authorized you to make a trip when you're supposed to be doing the president's job around here?" I guess I said I thought it was one of my jobs to clear up this mystery.

We were sitting around one evening, it was eight o'clock. We had been sitting in this hotel room. Ivan had been talking and Winstead constantly had questions. Then suddenly we heard singing. We were only a couple of doors away from the storefront religious organization and we could hear it through the window. Ivan pricked up his ears. Winstead noticed that and said to Ivan, "Mr. Cox, would you like to go down there and join your people?" Ivan said, "Yes, I would like that very much." He went and that was the end of the interrogation for that evening.

Then Winstead had a question for me and it was like this: "How in the world is it possible, Henry Schmidt, that a man like this can get elected as secretary of a union like yours?"

He got elected in the first place. I don't know why. He's not a very good speaker. But as he was going along doing his work as secretary he gave everybody the impression that he represented honesty. Plus he became known as "Honest
HS: Ivan" and when you get that kind of a reputation you don't have much difficulty getting votes. I should tell you before Ivan took off from our union he did follow the advice of the other two gentlemen, Harper Knowles and Sanborn -- I don't know which -- and he got ahold of some lawyers and they sued for him.

Stein: They sued the union?

HS: They sued the International and the local for $5,100,000. I can't remember whatever became of the suit. It was explained by the newspapers that the five million was to reimburse or repair the damages caused by the Communists in California so that the people would be made whole -- that's the best way I can put it. The $100,000 was for Ivan to tide him over and take care of him. Of course he never got any money.

Years later I learned that he died. The whole thing was really an adventure. It had that union tied up in knots for days on end.

Who Paid for the Gas?

I see here by this volume that I have made some notes having to do with certain pages. Maybe we can take a quick look and see what happens on page 162:

"According to the (LaFollette) Committee's record the largest amount of gas and gas equipment ever purchased by private funds for public authorities was the twenty-thousand dollars worth of equipment supplied to the San Francisco Police Department during the months of May, June, and July, 1934."

Stein: That was during the strike.

HS: Yes, that was during the maritime and longshoremen's strike. "The circumstances surrounding the payment for this great quantity of gas
furnishes an extraordinary example of the political intrigue and blackmail that are latent in the practice of the private purchase of munitions for public use." And so on and so on.

Here's McCarty's name. "Ignatius H. McCarty, salesman for the Lake Erie Chemical Company, informed his superiors that early in 1934 'The San Francisco Chief of Police was in possession of an unlimited order from public spirited citizens directing me to deliver up to fifty-thousand dollars worth of gas on his order and without cost to the taxpayers.'

"Mr. McCarty's correspondence reflects that he was aware of the identity of these public spirited citizens. On July 4th, 1934, writing during the strike, he says, 'Just spoke on the phone with the shipowners who authorized me to deliver all the gas needed by the police department as well as additional masks.'"

Another tear gas salesman, Joseph M. Roush, was dragged up before the LaFollette Committee. He admitted that he shot "Kentucky". He later wrote to his company and said that he did shoot this man and he had learned that he had died, but since his victim was a Communist he said he had no feelings on the matter. It must be in these pages. Boy, that really brings back memories.

Let me read this. It's on page 143:

"Several other persons who, according to Mr. (B. H.) Barker, were also connected with the steamship companies were interviewed concerning the matter." (Interviewed by the committee.) "The invoice was placed in the Bank of America and within two days an unidentified person, as Mr. Stow had hoped, went into the bank, paid the $13,809.12 in cash, and was given a sealed envelope containing the invoice."*

* The statements re purchase and use of tear gas are confirmed in the LaFollette Committee's report, p. 66, 164, and 165.
HS: This is the payment for the munitions that were used against us. That's the reason I obtained these books. I got quite excited about getting an opportunity to garner this knowledge.

Stein: You must have gotten these shortly after they came out.

HS: Have you got them?

Stein: No, but they're in the Library at the University of California. Were you involved in any other efforts to help the LaFollette Committee?

HS: No. My only contribution, if you can call it that, is when I went on the road with Winstead in order to find Ivan Cox.

(End of Tape 14, side B)

(Begin Tape 15, side A)

HS: We were lucky Cox didn't belong to one of those big churches where we maybe wouldn't have found him. (Laughing)

Stein: It's interesting that just one little clue like that and you can track the man down.

HS: We used to have a man by the name of Willie Christensen. He tried for years and years to become vice-president of Local 10 and finally made it. He was a waterfront worker while Ivan was secretary. Willie told me this: he was coming to the waterfront office to attend an executive board meeting; he came in early, perhaps a half an hour before the meeting was scheduled to take place. He went back into the meeting place and he found Ivan there all by himself and he was kneeling and praying.

Willie told me that he said to Ivan, "What are you doing there?" His reply was, "I'm praying for Brother Bridges." Maybe the heat was on, maybe a hearing was coming up or one of the numerous attempts to deport Harry was in the
HS: making and Ivan was praying for the man. I don't remember whether I ever told this to Harry or not.

Stein: I can't remember from my own reading now what Ivan Cox actually testified to, but I know it's in Chuck Larrowe's book.

HS: (Larrowe: p. 192) "- thought too radical, finally breaking openly with him over affiliation with the CIO, which Cox thought was a Communist front. Cox was defeated for . . . secretary-treasurer . . . When his successor took over, he found a shortage of $800." Gosh, I don't remember that. How the hell did Charlie Larrowe get all this jazz?

Stein: It might have come out in the hearing.

HS: Oh, yes. Here's the suit: (Larrowe, p. 193) "Defendants were . . . Bridges, the 13th district of the Communist party, the San Francisco director of the National Labor Relations Board, movie stars Frederick March and Mary Astor, (laughter) and five thousand Jane and John Does. Larry Doyle told Cox to ask for $5,100,000 damages. If he won, he was to turn $5 million over to the people of California, keeping $100,000 for himself as payment for defamation of character.

When Cox finished signing the papers, Doyle took him over to the office of the secretary of the California Federation of Labor, who gave him one hundred dollars on the spot and put him on the payroll as an AFL organizer.

How is it possible that such things could have happened? Chuck Larrowe must have been quite a detective himself to figure all this out.

Stein: That's what historians are. We're all detectives. Is there anything else about either of the two hearings that you remember?

HS: No. My memory fails me. I just have to hide behind my advanced age. (laughter)
The Committee for Maritime Unity

Stein: Okay. Just backing up a minute, can you remember what sort of discussions there were in the union about Roosevelt, how the union felt about Roosevelt?

HS: I'd say by and large they were Roosevelt supporters. When Harry made public statements to the effect that he was going to support Wendell Willkie and he was joining up with John L. Lewis, it certainly hurt Harry's reputation. Politically, it wasn't a very smart move.

Stein: Do you mean politically in terms of the union?

HS: Yes, that's right. He was alienating himself from the ranks. Roosevelt was the man. He took care of the depression. He told the banks to close down for five days and recoup their money. (laughing)

Stein: I don't know if you know much about any of these negotiations during the war.

HS: A very complex period.

Stein: Yes, in '46 the longshoremen began strike preparations.

HS: Yes, including the NMU.

Stein: This was when Bridges organized the Committee for Maritime Unity. Do you know anything about that story?

HS: Yes. I was in the midst of that and I'm pretty sure I was on the negotiating committee. It seems that we didn't strike in 1946 because it says here, (reading from outline) "Federal government stepped in because strike would be nationwide. Conciliation service of the Department of Labor finally settled on a standard wage package agreeable to all seven unions, but the SUP outmaneuvered them by negotiating its
own bigger wage increase on the West Coast."
The SUP sort of disassociated themselves - or they were never --

Stein: They weren't invited?

Schmidt: They were not invited. They got themselves a lawyer and, gee whiz -- He had what I call a typical Jewish name.

Stein: That wasn't Sapiro, was it?

HS: Of course, Aaron Sapiro. I got to know him well.

Stein: What was he like?

HS: I have difficulty giving a thumbnail sketch of human beings. I'll say that he was a very highly educated man. He knew his business. It was hard to understand why he was agreeable to go along with Lundeberg and his program of dis-associating himself from the rest of us. I guess the lawyer has to go along with his client's orders. That was the situation at the time.

Stein: To finish up with the Committee for Maritime Unity, do you remember anything more about it? What were the arguments in favor of organizing it?

HS: Of course the terrific unified strength of all the maritime unions and the ability to tie up both coasts -- that was the main reason. But if I'm not mistaken I was sent to Hawaii before this thing was all over.

Then Dwight Steele became the header-upper as they call it, for the shipowners here. We were having rank and file trouble in Local 10. Although they had an advantageous position compared to that of men in the other ports, they couldn't come to negotiations.

So a bunch of people in Local 10 started a negative movement against Harry and company, indicating their dissatisfaction with negotiations. The cure for that is to enlarge the
HS: negotiating committee, you know, and make it clear to these fellows that they can come to these negotiations as observers, and not necessarily take part in the discussion. They understood that.

We had quite a crowd in the Veterans' Memorial Building. It was one of those things where you know that the negotiations were shaping up and you were getting a package ready which could be submitted to the rank and file for their ratification or rejection. Then Harry — it's easy to say he did the wrong thing, maybe it was the right thing — brought pensions up for the icksteenth time and Dwight Steele told him no.

We were wrapping up this deal and everybody was sitting up to the table getting their papers ready. Then Harry said — I was sitting right alongside — "Okay, we'll take this back to the main office and let you know whether we can accept it and then we'll get ready for a referendum." But then Harry added, "There's just one more thing."

I looked at Dwight Steele. He was tightening up because he knew what "one more thing" meant. Harry said, "All right, Dwight, what about pensions?" That's when Dwight gave him the answer, and he used a very popular four letter word. He said, "I told you politely and I told you firmly and now I'm going to tell you impolitely. You can go and ----, Bridges, with your goddam pension." Harry said, "I guess you mean it this time." (laughter)

These rank and filers were all sitting there. That was the good part of this conversation — these guys who were saying, "You guys are not tough enough. You ought to go up there and tell those employers."

That must have been prior to 1952 because that's when pensions came about and the first payments were made.
Then another thing happened. When the pension deal was on the table there was a bunch of guys in Local 10 who started to break ranks. They wanted to set up another union. It was just exactly what the employers were looking for. They actually made headlines -- "Dual union being set up by certain ILWU Local 10 people." The employers were offering us a pension of forty dollars a month.

Stein: That would have been around '52 then?

HS: At least immediately prior to '52.

(End of Tape 15, side A)

(End interview)
X ORGANIZING IN HAWAII
(Interview 9: 21 January, 1975)

(Begin Tape 16, side A)

Arriving on a Tidal Wave

Stein: How did you come to be sent to Hawaii?

HS: I arrived there the evening before the tidal wave which occurred on April 1, 1946. I didn't have any specific instructions.

Stein: Who had sent you?

HS: Harry and the boys -- my so-called bosses. They had superior titles to mine.

Stein: What was your title at that point?

HS: I was on the Coast committee. The Coast committee is an elective position. There are usually two, Harry is the third man, and they are almost exclusively concerned with attempting to administer the affairs of the Coast longshore contract. Things that have to do with Hawaii and the warehouses are none of their concern.

The Coast committee is also called by another name, the Coast prorata committee. They see to it that the longshore locals plus the ships clerks' locals and the walking bosses' locals on the coast pay their prorata share toward a fund which is utilized to keep the Coast committee going. It's a fulltime job and the members have to have their salary and they have to make trips sometimes and they have their own office and long distance telephone and things like that.
They are elected for a period of twenty-four months. At the biennial convention of the ILWU they are allowed to be candidates to succeed themselves. If they get enough votes they are back in. The constitution provides that one man come from the northern part of the Coast and the other from the south. They are also on the Coast negotiating committee. I guess Harry (Bridges) and Lou (Goldblatt) must have decided that Jack Hall (ILWU Regional Director in Hawaii) could need some help. Frank Thompson was down there already.

Stein: Who's he?

HS: Frank Thompson's origin is warehouse and he was sent down there as an organizer. He was down there for years.

Stein: Is he still around?

HS: Yes. He lives in Sacramento and he's very old. I guess he won't meet with us much longer.

Frank went down there during the war -- Lou went down there, too. They went on steamers that were really rigged up for troop ships. Somehow or another they got down there. They -- Jack Hall and Lou, whenever he was there, and Frank Thompson -- were concerned with keeping that ILWU together. They had longshore, which was really a small group, they had sugar, which is the larger group, and pineapple, which is smaller than sugar.

The members employed in sugar are plantation workers and also refinery workers. There're thousands of them. From the political point of view the Hawaii Islands are very important to people who are in office, if they want to get reelected, because there are a very large number of votes down there. Our International officers are very popular. They have no difficulty in garnering the votes.
HS: Anyhow, I tried to make myself generally useful in longshore down there by hitting the Islands, flying back and forth, getting acquainted with the men and giving them an opportunity to get acquainted with me.

Stein: Did they already know that a strike was brewing when you were sent down there?

Lots of Strikes.

HS: There were strikes brewing. There was a sugar strike just around the corner. That wasn't exactly my field, but I got acquainted with the sugar workers. But mostly until the sugar strike started I made myself available to the longshoremen on the ships and on the piers.

The only thing that was not so pleasant -- but it wasn't really unpleasant -- was that it was different than sitting in a Coast committee office in San Francisco because in Hawaii I had to be on my feet. Very, very often it was necessary to get up early and hit the little shack restaurants where the longshoremen would have a bite before they went to work. I think they went to work at seven o'clock in the morning.

Stein: What would you talk to them about?

HS: Oh, I would talk to them. I found it fascinating to listen to their pidgin English. I've always been interested in languages so I got enthused about learning that pidgin English.

They in turn were very complimentary. "Gee," they said, "you one haole guy. You speak good. You're a white guy who learns our language good." There're Japanese and Filipinos and Koreans and straight Hawaiians and then there're the hapahaoles. Do you know what a hana is?

Stein: No.
He's half white and half Hawaiian, or half something else. Maybe I was overdoing it sometimes, but one day I had a talk with Ah Quon (McElrath) who is a full-blooded Chinese, mainland educated, speaks straight American, married to a white guy by the name of (Bob) McElrath who became Hall's successor.

McElrath used to be our radio man. He'd get on the air almost every day and speak for the union. A.Q. -- they called her A.Q. for short -- was a fascinating woman, not very good looking but very pleasant in every other sort of way, a polished, highly educated social worker.

She said to me, "Don't be bothered by those fellows who kid you about speaking pidgin, because it's a good thing that you learn it. You'll get along much better with these people. Once you learn how to talk some of it then you'll understand them better, because they cannot talk anything else." So I took that to heart. There you have it. You either learn it or you don't.

Very often I would make talks at the pierhead before they would go to work. Every once in awhile we'd pull some quickie strikes, which were of course labeled as violations of the contract, but somehow or other we overcame that. Of course the employers get furious at you and they wish that you'd go back to the mainland. You're just a rabble-rouser and what they call a malahini. Malahini is a newcomer.

Stein: Were the men you were talking to already members of the union?

HS: Yes, sure. There was no difficulty about that. They were fully organized and they had contracts. There was only one difference. They didn't have the mainland hiring hall.

Stein: They didn't?

HS: No, and they still haven't got it. It may well be that it's safe to say, "And perhaps they don't need it."
In my time there was a stevedoring contractor on every island, except in Honolulu where there were three stevedoring contractors. The contractor, or the stevedore, as they sometimes called him, was either a haole or a half-haole or a Hawaiian person who was in business. One gentleman down there had been in politics and he had been secretary of the Hawaiian Islands, right underneath the governor.

The governor in those days was not elected. He was appointed by Washington, somewhat after the British system. They have colonies or empires, dominions across the seas. I can't remember this man's name. He lived in a palace, of course.

When I found it necessary to go to a pier and talk to the men before they went to work, I would come along with a public address system, a loudspeaker on top of an automobile and a microphone. I would get acquainted and talk whatever came to mind about the work and the job. I would tell them about the mainland. Maybe negotiating time was rolling around to get a new contract and all that sort of thing. We also put out a mimeographed bulletin.

We were fortunate to find a cartoonist in the ranks. We told our story on many occasions in the frequent bulletins by cartoons. Our cartoonist was especially efficient during the strike because he couldn't work on the waterfront. He had all kinds of ideas and sometimes I gave him ideas.

Now I'm jumping ahead in my explanation, but maybe it's not too bad. Harry was down there a couple of times during the 1949 strike. The rumor had it that he was coming again. I told the young cartoonist that I would like to have a bulletin indicating that Harry might come down and I wanted to have a picture. I told him about the Arab flying through the skies on the flying carpet. It's a very popular picture. What's the title of the story?
Stein: The Arabian Nights.

HS: Yes. He didn't know what I was talking about, but I got ahold of something and I said, "Here it is." We made a cartoon. Here was Harry with his long nose sitting on this flying carpet flying through the air. In back of him it said San Francisco and ahead there was Aloha Tower. They have a tower right on the waterfront in Honolulu which sort of resembles the Ferry Building. The Ferry Building in the back and (laughing) Harry was flying towards Honolulu.

In these talks at the pierhead I would call attention that we would have a membership meeting. It was set up in different fashion when you compare it with the mainland. On the mainland you go to a membership meeting at eight o'clock in the evening. You can go home and clean up and then you go to a membership meeting.

But in Honolulu and in the other places they had what they called pauhana meetings. "Pau" means finished and done with and "hana" means work. So you go to a pauhana meeting which means you go to a meeting right after work.

Sometimes these pauhana meetings were held out in the open in Honolulu, sometimes in a school building, and sometimes smaller meetings in the office building of the union which happened to be almost right in the Aloha Tower. That was a Territorial building.

When the sugar strike started I made myself available to the speakers' bureau, then went out on the plantations and talked to the Filipino brothers. I got along very well.

Stein: To back up a second to the waterfront -- on the plantations one of the issues that the union had to deal with was the --

HS: Perquisites?

Stein: -- the racial antagonisms that had been built up by the employers, using one racial group against another.
Stein: I wondered if that was a problem on the waterfront also, among the longshoremen.

HS: It had been a problem on the waterfront and in every industry because it was very advantageous to the employers to have these racial groups. I don't know just exactly how they did it, but I guess the employers must have warned their Puerto Rican workers and their Portuguese workers that they shouldn't trust these others, and vice versa. I don't think they put out any printed matter to that effect.

One day I had a conversation with the man who had been the Secretary of Hawaii, and who was in the stevedoring contracting business. I went to this place just to introduce myself. At that very moment he was getting to work a cargo vessel which came from the Far East. That ship brought a very substantial number of passengers along and they were all freshly recruited workers to work in the Islands. They were all getting ready to work either in pineapple or in sugar.

When I looked over my shoulder and I saw this ship creeping along, getting ready to dock, I said something to the effect, "Where are all these people going? They look like working class." He said, "That's all fresh labor. Mr. Schmidt, I would certainly like to get my hands on some of that fresh labor and break them in as longshoremen." That was his salutation, "fresh labor." He was a little Filipino man.

Once in awhile we would have a beef, as they called it, an illegal strike or a wildcat strike or a work stoppage in order to enforce an issue. Since the community is so small it was front page news every time something like this happened, even if it was a very, very small thing. The Honolulu Advertiser and the Honolulu Star-Bulletin would hammer away at the ILWU. "Malahinis that came over to tell us what to do."

We had a good reply to that because there was a fellow down there by the name of Jim Blaisdell who was a mainland man. He was the president of the Hawaii Employers' Council and
he was a lawyer. He was later succeeded by Dwight Steele who was also a lawyer. Once in awhile it was necessary to point out in our printed matter that all these white people in Hawaii were descendants of white people who came here from the mainland of America. Even if they were descendants of the missionaries who came from New England, we would point to their names.

There was a fellow by the name of (Duncan) McBride. He was the head man of Castle and Cook, which owned a stevedoring concern. It was one of the Big Five. They owned hospitals and cemeteries and everything in between.

Stein: Who else was in the Big Five?

HS: One name is Hackfeld and Company. It was a German concern which changed its name to -- well, it's the Liberty House that's establishing itself here now, the department store. Then there's the Robinson family. They even own one of the islands. You have to ask them for permission to go there.

"Castle and Cook, the damned old crook, they make you weasel for your money," is what they used to sing.

Stein: What?

HS: The dissatisfied workers who were working for the Castle and Cook Stevedoring Company used to get on the corner and sing, (singing) "Castle and Cook, the damned old crook, they make you weasel for your money."

There was a man by the name of Russell Starr. He was second in command of Castle and Cook. He and I developed a sort of a friendly attitude towards one another. He is a direct descendant of a missionary family. When you read details on the history of Hawaii, I'm sure that Russell Starr's name will be in that book.
A Mountain of Coal

HS: We had one little struggle down there which was quite interesting because we called it the Hawaiian coal strike. There's no trace of coal in the Hawaiian Islands, but years ago when the American warships burned coal they kept a great big mountain of coal on hand because Hawaii was a refueling station. Then oil came along and that mountain of coal was just lying there for years and years.

The Navy got the idea to sell the coal; a ship came along one day and they started to load coal. I took a look at the contract and there was nothing in the contract about handling this lousy black coal. It wasn't handled in sacks, it was handled in bulk and brought to the ship and poured in, I suppose. It was a horrible job. I thought to myself, "If this coal were handled on the mainland, it would be penalty cargo at a higher rate."

I made a demand on the boss man -- whose name I can't recall. He told me that we didn't have a leg to stand on because there was nothing in the contract, it was cargo and the longshore rate is provided for in the contract and there was no penalty on coal; in fact there was no mention of coal.

My argument that the penalty ought to be paid didn't prevail, so I took it up with the men and we tied him up. We refused to handle his coal. Of course the next day there were headlines that high in the Honolulu Advertiser. We caught the devil again.

We had numerous conferences with this fellow and his superintendents, amid accusations that we were violating the contract. The papers were suggesting that the mainland office should be contacted.

I don't remember whether that was done or not. Jack Hall might have gotten on the phone to tell the main office (in San Francisco) about
it, which sometimes wasn't too successful because in those days we had radio telephones. The contact wasn't so good.

It was settled one way or another, but I can't remember now whether they granted us penalty pay or whether the governor of the territory stepped in and asked us to go back to work. I don't think the thing lasted very long, but we continued to work for this particular employer and worked his other cargo. He was working other ships. But the fellows who refused to work the coal were not being utilized on these other ships, as I recall it.

The 1946 Sugar Strike

HS: I made myself available to whatever was assigned to me during the sugar strike. That was finally terminated.

Stein: That was in 1946, right?

HS: Yes. Lou came down there to become the chief negotiator. I didn't have a great deal to do with that except that I went along with the committee to see the employers. The union won that strike. I don't recall any arbitrator being called in.

I do recall, with regard to the 1949 longshore strike, that I made a suggestion, I think it was in a press release, that we should settle these things by calling an arbitrator in. I suggested Wayne Morse.

The papers got ahold of that and they tried to murder us with this suggestion. In the first place they pointed out that they should not have to send for an outsider to settle their disputes, especially from the mainland. And, "Yes, the well-known liberal on the mainland" -- they almost called Wayne Morse a Communist -- Morse 'has been the longshore arbitrator for quite some time, but
HS: we can settle our own disputes and we don't need any arbitrator." In other words, they condemned him all over the place.

I don't recall how long that sugar strike lasted. There was a time when all the sugar that came from Hawaii was in sacks so the longshoremen in Hawaii handled sacks of raw sugar to place in the ship. Then it would come here to Crockett and it would be discharged by longshoremen handling these sacks. But that has all been changed. It now comes in bulk. It's ever so much more efficient than handling sacks.

Stein: Chuck Larrowe talks about the excellent way strike relief was organized.

HS: Yes. That was the big longshore strike in 1949. That's when we opened up the soup kitchen. In 1946, whatever work stoppages we had in longshore were not of a nature that would compel you to establish a food distribution system.

Stein: They were just the quickie strikes.

HS: Yes.

Stein: Can you remember what any of the issues would be in the quickie strikes, aside from the coal business?

HS: I can remember an incident, but I don't know what the issue was. The workers telephoned me from the work stoppage place in the middle of the night. I told them that I would be right down. I'd had my car shipped to Hawaii by that time.

McBride was on the job. McBride was the Castle and Cook big wheel. The men had stopped working a ship. Sometimes the working conditions were not to their liking. I don't recall what the difficulty was.

McBride and I discussed the situation. He wanted to know if I was going to tell the guys to go to work. I said, "Not right away. Let's
HS: negotiate." It was a thing of short duration; I don't remember how we settled it.

(End of Tape 16, side A)

(Begin Tape 16, side B)

The 1947 Pineapple Strike

Stein: You were about to tell me about pineapple organizing.

HS: I didn't have a great deal to do with that. I can recall that we had a strike in pineapple. Harry came down to Hawaii in connection with long-shore and we had the pineapple workers out. They didn't all come out. Harry said to me one evening, "I don't like this. I can smell a rat. I'm going to advocate that we tell these workers to go back to work. We'll tackle the pineapple cannery some other day." And that was what was done.

Stein: What sort of rat did he smell?

HS: He thought, first of all, that when you organize a group of workers and you talk to them and you have them in membership meetings and you explain demands and writing a contract and getting the employers to agree to it and try to point out to them that you might enforce these demands by tying up the canneries, and they vote to come out, and then you learn that some of them stayed in, then that weakens your program.

These workers, the ones that decided to stay in, were furnished with transportation by buses for a certain central place in Honolulu to the other street where the cannery was located. These buses went through the picket line, of course.

The striking workers soon found out where these buses were located and they started to picket the buses at the terminal point uptown.
HS: There were two terminals. One terminal was these non-striking workers arriving at the cannery and the other spot was uptown. Very frequently, the people that wanted to go to work found that their buses were surrounded by strikers. Then the police interfered. Harry developed the idea that we would have to terminate this and that was taken up in a membership meeting. So they all got back, and they tackled it another day and they did better.

Stein: Chuck Larrowe in his book talks about a break-off union that developed. There were two fellows, one named (Ichiro) Izuka and one named (Amos) Ignacio. I wondered if you knew anything about that.

HS: Yes. They were both longshore. Ignacio was Japanese. He was a leader on the Big Island (Hawaii). I don’t recall what circumstances developed on the Big Island, but he tried to establish another union. I think that this movement was in motion before I ever got there. So our best reference would be Chuck’s book or ancient issues of the ILWU Dispatcher.

Anyhow, he created quite a bit of pilikia. Pilikia is the Hawaiian word for trouble. He finally lost out all together. I don’t remember what became of him. It’s too bad, because he was very active in the early organizational days when the longshoremen on the Big Island really had to struggle. They had a set-to with the police in those days and Ignacio was quite severely injured. He developed a limp. I think he was walking with a cane, and would be all his life.

I went over to the Big Island one time when they had a Labor Day parade. Everything was in good shape. Of course I got acquainted with all of those fellows who were in leadership in those days, and he was one of them. It was still completely ILWU.

He must have been financed by the employers. Otherwise I don’t know how else he could have managed to set himself up. He established a little office. I think some of the workers left
HS: ILWU and joined his outfit. It's proper to say that it never got off the ground to amount to anything.

Stein: It sounds a little bit like Lee Holman's attempt.

HS: Yes. It's quite possible that Ignacio and the other fellow learned of Lee Holman's activities around here. I guess they thought that if they can do it in San Francisco, we can do it here on the Big Island.

The red-baiting entered into the picture. Their rationale was that ILWU is controlled by a bunch of Communists and therefore it's better to establish an American union. I think that was some of the phraseology.

There was another man who was the president of the unit on the Big Island of Hawaii. His name was Harry (Komoko). He was a Japanese-Hawaiian type, very pleasant man. He had a Japanese wife who worked in the office. That sort of became a difficulty of no great moment, but I could hear the other fellows talk about the man and wife team. "Who's running the outfit, anyway?" He's dead. They came to the mainland and established themselves in Monterey.

The 1949 Longshore Strike

Stein: You were saying that in 1949 there was a big longshore strike in Hawaii.

HS: Yes. I don't recall the date, but I got a telephone call in San Francisco from Lou. Lou was down there and I guess he was aware of the fact that it was just around the corner. Maybe the strike had started. He telephoned and said, "Hank, can you make arrangements to come down here? As soon as possible." I said, "I guess so."
HS: It's quite possible that I was there the next morning because I know I flew down there. I think that they had voted and they had tied up.

Stein: You flew from where?

HS: From San Francisco to Honolulu. In '49 that didn't take thirteen hours; it was much faster. I think I got on a plane the next morning and I was down there the next afternoon.

I did whatever had to be done. I can't say that I ran the strike. We set up a strike committee, of course, mainland fashion.

I didn't have any difficulty convincing the strike committee to accept almost everything I suggested because I said, "That's the way we did it on the mainland and I've had some experience. The first thing you've got to do, fellows, is to set up what we call a soup kitchen."

They wanted to know what that was and I told them. "You've got to get ahold of a vacant building, maybe on a second floor or on the main floor. You've got to set up kitchens. You've got to get cooks out of your ranks, maybe get some of the womenfolk to volunteer and see that people get fed."

One of my questions was, "Have you got any money in the union treasury? Can you buy a stove? Can you buy dishes? Can you get this and that donated? How are we going to get food?"

It was all arranged. They didn't have any lack of money. I had to buy some stoves and they found some people in their ranks who were good cooks.

The beauty of it was that it was diagonally across the street from the Aloha Tower, which was the Territorial office building and where the union had its office at this time.
As a matter of fact, it was the main pier where the big ship* would tie up. And that's where we had her tied up for the whole strike. The ship came in one day and the crew walked off and she sat there almost until the end of the strike.

I can't exactly tell you what kind of food was served, but it wasn't bad. Jack Hall, Frank Thompson, McElrath and I sometimes went over there to have lunch. It was a good idea, I guess, for us to go there.

It was a kind of an expensive deal. I was on salary and those fellows were not. I don't think that McElrath and Jack Hall were getting much. It's customary in the ILWU that if you're an officer you reduce your salary. But I was from the mainland. I moved in with Jack Hall. They gave me a shack right adjacent to their home. I had to pay for my board and room so I had to get money from home, from the mainland office.

Every once in awhile some of the fellows would hit me and say, "I don't know how to make it." So I would give out a dollar or two once in awhile. It became a little bit difficult sometimes.

The soup kitchen operated for three meals a day and it got very efficient after awhile. The strike committee met every day and it also set up an apparatus that would lend money to some of the striking workers who were very much in need. I don't know how much money they had in their strike fund, but the committee was too generous.

Every man who succeeded in getting a loan from the strike committee was told that he had to pay it back once he went back to work. Of course they all promised, but there was a great difficulty to collect when the strike was over.

* S. S. Lurline
Stein: Did you stay through the whole duration of the strike?

HS: Yes, I was there the whole time. We had a very efficient, small Japanese fellow who took the minutes of the strike committee every day. He would sit up half the night to make copies so that we could read the minutes the next day. He lived on Maui and some years later he got interested in politics and they elected him to the legislature of the island of Maui. He was always smoking a cigar.

What a loyal guy, gee whiz. I said, "How come you have these minutes on the table here at ten o'clock?" He said, "I work all night." His name was Yamasaki. Of course everyone called him Yama.

Stein: What was the outcome of the strike?

HS: As I recall it the guys got a very good deal, but the details escape me.*

Nineteen forty-nine, '59, '69 is twenty years. This is '75. That's twenty-five years ago. I'll just hide behind the twenty-five years. (laughing) Boy, that's sure a handy thing to have, that rationale. I'll just point out that my advanced age is responsible for this lack of memory.

Stein: You showed me a cartoon from one of the Hawaiian papers.

HS: The one when they were trying to deport us?

Stein: Yes. When was that?

HS: I can go dig it out and read the date of the newspaper.

* The Hawaii longshoremen got a contract that within two years gave them wage parity with the West Coast.
Stein: It's a cartoon that appeared in the Honolulu Star-Bulletin of October second, 1946.* I see. You're all in this.

HS: The only man that didn't get in there was Richard Gladstein.

Stein: Was he there, too?

HS: Yes. He was there at the time, but maybe Lou said there was no room for him in the canoe.

Stein: What was Gladstein doing there?

HS: Hell, you have to have a lawyer. Look, Blaisdell and Dwight Steele -- both of them are lawyers and they tie you up in knots. So Richie was asked to come down there. Now we must have been in longshore negotiations in '46.

Stein: Yes. What is kapu?

HS: Kapu means keep out, forbidden. They have signs all over the islands.

Stein: What's kokua?

HS: Kokua means cooperation. The island people have a quick, complimentary remark. "You kokua me, I kokua you." (laughing)

Stein: That's like, "I'll rub your back and you rub mine?"

HS: Something like that.

Stein: (Studying the cartoon) What does this mean, employers' hui?

HS: A hui is an organization. If you want to establish a business or you make an association you set up a hui. Like they say in pidgin, "You make one hui." They use the word "one" in many respects.

*The cartoon depicts the strike leaders and the employers' representatives in a canoe headed for San Francisco.*
For instance a man comes into the office in the morning, like Jack Kawano* -- he was a Japanese and he talked that kind of lingo. He would stick his nose in the door and say, "You got one letter for me?", instead of saying, "Is there a letter for me?"

Stein: "No, we have two letters for you."

HS: (laughing) "We haven't got any, let alone one." You feel like answering that way. Then the answer might be, "No stop," which means it's not here. "He no stop." I shopped around a little bit in order to find out where that word "stop" came from. It comes out of the Spanish language. The Puerto Ricans bring it along. "Estop" is Spanish.

Stein: Who were these other people? The cartoon says, "It's okay with Goldblatt and Schmidt, so how about a little kokua from the Big Five to make arrangements with Blaisdell and Steele. We won't even ask for the deportation of Rinehart, Troy, Meley, Sutton, Langetroth and the other malahinis who make up the staff of the Hawaiian -- "

HS: The point is that they are all white guys, all malahinis, and they've all been imported from the mainland, but they're a little bit incon­sequential. Maybe they've been in Hawaii for twenty years or more and got a feather lei on their hats, so we won't bother about getting them deported. Just get rid of Blaisdell and Dwight Steele and then Goldblatt and Schmidt will ride along with them and start looking for the Ferry Building.

Stein: Was this in response to an ad that the employers had -- ?

HS: Yes. The employer hui was making constant propaganda in the daily press that, "Something should be done about the ILWU sending these

*Former president of the Honolulu longshore local.
people down here. All they do is make pilikia for us." The employers would issue press releases and the Honolulu Advertiser and the Honolulu Star-Bulletin would reprint them word for word. Every day we'd catch hell.

Anyhow our response was very effective. It answered the propaganda. Anybody who did any reading at all would realize, "That's right, Mr. Steele just came here a few weeks ago. And they're attacking the Schmidt fellow and he's only been here recently; even Blaisdell hasn't been here so long. Why don't they all go back?" some people would reason.

Stein: Was this cartoon drawn by the cartoonist you said -- ?

HS: That's possible, but I don't remember. This is clear enough: "Mainlanders kapu, by order of Big Five."

Stein: Yes. That's the royal Hawaiian band, playing "California Here I Come." (laughter) It says down here, "The Big Five might as well know that malahini-baiting, labor-baiting, red-baiting and Jew-baiting will not settle this strike." Was there Jew-baiting? Was there antisemitism on top of everything else?

HS: I think that Lou was a little bit sensitive about that and that's the reason he put that in there.

When he and I were staying at the Niamulu Hotel there was a woman staying there who was pretty high in the councils of the Hawaiian Legislature. She was Jewish. I noticed that Lou left the breakfast table one morning to walk over and start a conversation with her. I guess he was trying to enlist her aid. But she waved him off so he came back to my table.

Stein: At any rate, you obviously were not deported; you didn't leave then.

HS: There's no way to deport you.
When did you come back to the mainland from Hawaii after the '46 strike?

I came back here when the '46 strike was over, the sugar strike. I got back on the Coast committee and the Hawaiians had to get along without us, if it's proper to say that, without me or Lou, and run their own ship. Jack Hall and McElrath of course were there and they had a number of capable Hawaiian people. It must have been towards the end of the year 1946.

Then what did you do?

Then came the message which caused me to go down there and get ready for the 1949 longshore strike. It seems to me that I got down there before that strike started. Lou apparently knew that it was coming, that there was no stopping it.

The Importance of Food

In a telephone conversation he said to me, "You know, Hank, the first thing we've got to do is set up a soup kitchen like you had on the waterfront in '34." I suppose my answer was, "That I know how to do; and set up a publicity committee." We also had what they saw fit to call an entertainment committee.

What did that do?

They developed a mission in life. They got underneath the bow of the Lurline. Here was the Aloha Tower and there's a long pier there. There are offices all under the same roof, so to speak. The passenger ship would make fast there and discharge its passengers and load passengers. It was the Lurline.

Diagonally across the street was the main office of Castle and Cook. They not only were a stevedoring contractor, I think they owned part of the cemetery, they owned part of the...
big hospital, and they took care of you from the cradle to the grave. When I first came to Hawaii I got acquainted with the big wheel in Castle and Cook, (Randolph Sevier). He was a Eureka man. He had been sent to Hawaii. But later on they took him out of Hawaii and they brought him to San Francisco and he became president of the Matson Navigation Company.

(End of Tape 16, side B)

(Begin Tape 17, side A)

He wanted to know what I was going to do down there. I said, "I'm going to mingle with the men, and get acquainted, and see what we can do about this contract. I hear complaints that they're not getting everything that they're supposed to get out of the contract." The Matson Line ship Lurline was tied up down there. This man was the president of Matson and of course he didn't like it that his ship was tied up.

Teddy Kreps, a white woman who used to work with us in the office in San Francisco, had been sent to Hawaii and was working down there. She and I sort of collaborated on the tune of "My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean." She helped me rewrite the words.

We made out as if this man would be sitting around in his office in San Francisco singing "My Lurline lies over the ocean, my Lurline lies over the sea." This bunch of Hawaiians would get out their guitars and every morning day after day, on a sound system, they would sing, "My Lurline Lies Over the Ocean." (laughing)

One day I got a telephone call from Russell Starr and he said, "Henry, how long are you going to keep that up? We've got an office force here doing work, whatever needs to be done. That God damn music hurts us." I don't know what I said. I probably promised him we'd shut it off on Sunday (laughter) when there was nobody in their office.
Stein: That's a pretty good tactic. You can wear them down that way. Was there anything else the entertainment committee did that you can remember?

Genuine Fresh Turtle Soup

HS: I think they had other duties. It's possible that they also joined the food gathering committee. One day they came out from a sea fishing trip. Instead of having mock turtle soup we had genuine turtle soup in the strike food kitchen. We invited those blankety-blank women that were picketing our office.

The employers managed to get some women to picket us. With the aid of Teddy Kreps we rigged up a menu and mimeographed it. We had "Specialty of the Day - Genuine Turtle Soup."

These guys actually brought the turtles in on little conveyances that you hook on behind a car. They butchered them right there on the sidewalk. It made a bloody mess, of course, but then you could see that we were going to have genuine turtle soup. These things were this big. (Holds out arms three feet apart.) Sea turtles.

Stein: What were the ladies picketing you about?

HS: They were protesting that we had a strike, tying up the ships and doing things that shouldn't be done. After all, this was Hawaii and things were different here. There should be peace between employer and employees.

Then there were some small businessmen who employed but a few people. They would tell their employees to go out there and picket. There was one group of six or seven good looking girls who came in white uniforms. It's possible that these girls were working in a beauty parlor. They didn't have white caps like nurses out of a hospital. You could just tell by their facial...
expressions that they didn't like their job, you know, but they had to go and picket. They walked around there for a good while.

One day that we passed out menus to these pickets who actually came. They had a woman who agreed to do some talking. I had to make a speech there to welcome them to our genuine turtle soup. "This is the way that we feed our people. Yes, it costs money. Perhaps you want to make a contribution. Perhaps you should no longer picket."

They had a spokeswoman there who handled herself very well. She gave us hell. But she ate the genuine turtle soup just the same. They finally realized that they walked into a bit of a trap, so she got angry about it.

Stein: Did it stop their picketing?

HS: No. They kept on picketing for God knows how long. One day we picketed them. I got some of the guys to make signs. You know, "You picket us, we'll picket you." We would march around them.

Stein: In relation to the 1949 strike, Chuck in his book said that there was more red-baiting then and that Jack Burns was sent back to Washington, D. C.

HS: Jack Burns eventually became governor. I do know this, speaking of red-baiting. The ILWU had rented the second floor on that building which was part of the pier. Right on the corner somebody rented space. Of course, we had no control over that. One day we woke up in the morning and went to the office and we saw a very, very large painted picture of Joe Stalin's face hanging from

*For further detail about the Stalin picture incident, see Supplementary Interview 3, tape 2, side 2.
HS: this building, from the second floor, covering up the window of a certain office of the second floor which was apparently vacant.

There was Joe Stalin staring right into the plaza. That's what they hung on us. It appeared that we were boasting about the fact that we were Red headquarters, but the opposition hung the picture there.

Stein: What did you do? Did you take it right down?

HS: I think we got our cartoonist to make some comment and make some pictures and answer it with some kind of cartoons in our publication. Here (Larrabee's book) are some things that maybe we should put on the record. It's on page 274.

"'You remember that strike,' Governor Burns said in 1946. 'It was over a fundamental economic issue. Before the war longshoremen in Hawaii got ten cents an hour less than they did on the Coast. By 1949, there was a forty-two cent differential!"

"'That was what the strike was about. Of course, the Big Five called it a political strike. They called it Communist. What else could they do? Their position was completely untenable.'"

(Quoting from page 283) "Governor Burns, speaking from long experience in Hawaiian politics, looked at it this way when this author talked with him in the Iolani Palace in 1964:" Then there's a long quote.

Let me read it for my own -- . This is Burns still talking:"'But when the organization of the sugar workers broke the dictatorial political control of the plantation managers as well as their economic control, then Jack Hall and the others associated with him could work through the two-party system. And they did.'"

This was Burns arguing that it's not Communism because Jack Hall was working through the two-party system.
Stein: Do you agree with Burns' description; that's how it happened?

HS: Yes. They were working through the parties that were available at the time. There wasn't any Communist party. Nobody was running on the Communist ticket in Hawaii that I can recall. Even though Joe Stalin's picture was hanging there. It was three times life size.

Stein: Somebody went to a lot of trouble.

HS: Yes. They must have made a frame and painted it on -- it was like you were looking at those big heads there at Mount Rushmore. It wasn't quite that big.

Stein: Let's see. You went back to Hawaii in '49. How long did you stay then?

HS: For the whole duration of that strike.

Stein: I have it that 1949 was a six-month strike. It says in my notes, "In 1949, six month strike. More red-baiting. Jack Burn's trip to Washington, D. C."

HS: I always call it a six-month strike. By the time it was over it was time to come home. I don't know right now which date it was terminated, but shortly after that we had the Bridges-Robertson-Schmidt trial.

The Untimely Arrest

HS: As a matter of fact I was arrested while I was in Hawaii.

Stein: How did that happen?

HS: It was one of those things. First of all you have to remember that Mr. (Tom) Clark, who was on the Supreme Court, was making a speech in Milwaukee, or near there, where the German people
HS: have a great big picnic on German Day. He made a comment there - he had to talk about something - that, "We will have that Hawaiian situation well in hand in a short space of time." And then he launched into a red-baiting speech.

Harry had warned me. He said, "You might as well get ready for something because we have heard rumors from the main office of CIO that they're going to have another big to-do about my citizenship." Words to that effect.

I can recall that I was visiting the superintendent of the Queen's Hospital in Honolulu. I had heard that he had blasted us because the hospital was running short of medicinal supplies and things of that nature. He also made it known that the things that the hospital needed were on board the ship that was sitting in Honolulu harbor.

I went up to visit with him and I assured him that if those materials were aboard I would try to convince the strike committee to get them ashore and get them to the hospital. While I was there the phone rang and he said, "This is for you, Mr. Schmidt." Meyer Symonds, the ILWU lawyer, was on the other end of the line.

He told me that the United States marshal was looking for me and that he had a warrant for my arrest. I guess Sy said, "You know what it's all about." I told him, "Yes, I think I know."

I got through with the doctor, the superintendent of the hospital, and I got back to the office. There I was met by the marshal. His last name was Heine. He was a German himself, he talked with a real thick accent. Meyer Symonds had made arrangements already that I would have to submit to arrest and that I would immediately be released on bail. The reporters and their cameras were all there.

I went through the motions of surrendering to the marshal and he served the papers on me. He must have known about the bail already because I never went to jail. Of course I got my picture in the paper.
Stein: I'm sure the newspapers were gleeful about that, that they could show you, the radical union organizer, being arrested by the federal government. That's the next best thing to deporting you. (laughter)

HS: By golly, it all comes back to me now. I flew to the mainland for the purpose of -- what is the legal term? You come to the court and you plead guilty or not guilty. There's a term for it.

Stein: Arraignment.

HS: Arraignment, yes. The strike couldn't have been over because I can still hear the lawyers making an argument to Judge Harris that, "Mr. Schmidt should be allowed to go back to Hawaii to continue with his duties there." The court granted this request and I think I was back in Hawaii before forty-eight hours were over.

The female picket line was ready to faint when they saw me walking into the building. (laughter) One of them even shouted, I've forgotten what she said, but it must have been to the effect, "We thought we got rid of you."

Stein: You were like a ghost come back to haunt them.

HS: They had a new sign. Harry had been removed as director of the CIO for the West Coast states -- he had had that title. Phil Murray had removed him. The picket line had a great big sign saying, "Mr. Murray fires Bridges."

Stein: Was that because of the Communist business?

HS: Yes, sure. We had been read out of the order.

Stein: I think this is a very good lead-in for next week. I think it's a good place to stop.

(End of Tape 17, side A)

(End interview)
HS: Governor Culbert Olson freed Tom Mooney, and that was a big deal in his career. On the day he pardoned Tom Mooney, I managed to get a ticket, to get a seat in the Assembly chambers in Sacramento and we saw the whole show. And by pure coincidence, we were seated directly across from (Melvyn Douglas), a movie actor and his wife - the woman who ran against Nixon. She got beat - Helen Gahagan Douglas. It was the most dramatic scene that I witnessed in my whole life.

Stein: How so?

HS: Well, everybody was on pins and needles and Mooney was brought in by the warden of the prison. Olson went to the microphone and spoke the necessary words which made Tom Mooney a free man and when he had finished, he said, "Tom Mooney, you are now free to go to that microphone and speak to the world." And he did. That's when it got real emotional.

Then, the next day we organized a parade up Market Street and Tom Mooney was in the lead. It was the most colossal parade I ever saw. There were a million people near the Ferry Building and the crowds - the sidewalks were shoulder to shoulder with people. Some unions had planned to
HS: march in an orderly fashion, but this mob of people started to move like a tidal wave. The people who wanted to be spectators were swept -- just swept up the street.

I was on top of a rather low building with a public address system, speaking to the crowd. I had been instructed by the arrangements committee to see if I could get the crowd to sing and when Tom came out, I tried it. Now, what's the name of that song? The refrain is "The union makes us strong" - Solidarity Forever. Well, I got so emotional that my voice just -- I just ruined my voice. I couldn't sing anything.

Stein: So, the crowd didn't sing?

HS: No, no -- they just moved like a tidal wave up the street. I can see Tom making a speech in front of the City Hall. Anyhow it was a big day for the working class. They don't come very often.

Well, maybe four or five weeks later, a little group of Herb Resner (a Mooney defense lawyer) and myself, and a couple of guys from the union went to Sacramento to talk to the Governor.

Stein: It wasn't about King-Ramsey-Connor, was it?

HS: I don't know. As we sat there and talked to Olson somebody came into the meeting place and said, "Governor, there is a gentleman outside who wants to see you. He indicates he knows you and he might also know some of these gentlemen who are sitting around here." And the man smiled a bit and said, "Well, he doesn't want to say."

The Governor said, "Show him in," and the secretary opened the door and there's Tom Mooney. We were all excited, and he looked terrible. He had yellow jaundice. He was on his way to the grave, you know. So, we chatted and the Governor said, "Tom, you want to see me about anything?"
"No, sir," he said, "I was on the train going to San Francisco and so I took the opportunity to get off and see you. After all, you pardoned me, you know."

Subsequently I learned that Tom was in St. Luke's Hospital. I went there to see him a couple of times; he was on his death bed. And he gave me some good advice -

Stein: What did he tell you?

HS: Oh, don't lose your faith in the working class, you know. It's wonderful to know a guy like that.

I was living out on Church Street and every once in a while I would take the street car and I would see Tom Mooney's brother, John. He was a conductor. We would talk, you know. So, I lived to see the day when I buried him. I also went to the funeral of Tom Mooney.

Stein: That must have been a very emotional affair.

HS: When John Mooney died, the papers pointed out that he was the brother of the famous Tom Mooney. We tried to whip up some interest in the fact that John was to be buried and nobody came except Herman Stuyvelaar (secretary of the San Francisco CIO Council) and myself. That's sad. Well, of course, he wasn't Tom Mooney, he was just John Mooney, the car conductor, you know.

Furthering the War Effort

Stein: You also spoke about serving on the Pacific Coast Maritime Industrial Board, during the war.

HS: Yes, it was known as the Pacific Coast Maritime Industry Board. It was Harry's idea that such a body should be established for the purpose of furthering the war effort. We were in the war against Nazi Germany and by that time the Soviet
HS: Union had been invaded and a vast amount of cargo was coming from the United States. A great deal of it came through West Coast ports. American ships and Russian ships were hauling locomotives across the Pacific to Siberia. These locomotives had to be wider because the railroad gauge in Russia is wider than here.

As a member of this Board I was in Portland more than once and we went down to the waterfront when they loaded these locomotives on the ship - you know a locomotive weighs 120 tons - and I had the impression that you could only stow them on deck. But they had ships that were big enough so that they could put them in the lower hold; they also put some on deck.

It was an interesting operation for an ex-longshoreman - I had never seen locomotives handled like that. They usually build them, you know, in the country where they are doing their work.

Stein: That's amazing. They must have had special equipment just to get the locomotive on to the ship.

HS: Yes, there are hoisting barges which come alongside of the ship and these barges have booms which have the capacity of lifting something of a 100 tons or more. Now, of course, they have ships with hoisting gear that can also pick up a thing like that. Well, there's something to it. In any event, the board was established "for the purpose of furthering the war effort." I think those are the exact words in a document written by Admiral (Emory) Land. He was the head man of the -

Stein: War Shipping Administration.

HS: The War Shipping Administration. At that time Cole Jackman and myself -- we were on the Coast committee, so Admiral Land listened to the proposition and he agreed. He created a board of five -- Jackman and I were the two guys representing the union and there were two men representing the employers; Frank Foisie and Frank Gregory.
Stein: Wasn't Paul Eliel on the board?

HS: Paul Eliel was the chairman - he represented the public. Harry used to admonish me and say, "Don't say that you fellows represent the union." As I remember, Harry's argument was that "the whole five of you represent the public." Well, the board functioned for quite a while until the war was terminated. It was necessary for us to travel from port to port and hold meetings with the employer and the union representatives in the several ports.

Stein: What would these meetings be about?

HS: About the work on the waterfront - how to expedite the cargo movement, you know. We met in San Pedro, San Diego, in Portland, in Seattle. We, union representatives on the board, had to make it clear to the longshore locals in the several ports, and especially to the membership, that the board had a certain amount of authority and could be labelled as being undemocratic on certain issues; and it also had the power to issue orders.

Of course, from the union officers' point of view, considering it in the political sense, it was a lousy job to have, especially when the men could say, "You went along with those guys and issued an order for us to do - why don't you let us vote on it?" And the answer to that was, "Well, there's a war going on, fellows, and we haven't got time to take all these democratic measures. What would happen if you voted it down?" The guys might say, "Well, the hell with it. Rank and file control."

Stein: I was going to say, especially with that union, you'd have that kind of objection.

HS: Yes, so we did the best we could and issued some very unpopular orders. Among people that were engaged by the board as employees was Charlie Raudebaugh, San Francisco Chronicle man.
Whenever we reached a decision which had the nature of an order, Charlie would write the order out in military style.

The Cement Gets Heavier

Can you remember what some of the orders were that were unpopular?

Just one - because it's such a glaring violation of the democratic procedure which had been in effect for years. During the war a great deal of cement moved from the States to other places. Thousands of tons of cement moved to Hawaii; thousands of tons of cement moved to some of those islands that our military forces captured.

The load on the sling load on cement -- bags of cement weighed 90 pounds -- was either limited to 18 sacks or 22, when insofar as the lifting capacity of ship gear was concerned, the gear could carry two times 18 sacks. A heavier load would still not be heavy enough to cause the gear to carry away, but it creates more work for the longshoremen, you know.

When the load comes down they have to move 30 sacks, pick them off the sling load, then stow them. It makes more work. Sling loads of 18 sacks were an arbitrary rule that the union developed and instituted, and in a manner of speaking forced upon the employer.

Later on there was an agreement reached between the employers and the unions that on a Coast-wise basis we would hoist 22 sacks. And that became a Coast-wise issue, so that there was uniformity insofar as the 18-22 sacks were concerned. Thereby, you could argue that the longshoremen in Seattle and the longshoremen in San Francisco were doing the same amount of work, that one wasn't forced to work harder than the other.
Anyhow, the Maritime Industry Board addressed itself to that question. The employer members on the board proposed - with the agreement of the chairman - that the load should be increased from 18 sacks to more than that. And I think that the board made a decision by a vote of 3 to 2. Jackman and I voted against this proposition.

So the order went out - raise it from this to that. Jackman and I, we couldn't make it clear to the rank and file that we voted against it. They said, "What the hell - we've got to do it anyhow." Our answer was, "The other three guys voted for it." "Who are they?", or words to that effect. We didn't sell it to the ranks, but they finally complied with the thing.

It affected my career in some respects. I didn't get as many votes the next time around and when the war was over -

(End of Tape 18, side A)

(Begin Tape 18, side B)

I was a candidate to succeed myself on the Coast committee, there was one occasion when I didn't make it. The fact that I was away in Hawaii where the fellows didn't see me might have been a contributing factor. You know, when they don't see you - well, that's not the important thing.

The Maritime Industry Board was meeting almost daily, or we were on the road going to some port or coming back to San Francisco. We also had on the payroll a seagoing man; he was a navigator and he had the title of captain. I remember he was a stevedoring contractor in Manila and he was a little bit puzzled about the way we were handling this thing because he came to the board meetings and he indicated that he didn't quite understand. He said in Manila, "I just told them to do what they were
HS: told."
"I think even Frank Foisie said, "Captain, we can't do it that way around here. Just ask these gentlemen from the union."

Stein: Well, they learned their lesson -- Frank Foisie --

**When the War Ended**

HS: Yeah, well then the war was terminated and a few weeks after that, Admiral Land issued an order dissolving the board and we all went back to our respective stations. The employer members went back to their building and became members of the labor relations committee again and we did likewise and resumed our activities as Coast committee men.

Whatever we accomplished thereafter I don't remember, but it wasn't very exciting. Adjustments had to be made with regard to cargo movement. All of a sudden the nature of the cargo changed - troops started coming home. It wasn't very exciting.

So, inasmuch as the union paid us while we were on the Coast committee and we were getting paid by the government as members of this board and we were doing the same kind of work, -- administering the affairs of the labor agreement under the order of the board -- it can be said that certain portions of the labor agreement were violated. The board had authority to do that.

There might have been a sentence in the order which created the board that it was given power by executive order that it could make some changes in the labor agreement having to do with the longshoremen on the Pacific Coast. There must have been something like that in the order; otherwise we could have been charged with violating the agreement by issuing an order forcing the men to build larger sling loads.
Stein: But after the war was over, things reverted to the regular contract?

HS: Yes, yes - but then I had an odd experience. Due to the provision in the Local 10 constitution which allows you to have two terms of one year each as an officer but you cannot be a candidate for a third term, I was constituted out of office as president of Local 10. Ed Reite, who had been secretary, was also constituted out for the same reasons, so he and I went to work on the waterfront.

It just so happened that on one particular day he and I both wound up on the ship working in the same hatch and we were handling cement all day. The other fellows there, you know, they were laughing and shouting and saying, "Look who we've got here, Hank the Crank and Ed Reite, the pencil pusher."

Stein: Was that your nickname, "Hank the Crank?"

HS: Yeah. Well, by this time the men had developed a system that was called "four on and four off." See, when you are loading cargo of that particular type, you have an 8-man hole gang when the ship is taking on a load; four men work on one side of the hold and the other four work on the opposite side.

The men had developed a system of four of them working and four of them sitting down 30 minutes of each hour. Whenever we were working that way -- you had to keep the hook going -- you had to work much faster because four of the fellows would be sitting down and four of them would be working. Everybody understood that you have to keep that hook going, but then you were looking forward to that 30 minutes of doing nothing, so you didn't mind it.

Stein: Well, except the people who were operating the hook kept working all the time.

HS: Yeah, that's the winch driver, he's a "glass hour" man - he's getting more money because he's a winch driver, a skilled worker.
He knows that he has to hoist the load, and he also knows that he gets a relief every hour or so because his partner, the hatch-tender, goes and takes the winches. For an hour he's giving signals with his index finger or his thumb and the other hour he's handling two levers which operate the winches. It's not to be compared with working downstairs unless the weather is very, very bad up on deck and they have to rig a tent.

So, when the day was over -- and we worked ten hours -- I said to Ed: "It's pretty tough when you're right out of the office, but after our muscles get accustomed to this kind of work, maybe it's even easier than the office." This particular operation - hoisting sacks of cement - after a while it wasn't so bad. And you don't have all those headaches that you get when you are an officer, you know. All you do is pick up sacks of cement from the load and carry them over here and drop them at your feet when you're flooring off."

So, that was when you went back to --

Yes, it must have been after the Maritime Industry Board was wiped out of existence.

A Hint of Danger

Well, shortly after you left the Maritime Industry board you applied for a job with the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration?

Oh, yes, I had been reading the papers while I was on the Coast committee and these articles pointed out that there were opportunities for a man to go overseas to serve in various capacities. They were looking for people who might know some languages, so I made the application and got an answer indicating that I might be engaged.
Harry talked me out of it, and it is quite possible that he saved my life by doing that. In order to secure some information, I went to a Holland ship to talk to one of the mates. I introduced myself – that I was an officer of the union and that I was interested in going overseas. I gave him some information on this agency and that it was looking for men who would assist in this business of the U.N. Relief and Rehabilitation Administration.

Stein: Working with displaced persons?

HS: Yes. So, I said to the mate on this ship – I was talking Dutch with him. "Well, he said, "how are you going to get ashore? Are they going to fly you over? Are they going to land you in enemy territory?" I said, "Well, I don't know – I'll never find that out unless I go."

So, I said to him, "Do you think they'll land me by parachute in Holland and that I can do any good insofar as the displaced persons in the Netherlands are concerned?" And he wanted to know, "How?" And I said, "You can hear that I talk Dutch quite fluently and I also know the German language – no difficulty – and I know English quite well."

Well, he said, "Do you know our country is completely occupied by German troops?" "Yes," I said, "I'm aware of that." He said, "On this ship, we don't go to Holland – we go to British ports, you know. Well, if you can get away with it and get yourself established and work" – I think he said, "underground" but – "If the Germans ever get you, that's the end of you, you know."

It sounded kind of interesting at the time. I thought to myself, well why can't I get away with it? You know you have this ego. If I should be caught by the Germans, I could talk to them and even convince them – well, I could truthfully tell them that I was born in Germany. They might say, "Well, what are you doing in Holland?
"And where did you come from?" "Oh," this officer on the ship said, "when those guys catch you, they will find out that you are not one of them and they'll just shoot you." Which of course, was what would have happened. So, I was about ready. I was mulling around in my mind, and I guess I was also looking for somebody who would talk me out of it. I might as well confess that, you know.

And Harry says to me, "You're nuts" or words to that effect. '"You can do more goddam good here in the States than going over there. And stay on the Coast committee - that's where you belong, that's what you were elected for." So, I gave up on it.

Later on Harry hired a man by the name of William Glazier, who worked as his administrative assistant for quite a number of years. I found out that he had been sent to Germany after the armistice to meet with Germans who had been captured because he knew the German language to some extent.

He and I talked quite a bit, and I said to him one time, "Give me a thumbnail sketch of what you were doing over there after the armistice." He replied that he had interviewed a great many German prisoners of war that our forces had captured. The idea was to put down on paper what their thinking was on the business of the war getting started and the long fight of the Germans against their enemies, and vice versa. After I received this information I thought to myself, well it could have been a very interesting job - the war was over - there's not much danger in getting killed.

Well, shortly after that there was an issue in the union - I guess in Local 10 mostly - about the Marshall Plan which Bridges was very opposed to; but according to Chuck Larrowe's book most of the members of the union supported the Marshall plan.
HS: I think that is correct. I don't know how boisterous Harry got about this thing but I think he began to realize that it was a thing that the men were for. After all, moving cargo from this country to other countries wasn't a movement of war cargo - ammunition; it was foodstuff and the like.

The Marshall Plan and things of that nature create work for longshoremen. I would say the Marshall Plan was a success from the point of view of moving the stuff.

Stein: I wonder if you became involved in that controversy?

HS: I don't think so. I remember some conversations years later with relatives in Holland and letters from them when the war was finished; they knew about the Marshall Plan. Herman van Donselaar, he was here and he is an uncle to my daughter and he is a great letter writer. And he said if it hadn't been for America and the Marshall Plan and things of that nature "We would have starved to death." He also gave us a description of the Allied planes flying from Britain to Germany for purposes of bombing. They would come across Holland, you know, and in the same letter he said, "Now they come with food for us . . ." And it was such a dramatic letter that it would work you up when reading it - especially my wife. Herman would write how these planes came across and they would parachute the cargo down and these things were full of food. And he said some people got sick because on one occasion butter came down from the skies and they hadn't had butter for so long that they started to gorge themselves and they got very ill.

Subsequently when I managed to make a trip they talked to me about the ships coming up the river to Rotterdam; they knew it was food from America. Oh, they would also point out food coming from Sweden and from Canada, but most of
HS: it from the United States. He told how the people would get all worked up because the newspapers would indicate the type of cargo that was coming in. For instance, there would be a cargo of white flour, white bread, because they don't really need dark bread all the time.

Yeah, Herman van Donselaar is very enthusiastic about America - he was an employee in a rather high capacity for the Phillips Company all his life. He had a very good job; in fact, he is so well off that he insists in driving around in a big American car - not a little one.

I drove him up to Clear Lake one time and we went into a rather small restaurant one morning after we slept in a motel and he said, "It's an amazing country - even in a small restaurant like this you get these big breakfasts, two eggs and things on the side, toast and fried potatoes. I said, "What do you expect?" And he said, "Well, I thought you only get those kinds of things if you go to a larger and classier restaurant." You know, in the old country they have that classification of peoples.

(End of Tape 18, side B)

(Face Tape 19, side A)

Facing the Race Problem

Stein: Let's go back to Hawaii. You went to explore the possibility of securing West Coast mainland conditions for the longshoremen in Hawaii including hiring halls, complete decasualization of work, sling load limitations and inter-change of longshoremen from one location to another.

You expected to remain for sixty days and you were going to investigate unemployment insurance and compensation laws in the Territory,
Stein: as well as employer intimidation of longshoremen and violations of existing contract, especially the safety code.

HS: Well, I would say that that is a highly complimentary story in the Dispatcher; they went overboard a little bit.

Stein: Oh, yeah - how so?

HS: Well, here's Hank the Crank going to Hawaii and he's going to do a good job. As a matter of fact I didn't accomplish all those things, even though I stayed more than sixty days. This business of setting up a hiring hall, West Coast style, you could only get that by tying them up. Later on we tied them up on the basis of wages and working conditions and the business of demanding a hiring hall, I don't think it even became a strong demand.

I don't think we moved too heavily on the question of sling loads. We probably succeeded in reducing them to some extent.

One of the main things I was interested in -- and I would like to say we had some success -- was to indicate to the men that they should not be concerned about the employer's attitude -- the relationship between the employee and the employer.

Most of the longshoremen down there are mixed Hawaiians or hapahaolies, or Koreans and Ch--. No. Many of them are Filipinos. All of these people are conscious of the fact that they are in white man's country; some of them hold the white race in awe, which of course is a sad mistake. So, the employer class has an easy time down there.

And I told my Hawaiian friends that our attitude on this coast is somewhat different, that we have had several strikes -- and I put it in plain language -- you have to get strong enough so that you can take it away from the shipowners.
I said that on the Pacific Coast, we have succeeded with that to some considerable extent. I had an experience one morning at the pier head; the men were standing around waiting for the 7 o'clock whistle. A small Filipino longshoreman came up to me and he took his hat off and started to talk to me very politely, perhaps a little bit too polite; he had his hat in his hand and he kept calling me "Mister."

So I said to him, I said, "Put your hat back on your head; you don't have to take off your hat for me - we are all members of the same union. I belong to the union in San Francisco and we are fraternal brothers." "Yeah, but," he said, "you're the union boss."

I said, "No, I'm not the union boss - when you come to the meeting then you are the boss. Maybe I explain to you what's going on and what we should do, but you make the decision." "Oh, he said, "si,si. It's more better." Oh, it was a three minute conversation, you know, and then I guess he went around and he told his fellows.

Well, I used to get up early and I would go into the restaurants at 6:30 in the morning and sit down with those fellows and eat rice balls and I learned to eat with chop sticks and they thought I was terrific.

Class Distinctions

Stein: Yes, that's a very hard problem to overcome - that problem of difference.

HS: Oh, yes. Well, if you come from Europe you understand that better. If you're born in Europe and live over there for ten or twelve years, you have a better awareness that there are working people and there are people up there who are not working people. They are the boss and all you have to do is do the work - and you have to obey the orders; and in America that is not quite so. It is so, but not quite so.
HS: When I go to - what is the name of that capital of New York? Albany. When I go to Albany, I don't expect to have lunch or dinner with Mr. Rockefeller, you know; that is a little bit too far. But we all love this equalization; only yesterday I was talking with John (Kohler) about the English word, "you" - it's an equalizer. It doesn't make any difference whether you are talking to a millionaire or a street-sweeper. You say "you" to him - - this is not the case in other languages. It's not the case in Germany or Holland. It's not the case in Spain.

Stein: I know in French there are two "yous" --

HS: Yeah, you have to figure out what class does this gentleman belong to and if you are starting a conversation with a street-sweeper, if you call him in lower case, he doesn't mind.

(Schmidt talks German or Dutch for about two sentences.)

When I arrived on this side of the water, I didn't know it. So, I came on this Canadian farm and I couldn't understand English but after a while I came to find out that the kids, they would say "you" to their mother, their father, and their sister and there was only one word and that is "you". And I thought, "Gee, that's nice, it gives more freedom." You don't have to worry about insulting somebody; in the old country if you are impolite and you use the wrong word to an adult, they are liable to slap you across the face, you know.

I have heard people say that when somebody addresses you in the impolite term that you should immediately pick him up and ask him to address you properly. It's comparable to the word "sir" in English -- the common soldier, when he is talking to the general, doesn't say "Joe", but "Yes, sir," uh? And the general, how does he talk to the private? He doesn't call him "Mister" - He doesn't say "sir" - that is the difference, you see.
I was driving through the state of Nebraska one day and my passenger was a black man and I got stopped by a highway policeman and as soon as he saw my driver's license, he started to call me "Henry". He should have said "Mr. Schmidt," shouldn't he?

Stein: Yeah, right.

I didn't say anything because he was looking for trouble. He wanted to know "Who's this fellow over there?" I said, "Well, he's my passenger." He said, "What's his name?" I said, "I don't know." "Well, where did you get him?" "I picked him up yesterday in Salt Lake City." "Where's he going?" "I think he's going to Detroit." If I had been alone, he wouldn't have been so fresh, you know. Anyhow, it gives you a feeling of equality when you use the word "you" and you don't have to bother with these other two words.

Stein: Well, is that true in the Hawaiian dialect? Is there also just one word for "you"?

Well, I don't know about the Hawaiian language. In their mannerism of speech when these working people in Hawaii talk to what they consider to be their betters they are polite, but they use the word "you". I don't know what happens in Japanese -- the Japanese, of course, are very polite. They bow from the middle - and I think the Chinese, too, and the Filipinos; they have been under the iron heel of the mighty Yankee so long, they also bow from the middle.

Well, let me read you this article which came out in the Dispatcher of April 4, 1947, after you had just come back from Hawaii. It said you had negotiated contracts that expired September 30, 1946; you worked on administering the agreement and participated in negotiations that lasted until January, 1947 when the new contract went into effect and you helped the longshoremen prepare for a strike which never became necessary.
Stein: The gains made were due to the recommendations of Nathan Feinsinger, special conciliator sent to the Islands by Secretary of Labor (L. B.) Schwellenbach. The gains included a 30-cent increase retroactive to November 1946, dues checkoff and a 20-cent differential for hatch-tender winch drivers.

HS: Right. There's only one thing in there that is too complimentary. I didn't negotiate these contracts by myself. I'm certain that Lou Goldblatt and Harry Bridges were down there every once in a while, and Jack Hall was there, and I never, never tried to take the position that I was a superior of Jack Hall. Of course, we also had Hawaiian fellows on the negotiating committee.

I got fairly well acquainted with Nathan Feinsinger, a professor from the University of Wisconsin, and these numerals here which have to do with those wage increases - they are as far as I can recall 100 percent correct. Yeah, Lou was down there a long time and Harry got in and out. Jack Hall was always on the mat.

One day Feinsinger and Dwight Steele, the employers' head man, were standing in the lobby of the Moana Hotel talking about the 30-cent per hour increase and I could hear Dwight Steele say to Feinsinger, "Can't you reduce this a little bit? My people will never agree to a 30-cent increase per hour." I saw Feinsinger going like this - "No, that's my recommendation, and I'm going to put it to you." That is what happened.

Feinsinger addressed me by my first name one time, but I didn't mind it in the least. We had never met and he showed up with Harry and Lou, sat down and the introductions came along. Feinsinger said, "Henry, I've heard so much about you, it seems I've known you for a long time." Well, from my European point of view, which I still hold within me, this man was somewhat my superior - he was a professor of economy in a great university, and where do I come from? Right out of the working class, you see.
Stein: How did you address him?

HS: Oh, I didn't address him as Nathan right away - maybe later on.

Postwar Unemployment

Stein: Well, in January of 1948 there was evidently a big controversy going on in Local 10 because there were threats of unemployment.

HS: January?

Stein: It was the Dispatcher of January 23 and it said, "Local 10 votes against the layoff of 500 men for protection of jobs of the rest of the men."

This was a proposal by James Kearney and the other Local 10 officers; and then you offered a compromise proposal calling for more gangs and providing for equalization of work among men not in gangs --

HS: This is just a summary?

Stein: Yes. It was the eve of the Taft-Hartley Act.

HS: As I recall, during the war, there was a high point insofar as the number of longshoremen working in the San Francisco Bay area is concerned. The number must have been 20,000 or more. And everybody was aware of the fact, I think, that if the war should terminate, there would be less work and somebody would be laid off. And that became a conversation piece among the men. The ordinary, popular system is that the people who are last hired would be the first to be laid off, if it was necessary.

Now, the thing I remember very clearly is a meeting in the Civic Auditorium in San Francisco. We had a stop-work meeting, so everybody was there. And the men who were to be laid off were in the meeting so that they could talk and vote against it. Of course they would not vote themselves out.
HS: When it comes to laying off, the employers have to agree with you — both sides have to agree that a certain number of men have to be laid off. An employer by himself can't get rid of you. You come in by the action of both and you go out by joint action. And there had been a decision by the joint labor relations committee that it was necessary to let a certain number of men go out of the industry. I don't remember the number.

The men who were going to get the axe were in the meeting and a number of them talked about it and went to the microphone; later on in the evening the vote took place and those men did not win. The membership voted to concur in the proposition that was submitted by the joint committee and a certain number of men had to go.

They were dismissed with the clear understanding that if in the future it was necessary to hire additional help — taking into account that men would disappear by attrition — those dismissed men would be the first to be rehired. With that understanding, the proposition to lay off carried. Of course, the majority of the men knew they would not be laid off. They knew that it was going to be only a small number, maybe it was 500.

Now, the boys were coming back from the battle fronts and they were all looking for jobs and the State Department of Employment had an office where jobs might be available.

There did come a time when it was necessary to add men to the work force on the waterfront, and instead of calling for the men who were laid off, I'm pretty sure the union and the parties went on record that the fellows who were coming back from the war were also entitled to some consideration, and they were hired.

Well, then we ran into another buzz saw. The military over on the Oakland side — they were in a powerful position — they could, if they wanted to, disregard the Coast contract and hire men to do longshore work and they would be paid by
HS: the U.S. Treasury. And some of those men that got the treatment from us - that's what they call it - went over there and hired out; so when some of our men went across the bay to load ship, they found that certain ships would be handled by the Army or the Navy and they could see some of their former friends working there and getting paid by the government.

So, it is too bad that this thing had to happen. When all the newspapers and radio and TV in the country were pointing out that we should do everything possible to see that when the boys come back from the war they should get work. You try to do something, you know.

Stein: Well, how was the issue finally resolved?

HS: Well, as the years went by and additional negotiations took place, you found yourself talking to captains in the Navy, or even admirals or generals. They have cushy jobs handling ships in certain ports, you know, and sometimes they have enough authority to make changes, or get authority from Washington. There might have been an order from some place that this military division recognize the Coast contract and hire their men through the regularly established hiring hall; that's how we got back in. We're still not all the way back in --

Stein: Oh, they still do some hiring on their own?

HS: Yeah, they have men working for them and it's a rule -- it's a thing that won't heal. Those men don't belong to any union and they think that's quite good. They said, you kicked us out and we even save the dues. That's the way some of them argue.

Stein: But then they don't have any pension --

HS: Well, they have that government pension. There's a Navy pension and an Army pension. I want to tell you a personal experience.

Stein: Well, okay.
Ways of the Military

HS: We were called to a ship which the day before had been worked in San Francisco loading cargo; our gang was ordered to follow that ship to Oakland and work it there inside the Army territory.

Stein: Uh, uh; and this was right after the B-R-S trial?

HS: Right after. Over there in Oakland they have a big hunk of land with piers, that's Army territory; and right next door there is a piece of land which is Navy territory -- and there are also piers. Some of our gangs were ordered by these military units and told we were going to work on a ship within the Army facility. We were checked in and I had the proper passes, but I had been in this trial and I guess I was a marked man.

So, after we had been working for a couple of hours, the gang boss shouted down the hole, "Henry Schmidt, you have to come up." And the walking boss -- he's the boss of the ship for the day; and his name was Schmidt too -- he said, "Henry, they want you up here." I said, "Who is 'they'?" He said, "Those two guys down there."

The two guys were wearing civilian clothes and I approached them and I had my cargo hook in my hand and I shoved it in my pocket. Schmidt (the walking boss) interfered in the conversation and he said, "This man is working all right, he's an old longshoreman - he's okay." And one of these -- they were FBI guys, you see, they told him to shut up, and they said to me, "We'll have to take you off."

And of course I said, "What do you mean, 'take me off'?" And they said, "You can't work here."

And Schmidt, the walking boss asked, "You're going to walk him out of here?" "Yeah," they said, "He can't work here." So, one of them said, "Give me your hook." I says, "What?" And he says, "As soon
HS: as you're out the gate, I'll give it back to you." I said, "All right." Have you ever seen one of those hooks?

Stein: I've seen pictures.

HS: Well, I'm going to show you a real one - I still have it. So, they took me to a gate and that's where the buses come by to take you into Oakland or San Francisco. You see, when we came there, I came in an automobile with some other guys.

Stein: Uh, huh - so you had no way to get back.

HS: No. It wasn't my automobile we came in. Of course, I started to ask some questions, and they said, "You just can't work here." Of course, I understood. I didn't know where the spot was where you take the bus and they pointed to it and said, "Just go over there and that's a bus stop and just wait for the bus and go back to San Francisco."

So I did that. I was standing there and all of a sudden a fellow comes along and he was dressed in working clothes and he said, "Say, can you tell me where I can get some longshore work, and I said, "You should be asking me - they can use a man over there on that ship, but I don't think they can hire you - a complete stranger." He wanted to know why and I tried to explain it to him.

So, I was walking around and looking at the territory and then I saw a sign that the bus stop was in the Navy facility. So, the Army guys didn't give a damn that I was standing in the Navy facility. It was one of those funny things; so pretty soon the bus came and -

Stein: Before the Navy people could tell you to get off?

HS: So, the next day I had my name in the front pages of the papers.

Stein: They gave you your hook back?
HS: Yeah, they gave it back.

Stein: They were afraid - ?

HS: Yeah, I guess they were afraid I'd hit them with it. Anyhow it didn’t hurt my working career because the next day I got back in Bill Rutter’s gang and we saw to it that we would be sent only to civilian ships. No more Army and Navy. And the union had a lot of trouble with those guys and this ruling from Washington. The union finally went to court and Washington lost. There was a court decision that they were interfering with our working rights and that -

(End of Tape 19, side A)

(Tape 19, side B, not transcribed)

(End of Interview)
XII THE CONSPIRACY TRIAL
(Interview 11: 14 February, 1975)

(Begin Tape 20, side A)

Henry Wallace for President

Stein: There was a lovely photograph of you in the Dispatcher May 28, 1948, showing you and Henry Wallace, then the Progressive Party candidate for president. I guess you had been taking him on a tour of the hiring hall and you two are standing in front of a blackboard arrangement which has all the men's names listed on it.

HS: Yeah, Henry Wallace came to the hiring hall that afternoon and we asked him to stand in front of the blackboard which gives information in regard to whatever piers or docks the men were to report to for work. He was accompanied by Bill Dodd, who was employed in the Dispatcher office as an assistant to Editor (Morris) Watson. Dodd's father had been the American Ambassador to Germany in years gone by.

I introduced Henry Wallace and he made his talk and got considerable applause from those longshoremen who weren't working that day - hanging around the hiring hall. The whole thing didn't last any more than a half-hour, I think.

Stein: Did the union generally give him much support?

HS: It's possible that Local 10 adopted a resolution in supporting his efforts to become President.
Stein: The next question I have is the break with the CIO.

HS: The fall of 1949?

Stein: Yes.

HS: Phil Murray, who was president of the CIO at that time, and Bridges fell out in the late 1940s over the Cold War.

Stein: Were you holding union office at that time?

HS: I was in Hawaii. However, I understand that in the fall of 1949 the CIO convention delayed voting on suspension of the ILWU for being Communist so as not to prejudice Bridges' trial.

The Trial Begins

Stein: Well, perhaps we just move into that trap.

HS: Okay. When the B-R-S started, I was in Hawaii and I heard about it. I was advised of the date the three of us were to report to a court in San Francisco and a U. S. Marshal came around and placed me under arrest. In the meantime our ILWU lawyers in Hawaii had made arrangements for bail and I was immediately released. I told you about that before. I was not incarcerated for even one minute.

Stein: Richard Gladstein handled the case at the beginning when you were first arrested. Gladstein had defended a group of Communists in a Smith Act trial back in New York before Judge (Harold) Medina, as a result of which he had been sentenced to six months in Federal penitentiary for contempt of court.

HS: I recall that he was in a penitentiary back East somewhere. The only thing that comes to mind is Leavenworth.
Stein: Yes. He told me a fascinating story - he was in six different penitentiaries before he finally finished his sentence. He also said that the union felt - and he felt also - that it wouldn't be wise to have him representing Bridges when Bridges was denying that he had ever lied about being a Communist -- with a defense lawyer who had just finished defending people who were outspoken Communists.

HS: Yes, that sounds reasonable.

Stein: Do you know how the decision was reached to choose (Vincent) Hallinan and (Jim) MacInnis?

HS: Well, after the arraignment I returned to Hawaii. We pleaded "Not guilty" and a continuance was granted until September 1. Hallinan and MacInnis were chosen during my absence. When I came back to San Francisco to visit with the court, so to speak, I noticed that MacInnis and Hallinan were to be our lawyers. After the trial had begun I realized that Hallinan was assigned to defend Harry and MacInnis was assigned to Robertson and Schmidt. I had never met these two gentlemen.

Stein: What were your original impressions of them? When did you meet them? You must have met them before you went to court.

HS: Yes, I think we had a meeting with Hallinan and Jim MacInnis; we all got a lecture on how one behaves in a court, and Hallinan and MacInnis interrogated the three of us. They both said something to the effect -- and I understand lawyers do this all the time with clients -- that of course we were going to win. Naturally, you are not guilty.

There was a woman there, Elinor Kahn, and she gathered the information that was required for our defense. She also made preparations to collect money from all corners of the earth to pay for the defense. She functioned as secretary of our defense committee. Harry decided, and got
HS: concurrence from the defense committee, to send her to Britain to check up on a former officer of the Firemen's Union, whose name was (John) Ferguson.

Stein: Oh yes!

HS: And she went and I don't recall anything about the information, if any, that she came back with. I do recall, not very clearly, with regard to prosecution witness Lawrence Ross that some information was obtained on him while the trial was going on; our lawyers told the court that we had communicated with the superintendent of a certain school in another state, I think it was Kentucky, to find out if Ross had told the truth when he testified that he had gone to school there.

**A Dramatic Confession**

HS: The reply had been that there was no such name as "Lawrence Ross" on their records. And I think it was about that time that Ross confessed that his name was Rosenstein.

Stein: It is in a list of witnesses - Lipman Rosenstein. That must have been a very vivid moment in the courtroom.

HS: And since I am sort of interested in the origin of names -- especially the Germanic names -- when he started in and said, "My name is not Lawrence Ross," that said something to me about Jewish background. I leaned over and said to Harry or Bob, "His name is Rosenthal, or Rosenberg or Rosenstein, you wait and see." Because, you know, if you assume another name you're liable to Anglicize it, you know, so Ross is good enough.

Stein: Well, I gather that Hallinan immediately got off to a bad start with the judge in his opening statement. I wonder if you remember that - the very first day.
HS: On the very first day?

Stein: Yes, in Hallinan's opening statement, the prosecution kept jumping up and down and objecting and Hallinan was finally charged with contempt.

HS: Yes, he lost his temper. He couldn't take it any longer — because in all probability (Prosecutor Joseph) "Jiggs" Donohue was going a little bit too far. That was Vince's modus operandi because frequently he took those fellows on. But I don't remember what the pitch was at that point. The very first day I hadn't settled down yet. I was probably sitting on the edge of my chair and since smoking was not permitted I couldn't take another puff on my pipe.

After we were there a week or so I settled down and I just let the waves roll in and the waves roll out and felt perfectly comfortable. I thought, well, this is going to last a long time but we're not going to go to any jail.

And the union had gone on record that we would continue to the best of our ability our union duties. That was all right for Bob and Harry but I didn't have any union duties at that point. I was just a defendant. However, the union decided that I would continue to get my salary, so I didn't have any economic problems — $75 a week I was getting. That was a considerable amount of money in those days.

Stein: Was that the salary as a member of the Coast committee?

HS: No. That was the salary that I was paid as International Representative in Hawaii. They had to pay something in addition for my board and room in Hawaii.

(End of Tape 20, side A)
Stein: One of the first prosecution witnesses was John Schomaker.

HS: Yes.

Stein: And in relation to you he testified that he had been at a gathering at the home of Jack Shaw where Bridges was reputed to have made a speech to some 50 or 60 people, and that he was a member of the Communist party.

HS: Well, you ask who was Jack Shaw. Well, he was Irish, he was single, he was not exactly a young fellow. I remember a cocktail party at his place or somebody else's - a larger place - but I don't even remember Harry even being there. Not an iota. It says somewhere in here that Schomaker testified, indicating that he also had been at this affair -

Stein: Yes and that Bridges had been there.

HS: In all probability I was at that thing. I don't know what its purpose was but I don't recall Harry being there nor Schomaker being there. It's pretty hard not to see Schomaker, he's way over six feet tall.

Stein: Then Schomaker also testified that he, along with Henry Schrimpf, had brought charges against Norma Perry for being a labor spy.

HS: I don't recall that.

Stein: And then Schomaker also said that Sam Darcy had played a leading role in the 1934 strike and that -
HS: Yeah, those were rumors that were floating around. I can't see myself standing on the street corner and talking to a man by the name of Sam Darcy; I can't place him. I do recall that there was a leaflet floating around indicating that he was to speak somewhere, and I think this came up in the trial.

The question came up if I was responsible for the distribution of the leaflet or if I had personally passed it around. I think my testimony was to the effect that I was aware that such a gathering was to take place, but it never did take place because a cancellation must have occurred.

Stein: I also noted here several other things that John Schomaker testified to and I wonder if any of them rang a bell.

HS: Well there's something about Albion Hall -

Stein: That's right. He testified that he had been instructed by the Communist party to form the Albion Hall group.

HS: I can't understand that. I knew about the Albion Hall long before these other fellows knew about the place.

Stein: You told me that story, I think that German singing society -

HS: Yeah, and the Workmen's Benefit Fund met there. I don't know what became of the singing society, but the Workmen's Benefit Fund had an office there and I still belong to it and I'm still paying quarterly dues. The benefits are a doctor and then there's a burial benefit.

There was a group that met at the Albion Hall - and Jack Shaw was in that group. I don't see Schomaker sitting there. A fellow by the name of McKenna was there; he used to be a winch driver at Matson. I've told you about him. I don't know what to do with Sam Darcy. I don't see him being around, making any talks.
Stein: Yes, that's what you testified to at the trial. I think you'd seen him twice at meetings, at mass meetings when he spoke. You had never met him personally.

HS: Yes, and I don't know who Stanley Hancock is or was.

Stein: Neither do I, but his name keeps coming up. Well, one of the next witnesses was Mervyn Rathborne.

HS: Mervyn Rathborne was pretty active on the waterfront. He was a member of the ARTA - that's the American Radio and Telegraphers Association. I think he was an official in that outfit. Later on, he became secretary of the district council of the Maritime Federation in San Francisco - he was very active in the maritime - but now we are not talking about the 1934 strike. We're talking about the '36 - '37 situation.

Stein: Do you remember him testifying?

HS: Yes, I remember him testifying. He testified to the effect that he was a member of the Communist party and all the other fellows were in there with him. But it had something to do with a resolution. There is an organization (World Federation of Trade Unions) which is supposed to be world-wide; it's an organization mainly of maritime workers, sea-going and long-shore.

During the trial it was mentioned that this organization had had a convention in Marseille, and at that convention a resolution was considered which said, in effect, that if any individuals who had association with any maritime organizations were to testify at the Bridges trial the convention would go on record urging all maritime workers to tie up a ship if such an individual were to show up as being employed on such a vessel.

What they were talking about was the possibility that Mervyn Rathborne might get employment on a vessel as radio operator. In that case
foreign workers were requested to tie up his
ship. That thing coming up in the trial brought
about a humorous situation. It was alleged that
the resolution had been adopted and Hallinan
wanted to read a copy that had been provided by
our defense committee into the record and get
Rathborne to testify that he knew about this.

Hallinan said, "It's in French", so he
started off by saying out loud as if he were
reading "Resolution de 'Arry Bridge." At this
point a lawyer from Kentucky with a heavy
Southern drawl whispered something to Donohue;
nobody could hear it except Hallinan who was
standing fairly close. Hallinan spoke up: "Your
Honor, here's Mr. So-and-So whispering something
to Mr. Donohue about my poor pronunciation of
French, when he can hardly speak English." Everybody laughed.

Well, one of the next prosecution witnesses was
Henry Schrimpf, and the bit of his testimony
which I found amusing was that he testified that
he had met with you and Bridges and Earl Browder
of the Communist party shortly before the general
strike in '34 in a shack in a prune orchard in
Santa Clara County.

Yes, I read that yesterday. I can come up with
something -

Oh, yes?

Yes. Harry and I were traveling on a plane one
time - we had been to Los Angeles or San Pedro
Harbor. Well, after you've made that trip a
few times you can tell that you are approaching
San Jose and those other places around there.
You see acres and acres of orchards.

We were getting close to San Francisco
airport, and Harry suddenly said, "That is that
prune orchard, Hank, that we were meeting in
one time." I looked out of the window, and sure
enough, you could see the straight rows of fruit
trees. You couldn't tell an apple from a prune at that elevation - and that's all I know about having met in any prune orchard, with who? Oh, yeah, Earl Browder. This is short shrift of Mr. Browder.

A Hot-Headed Witness

Schrimpf was included on the first labor relations committee and he had a very hot temper, and sometimes he was ready to fight. And he also lost his temper while he was testifying.

HS: 

Stein: Really?

HS: He was being cross-examined by Hallinan or MacInnis and he lost his temper; his face got red and he was ready to fight. He was also quite concerned about information coming out at the trial as to his residence address; he turned to the judge and asked for permission not to disclose that information. "I guess for reasons you understand, Your Honor" -- words to that effect. The judge said, "Skip it."

Well, Schrimpf became a walking boss. On the waterfront the question arose whether or not longshoremen in gangs would work under his supervision. But some of the fellows were impressed with the fact that he had been a witness for the United States; they had great respect for the man and they couldn't see why anybody should even think of not working under his supervision.

So, he reached the retirement age one day. The walking bosses had a little bit better deal under the Mechanization and Modernization Plan, and the amount of money they had negotiated for themselves was higher than the sum that was paid to the ordinary longshoreman, who received, I think it was almost $8,000. The walking bosses got $10,000, close to $11,000 perhaps.
Schrimpf's papers came across my desk, and I raised my eyebrows. I had a conversation with Harry and he said, "Well, Hank, what are you going to do about it? He can prove he earned it, just like all the other fellows." He got $10,000. But that particular aspect of the contract was re-negotiated later on and the longshoremen got $13,000. When I retired, I got that sum of money, minus tax deductions.

The contract says that when a man is a registered longshoreman and he obtains a job in the office as an elected official or some such, that kind of employment is considered to be the same as working on the waterfront. That's how I was eligible for that sum.

Stein: Yes, but getting back to Schrimpf - the other thing I was interested in was that when you were on the stand, you mentioned some difficulties you had had with Schrimpf; he tried to punch you at one time.

HS: Yes, that was in the office. I think he came in with a large piece of paper on which he had written a resolution. He wanted to know if he could have this typed up - he was going to bring it to the membership meeting. I looked it over and I called his attention to some kind of error in one of the sentences; he blew his top. Then we almost came to blows, that's all.

Stein: Well, one of the other prosecution witnesses was Charles Krolek, the fellow who had found a microphone in the wall of Bridges' hotel room in Portland.

HS: Yes, I described that one day. When the next witness was called I immediately recognized the name. He was brought in and I leaned over towards Harry and said, "Now, what in the hell is he going to testify about?"

You see, when he walked into the courtroom, I thought "This man is our friend and he will explain about the microphone and all that."
HS: Somewhere along the line he was asked, "Well, how did you know?" He said he knew all about the microphone because he had put it there, that he had been employed by the Portland Police Department; I was aghast.

The Man Who Cried

Stein: Well, then, George Wilson testified; do you remember him?

HS: Yes. I certainly had the impression that the man was, for some reason or other, forced to testify. He had been secretary of the Bridges Defense Committee in an earlier trial, and here he was testifying against us. I guess you would call him a key witness for the prosecution.

In my estimation he wasn't acting or putting on a show. There came a time in his testimony when he broke down and started to cry. I got the message that he was sort of telling us that he couldn't help himself - that he had to make these kinds of statements.

(End of Tape 20, side B)

(Begin Tape 21, side A)

HS: In your outline here is this sentence: "Schmidt overheard reporter in hall outside asking Wilson if he testified under compulsion, and Wilson said 'Yes'." It's possible that I overheard that comment but I don't remember it.

Ridiculous Testimony

Stein: Okay. Why don't we get the story of Manning Johnson on the record. He was asked why he left the Communist party. And he testified that he
Stein: left -- and this is quoting him -- "because I cannot serve God and Beezelbub."

HS: Yeah, I can recall that very, very clearly because of the way the man mispronounced the word Beelzebub as "Beezelbub". It's understandable. A person who is acquainted with the English language only would have difficulty pronouncing the word, which the Germans pronounce as "Balzeboob." It means the devil or Satan, and when I heard Mr. Johnson say Beezelbub I burst out laughing right there in court. If there was any other person in the courtroom who had knowledge of the Germanic language he likewise would have been compelled to laugh.

Stein: But you said you were the only one -

HS: Yes. Who ever heard of Beelzebub? There were other things that Manning Johnson said which were so ridiculous that somewhere along the line I thought to myself, "Why do they bring a man like that in to testify?"

He testified about seeing Bridges at a Communist party convention in 1936 where Bridges was elected to the C.P. national committee. Bridges produced proof that he was actually in Stockton at the time.

I think it was in connection with that trip to Stockton that Harry and I rode in Willie Christensen's automobile. Poor Willie couldn't testify in the courtroom so Court was recessed and the jury and everybody else connected with the trial went to Willie's bedside in the Kaiser Hospital in Oakland. The prosecution didn't get very far with him. The first question that Donohue asked Willie was, "When were you last in Moscow?" And Willie said he had never been there.

Stein: Was that a fairly common question that the prosecution asked?

HS: I don't recall if they ever asked anybody else if they had been in Moscow.
Stein: Well, let me get to Lawrence Ross whom you described a bit before. I just wondered when you first met him.

HS: Well, the 1934 strike had been in motion for several days, perhaps a week. I had been elected to the publicity committee, instructed to get out a bulletin about once a week. A fellow by the name of Ralph Mallen was on that committee and there was a third member, but I can't recall his name.

Certainly in those days I didn't have the ability to tackle such a job and a bulletin and get it out. But one day this man came along and he introduced himself as Lawrence Ross; among other things he said that he was a newspaperman; that he was an employee of the Western Worker and that he would help us.

And he succeeded in convincing the other two fellows that we ought to accept his assistance. I don't recall if we cleared that with our strike committee or not. See, the strike committee was a body of about 30 men and we met every day; in the usual development of events we would go to the strike committee and ask for concurrence in letting this man help us.

I don't know how much assistance we got from him, but I do remember that he wasn't around there every day and it never, never occurred to me that Lawrence Ross was not his real name. He doesn't look like a foreigner - he talks straight American. I never knew any different until he testified in court one day and indicated his name was not Lawrence Ross.

At court he testified that he had gone to a Christian Science Church the evening before and that he had communicated with the Creator - or words to that effect -- and therefore he had something of importance to say to the court. At this time Hallinan arose and shouted, "Your Honor, we know what he's going to say and when we cross-examine him, we'll bring it all out."
And I'm pretty sure that Judge Harris also knew what was going to come up and I think the judge allowed Ross to explain the situation in his own way; then Hallinan could cross-examine later on. So, I can recall quite clearly that he said, "My name is not Lawrence Ross - my name is Rosenstein. I was not born in Kentucky - I was born in New York, in the Bronx; my father is not a Kentucky planter, he is a member of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers."

Well, then the whole thing was exposed and Ross asked the court if he could please be released and go back to his job in Tennessee. He was putting out a paper -- a trade paper, not a trade union paper -- that had to do with news about the cotton crop. I don't recall whether he was allowed to leave or not.

No, I think he wasn't allowed to leave.

Well, then, he had to face the music. He said he went to this church and I think he said - Christian Science. He didn't say "the Creator." He said, "I was convinced by a power greater than is prevalent in this court." You know, and he looked up at the ceiling. Oh, Lord help me, it's a good thing Beezlebub wasn't around.

I was just going to say - maybe he had a vision of Beezlebub! This might be a good place to stop before the defense witnesses. Well, I might just ask one more question. As the first thing under the defense witnesses, I got the names of some shipowner representatives who testified for Bridges -

Yeah, Captain Pearson -

It was Victor Pearson, who was then president of the PMA -

Right -

And Hubert Brown -

Hubert Brown was a big wheel in the Pacific Far East Lines.
And Kenneth Finessy?

Kenneth Fennessy.

A State Steamship Company -

Yes, yes, that makes sense.

Were any of these people that you had worked with?

No, these are all people on the shipowners' side, you know.

I don't mean working with them, but -

Well, in negotiations, yeah, Captain Pearson, I got acquainted with him during negotiations; Hubert Brown was always around, in one capacity or another. All very pleasant gentlemen. Hubert Brown, nice guy. Victor, he's no longer alive.

Well, just let me put one more question, here. I discovered that your daughter testified -

Hm huh.

And I wanted to know how that decision had been reached, or if there's any story behind that.

Well, Lucia came - she was working at the Crocker Bank. She was a teller there, but every once in a while, she would take some time off and she would come to the trial, so she met our lawyers and they were impressed with her personality. Well, even if I say it, she is a person who is very popular with people.

She bubbles all the time, you know, what they call outgoing. So, she testified because her affection for her father, thinking he was in deep trouble, and she testified with regard to her father's reputation in the community. At that point I was sitting on the edge of my chair, you know, and I wasn't puffing on my pipe, either. She was born in 1928, and when was the trial, '49?
Stein: She was on the stand in January of 1950.
HS: She was a little over 20, yeah.
Stein: Twenty-two - and the newspapers all described her as being very beautiful.
HS: Yes, she handled herself very well. She got her picture in the paper, of course. Oh, and Donohue said he had no questions of the young lady, but later, after she was all finished and he was trying to tear me apart, he said something to the effect that "Mr. Schmidt is trying to hide behind his daughter's skirts."

We all used to live at 1156 Sanchez Street long before that, and somehow or other a letter was addressed to me and it went to 1156 Sanchez Street by mistake. The woman who lived there knew where Catherine and Lucia were living and forwarded it and she wrote on the outside of the envelope, "Try Jail."

Stein: The picture of the envelope was in the Dispatcher.
HS: Oh, oh -
Stein: She had written, "Not here, try jail." In great big letters.
HS: Lucia called me up and said, "What can I do about that? Such a nasty thing to do." And I think I said, "Go see the woman and talk with her." She did and after Lucia left she wrote a letter to Lucia and was much impressed with the daughter's sympathy with her father's predicament. And Lucia took the letter to the Dispatcher and it was published.

(End of Tape 21, side A)

(End of interview)
Schmidt On The Stand

Stein: My notes indicate that last time we stopped just as you were going to take the stand.

HS: Are you going to sort of interrogate me with some of these questions, as if I were in the witness box?

Stein: (laughter) I wasn't planning to do that.

HS: One of our attorneys told me after the drilling was over that he had had a short conversation with "Jiggs" Donahue and one of his assistants, and the answer was, "We're not getting any place with this fellow." (laughter)

Stein: Well, that's a compliment of sorts.

HS: Well, they had a habit of saying, "And did there come a day that you became a member (laughter) of the Communist party of the United States of America?" "Did there come a day" -- I don't know how many times I heard that in that courtroom. (laughter)

Stein: You were asked if you had had any understanding with Bridges about what you would testify to at the citizenship hearing, and you said no.
HS: Oh, the citizenship hearing before a judge took place at the City Hall?

Stein: Yes.

HS: Well, as I recall, the whole thing took place on short notice. I think Harry called me into his office on the very day that he was scheduled to make his appearance. And I think I had had a short conversation with him prior to that date and I asked him why he wanted to take somebody along who was a naturalized citizen. I said, "Why don't you get somebody who was born in this country?"

His answer was that he wanted to get a couple of guys who had been active in the trade union movement; it didn't make any difference as long as you're a citizen, naturalized or native-born. There were quite a number of people who were anxious to go just to see the proceedings. There was no anxiety on my part to go along; we didn't discuss anything that had to do with the questions that were going to be leveled at him.

Let's see. I was naturalized in 1927, and this hearing took place when?

Stein: Oh, it's 1949-50.

HS: Well, over twenty years; I had been a citizen for twenty years plus at that time. We ran into a stumbling block because Harry was examined by somebody who represented the Immigration and Naturalization division — that is, a gentleman who was not a judge, but who prepared him for the session with the judge. I was standing there and heard all the questions.

There came a moment when he wanted to know from Bridges, "Who are your witnesses?" He pointed to me and I went through the business of identifying myself. I showed the gentleman my naturalization certificate, and he said that I would serve the purpose.
Then there was a man by the name of Paul Schnur (then executive secretary of the San Francisco CIO Council). Schmidt and Schnur. Now doesn't that sound good? Well, Paul Schnur had been born in Germany. When the examiner asked him, after he said that he was foreign born, what about citizenship, Schnur said that he had derivative citizenship.

The man asked him to explain that, and he said, "Well, I and" -- he pointed out that he had some brothers and sisters -- "we were all below the age of twenty-one when our father was naturalized, and according to the law that was prevalent at that time, we derived our citizenship because our father was naturalized."

So the gentleman wanted to know if Schnur had any papers to indicate that he had derivative citizenship, and Paul said he had nothing. The man then said, "Well then, I can't use you."

Then the question arose of what should Bridges do now. He needed two witnesses. And the examiner noticed all these people standing around and he said, "Don't you have anyone here that might be agreeable to be your witness?" and he saw Bob Robertson (ILWU vice-president) standing there and he hailed him. Robertson was briefly examined. He said he was born in the United States. Good fortune when you were born here -- you don't have to prove anything. (laughter)

Stein: Always at a passport office.

HS: Yes. So Bob Robertson was, as the saying has it, sucked in. Well then, Harry took the stand and he was asked the usual questions and he was also asked, as they always do, "Do you belong to any organization that's interested in the overthrow of the United States government by force and violence?" And he gave a negative answer to that. I think this business didn't last any more than fifteen or seventeen minutes. We all went and had lunch some place, probably
HS: to Harrington's on Jones Street, because Harrington's is just around the corner from our office.

Stein: Well, let's see. Donahue cross-examined you, and one of the things he was very interested in was whether you had made speeches before the war in which you said, "The Yanks are not coming."

HS: I understand. I do recall, while I was president of Local 10, that a leaflet was being distributed, and I think Mr. Donahue had a copy of that leaflet. The leaflet was showing that there would be a gathering somewhere near the waterfront, the public was invited, and that somebody from the Communist party would make a speech. I think Mr. Donahue tried to point out that our union had assisted in the distribution of this leaflet. I don't know whether that's so or not.

But our Bridges, Robertson and Schmidt defense committee did some research, and they found out that even though this meeting was advertised, it never occurred. And I testified to that later on.

For the purpose of doing some work in Hawaii I had been given the title of International Representative. It came up in the trial while Harry was on the stand, "What is Schmidt going to do when this trial is over? Is he going to go back to Hawaii?" I recall that Harry said with considerable emphasis, "No, no. He's going to go back to work" -- meaning on the waterfront. And that was a fact.

Stein: That's what you did?

HS: Yes.

Stein: Another thing that Donahue brought up -- he seemed to be stressing the point that Bridges had said that at one point -- that "the Yanks are not coming." And asking me if --
Stein: And asking you if you had agreed to that, and you said that you didn't subscribe to that philosophy. Donahue said, "Didn't Bridges subscribe to it?" and you said, "Well, I'm often at variance with Bridges."

HS: It's quite possible that that took place.

Stein: Well then, Donahue also at one point raised the question, I guess to show that you had Communist sympathies, that you had endorsed Oleta O'Connor Yates for supervisor; she was running on the Communist party ticket. And then somehow it was brought out that you hadn't endorsed only her; it had also been an endorsement of a lot of people on that ballot, including several Democrats, including George Harris, who was then running for municipal judge.

HS: Yes. He also was the judge in our case.

Stein: Yes.

HS: I think there was a leaflet which Donahue may have had in his hand. When our lawyers got ahold of this leaflet, they showed that "the following are being endorsed by Henry Schmidt" along with a number of other people. Not only was the name of Mrs. Yates on this leaflet, but it also had the names of other people, including the judge. That little incident took care of that day's testimony. (laughter) Hallinan tried to make capital out of that.

Stein: Yes. Larrowe's book said that everyone in the court burst out laughing except the judge. (laughter)

HS: Yes. He could be very stern.

(End of Tape 22, side A)
Mentality of the Jurors

Stein: In Larrowe's book it says that you had chosen two jurors who you thought would reflect the feeling of the rest of the jury, that you looked at them as they came back out of the jury room, and you whispered to Robertson and Bridges that there was going to be a guilty verdict, based on the expressions on their faces.

HS: I don't recall that I had specifically two jurors in mind. But as they filed past us, I studied the facial expression of every one of them. And I leaned forward and made that kind of comment to Harry and Bob. The jurors were all grim, and they looked determined. Well, maybe Harry and Bob had the same kind of thoughts but didn't say anything.

Incidentally, some of the jurors were interviewed much, much later by a young woman who worked in our office named Jean Bruce.

Stein: Oh, yes; she worked on the Dispatcher.

HS: Morris Watson sent her out to interview some of these jurors to find out the background to their guilty verdict. Some of the material she got was published in the Dispatcher. Quite revealing.

Stein: What did they say?

HS: Well, there was a man there who was a furrier; he had a business down the peninsula somewhere. His complaint was that the unions had tried to organize his shop and they had put him out of business because he couldn't pay the wages that the union demanded. He apparently just didn't like unions.
Another was a Jewish lady. Talked with an accent. She was interviewed months and months after we were found guilty, while the appeals machinery was still in motion, though. She said something to the effect that she just couldn't understand how "Here we found these men guilty and they're still not in jail?" Being out on bail was something that she didn't comprehend.

Then there was a woman with a Scandinavian name (Anna Dagmar Lundgren). Her rationale was to this effect: She had read an article in the paper that the union had invited me to come to Hawaii; the occasion was that they were inaugurating one of their new buildings down there in Honolulu, and they wanted me to come down at their expense to take part in the festivities. So I went.

She took it for granted that the troublemaker was going to go down there and make more trouble. She said, "Well, I just read in the paper that this Mr. Schmidt is being sent to Hawaii again. You know what kind of trouble he makes." (laughter) It's a good thing we made all that trouble. Otherwise, we wouldn't have got organized. (laughter)

After the Trial Was Over

Stein: So after the trial, what did you do?

HS: I immediately went back to work on the waterfront; I was no longer on the union's payroll. I was still a member of the International executive board. That body only meets every once in a while; you get paid while you're at such a meeting.

Well, the pension plan was not yet in existence, but it was being negotiated. They gave me the job as pension director on the first
of April, I think, 1952. For a couple of years I had worked in a longshore gang; the gang boss was William Rutter, who is now the president of the pensioners club. Before I became pension director I worked in Rutter's gang exactly two years. So it would be April, 1950, when I went back to the docks.

Stein: Because that would be shortly after the trial.

HS: Maybe I ran for the presidency in those two years.

Stein: You did. In December, 1950, you lost by about two hundred votes.

HS: That was while we were in the midst of the Korean War, and I blame the war for the fact that I couldn't get enough votes.

Stein: How so?

HS: Well, everybody was being patriotic to a considerable degree. Longshoremen were losing sleep and being bothered with waterfront passes which were being issued by the Coast Guard, the Navy and the Army. If you failed to get one of those passes, then you couldn't work on Army piers or Navy piers.

This was a subject of considerable discussion among the men because they were all concerned, you know, especially the foreign-born. That particular thing caught up with me one day, as I told you before.

Thereafter, I kept on working longshore. Whenever we got to a ship that might move across the bay, why then I would try to find out if we were going to be in an enclave operated by the Army or the Navy, and I wouldn't go along. Didn't lose a day's pay that way.

Stein: You think, then, that that gave you a bad reputation in the eyes of some of the union members?
HS: Oh, there's no question about it. Harry and Bob and myself -- we were marked men. Every once in a while a discussion would develop at a longshore membership meeting; I can remember one man getting up in one of those meetings and saying, "Them guys don't need to worry. They're gonna go to court in the United States of America and they'll be tried by an American court and by an American jury." In effect saying, "What better can you have?" (laughter)

Stein: Oh dear.

HS: Once in a while, somebody would make a comment which wasn't exactly complimentary. I can remember very clearly on the morning that I went back to work in Bill Rutter's gang. We had to come on deck after we went down below, to retrim the gear -- that is, shift the booms around and work with ropes and chain stoppers and so forth. I noticed that some of the fellows standing on the dock were looking up and watching me to see if I really knew what to do up there.

Stein: They were thinking that because of your alleged political activities --?

HS: Oh, no. The thinking was, among some people, that: "He's been in the office so long, he doesn't know how to shorten up a rope sling, he may not know how to put a stopper on a lift." Things like that; there are certain knots that you have to tie. The first time you were ever a longshoreman you didn't know how to do it. If you have a knack for it, you will know before the second day's over that you have to do certain things that an office worker just doesn't do.

Stein: Well, the Dispatcher reports that you made several speeches for the Bridges-Robertson-Schmidt defense effort, including a tour of twelve northwest longshore locals in October of 1950. That was after the trial. It must have been before the appeal came down -- the Supreme Court appeal.
Stein: That's right.

HS: Yes. Bulcke and I visited a number of locals up in the northwest -- Locals 11 and 12. I talked as one of the defendants and Bulcke was International vice-president. We got a good reception everywhere, and asked for financial support to help pay the lawyers.

Stein: Did you meet any resistance to the defense efforts? This was the beginning of the McCarthy period and there were a lot of anti-Communist feelings.

HS: You mean among the ranks?

Stein: Yes, in the rank and file, and among people that you'd appeal to for help. Would they be afraid to support you?

HS: There were a number of people who sent cash to the office. I was watching a young woman opening envelopes one day on the second floor, and people enclosed notes without signatures, "Here's a contribution for the defense committee. I don't want to give my name." You know -- anonymous. Maybe a couple of dollar bills would come up, maybe a five dollar bill.

In our tour, whatever we said there was not convincing enough to some of the fellows who were listening to our comments. Sometimes there were some fellows who would get up and say, "Well, it's all right. I guess we ought to support these guys, but we've got to be careful about supporting something that's Communist."

Is it of any interest to point out that after that trip was all over and we had a Supreme Court decision, the Internal Revenue Service came down on us, hitting us on the head with a mallet?

Stein: No. What was that?
The Penalty for Winning

HS: Well, after the Supreme Court decision came down and I was working in the office -- and it was that time of year -- if you have a refund coming on your income tax you look forward to receiving it. If you've ever had a refund, you recognize the envelope.

Well, I opened up my mailbox one day and I saw the familiar envelope and thought, "Well, I guess I've got a refund." When I opened it up, it was a request to remit. And guess how much.

Stein: I give up.

HS: Eighty-one thousand dollars.

Stein: Eighty-one thousand dollars?

HS: Yes.

Stein: That you owed IRS?

HS: Yes. They said that they had made a study of the monies that were used -- that I had been involved in a criminal proceedings at such and such a court, and that in a prior year, I had paid my income tax -- that is, prior to the trial -- and I had taken care of my income tax and made a proper return, that while I was on trial, there was a certain expenditure -- money spent in the defense -- and they had decided that that was my income, added to whatever I had earned.

It was added to the millions, and it amounted to eighty-one thousand dollars and so many hundreds and some cents. So I immediately went to the telephone and called Bob and Harry. It happened to be a Saturday, so I called their homes.
They both knew what I was calling about, and they had the same kind of letter. I asked them, "Do you think the eighty-one thousand dollars is for the three of us, or eighty-one thousand for each of us?" I guess they had made a better study of the language of the letter and they said, "Well, it's eighty-one thousand for each of us."

Then I panicked. They didn't seem to be as worried as I was. My first thought was, "Where in the world am I ever going to get eighty-one thousand dollars? I haven't even got eight hundred dollars!"

Well, George Andersen got the happy job of going to Washington and taking it up with the tax court. He was gone for a long time and I guess he charged extra for that. Then he finally reported that he managed to get a decision out of the tax court. I think he also reported that the IRS had agreed to the decision that was made by the tax court, and the IRS would accept eleven thousand dollars for the three of us.

It was decided to take it to the convention. The convention was in Honolulu and was a very large one because the Hawaiian locals send tremendous delegations when they don't have to come so far; it costs less money. So there might have been 550 or six hundred delegates.

This question came up, and it was the recommendation of Lou Goldblatt and the International executive board that this thing should be settled, take the defendants off the hook, and that the International union should pay the eleven thousand dollars. That was voted in the affirmative by the delegates.

Somebody got up and asked a good question. He said, "How do we know that once the government gets this eleven thousand dollars that they won't come around and say to these three guys, 'That will be added to your income,' and charge them." Well, that was already settled in court, that there would be no request to try to collect some more.
After that was over, I went to the microphone and made a short talk, thanking the delegates for having voted in that fashion. So then we were off the hook.

Years later, after having worked in the office, I learned that if you communicate with the Social Security office, they will furnish you with a report of all of the money you have earned ever since Social Security became a law, which was on the fifth of January, 1937, or from the first day that you worked if you started work after that date. They also give you the names of the employers that you worked for through the years.

Well, I have it on one of their little cards. I think from 1937, first of January, through 1960, in those years I just happened to earn eighty thousand dollars. All those years. (laughter)

Well, if you had saved every penny of it, you could have paid off the IRS right away. But that, it seems to me, is an incredible claim of theirs.

Well, that's what they did. Years later -- this is just an adjunct to this horror story -- an agent from the Treasury Department came to see me at my office. I thought it was one of those fellows that serves a notice on you, not to send a pension check to a certain pensioner. That has happened. And I thought, "Oh, he's going to hand me a paper and then I won't be able to send Joe Jones his check." That isn't what he wanted.

I said, "Well, what is it you want?" He said, "I don't work for the Treasury Department any more. I used to work there." I said, "You used to work right around the corner in the big Federal building." And he said, "I'm no longer there." And I said, "What is it you wish? Are you looking for employment?" He said, "No, no. I'm a certified public accountant and I have my own business in Marin County. But
HS: I just happened to pass by and I remembered the business with that large sum of money, and I just wanted you to know that when I was working in the IRS office, we knew exactly what was going on. We talked about you fellows. That was just for the purpose of harassing you. They knew that they could never collect that kind of money."

Well, he was angry with his former employer, the IRS. Subsequently they set up some kind of a subcommittee in Washington -- senators, I believe -- and they traveled the country and they had hearings that apparently had to do with the inner workings of the IRS. And this man -- I've always felt he did me a favor -- he testified. As a former employee, he felt free. I followed it a little bit in the paper every day.

He told me that day, "Quit stewing around about that, Hank; it's all behind us now." Eighty-one thousand dollars. I never realized that eighty-one thousand dollars could scare me that bad. (laughter)

Stein: You eventually got in touch with George Andersen?

HS: Oh, yes. Well, we discussed it, the three of us, and said, "This is a job for the law firm." Harry contacted the law firm and the answer came down that you have to go to Washington to see a tax court, or find a lawyer who specializes in that sort of work. They decided George Andersen was the man. Apparently he didn't get to the court just on any old afternoon, because he practically lived in Washington for weeks on end.

Stein: You know, the maddening thing about all that is that even if it could be found that the IRS was completely unjustified and you didn't have to pay a penny, you still would be penalized the amount you had to pay the attorney. So that even if it turns out that you're completely innocent you're harassed anyway.

HS: Sure. I never did check up and see what George Andersen's bill amounted to. But it's understandable, when they do extra work like that,
HS: it's outside of the agreement that they had with the union, so they send the bill, just as they are doing now with regard to some of those monitorships.

Fay: If you happened to be an ordinary citizen and did not belong to a union and had a similar situation develop you'd be in a fix.

HS: Yes. Have to go and see a lawyer.

Stein: I think a lot of that came out in Watergate -- that that was being done -- that the IRS is really deliberate in who they go after.

HS: Oh, sure.

Fay: Of course, they weren't attacking an ordinary citizen.

Stein: Well, did the IRS leave you alone after that?

HS: Yes.

(End of Tape 22, side B)
(Begin Tape 23, side A)

The Basement Celebration

Stein: Hallinan in his book tells the story that you were all in a meeting together when the news came that the U. S. Supreme Court had cleared you, and you took another puff on your pipe --

HS: Yeah, yeah. Do you want to get an explanation about that article by Hallinan? Taking another puff on the pipe, et cetera, et cetera ....

Stein: Yes.
Well, it seems to me it was about noon time on that day when a little excitement developed in the basement office where the pensioners and welfare department was. One of the women had a radio on her desk and got this news. I found out it was Anne Waybur. So, I went in and spoke to Anne and she said, "Yes, and you fellows are taken care of; you're off the hook by the Supreme Court." So, since I was in the basement I couldn't have been in Harry's office getting that kind of information, because I couldn't be in two places at once.

Stein: Right.

HS: It's quite possible that subsequently I was sitting in Harry's office with Bob and Harry discussing something, but it certainly wasn't the message from the Supreme Court. Now, does the article indicate that Hallinan was sitting there and he witnessed this?

Stein: It was in Hallinan's book -

HS: He is somewhat incorrect.

Stein: It seems to me that you would remember sitting in a meeting. He claimed that Bob Robertson fainted.

HS: No. I never saw Bob faint any place. In any event, after that news hit the basement, naturally no more work was done that day - because we had a big party. We sent out to the delicatessen and got Russian bread and potato salad and blintzes and whiskey and celebrated for the rest of the day. The celebration took place in the basement because that was one of the largest office rooms we had there; and people drifted in, you know, people from outside.

(End of Tape 23, side A)

(End of interview)
Expulsion Without Regret

Stein: The CIO expelled the ILWU. Do you remember much about that?

HS: The thing that stands most vividly in my mind is that years and years later, when I had the job in the pension fund office, Paul Jacobs telephoned to me. He and I had never met. He said that he wanted to talk to me about the Weir case.

Stein: Oh, yes.

HS: Stan Weir and a number of former longshoremen were removed from the industry by joint action, and they are suing the ILWU and the employers to get their jobs back; and suing for damages and libel and whatever else they call it. Paul Jacobs wanted to know if I had anything to do with the matter and could I do anything for Stan Weir and the group. I told him I was far removed from that situation and I didn't want to get involved.

But the thing that sticks out in my mind is that he confessed to me on the phone that he was the man who wrote the resolution which was adopted by the CIO convention which resulted in the expulsion. He said he wrote the resolution and prepared it before the convention took place. And I can recall that I said into the phone
"Before?" and he said "Yes." He also said he was sorry about it and indicated that if he could make amends, he would try. And to this day, Paul Jacobs and I have had no opportunity to meet.

Our delegates came home from the CIO convention and made a report to our membership meeting, pointing out that the accusations were to the effect that the policy and objectives of the ILWU were parallel to the objectives and the policy of the Communist party of America. And that's really all I know about it.

What sort of reaction did that stir up among the union members that you had contact with?

Well, as I recall Harry and the other delegates reported it as having become a fact of life; we were no longer in the CIO and were now completely an independent union. I recall that the reaction was quite mild - nobody got militant about it. Nobody wanted to tear the building apart. Everybody just went back to work the next day.

The Political Arm

Okay. Well, let's move on to the Northern California District Council.

Well, the Council was established because somebody called attention to the ILA Constitution. There is an article in the ILA Constitution which says that where there is more than one local in the region it would be necessary to establish a council of locals.

Since there were a number of ILWU locals in this region, this council was set up while we were still in the ILA. It eventually became an ILWU Council; the affiliated locals were the longshoremen of San Francisco, the longshoremen of Stockton, the longshoremen of Eureka and the warehouse locals in this region.
Delegates from each of the locals were obliged to meet once each month for an exchange of information between the locals during a three or four-hour session.

The main function of the council was to elect somebody from its ranks to become the council's political representative in Sacramento, at the Legislature. There was a paid secretary and he could be a combination man, you might say, and become the lobbyist. For years on end a member of the Ship Clerks' Union, Local 34, was secretary of the council here in this region; that was Mike Johnson - he's dead.

The council, if election time was approaching, would elect a sub-committee that would do some research and make recommendations to the membership of the locals as to who they should elect to office. That was about the main function of the council - sort of a political arm.

The only man that was paid was the secretary. The delegates got some money for attending the council; each local paid its own delegates. I was a paid president of Local 10 and the council never did have much money, so they usually elected somebody to the presidency who would not require any additional funds. Year after year I had no difficulty getting elected as a delegate and so I would become a candidate to succeed myself to the presidency of the council. Nobody wanted the job, anyway; the secretary had to do the work.

Stein: Well, let's see; who were some of the other people who were active in the district council?

HS: Well, Mike Johnson was the most active man. Albert Bertani was a delegate to that body and Joe Lynch, who is now president of Local 6, is also the president of the council now. I can't for the life of me remember the names of all longshore delegates who came from other ports, such as Eureka and Stockton.
Every year we would have a joint meeting with the Southern California district council at Fresno. There we would discuss, almost exclusively, matters that had to do with the Legislature and the governmental machinery of the state. We also made recommendations to the membership as to how they ought to vote in the up-coming elections.

A Great Step Forward

Okay. Then let's move on to the ILWU-PMA Pension Fund, which is what occupied your time for a number of years.

Well, I was a member on the Coast committee and Coast committeemen were considered automatically to be members of the negotiating committee. Resolutions had been adopted by the locals up and down the coast that we get to negotiate a pension plan and the pensions went into effect as far as our first payments were concerned, on the first of July, 1951.

Well, the Dispatcher of June 22, 1951 calls attention to the establishment of that benefit; it says here "Pension contribution shall be paid monthly beginning July 1, 1951 and continuing until July 1, 1961." That is how it got to be called a ten-year plan. Some of our brothers got confused and they wanted to know what's going to happen in 1961 - "the thing's going to expire and I'm not going to get a pension any more." Things like that.

In any event the pension matter was brought up by Harry at one of the meetings in Veterans Memorial Building and a fellow by the name of Dwight Steele who was the chief negotiator for the PMA.

Of Hawaii fame?
Yes, and as I mentioned before, Steele told Harry to "Go fuck yourself."

What happened at the rest of this meeting? With Dwight Steele?

Oh, the negotiating committee members went to their home ports and verbally reported and the contract went into effect.

This was without pensions?

This was without pensions. It was a meeting held prior to 1951, so it must have been in 1948—so, it was a big strike which failed in getting pensions. Subsequently, during the BRS trial, Harry earned the displeasure of the court and wound up in the jail down on Kearny Street. I went down there to see him once.

He seemed to be in good humor, but he also sounded very determined; he said, "We're really going to go after this pension deal now, Hank." I agreed with him, and sometime thereafter pensions became a truism.

Well, Chuck Larrowe in his book makes it sound as though at first Bridges had been opposed to the idea of pensions.

Yes, and it just so happens that I read that particular item this morning. I have no remembrance of that at all. There is another opinion expressed by an American labor person in some other book, opposing getting pensions through the employers because it would take the militancy out of the ranks. Once that they get everything they need, they will not demand more.

Now, Sam Gompers was the original AFL president. It says here in the notes that somebody went to Gompers and asked, "What does the labor movement really want, Mr. Gompers?" And he said, "More." Well, then, while I have no remembrance of Harry ever opposing the pension plan, in the notes it says, "He feared the union would lose its fighting spirit and go downhill."
Well, I never did subscribe to that. In any event, the pension plan was agreed to and the first payments were made available to those who were found eligible on July 1, 1951. I think the number of checks that were mailed out that particular day was eleven hundred and fifty-six.

In connection with this big day, we had a banquet in the Palace Hotel where, symbolically speaking, we handed a pension check to a member of Local 10. It was done in a manner as if we were on that day handing checks to everyone of the 1156 guys who were entitled to it. I'm trying to remember the man's name - both he and Bulcke used to work in the automobile industry in Detroit - (Harry "Buffalo") Nesbitt. Everybody who is anybody in this little labor movement in San Francisco was at this banquet.

Stein: Oh, that must have been quite an affair.

HS: Hugh Bryson (former president of the Marine Cooks' and Stewards' Union) was there and his Latino wife was there, and they handed me the job of chairman. I was quite concerned about handling that correctly, but once I got going it seemed to be - well, nobody came around and said, "Hank, you did a lousy job."

Stein: I'd be surprised if anybody had.

(End of Tape 24, side A)

(Pension Problems)

Stein: One of the things that interested me in reading about the pension plan was how it had been put together. According to one little booklet called the "ILWU Story - Two Decades of Militant Unionism" there really were no models that the union could look to - the Auto union and the Steel union had
Stein: pension programs but that they were inadequate, according to the standards that the ILWU had set.

HS: Well, in the proceedings of our 1951 convention, you will find a report mostly by Lou Goldblatt; he explains what this pension plan amounts to and how much the benefits were at the moment. He expressed the view that the benefits would be increased as time goes on, and he also made the point that it is a non-contributory plan. It means that the employer is the sole contributor to the fund and that the employee contributes nothing. I have been compelled to explain that any number of times, and in order to make a comparison I always say, "Social Security is a contributory plan, meaning that both the employee and the employer contribute into that fund."

After Lou got through, the record will show that Harry made a few comments; both of them make it a point that the pensioners should remain active in the union. This convention okayed a pension program which was developed at an earlier caucus where a resolution was adopted to assure the pensioners that they shall continue to be members of the union, that the locals of which they are members can charge them token dues, and that they would not lose their voting rights.

That is all made clear in four or five pages of the 1951 convention proceedings. They speak for themselves and these comments are quite forceful. Of course that has all been changed. Pensioners are merely pensioners now and they are only active in the sense that they have so-called clubs in the larger ports. They are not very active as far as their local unions are concerned. And they have also learned that the active ranks are not anxious to have pensioners around who bother about what is going on in the union.

The Local 10 constitution quotes the matters that were adopted respecting pensioners. (Handing over a document).
And this is the constitution and by-laws of Local 10?

Yes.

Adopted October 1, 1963.

And this is Article VIII - it appears on page 11 - and has to do with pensioners' rights in Local 10. "Section 1. A retired member may retain his union membership. Section 2. A retiring member shall have the letter "R" placed by his registration number and he shall retain his registration status until age 68. Section 3. A retiring member who retains his membership under Section 1 above shall be eligible to serve his local union on unpaid jobs or committees. He shall not be eligible to seek any job that is remunerative."

And then it goes on: "Section 4. " -- a very important item -- "He shall retain full voice and rights on all matters within the union. Section 5. The provisions of Article XV relating to the death benefits payable by this union shall apply to retired members as well as regular members."

That is the end of Article VIII. These matters are a part of the Local 10 constitution because the membership decided to include these rules on the rights of pensioners. But now these things have not been adhered to, and to a certain degree the retired members of Local 10 have been disenfranchised.

How so?

Well, they have been told that when a new contract is negotiated having to do with wages, working conditions for the active members, plus changes insofar as pension benefits are concerned, the pensioners shall not vote. The pensioners should not be interested to vote in matters that concern the rank and file exclusively, but they are interested in pensions.
HS: The active longshoreman is permitted to vote on two matters: on matters that affect him directly and he also will vote on matters that have to do with the pensioners. For instance, a new proposed agreement might provide for higher wages, shortening of hours, and earlier retirement as far as pensions are concerned. The active longshoreman will receive an explanation of the whole deal and will vote "Yes" or "No" on the whole package.

The pensioner is interested in the changes in the pension plan and the guy who is still working on the waterfront is very much interested in wages and working conditions and related matters, but not in the pension increase; yet he will vote "Yes" of "No" on the package. In that sense, the pensioner has lost his rights.*

Stein: What actions have the pensioners taken to protest that?

Those Unanswered Letters

HS: Well, a couple or three years ago, the president of the pensioners' organization, which is a Coastwise apparatus, got interested in the fact that the cost-of-living was going up. He made some inquiries of the International president (Bridges) about a cost-of-living increase. The union had gone on record for a cost-of-living increase for pensioners; that the pensioners' convention had likewise adopted a resolution advocating a cost-of-living increase, and the

* For an update on pension rights, see Supplementary Interview 1: 21 August, 1981. (Tape 1, side 1)
pensioners' president wrote a letter to Harry trying to find out what, if any, progress was being made in regard to this matter.

He didn't get a reply, so he wrote a second letter and a third letter and a fourth letter and a fifth letter and I believe, a sixth letter. Then he came to a longshore caucus one day here in San Francisco and he spoke to the International president via the microphone, pointing out that he had written on a number of occasions. He said, "Here are copies - I will now read copies of the letter that I wrote to Brother Bridges." He read all five or six of them and at the end of each one he would say, "No reply." "No reply." "No reply." - on and on.

Well, then it was also made clear to the assembled delegates that when these letters were placed on Harry's desk, he wrote a letter to all longshore locals on the Coast and he told them that we -- in the main office, he meant -- don't communicate with the pensioners or the pensioners' club. If a pensioner wants to get information having to do with pensions he should go to the secretary of his own local.

And of course when that letter was mailed, the pensioners' clubs realized that the president of the Coastwise organization had been told off. If you are on top of things you know that when you go to the secretary of a longshore local about pensions, he doesn't know because it's too far removed from his job. This, I believe, is very true of small locals like Eureka and on Puget Sound. There are locals up there that have twenty-seven members; and after the secretary does his union work, he goes to work on the waterfront.

That was shutting off the pipeline, you know. Since that time there has been a poor relationship between the pensioners' clubs and the main office; and there are other things which are not conducive to improving that relationship. I did not hesitate to stick my neck out on this kind of thing and I've been bitching about it for a number of years, but I don't make any progress.
Stein: But you're at least a voice that is speaking out. Well, what are the terms of the pension program now? I wonder how they changed over the years.

HS: Well, I may be a little bit inaccurate but the original amount was $100 a month for any man who was at least 65 years old and could show 25 qualifying years of work. I believe the word "qualifying" meant that if you have worked sufficient hours to earn a vacation, such a year would also be okay for pension eligibility. There are other things in the pension plan which are confusing - hard to understand; and they are not happily accepted by the pensioners.

For instance, there are men who think - some of them are quite radical about this - it is just outrageous that when a man puts in 25 years, and all counting as qualifying years, he shouldn't be allowed to retire right then and there, no matter how young he is.

Well, the plan doesn't provide for that and they want to know why. And, of course, one of the answers is that the union apparently isn't strong enough to convince the employers that they ought to agree with the union to let Joe Blow retire at the age of 51, even if he's got 30 years in. They resist that kind of proposal because they know that if they were to agree, that man would be an expensive man because of his long life expectancy.

If you make that kind of explanation to an individual standing on the curbstone, he will tell you, like as not, "Well, you're speaking for the employers - what kind of union man are you?" Well, it's too bad that these things are difficult to explain. There was an item that appeared in the Dispatcher; it covers two pages and the title of it is "The Pension Plan - How It Works." This was prepared by Barry Silverman (the ILWU research director.) It's easy to read and it's comprehensive. Well, I took an armful of these things to a pension club meeting in San Francisco one time, urging the fellows to take them home and read them.
Later on I learned that the fellows don't care to read that stuff - they're too far advanced in life, you know. I guess they want a verbal explanation right now from guys like myself. There are frequent discussions with regard to the matter of contributions into the fund. Some of them don't seem to believe that the employer is the sole contributor.

There are documents in existence - for instance, the Coast committee sent out a one-page document -- and they get the pension fund to send it out -- and there is a short sentence in there that makes it clear that the sole contributor is the employer. The longshoreman, the ship clerk, the walking boss make no contribution; they get that information with their first check, you know, and apparently they don't read it.

Well, we started with $100, subsequently they were supposed to raise it to $125. The fact that the union was proposing to raise it to $125 was advertised in the Dispatcher and at that point a number of pensioners wrote in or came in and said, "I don't want to take that $25 raise." My reply would be, "It's not established yet - the union is just trying to get it." "Well, I don't want it." "Why don't you want it?" "Because I am a veteran and if my annual income is increased, then I will lose my VA (Veterans' Administration) pension."

Well, at that point I had to learn something about VA pensions. You know, a little more headache. I found out, true enough, that if they are increased by $25, the VA will reduce their VA pension so they are further from home than they were before.

Well, I forget all the details, but I communicated with the VA and I finally wrote to Jack Shelley who was then a congressman. It took him a long time but finally he wrote me a letter and said, "You will get a letter with regard to that troublesome item." It was an executive
HS: order by the Veterans Administration pointing out that these longshore pensioners could accept the increase and it would make no difference as far as the VA pension is concerned. That cleared that up.

Confusion Starts

Stein: Well, let's see. When the program first started, the fund came from payments by the employers of 15 cents for every man-hour worked by longshoremen, ship's clerks and walking bosses. Now I assume that's increased since then.

HS: Yes. There's also some language that the pension contribution should be related to tonnage of cargo moved - isn't there?

Stein: Oh, yes.

HS: Well, as I learned while I was working in the office there that nobody - at least I was told unofficially - nobody has been able to come up with a formula so that the several stevedoring companies could pay their contributions into the pension fund on the basis of the tons of cargo they had moved on and off the ship.

   It was much easier to take care of it by paying the longshoreman his wages, and then on top of that the stevedoring company would count the number of hours each longshoreman had worked in a certain amount of time, perhaps every month, and the company would have to come up with 15 additional cents over and above the longshore wages and send that to the PMA and the PMA would put that in the pension fund.

   This is where the confusion started. It says right here 15 cents per man hour. Well, that's all been changed. On the front page of the Dispatcher, published in 1962, there is an article no bigger than that (gestures) which says in so many words that the employer members of the PMA
have agreed to a change in the pension contribution plan; contributions shall be made in an amount, actuarially speaking, that would take care of the benefits that are due the man under the terms of this particular contract.

Now, to me that means that if the guys are getting $150 a month, the employer members -- there are several stevedoring companies who are members of the PMA -- are advised by the PMA, "You've got to come up with so much money this month in order to take care of the outgo of the pension plan."

Stein: Uh, huh.

HS: That's what it means to me, but apparently nobody read this. I can recall a caucus where this was being kicked around. And I asked, "I'm reading from the front page of the Dispatcher and here it is; is that still in effect?" and Fred Huntsinger, (a Coast committeeman) said, "Yes, that is still in effect." So it has nothing to do with any hours, you see. As a matter of fact in the most recent caucus, more amendments were called to the attention of the delegates -- all to the good.

Bill Ward (another Coast committeeman) made it clear; he said, "You are protected by certain language in the pension plan that if an employer goes out of business or goes broke, the terms of the agreement are that the remaining employers must pick up the tab for this company that no longer exists so that your benefits will be protected."

Stein: I realize that we never finished the question of what the monthly benefits were.

HS: Well, they are numerous --

Stein: We got them up to $125 --

HS: Well, the man who retires now with the necessary qualifying years will get $300 a month at age 62 providing he has at least 25 qualifying years
in out of the past 35; so that he can have some
ten bad years in there. He will get $300 a month
plus $150 on top of the $300 which is called
"the bridge."

The idea is to bridge him over, because at
age 62, if he takes Social Security, he will get
it at the reduced rate, so he will get $300 a
month out of the ILWU-PMA pension fund and on
top of that he will get the $150 a month. One
of the purposes which has been unofficially put
out is that this $150 extra is to give the
recipient the opportunity to catch up with those
fellows who earlier received pensions per month
plus an additional amount of money from the
mechanization fund -

Stein: Which no longer exists -

HS: Yeah, it's dry, it's dried up. Some of the men
got close to $1,000 out of that fund and later
on that fund was raised to $13,000.

Stein: Well, then the bridge - did they continue
receiving that $150 per month?

HS: Yes.

Stein: Or was it just a one-shot deal?

HS: You mean just $150 at one time? Oh, no. For a
number of months - I don't know how long it
lasts, but it is considerable. I think it's
good for three years, until the guy is 65.

Well, right now maybe you have a question
before we get into the so-called new deal which
has been voted down.

Stein: Oh - what's the new deal got to do with pensions?

HS: Yeah, well recently the parties negotiated an
extension of the longshore contract for active
men which has a number of things in it which are
good and some apparently not so good, and they
also negotiated a $25 per month increase for the
HS: current pensioners. With regard to pensioners who retire on July 1 of this year (1975) or thereafter, they will get $50. I and hundreds of others will be stuck with only $25 more and the newcomers who retire on July 1 will get, if eligible, the top plus $50.

For reasons which are difficult to explain, this new contract proposal -- with the pensioners not being allowed to vote on it -- was voted down.

Stein: Oh, that was the one that was voted down by the Los Angeles --

HS: Yes, Local 13. Because of a proposition adopted years ago in a caucus, a proposition that was submitted by Harry, we arranged a rule that if one large local voted a contract down it amounted to a veto; then the thing could not go into effect.

(End of Tape 24, side B)

(Begin Tape 25, side A)

Stein: Okay, well -- you're saying --

HS: Yeah, unless a second vote is taken, and I'm talking of a Coastwise vote. The membership, in order to override the veto, must vote at least two thirds in favor of accepting this contract the second time, and that failed.

Stein: Uh, huh.

HS: Because the second time around, more people in San Pedro voted "No" and more people voted "No" in San Francisco. So, it was necessary for the negotiators to try to negotiate something better. Now the starting date of that attempted contract was July 1 of this year, and the parties are not meeting.
The contract we're living with now will expire on June 30 of this year and the ILWU convention is scheduled to start next Monday in Vancouver, B.C. And after that convention has been held there will be a longshore caucus. The caucus is tantamount to a convention except that the only delegates there are from the longshoremen and the ship clerks and the walking bosses. The sugar workers and the pineapple workers and the warehousemen don't take part in it.

There they will listen to some kind of a proposal; I have no information as to what it will be. Now, the pensioners are not satisfied with the $25 because they had gone on record to request at least $100. Some of the locals — active locals — supported that $100 position, but the negotiators didn't manage to get it so we have to wait.

In the meantime it has been pointed out to us current pensioners that we lost $25 in March and we're going to lose it again in April. At the pensioners club meeting which took place on the 4th or 5th of March some of the speakers, a couple of them — at least one who never comes to pension club meetings — were criticizing Local 13 for having done this.

One says "I just went to the International office and I got some figures in regard to the money that we lose and the employers save; if we lose two months — each person $25 — I have been told it will amount to a quarter of a million dollars." Very critical of Local 13. It was also pointed out that when the ranks voted in 13 and in 10 and all the Coast whether to accept this new contract pensioners were not allowed to vote.

Well, after that little discussion was over, one of the old timers who was a religious supporter of Harry and company says, "I make a motion that we go on record here today to endorse this contract." And the chairman said, "I'm going to rule that out of order because it has no place here."
HS: "We have not been permitted to vote on any of these matters in the official elections." So the maker of the motion said, "I appeal from the decision of the chair." So, the issue was debated under parliamentary rules and a standing vote was taken on whether to uphold the ruling of the chairman. The pensioners all got up. Well, then only four or five of these characters got up and voted the other way, so they lost. And that was a good thing. There's a couple of boisterous guys, you know, always shouting.

Well, listen. In the second vote to override the veto, the "yes" votes for this contract outnumbered the "no" votes - but they didn't get enough votes to raise the two thirds. But they have a majority. Now what they might do in the Vancouver caucus is to reconsider the veto proposition, which was adopted fourteen or fifteen years ago. If they succeed in that somebody will make a motion that "Well, we've got a majority - we've killed the two thirds thing." That would be the easy way out.

Case Histories

Stein: I'd like to talk a bit about your functions as pension director. I tried to make a list of what appeared to have been some of your functions. Number one is informing the membership about the provisions of the pension program. It sounds as though - especially in the first few years - you did quite a bit of traveling up and down the Coast to explain --

HS: Well, let me put it this way. The benefits that were available to the recipients were all publicized in the Dispatcher and of course there were verbal explanations by members of the negotiating committee. But it still wasn't enough, so in the beginning I made a few trips.
HS: I was also compelled to acquaint myself with the benefits that one gets out of the Social Security fund and I would get written inquiries from the secretaries of the various locals. I would also receive letters inquiring about the benefits from men who were looking forward to retiring. We had some printed material which was mailed out. There was plenty to do right there in the office, especially in regard to the eligibility formula. You just run into all kinds of problems.

Maybe I can call attention to a couple. For instance, there was one provision in the pension plan which said that a man may retire at the age of 65 provided he has the necessary number of qualifying years, provided he is still registered, and provided he has worked in the industry as a longshoreman or its equivalent -- which means it may be in the office -- for the five years immediately preceding his retirement date.

Now, that thing raised hell because there were many men who were reaching the age of 65 and they quit working because there was a pension plan in the making. They thought, "Well, I'll just get sick." In California they could get disability benefits or unemployment benefits. "Just ride it out and wait for that day on which I'm 65, and I'll take two years vacation."

Well, that had to be amended because we ran into a few guys who were not fully informed and they thought, "I've got 40 years in; I'm tired." So, they wanted to retire, but the record showed that they had not worked in each of the five years immediately preceding the retirement date. Now, they did not have to work much but they had to show some. So, by agreement, the trustees had authority to kick that provision out and that alleviated that situation.

Then there were men who got jobs on the Army barges. The U. S. Army owns a number of vessels that operate on San Francisco Bay. The Army was in the habit of hiring a longshoreman
HS: and he would work steadily on these barges as a gear man, or handling cargo or whatever. He would be paid by the U.S. Treasury and he was, from the point of view of the pension fund eligibility formula, outside of the industry. He was on the waterfront doing work but he wasn't working for a member of the PMA; he was working for the United States government.

Stein: Oh, I see.

HS: So, you run into one of these fellows and then he comes to your office and says, "How in the hell is this going to work? I've been working for the Army for seven or eight years, do you mean I have to quit? And go and do regular longshore work?" And the answer is "Yes."

I used to explain to these fellows that when you retire your work record must show that you worked in the industry for the five years immediately preceding your retirement date; and in addition to that, if the record shows that you were working on the barges for over ten years, you might not even be eligible, because then you can't find 25 qualifying years out of the past 35.

So, my advice was that before you complete 25 years of work with the Army, quit, and go back to regular longshore work. I got one of those fellows just in time. One day I walked into a Sears store in San Francisco, and a man was there with a lady. He said, "Henry, I'm sure glad you told me to quit that job because I got my pension, I started to do regular longshore work and everything fell into place."

Stein: Would there be any way of changing that rule to allow for the Army years to be counted?

HS: Oh, if the parties agree. I can recall another case that had to do with a Seattle member. His name was Brown - I think it's a German spelling, B-R-A-U-N. He was offered a job at the Army
HS: dock in Seattle; it was a steady job. He was a walking boss; he was working in the industry insofar as the physical aspect is concerned, but he was getting paid by the U. S. Treasury and he was also making contributions into the Federal pension scheme. This is all right, but he wasn't piling up any qualifying years as far as PMA is concerned.

Well, he came to the joint labor relations committee one time in the city of Seattle and he went into the thing. Somehow or other they made a ruling that they would pay him a vacation and treat him as a regular longshoreman. So we ran into the problem that when you qualify for a vacation, they took the view that it was the same as if he had been working for PMA and they give him vacation money.

Then the matter was taken up by myself and there his work record showed that from 1927 all the way down the line he had been working longshore, working longshore; but there's a great big gap of 15 years of "no work." What was he doing? He was working for the Treasury as a walking boss longshoreman, and the Seattle joint labor relations committee had granted him vacation time.

It was a new one on me. So I took it up with the sub-committee of the trustees, which was customary in those days. Howard Bodine was there representing the union and Kenneth Saysette was the employer trustee. Our trustee was also a Coast committee man and Saysette was secretary-treasurer of the PMA. Both of these guys are now dead.

They made a ruling that the man was certainly not eligible under the rules and regulations and the eligibility formula of the ILWU-PMA pension plan for the reason that the Treasury had made no contribution into our pension plan. Ken Saysette said, "I'm not going to tell the employers to demand this guy give back the vacation money; we'll let that go."
HS: So officially Braun was held ineligible. Well, he just wouldn't understand it. Men who find themselves in that predicament have one answer: "I was working in the industry." And then I would say, "But you got paid by the United States Treasury, didn't you?" "Well, what difference does that make?" And this would go on and on.

Stein: Uh, huh.

HS: Anyway, I learned some years after I retired that Brother Braun was found eligible for a pension, and I haven't the slightest idea how it was done. They overturned the decision that was made by Saysette and Bodine years ago, which is fine, you know.

Stein: Who overturned it?

HS: I don't really want to know. I'm happy that Brother Braun got a pension. Of course it is something that I couldn't touch; I took it to Saysette and Bodine because they were, in a manner of speaking, my bosses. Well, then there are other problems which keep you busy on the phone, explaining things. I have had maybe an hour's conversation with a man who lives in Calistoga or some place. "Well," he says, "My time has come. I have been down to the local and I signed a card which will be mailed to you in order to get this pension." I don't recall his name but this is just for explanatory purposes.

Stein: Yes.

HS: And he asked, "What have I got coming?" And I said, "Well, you'll get $165 a month" -- or whatever it was at that time -- "and you'll get the mechanization fund money, which is close to $8,000." "Can I get that in a lump sum?" "Yes, if you give a good reason and put it in writing the trustees might grant that. I advise you not to do it because you'll get hit with high taxes. You just got through telling me that you worked seven or eight months on the waterfront, so if
HS: you made $4,000 longshoring and $8,000 on top of that in pensions, you'll be way up there." He said, "Forget about it; I'll take it by the month." Then I said something about the possibility of the $8,000 deal being raised to $13,000 and perhaps he ought to continue to work for a while. He thought it over for a while and said, "No, I want to go, I want to get rid of this waterfront." "Okay, okay," so he departed.

About ten minutes later he came back in and said, "You know what happened? As I left the building I ran into Harry and he told me, 'Go back and change your mind and wait for the $13,000.' And that's what I want to do." "All right, wise decision." It's possible that I said to him, "I'm gonna stay behind this desk until the $13,000 comes around the corner, you know."

So then there's women trouble. Women call about their husbands hanging around the house too much. Some of them they finally admit that they are not married. Common law? I explain that insofar as Social Security is concerned and the pension fund made some kind of a ruling, maybe unofficially -- that we are not going to scrutinize such a situation too closely.

"Well, what can I get in case this man dies?" Then you run into trouble; I say, "Well, I'll talk to a lawyer about it. Maybe you ought to go to a lawyer." Things of that kind; there's no end to them.

An additional work load comes about by reason of the fact that men are eligible for disability pension under our pension program. Let's talk about a man who is a long way from being 65. He becomes ill and he can no longer perform longshore work.

Under the plan, if he's got 25 years in, he can get what's called a disability pension. The amount of pension is the same as if he had earned it on the waterfront and he'll get it before he is 65. He will also get raises if any additional
raises are negotiated. Right now, if the man would have been eligible for the modernization and mechanization fund money, such a man is also eligible for Social Security disability money.

However, Social Security then had a hard and fast eligibility formula that he could not be found eligible for their disability benefit unless he was completely incapable of doing any kind of work. And then, of course, a man like Jacinto Lopez would come around - he just can't understand - "I got it from you - I get it from the union."

They all think it comes from the union, as if the union were putting up the money. And now, Lopez says, "The government he don't want to give it to me." "Don't want to give you what?" "You know, what you call disability."

Well, they would go round and round, you know. "Did you get disability benefits from the State before you got the disability from the union, as you put it?" "Yeah," Lopez says, "I get disability from the State." "Then you applied for Social Security?" "Yeah, like I told you, but they no give him." This is the conversation.

Well, then, as pension director, you write to the Social Security administration and find out - or you call up somebody. I had a good relationship with Everett Eaton, the manager of the Social Security office in the Mission district.

Stein: I was going to say you probably got to know some people down there fairly well.

HS: Oh, yes. Well, I'm thinking of this Lopez. I worked on his case after I retired; it is an outstanding case. I was quite happy about it. He was getting an ILWU-PMA disability pension, but he had exhausted his benefits with the State of California.
The Social Security administration said, "No, you are able to do another kind of work." One day they sent him to some doctors and he came to see me and I said, "Did you see more than one doctor?" "Oh, yes," he said, "there were three of them." And I said, "What did they do?" and he said, "They did nothing." "Oh, they must have talked." "Oh, yeah," he said, "They all three asked me all kinds of questions." All this in broken English.

I thought to myself, "Psychiatrist." Of course, I never found out whether they were psychiatrists or not. But in any event, any time we communicated with Social Security, they said, "No soap." Finally, I said, "Appeal their decision and send the case to Baltimore; that's where the high moguls sit."

The appeals board, if I am not mistaken, said, "No - not eligible, and the reasons are so and so." Well, I said to Bill Bailey, vice-president of Local 10, "I'm not an officer any more and I've got to get an officer who will put on the stationery of Local 10 this brief that I'm sending to this outfit in Baltimore." And I acquainted him with the facts. I said, "You can't get into difficulty." Well, he was a little bit concerned and he might have difficulty with the Social Security. Anyhow, we won the case -

Great.

(End of Tape 25, side A)
Oh, Happy Day!

HS: Well, he telephoned me and pointed out that he received something from Baltimore or Washington; he also said, "How much you want?" I said, "Read the last sentence." Well, the last sentence was very short and it said in effect -- using the word reversed -- that the commission had agreed to reverse its prior decision, indicating that he was eligible.

I said, "Read it one more time." He had a hell of a time with this word "reversed". He made it read "reserved," and what have you. I said, "Stay home and I'll be over." And so I read it. I don't think it gave any information with regard to the amount, but then some couple of weeks later, he called up again. At that point he said, "How much you want?" I said, "What are you talking about?" "Well," he says, "I get check." I said, "You don't owe me anything. Tell me how much it is." Yes, it was almost $3,500.

Stein: My heavens!

HS: Well, there was an additional development which I think is also interesting. He was living under the roof of a lady who was not his married spouse. As a result of this business and getting this Social Security money and talking to Everett Eaton, somebody pointed out to him that since the lady was 65 or even older, she might also be eligible for Social Security.

Somebody must have told him that if he had a marriage license, proof that he was married, she would have no difficulty. So, later he called up and said he had been to Reno and they
HS: got married and now she's also getting her Social Security check. Yeah, it seems hardly possible. The man can hardly talk English -- can't read anything. So that is the story of Jacinto Lopez.

(End of Tape 25, side B)

(End of interview)
Stein: Oh, one of your other functions as pension director was in helping to develop recreational and educational facilities for the pensioners.

HS: Well, that's really giving the subject matter a fancy title. What I did, with the assistance of a committee of people who were on pension at that time, was arrange to get some space in the headquarters of Local 10, which was then located at Pier 18, so that we would have regular gatherings there; books would be provided and card games and the like would be allowed, but no gambling. In other words, a plain, innocent type of recreation.

That was done with the assistance of the Pacific Maritime Association, which contacted the Port Authority, as the piers belonged to the State of California at that time.

A pensioners committee met there to take up the question of certain potential pensioners who had difficulty with being found eligible. It used to be provided for in the pension plan that whenever a potential pensioner had difficulty to prove his case, he should have an opportunity to meet with a committee of pensioners who had been elected by their fellows.
HS: This committee would study the case and ask the potential pensioner a number of questions with regard to his employment on the waterfront and then make a recommendation to the joint trustees of the pension plan to find this man eligible—yes or no.

Well, it soon became crystal clear that this pensioner's committee was very, very generous in its recommendations. They just went on record something like this: "Oh, yes, we remember him; he's been around a long time and I worked with him on such and such; there's no question about it. He should be put on the pension list and allowed to retire now if he's age 65, or on the date when he becomes 65." The joint trustees had the authority to propose amendments, and possibly make amendments to the plan, and the activities of this committee were terminated.

A number of these pensioners' committee recommendations were accepted, but in quite a few cases they were referred to me for further investigation; then you ran into some difficulty. I spent a considerable amount of time calling on would-be pensioners in their homes. On at least three occasions, I visited a man who lived in Walnut Creek; his nickname was "Soapy" Pearson. I don't mind telling you that we had one difficult time getting him on the pension list.

Stein: What sort of difficulty did you have? Just as an example?

HS: Well, he might have left the industry for a while and worked elsewhere.

Stein: I see.

HS: Every once in a while, we would run into a man who had worked on the waterfront maybe 14 or 15 years. I may be talking about men who had been sailing before they became longshoremen. Then something happens and they get a hankering that they want to make a trip, so they move over into the Sailors Union of the Pacific—when things
HS: were kind of loose, you know -- and they go sailing. Instead of making a trip, they make several trips. So then they come back in the longshore industry, and then later you find that right there in the middle of a man's working career, he doesn't show as a longshoreman. And you question him and he says, "No, I was sailing. What's the difference? It's all the same work." Well, from his point of view it is the same work. You're working for a member of the PMA, a big steamship company and you're sailing all over the face of the globe. Why should a pension plan be so particular?

And then you had to point out that the Sailors Union of the Pacific and the Marine Firemen's union and the Masters, Mates and Pilots each had its own pension plan. Some members of those unions probably worked longshoring once in a while and the Longshore pension plan didn't pick those fellows up. You had to go to your own pension plan.

I don't remember what difficulty Pearson had, but we finally straightened it out. He was quite ill, and after he got his pension, I visited him a couple of times. He had a stroke, and that is how he ended up.

Then there was another thing. A number of years before all these things took place, it became a policy by the joint labor relations committee to de-register men and kick them off the work list because these men were planning to retire on Social Security; they were not concerned about a pension plan being just around the corner, so to speak.

So there came a time, after the pension plan went into effect and I got the job, when some fellows would drop around and ask, "Where's my pension?" And then I would check their records over at the labor relations committee and find that they were de-registered about three or four years before the pension plan took effect. And
HS: it was a very important item in the eligibility formula that you had to be a registered longshoreman. I went to the joint trustees and they instructed me to go ahead and make an effort to find these men and refer their names to the joint labor relations committee.

I drove around this city and I found about 13 or 14 of these fellows and they were put back on the registration list and the committee agreed that they should not have been de-registered and they received their pension.

Subsequently the joint labor relations committee went on record that a proper effort had been made to find these men; but the committee also took a certain date and said: "Anybody that comes along and wants to be re-registered in order to get on the pension list would be too late if he comes on the wrong side of that date. That was agreed to, but those unfortunate men who did not know about that and came around later on gave me the unpleasant job of saying, "I can't do a thing for you; this is what the parties agreed to."

Well, then they would usually say, "What do you mean - the parties?" And then I would say, "Well, the shipowners are on one side and the union is on the other; those are the parties." And they always thought that was a hell of a note, too. "Skip me," quote, unquote.

There is the principle, and of course whenever a potential pensioner learns -- or thinks he learns -- that the employer trustees are disregarding a principle, he will call it to the attention of the union trustees.

Stein: Well, is it known to longshoremen now on the waterfront that if they leave the industry for a certain number of years they are going to risk their pension?

HS: Yes, I think there has been sufficient publicity on this particular point. But they forget about it, you know; they are working on the waterfront
HS: and there are all kinds of things to worry about -- they have their family obligations -- the work opportunity has been considerably reduced.

They're not absolutely clear on these things and in my estimation they never will be. You run into the stumbling block of the man not being sufficiently educated as to the provisions of the pension deal. It's awfully difficult to convince a man that it's almost impossible to get a pension as soon as he gets his 25 years in, irrespective of his age.

If a man comes to the office and says, "I've been here for 29 years and --- " How old are you now, brother?" "Well," he says, "I'm 50." I would have to say, "There's nothing in the plan that provides . . ." "Well, why don't they agree to let me go? It's none of their business; I've earned my pension; I've been here 29 years. Don't they do that to the automobile workers?" "That's possible that they might." "And I heard that on the East Coast and in the ILA they give them - they let them go at a certain age, even though they are a long way from 65."

"Expensive Men

HS: And then I try to explain to them that the shipowners have to say "Yes" to this question and maybe the union isn't strong enough to force the shipowners to say "Yes." Then sometimes I make the sad mistake of saying, "Well, one of the reasons that the operators won't agree to amending the plan to help you here is because "you're an expensive man." He wants to know, "What's an expensive man?"

I say that it has to do with his life expectancy. I've made this explanation: "I'm 67 and you're 50. My life expectancy is practically nil compared with yours because the
statistics that are available in these United States show that as far as the male is concerned, at 65 you may still live 13 and a half, 14 years. And the statistics also show with regard to the female, that they're expected to live 15 and a half to 16 years, once they reach 65."

"Well," says the man, "How do they know how long I'm going to live?" "You might live 20 years and, that's what they would call an expensive man." I guess finally you have to say that nothing is perfect.

(End of Tape 26, side A)

(Begin Tape 26, side B)

Organizing Pensioners' Clubs

Stein: I also came across references about trips that you made, mostly to the Northwest, to help the pensioners up there find out about educational and recreational facilities.

HS: Well, I simply told the little gatherings of pensioners in the several ports what they had done in San Francisco. In some instances, they had already started such a thing - they called them ILWU pension clubs. So, in due time they had one in San Diego, San Pedro and in Portland and Seattle. I flew up to Aberdeen one evening from Seattle in order to give those fellows an idea what we were doing.

I think the idea of setting up a Coastwise organization of pensioners had its origin in the San Pedro club. Anyhow, an apparatus was set up and a founding convention was held in Redding. Every pensioners club on the Coast was invited to send delegates. It was a hobo convention, at the expense of every man who was a pensioner. It was his own money to get there and get home,
and it was not compulsory to come. It became quite a movement. Every convention has been held in Redding, because it seems to be the central point. There usually is some kind of picnic before the convention date and they address themselves to Social Security and the high cost of living and the fact that the working ranks have had an increase and they want more pension monies. Sometimes they address themselves to the case of an individual who hasn't got any pension and can't understand why not. Such a case goes to the Coast committee with a request to do something for the man.

In the officers' report to the convention of the ILWU which is presently in session in Vancouver, British Columbia, there is a paragraph on page 18 which has a very interesting short sentence in it. The title of the article is simply "Pensioners": "Retired members of the ILWU have continued to be notably an active force - sometimes too active - in the internal affairs of the union.

"The Pacific Coast Pensioners Association has held two conventions since the last ILWU convention. At each one they spoke out not only on their own behalf but on social and political issues of the day. They have engaged not only in political action campaigns but in assorted charitable activities as well. At their most recent convention in September of 1974, the Pacific Coast Pensioners Association stated: 'We must all play a part in politics or be sunk.'"

Pensioners, Stay Away

Stein: And so what is the sentence you said was interesting?

HS: These are the words: "sometimes too active in internal affairs of the union."
Stein: I think it's pretty easy to read between those lines.

HS: If you've been around, you know. Sometime ago, the pensioners were advised by the main office that we shouldn't be too concerned about the internal affairs of the union and shouldn't be taking part in meetings of the membership that is still working on the waterfront. After all, you are retired and why should you be bothered about these affairs?

It came to the point where a certain communication came from the main office -- it was sent to all of the locals on the Coast -- pointing out that the pensioners were becoming too active. They were considered to be virtually a union within the union and that perhaps they were the tail that was wagging the dog. Those are almost the precise words.

Stein: Well, to move ahead a few years, you ultimately retired yourself and became a pensioner. When was that?


Stein: Yes, that's it. You've been retired almost ten years.

HS: This is the number of my union book and it also was my registration number. Some years ago the parties agreed to change the registration number so that it would be the same as the book number or vice versa. So that it would be Coast-wise. In other words, if you had the number 15 in San Francisco, you would be the only number 15 on the whole Coast. I don't remember what my book number used to be, but my registration number was number 2.

Stein: Number 2?

HS: The second man to be registered.
Who was number one?

It wasn't Harry.

I was wondering.

Well, we have to go back to the 1934 award now in order to explain that. There came a time when we rented some space in the Ferry Building and put out some bulletins urging the men to come and register calling attention to the provisions of the award.

It just so happened that we were getting ready to -- we sat down. Charlie Connors was one of the members of our joint labor relations committee, and I said, "Charlie, how would you like to be number one?" So the gentlemen from the shipowners agreed that Charlie become number one. Then I said, "Now, I'm going to register myself" and I became number two. Much to my chagrin, when these numbers changed I became 1282.

So, you slid way down the list.

Every once in a while when I went to the hiring hall to get a job -- I was working the front, you know, jumping from one gang to another -- the dispatcher would shout "Number two" and call out "Schmidt." If I was in a conversation with some fellows and didn't hear it, some guy would come running along and say, "Hey, they're calling you -- get your ass out of here and go to work."

I guess that pretty much made you stand out -- having such a distinctive number.

So, you slid way down the list.

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The Great Union Hall

Twelve years ago the membership of Local 10 instructed its officials to look around for a location for a union headquarters and hiring hall
combined into one facility. The location they chose is 400 North Point Street; the hiring hall is there now and it's been in operation for over ten years. The union headquarters are there - the joint labor relations committee has some space. The hiring hall is big enough for the members to hold their monthly membership meetings.

The union set up a committee to assume responsibility for the affairs of this building which was being erected. The committee saw fit to call it "Bay Area Longshoremen's Memorial Association." This was done on the advice of counsel that it be set up as a separate organization, incorporated under the laws of California. This was for the purpose of protecting the organization; it shouldn't be one with the ILWU local union itself.

Finally the membership adopted resolutions to assess themselves so much per month in order to pay for the whole project. A lot of this was done under the name of the Bay Area Longshoremen's Memorial Association (BALMA). The mortgage holder is the ILWU-PMA Pension Fund and the rate of interest is rather low; I think it is probably 4-1/4 - 4-1/2 per cent. Every man who paid his full share, the old-timers, myself, we stopped paying once we had paid in $250. We all have a certificate indicating that that is our share in the building.

Active members are still paying so much per month, and an arrangement was made that each time a man paid his monthly dues, which up until recently were $18 per month, $3 of the $18 would be set aside to pay the obligation towards BALMA.

That apparatus sort of stopped functioning here some months ago, because some members didn't pay their dues, though most of them had agreed to have their dues deducted from their pay; consequently they didn't have to pay their dues at the window in the union hall anymore.
HS: Every month the secretary would get a check representing the payments. However, in order for the employers to deduct that from a man's pay, he had to sign an agreement and many of them haven't done that.

Stein: Yes.

HS: Anyhow, the local union went very much into arrears with regard to its monthly income. Consequently the $3 payments also fell behind. I think that has been adjusted now; that is one of the things the monitors take care of.

Stein: Yes, I was going to ask; didn't the whole business with the monitors get all mixed up with BALMA?

HS: Yes, the monitors were appointed by the International officers, and they were to sort of look after the union and had considerable authority. The monitors found out, among other things, that the secretary of the local union wasn't receiving enough money to run the show, so to speak. But they have taken certain steps recently to convince the membership that in order to keep the union going you have to pay your dues. The $3 payments in question are being made available now.

That's just a short explanation; and some unpleasant things took place and I'd rather not go into them.* The management of BALMA was changed on the evening of February 4th when another group took over; as a result of that change I am no longer a member of the board of trustees of BALMA, and I am pleased to get out of that traffic.

*For further detail, see Interview 15, tape 1, side 1; also Supplementary Interview 2, tape 1, side 2.
Stein: Is there always a representative of the pensioners on the board?

HS: No, this is something new. There was considerable opposition to having pensioners sit on BALMA, but suddenly this opposition sort of dwindled away. But in any event on February the 4th, different people were elected.

Stein: Yes, here it is --

HS: - a man by the name of Joe Moseley, who is presently assistant chief dispatcher, is the president of BALMA, and a man by the name of (William) Watkins is secretary-treasurer.

Stein: Carl Smith is the vice-president.

HS: And Watkins is vice-president of Local 10.

(End of Tape 26, side B)

(Begin Tape 27, side A)

Mechanization and Modernization

Stein: Let's move on to M & M.

HS: Mechanization and Modernization? There was established a Mechanization and Modernization fund.

Stein: What was the purpose of that?

HS: First of all, that was financed by the employers as a result of having reached an agreement that made it possible for the employers to make changes in the methods of operation of longshore work. In other words, to do away with archaic methods of loading and discharging cargo with the understanding that whenever the employers wanted to make changes, they must first notify the union.
If it was the union's view that such changes would result in cargo moving faster, ships making more trips, handling more cargo with less men, that should be worth something. As a result of long discussions, it was finally agreed that a fund would be established, the employer being the sole contributor, and the money to be paid out to pensioners.

So, for several years when a man went on pension he received his monthly pension check plus a certain amount of money out of the mechanization fund. Monies out of the pension fund are taxable and monies out of the mechanization fund are also taxable. So the first mechanization fund agreement provided that the man who retired on pension would receive so much a month in pension money, and in addition he would receive almost $8,000. It was $7,900 and some thing.

The man could use mechanization fund payments by the month, or if he desired and gave good reason, he could have a lump sum. Some of them requested a lump sum and it was granted.

Sometimes it was necessary to point out to such an individual that if he had, as an example, worked on the waterfront for nine months of the year in which he was retiring, had earned considerable money working, and went on pension say, in October, to request his mechanization money in a lump sum would put him in a much higher bracket and would cost him more tax money. And of course that was easy to understand and so most of them decided to take it by the month.

In the second mechanization fund agreement the amount was much larger, it went up to $13,000. Taking myself as an example, I was a member of the negotiating committee for a long time. I knew what was coming. I began to realize that if the mechanization fund payments were raised to this higher level, since I wasn't forced to retire at age 65, I should continue to work as pension director. Then in September of 1966 I retired, and fortunately for me I got $13,000 on top of my monthly pension.
Many men also got the same amount of money. Of course, there were bitter complaints from many pensioners who were retired eight or nine or ten years by the time the first mechanization fund payment was established. And they were not included. They are still asking "Why not?" Some of those men wanted to know couldn't they get some retroactive payments on top of their $8,000. Of course, that didn't work either.

By now the mechanization fund has dried up and it's no longer in existence, but the new men who are going on pension are getting much higher pension than those who retired ten or twelve years ago. Now the maximum pension is $350 a month and you can have that at the age of 62, provided you have at least 25 qualifying years in. Then you get an additional $150 on top of the $350, which makes it $500. After you have received $150 per month, which is called the "bridge", for a number of months it no longer is payable - I think it's paid out to you from the age of 62 until you're 65.

Why was M and M stopped?

Well, it became a little bit unpopular. Maybe the employers resisted the business of continuing the pay for all time because whatever changes they had made, introducing new and modern machinery to handle cargo, has reached its peak. The only other thing that's left now for the employers to modernize - and this is only an observation off the cuff -- is to build ships that run twice as fast as the ones that we have now; that come back quicker, you know. I don't know how to explain that, but it was very unpopular with certain people.
A Never-Ending Headache

Stein: Does that bring us to Stan Wier and the B-men controversy, or was it strictly a pension problem?

HS: It could be - the pensioners who were not eligible for it were complaining. They were asking, "Why not us?" Why don't you make it retroactive? The men who were receiving it were happy, of course.

There are men on the waterfront now whose thoughts run along these lines: working conditions have been changed, the machine has taken over; the employers have been given the right and the opportunity to make the changes -- for a price. In connection with that they use the words, "Sold out."

Stein: Do you understand the Stan Weir situation?

HS: Well, it's a long time ago. First, one has to understand the difference between "A" man and "B" man. An "A" man is a member of the union who not only has union membership, but he has been registered by the parties and placed on a registration list. A "B" man is a rather newcomer in the industry. He is labeled a "B" man with the understanding that he is working as an apprentice.

He doesn't have the same rights as an "A" man; he's not required to join the union until he's promoted by the parties to become an "A" man, but he does have to pay a certain sum of money to the union every month, which is not quite as high as the sum that the "A" man pays. He just pays a sum commensurate with that part of the dues payment which is used to operate the hiring hall.

He can come to the union meetings but he cannot vote on issues -- although recently, I don't know why this rule was not enforced; the "B" men were allowed to vote on the new contract. At least that is what is set forth in a report which went to the Vancouver convention.
HS: Of course a "B" man's work opportunity is not comparable to the work opportunity of an "A" man and the "B" man lives always in hopes that some day he will be promoted to become an "A" man and become a full member of the union with the right to vote and take part in union affairs.

Stein: Now with a "B" man, is there a specific time period or other qualification that he has to pass?

HS: No. First of all they are being watched all the time to see that they don't break any rules, don't chisel on the job, and don't try to go ahead of an "A" man in the morning when you're in the hiring hall waiting for your turn to go out. It is understood that as long as there is one "A" man in the hall who is willing to go out, a "B" man can't go out. In that respect, he's a second class citizen.

Of course, he is looking forward to the day when he will be promoted. Promotion is not an automatic thing. The joint labor relations committee will meet for the purpose of deciding whether or not "B" men should be promoted. At the same time they might consider the possibility of adding brand new men to the industry, if that is necessary. Well, at the present time, as a result of M and M, it's not necessary.

So, you have to take into account the possibility that "B" men are knocking at the door and they want in. Say that the parties decide they will open the door to a certain number of "B" men to be promoted. The employers might propose that they promote 400; the union might propose only 200.

The three men on the joint labor relations committee representing the union will get their instructions from the voting membership. They might make recommendations to promote 200, but the men who are already members might decide that 100 is enough, because the job competition increases as more men become "A" men.
HS: So the "B" men are processed or screened before this labor relations committee. At that point some of them may get into difficulty because the joint committee has checked on their work records and if these show that they have not been to the hiring hall religiously, have been found intoxicated, or have appeared before a committee for doing the wrong thing, or have chiselled in one fashion or another, the chances are that Johnny Jones will be turned down.

Or the employers might say, "Well, here's Harry Smith who we're not anxious to make an "A" man because we have learned he's not a good worker and he's frequently intoxicated," -- and the union guys on the committee might agree with that.

Well, some years ago, the committee was processing a bunch of men for the purpose of promoting them from "B" to "A" and the committee -- the union committee -- apparently turned down some fellows. The employers agreed with them. These men -- and it seems that Weir was one of them -- were told that they would not be promoted and, if I'm not mistaken, they were requested to leave the industry.

I recall that these men were allowed to come to a membership meeting and plead their case. And of course they did not get any place. So, all of these men disappeared, so to speak, and apparently they got together some place and made an appeal to organize a defense committee.

They managed to get some very prominent Americans to assist them. I think Norman Thomas was one of them. There was a black clergyman from San Francisco who became a member of their defense committee. After passage of quite a number of years, this group of former longshoremen are suing Local 10, the International and the shipowners for their jobs and for lost time and lost money. And the thing has been in Federal court.
One of the peculiar aspects of the situation is that you find the defendants are the Pacific Maritime Association and the ILWU, working together. The thing has been in court for months and months and I've lost track completely as to what the status is. Anyhow the whole thing is costing the union a tremendous amount of money, because the union's law firm is doing so much extra work on the Weir case.

(Editor's Note: The Weir group ultimately lost all possible appeals.)

Okay, what's left on the list here are just a series of miscellaneous items.

**A Pungent Anniversary**

Well, let me take a quick look (reading):
"June 19, 1959: 25th Anniversary of Bloody Thursday up-coming; parade to be organized up Market Street, led by contingent of pensioners."

Yeah, I remember that, and I got plenty of assistance from Tim Kelly.

Oh, is he the fellow who lives in Marin?

Yes. He called up the other day and wanted to know how we were. He's way over 80. Tim helped and was responsible for having some floats made which were quite interesting.

What sort of floats?

Well, having to do with the struggles we went through, you know; they were small things, on small pick-up trucks. I had a lot of difficulty with Harry. He didn't want the parade.

Why not?
Oh, he says, "Let it be - forget it; this is a long time ago and we shouldn't bring it up." But he marched; he joined the parade way up Market Street. We were heading for the City Hall. He and I had a little bit of a word battle as we were marching up Market Street.

Stein: About the parade?

HS: Yeah, bitching about it, you know. How can you sell hearts with a thing like this? That's the way he was talking. But when we got to the Civic Center he made a terrific speech, and of course I felt a whole lot better when he made that kind of speech. I thought well, after walking a couple of miles the guy straightened out.

Stein: Got the blood circulating - that's what did it.

HS: Right. There were maybe 6,000 longshoremen in the parade; Bridges in front, Schmidt, Bulcke and Bill Chester.

(End of Tape 27, side A)

(Begin Tape 27, side B)

A Trip to the Old Country

"Dispatcher: July 29, 1960: Schmidt just returned from two month trip to Europe. Reports strong peace sentiment in East Germany, and in West Germany many who still want to fight Russia."

Well, I think this is approximately correct. I don't know if I want to say there are many people who still want to fight Russia. There were some individuals I ran into who indicated that.

I can remember one talk that I had with a man, a distant relative, and he started to talk about Montgomery, a very famous British general, and Eisenhower. This German relative wanted to know if I could remember a German Admiral Rader,
who, according to this man's explanation, proposed to Monty and Eisenhower that what's left of the German military forces should join with the Allies and fight against the Soviet Union. And he said to me, "Henry, if that had happened, we wouldn't have this difficulty now." I indicated in sort of a mild manner that I couldn't agree with him.

I can tell you about a conversation that I overheard, having to do with World War II. I arrived in Moscow the evening before May 1st and I was there eight or nine days. Then I went to Czechoslovakia and I was there three or four days; went to East Germany, and in the latter part of May I made arrangements to fly back.

A couple of fellows of the East German labor movement took me to the main airport of Berlin, Templehof; there I sat down to wait for the plane to take me to Hamburg, my next stop. It was American Armed Forces Day and as I sat there, I heard the loudspeaker system tell the passengers who were sitting around that all planes would be delayed because "This is Armed Forces Day of the U.S.A.," and the American military forces were going to occupy the airport for a parade.

The voice pointed out that this would take some time, so everybody was sitting around and standing around and having conversations. The discussion had to do with the fact that the Americans were going to show off their military might and everybody else was prevented from flying to their destinations.

Well, I heard a couple of Germans talking and they were sitting close enough to me so that I could hear the conversation. They had the appearance of being well-to-do business men and they were talking about World War II and the Russians and the Allies.

One of them said, "Well, there's nothing we can do now, absolutely nothing that we can do." The other fellow agreed with him and his observation. Then one of them said, "There is only one
hope, he says, "It is the thing that is called the yellow peril." All this was going on in German. I was sitting there, pretending to read my American paper, that comes out of Paris - once you get over into the free nations, you know, you get it at every newstand. So, I rattled my paper a little bit and asked, "The yellow peril? You mean the Chinese would go to war with the Russians?" And the man said, "That is the hope, that is the hope - dat is the hoff, - dat is the hoff." Well, I let it go at that, but it was a nice conversation piece when I came home, you know.

Yeah, always -

Hope lives forever in the breast of man.

(End of Tape 27, side B)

(End of Interview 14)
The Veto vs. the Majority

HS: Al Bertani and Jerry Bulcke were fraternal delegates to this affair (caucus) at Vancouver, B.C. and they just got back night before last.

Stein: Oh, really! What happened with the contract?

HS: I only have information from Bertani and as late as yesterday morning he said to me on the telephone that the caucus where the contract was being considered was still in session. He told me that the recommendation of the Coast committee, which is Huntsinger, Ward and Harry, was voted down by the caucus. Now, as I understand it, they are struggling with a proposition to reconsider and I haven't got the slightest idea of how this is going to work out.

Stein: Yes.

HS: Then I learned via the grapevine that the proposition had been voted down and after that I didn't hear anything.

Stein: Ummm – this is the proposition to accept – to put the contract back --?

HS: Put the contract into effect. The people who were proposing that pointed out that the majority of the membership in a referendum had voted in favor of the contract, and argued that they should agree not to pay any more attention to this thing called a veto.

Stein: Yes.
HS: In other words they want to kill the veto and go back to the ordinary modus operandi of deciding the issue by a majority vote.

Stein: I read a comment in a newspaper this past week about that; it was in the Wall Street Journal.

HS: Oh, that's the only paper that put something in to that effect.

Stein: Yes, they quoted Harry as saying, "We have a reputation for being the most democratic union in the country, but sometimes we're a little too democratic."

HS: Oh, that's a quote from his article "On The Beam" in the Dispatcher. He has an "On The Beam" article in the Dispatcher in every issue. In the one we're talking about his first sentence was "We are very democratic, perhaps too much. Perhaps we should reconsider the matter that has to do with the veto," or words to that effect. Oh, I'm satisfied that they will prevail.

Stein: Who?

HS: I mean they're going to convince the delegates that they were wrong when they voted to defeat the contract proposition. That's just my prediction.

Stein: Interesting situation. Okay, now let's see, where were we? I guess they passed that business about making officers retire at 65.

HS: Yes, I have that from a telephone conversation. If I read the thing correctly it will force Goldblatt and Harry out of office, but apparently they had no opposition this time. They were automatically re-elected. I'm sure there is a clause in this proposition having to do with mandatory retirement that when you reach your 65th birthday, if you are holding office for a two-year term, you are allowed to finish the 24 months.
Stein: Uh, uh. But at that point some one else will be elected, right?

HS: Yes.

(Last half of Tape 28, side A, and all of side B not transcribed)

(End of Interview 15)
Those Pesky Monitors

Stein: Now recently there was some kind of a row in Local 10 - something about monitors.

HS: The International officers, not all of them, thought it was necessary to establish a monitorship to give the local officers and membership some guidance. They appointed a couple of members who are elected members of what we call the Coast labor relations committee. I used to function in that capacity.

Bridges is also a member of the Coast committee, so there are three of them. When he and Chester, the vice-president, appointed the other two Coast committee members to the job to become monitors they also appointed another man, the regional director; he is the only black man in this particular trio. Chester is also a Black.

The word went out that these men would give guidance, not orders; they would not become dictators. The definition of monitor or monitorship as provided by a dictionary was printed in one of the bulletins, with an additional warning that
Some members would make charges of dictatorship; watch out for the people who make those kind of comments. These fellows (the monitors) are gentle people, they will not give orders, they will suggest, they will explain the situation and give guidance.

It all sounded very reasonable. This proposition was submitted to the membership with a six-page document which was read to a rather large membership meeting by Chester. He has become, what I call the delivery boy of messages. And if I sound cynical and bitter at this point, that's exactly what I am -- my feelings --

Stein: It's good to be up front about them.

HS: Put that on the record.

One of the suggestions was, by the establishment of the monitorship, that a recommendation to the membership would come from these high officers; that the membership might as well accept the fact that the local was financially in the red, and the sum was quite large. They could only get the ship back on even keel by digging into their pockets, because that's where a union gets its money.

Take into account that there were people who were delinquent, who thought, "Well, I'm not paying any dues, and I'm working anyway, so why should I pay dues?" This is the thought that's uppermost in the minds of some people, hopefully not very many.

One has to remember that, prior to the time this monitorship message was delivered to the membership, the local officers had recommended that there was no escaping the facts of life, that the members had to pay back dues and vote in favor of an assessment in order to save the union. Again and again it was pointed out by the local officers that the money would have to come out of the pockets of the membership.
One of the recommendations which the local secretary made in writing in one of these bulletins was, "I'm looking for five hundred members who will voluntarily come up with forty dollars per man in order to help us to get out of the hole." Well, I don't know how many people responded to that request. I thought it was very constructive and, even though I don't have to, I put in forty dollars, to set an example.

It should be pointed out in passing that Frank Stout, who is the president of Local 10 at the moment, and Herbert Mills, who is the secretary, are not liked by the higher-ups, for reasons that I might have to explain later on.*

Yes, I'd like to know those reasons.

Well, one of the reasons, very briefly, is that it's recognized that they are educated men; they can verbalize in a much better fashion than some of us, and, in my humble opinion, they can make much better talks than Harry and Bill (Chester).

In any event, the higher-ups were opposed to these two men running for office. But, in spite of the fact that the International officers -- not all of the International officers -- were opposed to these fellows being candidates for the office of president and secretary, they got elected -- which must have been an awful kick in the pants to the higher-ups. Especially when verbal name-calling was indulged in by the president (Bridges) insofar as Stout was concerned.

And then some of the supporters of the International officers, a small clique, put out very dirty bulletins -- official bulletins -- and indulged in name calling and all kinds of junk like that, which was really horrible. Brother Stout insists that one of their bulletins actually helped him get elected, and it could be that he's right.

* For further detail, see Supplementary Interview 2, tape 1, side 2.
These newly elected officers started in February to push their recommendations to help the union out of the financial hole, and they couldn't get it across. They were newly elected, and here they were asking for more taxes. But both of them had said in bulletins put out while they were still candidates, "That's what we're going to do." So the membership had been forewarned.

One of the reasons that they didn't make it is because the International officers would sit on the platform at these meetings and say nothing, realizing all the time that if they had supported the proposition to increase dues and levy assessments -- see, you can't increase dues and levy assessments in that union without the membership voting for it, you just can't -- if they had said maybe a dozen words in support, the membership would have adopted it.

But the membership developed the notion that -- this is what they say -- the International will help us out of this hole. But nobody explains how. Well, finally the International came along and they supported a proposition which, in my estimation, almost followed the proposals of the local officers. Do I make myself clear?

Stein: Yes.

In other words, both propositions advocated more money out of your pocket, Mister Longshoreman, because that's where it must come from.

Well, the membership bought that package, and along with it they bought the monitorship. So now the fellows have a feeling that they are compelled to pay their back dues, they are compelled to vote for the assessment. There were two propositions on the ballot: the dues were increased by five dollars per month; on top of that, it was necessary that each man pay a seventy dollar assessment in seven payments, ten dollars a month, but he could get away with sixty dollars if he paid it in a lump sum.
HS: Now, I understand, this is rolling along very good so they're digging themselves out of their financial grave. The local was so poor that they took certain people off the mailing list for this bulletin. So I'm sitting here thirty-two miles away and I want to know what's going on. So in order to get this bulletin I supply the envelopes and the stamps; and I have a deal with one of the ladies in the office who will use my envelopes and my stamps to send me this bulletin. It doesn't cost much -- but just to indicate how bad things were.

Stein: Isn't that something?

HS: In any event, the monitors sure changed their song and dance, and, instead of giving mild suggestions and behaving like gentlemen, they started to give orders. The local officers, using their own words in their bulletin, bridled. And the monitors then asked the officers to resign -- because in the opinion of the monitors, the local officers were not obeying orders.

Stein: Now, what orders weren't they obeying?

HS: Well, that's -- oh, you have to read these things. (Gets out a bulletin.) So the officers put out a bulletin to indicate to the reader, who is the longshoreman on the waterfront, why they were not resigning. So then the International had to come down with this document and, again, Chester had to read it to the membership.

The Top Men Apologize

HS: It's an apology for their servants.

Stein: Well, it sounds as though the International has backed down.

HS: Oh! They had to.
Stein: And that the monitors are now saying they will confine themselves solely to what the membership voted in the first place.

HS: Yes, it was an apology, and there was no kidding about it. They disowned their own servants, too. It is my position after about almost daily association with Harry for forty consecutive years, I now find myself in complete disagreement. I think he's on the wrong tack, appointing monitors.

Stein: Why did he appoint the monitors in the first place? Why did he feel it necessary?

HS: Because he wanted to show that local officers couldn't help the membership over the hump.

Now one could go on a fault-finding expedition to find out why the local went into such debt, but there has been an investigation; the investigator did not indicate that any certain individual functioning in the local office was at fault. This might mean that nobody was at fault, but it also might mean that somebody was at fault and it's not worthwhile to expose that individual. That is something I don't know. My feeling is that Stout and Mills both have capabilities which indicate to me that they know how to guide a local along. I think especially Mills is cut out for the job of being secretary-treasurer.

We have a system in Local 10 which allows a man to be an officer for not more than twenty-four months; then he's constituted out.

So, every once and awhile you wind up with somebody who has popularity, a vote-getting ability, but is not cut out to be the secretary-treasurer. And that's where you run into deep water.

So, unfortunately, I was elected to function on the building association as a trustee -- which gets me into all kinds of hot water. After having been on it for about ten months now, I say to myself, "Why did I get myself into this predicament?"
Stein: Well, there's a letter from Herb Mills.

HS: Oh, yes. It was approved by one of the monitors; it is aimed at the delinquent members. "Pay up or get out."

Stein: Yes, or you don't get a job.

I read also that there was the recommendation that the Local 10 hall be rented out and that smaller quarters be --

HS: Well, that's another subject.

Let me bring in something else which is very pertinent.* Since these certain individuals, who demanded the officers to resign and demanded the office keys did something which was completely illegal and was disapproved by the International, the local officers have seen fit to prefer charges against them, under the constitution of Local 10. And they're going on trial.

That would be the first time in the history of that local that a group of men go on trial for bad behavior. In the past, we have had trials of certain individuals. And the odd thing is that since they are on trial, these men are now on their good behavior.

But another very important event has taken place. The local officers who are bringing their charges -- and they are right in doing so -- have been called to the International office and have been requested to drop the charges -- by none other than the main man.

Stein: Oh! That's --

*For further detail, see Supplementary Interview 1: 1 September, 1981. (Tape 1, side 1)
HS: So these characters have found out they are on trial and they run up to the main office and say, "Do something!" These fellows went up to Harry and said, "Do something; get those charges withdrawn; otherwise we're in the soup." That's what they must have said.

There's an interesting sidelight in connection with this trial business. You see, when the attack on the office took place, everybody seemed to be around except the vice-president.

Stein: Of the local?

HS: Yes. His name is Willy Zenn; he's a black man. It's unfortunate that when you explain a thing like that, when you mention a man's name it follows that you should call attention to his race.

Stein: Yes.

HS: It bothers me, you know.

So anyhow, Stout, he did something that in my estimation was very clever. When the charges were read to the membership meeting, indicating that these men did something that was improper and they should go on trial, and that steps would have to be taken to select a trial board, Stout gave that job to the vice-president, this Brother Zenn. He had to handle that. After all, he was not in the building when the attack took place, so he should be neutral. I thought it was very clever.

A Real Estate Problem

Stein: I asked you about the building, the talk about renting out the building.

HS: Oh, yes. Years ago on advice of counsel, George Andersen, shortly after the building was in operation it was recommended that the thing should be incorporated. At the time this didn't mean a thing to me.
We were told by Andersen that if we set up a separate entity and called it the Bay Area Longshoremen's Memorial Association with a board of directors, the understanding would be that all members of Local 10 would also be members of BALMA. That's the, what do you call it, euphemism?

Yes. I know what you mean -- the acronym.

You're a member of BALMA because you're a member of Local 10.

Now, in recent months, some argument has crept into the picture, which helps to create friction, whether or not pensioners are members. Oh, oh, oh, (shudders) that's where the mazuma comes in. There's a movement afoot that the building be sold, and the question arises, who makes the decision? Is it the board of directors elected by the membership which actually takes care of the affairs of BALMA? And is it a separate entity or is it not? Who's going to say?

Ah, where was I? The board of directors meets once a year, and the attendance is very poor. We put out bulletins all along the waterfront, "The board of directors will meet on" a certain date, and usually we get fifty-two fellows.

Once, I am told -- after I retired I didn't go as religiously as I used to -- there were two hundred fellows there. It must have been a revolt movement, because the 200 guys changed the complexion of the whole thing. On one of those occasions the high officers even got fired. Harry and Chester couldn't get enough votes to get re-elected to the honorary positions as chairman and what have you.

I'm glad I wasn't there that night; otherwise I would have gotten the kick in the pants, too, because of my years of association with the worthy brothers.

So, now there --
HS: Well, there's a movement afoot to sell the building. And, believe it or not, the Alioto gang is in there with both feet, according to some people.

Stein: Really!

HS: When you take a look at the situation and are acquainted with what goes on around Fisherman's Wharf, every other store's owned by Alioto. (Joe) Alioto is the Mayor, and then there's this conflict of interest thing. There's Harry on the Port Commission, and we've got about seven guys in the City Hall. Years ago we were told that we were not going to attempt to get anybody in City Hall because we didn't want to get mixed up.

But at the very last convention, and I have the record here, there was a gentleman from City Hall who welcomed the delegates -- we had the convention here in San Francisco. He read off the names of about seven or eight men who were members of Local 10 and who have occupations in the City Hall, some of them full time.

Stein: Hmm.

HS: And just the other day I looked at the proceedings, and their names are all in there. This fellow came to the convention and he said, "We have all these fellows up in the City Hall, - they're all doing a good job."

(End of Tape 29, side A)

(Begin Tape 29, side B)

HS: At this particular time, Stout and Mills were not top officers of Local 10. As a matter of fact Stout was the president of BALMA, and he was also a business agent on weekly salary getting paid by Local 10.
Apparently his opponents felt that they had to do something to demote him, and to also demote his fellows, his board of directors. There were accusations that he was having secret dealings to dispose of the building. The word "dispose" of the building became known as "to sell." Related to that is the possibility that "sell" means profits to somebody, and that the members will get something once a sale is realized.

The related matter is, could the pensioners -- of whom there are quite a few -- be considered recipients of any distribution of any funds in case the building is sold and a profit is apparent?

It became crystal clear to many people that if the pensioners were shunted out, the members who are still working on the waterfront and making their monthly payments to take care of the mortgage on the building would get more, if a profit is distributed, if the pensioners get nothing. And that's where the two bodies meet.

Well, one evening there was a meeting of the board of directors. Anybody who is a member of Local 10 is entitled to come to the annual board of directors meeting, sign the roster, and, if he's found to be in good standing with regard to dues, he is automatically a member of the board of directors. Before the evening is over that board of directors is entitled to elect a board of trustees.

I went to one of these meetings last Fall, and I could tell by the people in attendance who were opposed to Stout that they were making propositions that would result in Stout being kicked out.

The situation got so rough that, at one point, one of these men who was sitting directly behind me -- who was also active in this raid on the office recently -- disturbed me so much that I got up and said, "Well, I've had it."
HS: So, I stormed out of the meeting. "Well, we can't get along," I heard him say to the back of my neck.

**Too Many Politicos**

HS: Incidentally, recently I found out -- and I don't know how these fellows make it -- that he is a commissioner of the Port of Richmond. We've got commissioners all over the place. We've got Chester in BART, Harry in the Port of San Francisco, and this other fellow in the Port of Richmond.

Stein: Okay.

HS: I was leading up to an event that took place on August 2, 1974, where the people who wanted to get rid of Stout succeeded.

You see, at this directors meeting, when I walked out I didn't know what happened the rest of the evening. But, it must have been in July, because on August 2 there was a membership meeting, at which the active members made a motion that all the officers of BALMA and their board of trustees and board of directors be removed forthwith, and that the officers of Local 10 take their places. And the motion was carried with a lot of whoopla. I wasn't there.

Then these people put out a bulletin that said many nasty things, most of them outright lies -- that Stout and company are finished and they're nothing but a so-and-so clique, and the membership has decided there will be no more secret deals by Stout and his clique. "We will be riding herd on this thing, and we will make a complete report to the membership at some future date." Well, they haven't reported yet.

So, for several months, the president and the secretary, the executive board and the board of trustees of Local 10 served in dual capacity.
That's what they call a change hats deal. In order to make that change, here's how they handled it. At a membership meeting you're supposed to give five days notice, not five minutes; you're supposed to put out a bulletin. They had this whoop-de-doo meeting, and the motion carried, so Stout and company were through and these other fellows took over.

They were in there for several months and I've read some of their minutes and they didn't do anything of great moment. At one meeting they made a motion instructing the secretary to take forty thousand dollars out of union savings in order to pay the semi-annual property tax bill to the City of San Francisco, because that bill is eighty-six thousand dollars per year. Well, you can't say that that was not a constructive proposition. They had to do it, you see.

Well, August 2 is behind us, and these fellows had stormy meetings. We're now working towards the winter and the election time comes around, Stout is continuing to function as business agent and so is Mills. They suddenly declare as candidates for the presidency (Stout) of Local 10, and Mills for secretary. Of course, there's consternation among the guys on the front. "We just fired these guys, and now they're running for office in Local 10!"

Well, they won, even though one of the fellows from the main office got up on the platform -- and Stout was sitting there saying nothing -- and said, "There's no question about it, this guy is a fink" -- meaning Stout. But, in spite of that, Stout and Mills got elected.

So, after Stout and Mills took office, they had a board of trustees which didn't exactly go along with them. They started to point out immediately that the local was in bad, bad shape financially, and that there was only one thing to do -- get the money from the membership in order to put the ship on an even keel.
But, no matter how they tried it, this bunch of disrupters raised all kinds of hell at every membership meeting in order to stop the guys from voting. If you carry on, people just get disgusted and walk out. There was little success in getting the membership to realize that they should endorse the proposition that Stout and Mills were advocating.

Oh! And when I use the term "executive board" it reminds me of a trick they resorted to. Many of Stout's opponents were elected to the executive board. So, when Stout advocated a proposition to go to the membership for a five dollar dues increase per month plus an assessment of forty dollars, somebody made an amendment to make the proposition five dollars a month dues increase, and that the forty dollars assessment should be increased to sixty.

And, lo and behold, the executive board went for that unanimously. When I read that I thought "Gee, those fellows have changed their minds." But that was a trick. Those fellows knew beforehand that the membership might go for forty, but sixty they wouldn't buy.

The proposition was defeated. I am told that some of these fellows, even though they voted for it unanimously in the executive board, when they got to the membership meeting some of them had changed their minds. All they had to say was, "It's too much, fellows," you know, and the membership -- nobody wants to dig into their pockets and come out with sixty instead of forty.

And nobody can understand: "Where did the money go?" Somebody would get up and say from the platform, maybe to this effect, "I don't know where all the money went, but the investigator who recently made an investigation didn't point the finger at any individual." So, where are you?

Then there's another thing in the picture -- it gets very complicated.
Stein: Yes.

HS: Every time a man pays his eighteen dollars per month dues, three dollars of that is used to help pay off the mortgage. Very recently we made it clear, or tried to, that according to the auditor, if we continue to pay the seven thousand dollars per month on the mortgage the building will be paid for at the end of next year.

But we won't make it because the well is going to be dry. Because the record shows that the three dollars per month is not enough money, and it's still three dollars per month.

So, all these trials and tribulations have happened in that local, and it just tears me apart.

Stein: Yes.

HS: And I sit around here and I don't know what to do. Maybe it's a good thing for me -- I don't know whether it's good for me physically or mentally. I'm sort of helpless.

Well, after all that, the International came along with a six page document in which they practically endorsed those propositions that Stout and Mills had been advocating for months. And keep in mind that, almost every time there was a meeting, either Harry or Bill (Chester) were there; and they never said a God damn word; just kept silent, or stayed away. And if somebody were to say, "Where are these fellows?", the answer would be, "Well, Bill is with BART and we don't know where the hell Harry is." Or, "He went to Hawaii."

(End of Tape 29, side B)

(End of original series of interviews)
Selden Osborne

Ward: Henry, tell us what you remember about Selden Osborne; he was a highly educated man and he was anti-Bridges.

HS: Well, I can recall Selden Osborne working on the waterfront, and occasionally he would get up at a membership meeting and speak his mind. I learned that Harry got very impatient with the man. I don't know how long it took before Harry indicated to me and perhaps to other people that he had information from the Southern California local --

Ward: That's Local 13?

HS: That's Local 13; from one of the local's officials --

Ward: Bill Lawrence?

HS: I think so -- that this man was considered to be a spy and not to be trusted. And there was no question about it, Osborne was a highly educated man. I don't know whether he ever passed through a university or not. It was my opinion that Harry was not too interested in any highly educated longshoreman who would talk on certain issues at times.
Ward: Didn't this man Osborne have a Ph. D. from Stanford?

HS: I have no knowledge of that; but I do recall that he joined certain picket lines. At one time he told me, I think, that he was going to march from the West Coast to the East Coast because he wanted to bring a certain issue to the attention of the people.

Ward: Wait a minute. What were these certain picket lines that he joined?

HS: Well, I can't recall; he did certain things that a good union man would participate in, even though his own union was not involved.

Ward: Where a good union man would not participate?

HS: No, would participate.

Ward: In other words, these picket lines were not anti-union in any way?

HS: I have absolutely no knowledge of that man taking part in an anti-union picket line.

Fay: Didn't he participate in a San Francisco University picket line?

HS: Is that the one where (Sam) Hayakawa was the boss man?

Fay: Yes, right.

HS: (laughing) Well, I picketed there myself.

Fay: Then also there were the young people who got washed off the steps at the City Hall. I know Harry took opposition to a lot of that stuff.
Pensioners Barred From Voting

HS: Here recently the membership indicated that they didn't want the pensioners to vote on anything. The result was that after some discussion in Local 10 and in a convention in Hawaii recently they went on record --

Ward: That would be the '81 convention?

HS: -- and voted that we would not be allowed to vote, not even on the election of the Coast committeemen, who are the trustees of the pension fund. Their opponents are a three-man team from the shipowners; it's a joint proposition. And we now have no right to even know those men who should be interested in our welfare. As one pensioner put it, "Those fellows are controlling my money." He was that strong about it. Anyhow, the convention voted us down with great "vigah," as Jack Kennedy used to say (laughter). So, we're through!

Ward: Well, you don't have any differences with the present top leadership?

HS: I've been given to understand that the top leadership and the Coast committee are not excited about the pensioners not voting or voting. I communicated some of this information to certain people and I pointed out that we are senior citizens and we all belong to that other great union which is known as the Union of the fifty States.

And I said in this communication: "We are all members of that union and we have considerable clout in this national scheme of things, but apparently this is not recognized in the union of the ILWU. And also, if I remember correctly, in some discussions previously of the pensioners' problems we quoted from the constitution of Local 10 at great length -- either the constitution of Local 10 or of the International, I forget which."
HS: Anyhow, the thing was brought up and my friends in Hawaii, the delegates from Local 142, gave us the coup de grace. They came into the convention as a body and voted with the majority that the pensioners should not vote. That was this year.

Peace With Bridges

Ward: I gather that over the years, whatever differences Henry Schmidt had with Harry Bridges had been more or less pleasantly resolved. Whereas at one time you were quoted as using the words "horrible disagreements," you would now cut out that adjective?

HS: Oh, absolutely. Incidentally, I just thought of something that has to do with this particular subject matter. I went through a batch of old Dispatchers and I found one that was written by Harry in his "On The Beam" column, and he points out there, in effect, "After all, we should be most considerate of our old-timers" — pensioners, that is — "because they are the men that built this union." I certainly liked that; it was a statement of fact.

I recall the comments of a man, a black member of Local 10, in a speech one time in a Local 10 meeting: "Well, you guys, you ought to take this into account that when you came here and you were taken in and you started to work longshore, the table was already set and all you had to do was sit down and eat."

Ward: That's a good remark. I think you have expressed this feeling that, whatever happened in the past, there is one over-riding factor that stays in your mind, that of all the people who worked to build the ILWU, a great debt is owed to Harry Bridges himself.

HS: You can't shake that out of me.
Ward: Because he was the right man in the right place at the right time. Wouldn't you say that?
HS: Oh, yes.
Ward: That's history.
HS: Sure. That's history, and it cannot be changed.
Ward: And although you have disagreed, you and Harry now have been friendly for a long time?
HS: No question about that.

More About Albion Hall

Ward: Henry, we've been talking more about Albion Hall, and I gather that you must have been considered to be one of the waterfront militants at that time.
HS: It's possible that somebody considered me to be one of the militants. I couldn't name anybody.
Ward: And they probably thought you looked honest, too.
HS: I hope they did. I am honest. I'm so God-damn honest --
Ward: Good. It's a pleasure to talk to a man who's honest. (laughter) Well, people came to you and -- there must have been a buzzword among people like you -- who thought like you -- that there ought to be a little meeting place somewhere, and you happened to know the Albion Hall.

I wish you would repeat the story about what Bridges said when he introduced himself at the union meeting and said he had come from Australia and that there were some wages and working conditions down there --
HS: Well, Harry made some comments at one of the first meetings we had at 113 Steuart Street. He (Harry) introduced himself as being from Australia and that he had worked in various ports and on the waterfront in Los Angeles. I think he also mentioned working in New Orleans; and I think he also said that he had worked as a dock worker in Australia.

Ward: I think also in Tasmania, Port Darwin.

HS: Well, anyway, he mentioned some of the working conditions and talked about his father; he said something about his father being in the real estate business, but I think he also told us that at that time his father was an elected official of the city (Melbourne). He said, with considerable emphasis: "We dock workers in Australia, we have a union in every port, and we have things that you ought to have and you don't have them."

Ward: Like a union contract?

HS: How much wages you get, and establish better working conditions. So he made a good impression with us; that's what we needed.

Ward: But you had met him previously, during the Albion Hall --?

HS: Yes.

Ward: You knew each other, then?

HS: Well, not closely. Because -- well, I guess I don't get acquainted so quick. Maybe if he'd have been a good-looking girl, I'd have gone after him.

Ward: (laughing) I've heard about that. Both of you had that reputation, you and Harry.

HS: Yeah. Well, he quizzed me about my nationality background and I gave him a quick report on my forebears; my mom came from Holland and my pop came from Germany, and that I had a daughter -- and that's all.
Death of Catherine

Ward: You had only the one child, Lucia?

HS: Only the one.

Ward: I see. And is Catherine still around?

HS: Oh, no. She'd been dead at least 15 years.

Fay: She died in 1953 or '54.

Ward: Were you still married to her when she passed away?

HS: She died in Kaiser hospital in Oakland. She had a kidney ailment which was never cured. One day they called me up and I rushed over there and Asher Gordon and another doctor met me in the lobby of the hospital and said -- that she was dead.

Ward: How old was Lucia when your first wife died?

HS: Well, she must be 50 now. She was born in '28.

Fay: She was born in '27 and her mother died in '52.

Ward: She was a grown woman when her mother died?

HS: Oh, yes.

Ward: I see.

HS: Catherine and I made a trip to Europe in 1927, and Lucia was born in '28 -- right?

Fay: I guess so, yes.

HS: The only reason we could make the trip to Europe was because Catherine's father helped me with money. He had a small business in a small town outside of Haarlem; it was really not a brewery -- it was a beer bottling plant. The beer came in
HS: barrels, and from barrels they put it -- And he had one employee, who drove with horse and wagon to make deliveries. He had a sister next door who was operating a pub. We came back from Europe, having spent my father-in-law's money. We got on the train in New York, and we traveled back to San Francisco by way of Canada. Well, then Lucia was born and it seemed like we had a stake in San Francisco.

Lucia, of course, was heartbroken about her mother having passed away so she communicated with friends in South Africa, and my God, one day she took off and went to South Africa.

Ward: I thought she married a South African.

HS: Well, he was a European, a Hollander, and she soon found out that she wanted to come back to the States; so one day they took off from South Africa and for awhile lived in Holland to get acquainted with the relatives. But they were anxious to return to San Francisco, and soon did just that.

(End of Tape 30, side A)

(End of Interview 1)
The Attack on the Union Office

Ward: Henry, in regard to the attack on the union hall, which took place on September 13th, 1974, I'm going to read to you from a summary of newspaper clippings, (S. F. Chronicle and Examiner, September, 1974) and see if you agree with it:

It says, "About a dozen members of the ILWU, led by Morel J. Marshall, stormed the offices of the union near Fishermen's Wharf. Larry Wing, who was then a business agent of the union, was slightly injured. President Frank Stout and Secretary-Treasurer Herbert Mills were in the office, and a demand was made by this group, of which Marshall apparently was the spokesman, that they hand over the keys of the office and get the hell out of there. They of course refused and there was a fight. The police were called, and all that.

"It seems that Bill Chester, who was vice-president of the International Union, had called for the resignation of the officers of Local 10, specifically Stout and Mills, because they had defied the orders of the monitors who were overseeing the financially distressed local. These monitors were Fred Huntsinger, William T. Ward, and Leroy King.

"This rank and file group said that the local's officers had failed to follow the directions of the monitors and had discriminated in handing out jobs, and had allowed dangerous working conditions to exist on waterfront jobs by failure to insist on proper inspection of equipment."

You don't know anything about that, I suppose?
HS: No. I was not working on the waterfront at that time. The officers who are supposed to make observations as to working conditions are known as business agents; and the president in recent years has been called a business agent. He has to make rounds. And as far as I know, officers from the International office wouldn't be required to go to the waterfront and observe working conditions unless there was something very serious.

Ward: Well, this was not the allegation of the rank and file group. The allegation of the rank and file group that burst into the office was that the officers of Local 10 hadn't maintained the working conditions as they should have. Not the International.

HS: Oh, they may have maintained that. I didn't hear their complaint because I was not there when this invasion took place.

Ward: Very good. The next paragraph is that "The membership of Local 10 had voted to accept the monitors which were sent down by the International to try to straighten out the financial affairs of the local." Does that sound right to you?

HS: Just give me the date again when that took place.

Ward: The date of the attack was September 13th, 1974.

HS: Anyhow, I was long since retired.

Ward: Now, I'm reading again from this report, "The local officers and their supporters contended that the monitors had exceeded the authorization granted by the members. The officers had sent an open letter to the monitors saying: "We are guilty of one thing. We have opposed your grab for certain powers which the membership did not vote to give you." Do you know anything about that?"

HS: I don't have any knowledge.

Fay: I may say that although Henry was retired, I was somewhat connected and it sounds like it was correct.
Ward: Further, we have here: "The membership had voted on August 22nd to accept the monitors and they approved a dues increase and a special assessment of $70 per member," et cetera. Then it says here that Bill Chester "convinced" -- that's in quotes -- Stout and Mills that any longshoreman delinquent in dues should not be assigned to jobs from the hiring hall. That seems to be an interesting point.

HS: I didn't hear it because I wasn't there.

Ward: On September 20th -- this was after the attack -- the membership voted to keep the officers and the monitors after hearing letters from Bridges and Chester promising that the monitors would work strictly within the local's constitution.

And Bridges specifically in his letter disavowed violence and claimed that he had had nothing to do with the attack on the hall. The monitors had ordered that monies collected for their building not be turned over to BALMA. That comes within your purview because you were a director -- or a trustee -- of BALMA at that time.

HS: The only thing that I can remember is that with regard to this unfortunate incident, the monitors and the office having been raided, that Chester came to a membership meeting and I was there. He read as if it was a mandate from on high, and he even said "There will be no votes." I think he said "You may ask questions but there'll be no votes; this is an order from the International." I don't think he mentioned any names, but when it's from the International and it's an order, then you know where it's from.

Ward: In your previous interview, Henry, I believe you referred to that act of Chester's as being "the letter carrier."

HS: Well, he had the letter on his person, and he had come from the International office. He was like a postman.
Ward: (laughing) Oh, yes. And also, the information I got indicates that, as it is written here, "Part of the row stems from alleged efforts of the Joseph Alioto interests to purchase the waterfront property for $4,000,000. And some people thought the waterfront property should not be sold, hang on to it; and other people thought that if it were sold, it was worth a great deal more than four million dollars."

HS: I know nothing about that.

Ward: (Speaking to Fay) I remember you had a comment on that the other day. I remember your saying that there was a big to-do down there about the Alioto interests going --

Fay: Oh, yes. I'm sure, but I can't give details.

HS: I don't know when Joe Alioto came along. He never came to any membership meeting that I know of.

Ward: In your previous interview, Henry, you said Frank Stout, who was president of Local 10 at the moment, and Herbert Mills, who was the secretary, were not liked by the higher-ups, "for reasons that I might have to explain later on." Well, you never did explain them later on. So I ask you now if you can recall why the higher-ups didn't like Stout and Mills.

HS: Well, I don't know about Mills because my memory is very poor about Mills being secretary at that time.

Ward: He was, though.

HS: Okay. Apparently the higher-ups didn't like Stout because he was going to go to court and take a class-action suit. Is that what it's called?

Ward: Well, I don't know. There's a vague mention somewhere, I think, about a suit being dropped or forgotten.
HS: Stout told me that he was going to go to court in order to get some clarity on this particular issue -- namely, the thing that I call "the mandate." You know, the thing that was read by Chester, who said that "There'll be no voting on this."

And I'm pretty sure also that Stout did not win that case, and then he made a number of enemies; the president of the pensioners' association said, "The man who is suing his own union -- I've got no use for him."

Ward: I see. There weren't any clashings of leftwing politics in there, were there? You know, between the SWP and the more-or-less Communist people?

HS: I wouldn't think so.

The Scrapiron Picketing

Ward: (Reading from the original script:) Stein says: "And then there was the business of loading scrap iron to Italy and Japan. Schmidt: Yes, I got my feet wet in that. I had to go down eventually to Fishermen's Wharf and talk to the assembled Chinese and advise them that we couldn't make our Longshore picket line stick. That's a horrible . . ." -- there you cleared your voice -- "All of the employers were ready to lock us out on the Coast, you know."

HS: I must have been president of Local 10 at that time.

Ward: I think you were, yes.

HS: And I got telephonic instructions from the higher-ups, from 150 Golden Gate Avenue, that they had been threatened by the employers that they would lock us out and we would be in another big beef; so I had to say, "We cannot make it stick."
HS: I decided that I had to go down there and make a talk to these Chinese people and express our sympathy for their cause. We knew they were going to get that scrap-iron shot back at them some day.

Ward: That's the point I wanted you to make. You knew that we were going to get the scrap-iron back?

HS: Yes. They were going to make munitions out of it and shoot it at us. And I said, "We'll just have to put this off until another day, and we hope to join you then." They were kind enough to see the point, so I didn't have to make a lengthy speech. I got off my soapbox and went back to my office, feeling very much relieved. And I was saying silently to myself, why didn't one of those guys from the main office go down there and handle it?

Local 10 Jurisdiction

Ward: What did you mean in the original script by "the local of the whole"?

HS: I don't remember.

Ward: Well, of the whole waterfront, or . . . . ?

HS: Oh, I think it means that the local had jurisdiction, work jurisdiction, insofar as the San Francisco and Eastbay docks were concerned, because that's always been the custom. Referring to things that happened prior to the 1934 strike, I know that there was a strike in 1916 and another one in 1919, and the workers lost those two strikes.

Ward: Yes. But you think the term "local of the whole" meant that you had jurisdiction over waterfront work in the entire Bay region?

HS: Yes. There was no other local around.
The Communist Role?

Ward: This mention of the three factions among longshoremen -- did they exist prior to the actual re-institution of Local 38-79?

HS: Well, I'm just assuming that. Holman had entered the scene, and it was explained that he had been an officer of the ILA prior to this particular time. We were also made acquainted with a fellow by the name of Bill Lewis, who was known as "Burglar" Lewis, and Fred West, who was --

Ward: He was a window washer!

HS: That's just what I was going to say. He was quite a speaker, and that's the reason, I guess, why Holman dragged him into the picture.

Ward: Then he was more or less with Holman?

HS: Yes. What exactly are you -- -- ?

Ward: Well, I had gathered from previous conversations with you, Henry, that the Albion Hall group began prior to the re-institution of Local 38-79. Everybody was interested in reorganizing the waterfront.

HS: Yes. Everybody would gather in that little room around that table.

Ward: That's at Albion Hall?

HS: That's at Albion Hall, in an upstairs place over the beer hall. We were aware of the fact that the ILA was being reformed, and that was the subject matter that was always under discussion. They didn't meet there every evening, or night and day.

Ward: About how often did they meet?

HS: Oh, I can't recall that. After all, it was over 47 years ago.
Ward: And you think it would be sometimes six, sometimes eight, sometimes up to a dozen?

HS: Well, that's about all the place would hold. All bullshitting around, you know; pardon the expression.

(End of Tape 30, side B)

(Begin Tape 31, side A)

Ward: Now, I asked you the other day how these guys got together and sat around the table and bullshitted in Albion Hall. Did they just automatically recognize each other as militants, that sort of thing, or did somebody come and invite you, or what?

HS: I guess we were all invited by somebody. I don't remember exactly how it developed.

Ward: Except that you were the guy that got the hall?

HS: Yes. Somebody must have contacted me and advocated that I should take an interest in a little group meeting. And I might have asked, "What's it all about?" And I guess the answer was "Strictly union business -- what else?" You know.

And then I remember that I was a member of the organization which had as sort of a side issue a little singing society. And I stopped in there every once in awhile to have a beer. And I checked and they said, "Well, the manager of the place upstairs has a little room; you can meet there."

Ward: How much rent did you pay for the use of the hall?

HS: I don't think we paid anything.

Ward: Just go down and patronize the bar once in awhile?

HS: Yes. The chances were that most of us met at the bar first. You know, (singing) "At the bar, at the bar, where I smoked my first cigar, and the nickels and the dimes rolled away." (laughter)
Ward: I see. Well, at that time there weren't these three opposing factions that Larrowe mentions in his book?

HS: I'd have to read his book again. I don't know how he could make any observations in his book of that little group and three factions.

Ward: Well, not in that little group, but he mentions the three groups -- the Lee Holman, Bill Lewis and Fred West, and the Albion Hall group.

HS: I don't know how to answer that.

Ward: You told me the other day the Albion Hall group simply disintegrated, once the local was formed.

HS: Oh, sure.

Ward: All right. Then these other groups must have been contending for followers prior to the formation of the union.

HS: Let me start with a man of the name of Fred West.

Ward: Fred West, yes.

HS: I just have a vague picture of him being there. Every time we went home we went over some new idea which we would try to give life to and think over personally. As a result of my having been there I got into a conversation with a man by the name of White --

Ward: Wait a minute -- "as a result of my having been there" -- where?

HS: Albion Hall.

Ward: I might ask this: Hal Yanow, in his contribution to the original interviews, made a statement which I will read to you. He said it was his understanding that the 1934 waterfront strike had been run by the Communist party, and the 1934 Minneapolis strike had been run by the Socialist
Workers' party, and that both strikes were very successful. And you were in the room and taking part in the interview when Yanow made that statement -- and you didn't comment on it one way or the other.

And where was this -- - ?

This was when Yanow was being interviewed along with you at your home in Concord. He made that statement and it wasn't mentioned again, by you or anybody else. Would you comment now on whether the Communist party had anything to do with the Lee Holman group or the "Burglar" Bill group or the Albion Hall group?

I don't think so.

In Chuck Larrowe's book, it says here: "By July, 1933, three groups had emerged and were competing for control of the union. Holman's was the largest and attracted the conservative longshoremen, which included the Irish Catholics -- a sizeable block on the San Francisco waterfront. The second group formed around two incongruous leaders, William Lewis and Fred West. Lewis was known in waterfront circles as "Burglar Bill," because of a minor brush with the law in his youth. He had been a member of the A F of L longshoremen's union that had been broken in 1919. He was a unionist in the historic tradition of the A F of L, militant on economic issues but politically a conservative. Fred West, by contrast, was a militant on both fronts. He was district organizer in San Francisco of the Proletarian party -- -"

The Proletarian party? Fred West?

" -- a small Marxist party which fell ideologically somewhere between the Communists and the Socialist Labor party. A coalition led by Lewis and West couldn't last, but they were temporarily thrust upon each other by their common aversion both to Holman's timid leadership of the ILA and the crimson hue of the MWIU."
"The third group, the smallest, was the rallying point for most radical longshoremen, included the handful of Communists who work on the waterfront. It took its name from the building, Albion Hall, where it held its meetings.

"'There never was any question that Harry would head up Albion Hall.'" B. B. Jones who was an Albion Hall member, told this to Larrowe in 1957.

"'He had a lot of good ideas, he was always there when meetings were called, and most important, he'd had more experience than any of the rest of us had had. Don't forget, he was in a sailors' union down in Australia for several years. Hell, he knew more about what to do than the rest of us combined!'"

So there you are. Does that make everything clear?

I read that, of course, and it didn't mean a thing to me. And I don't remember reading the name of B. B. Jones --

You've said that B. B. Jones was not there.

And I'll say it again; I have no remembrance of the man's being there -- and I knew him well, you know.

Well, I'll give up on Albion Hall.

Now, Kullberg departed from the regular ranks because he didn't want to go CIO?

I think that was the reason. And of course we were no longer at 113 Steuart Street; we were over on Clay Street.
Ward: I see. Now Holman and his group were still at Steuart Street -- were they?

HS: No, Kullberg and some other guys, they established themselves at 113 Steuart Street. And they put out a bulletin. We, of course, got hold of that. I don't remember exactly, but it wasn't quite complimentary to my person. But when we were in business Kullberg was quite effective, making talks.

What Mr. Plant Really Meant

Ward: I don't know why Tom Plant said that.

HS: He meant to get this thought across to whoever was listening to him: that it was the employers' own fault because the longshore work force was so efficient that in those skyscraper offices they didn't know that we even existed. We never gave them any trouble, and if they had had some labor spies working for them they might have been told that something was cooking down there on that waterfront. "You'd better wake up."

Ward: So they were tending to whatever business they had -- ?

HS: And there was another comment by a very rich industrialist who owns all the banks and property -- I can't call him by name right now but it was published in the papers -- he said, in effect, "When this strike is over, these workers will be driven back to work and we won't have any difficulties for years to come."

Ward: I remember that statement.

HS: That didn't come to pass.
The Angry Man

HS: I remember that Schrimpf and I were on the joint labor relations committee together.

Ward: Was Schrimpf jealous of Harry's leadership?

HS: That could be, that could be.

Ward: Was he a phony of sorts, pro-shipowner, or what?

HS: Oh, I wouldn't use those words.

Ward: He testified against Harry and you in the B-R-S trial.

HS: Yeah. I'm glad that you mentioned that.

Ward: I would say that that was pretty lousy of him.

HS: (laughing) Yes. I remember that I had worked on the preparation of a bulletin in Local 10's office, to be distributed on the waterfront. Another person around that office had been the author, but he submitted it to me for perusal; and I made a few changes. I took the document around the corner to give it to the girl, and Henry Schrimpf was there. He wanted to see the bulletin. He had been studying a copy, which I didn't know.

Ward: So he saw the changes?

HS: He made some kind of a change. I looked at that and I didn't agree to accept his change, and he just blew his top.

Ward: Well, he must have had a very short fuse.

HS: Oh, God, it was terrible.

Ward: I see.

HS: Yeah. I remember another incident. It was during the strike. The ship was docked alongside the
thing that we called the State Pier, way down past Matson, past the Dollar dock, and Henry came running into the office --

Ward: Henry Schrimpf?

HS: Yeah. And he called out that we should go down on that ship and chase the scabs off. He had learned something to the effect that it was not going to be difficult. I think maybe he said there were no policemen around. So a bunch of guys got ready to go, and I went with them; I thought I'd better take a look.

And lo and behold, Henry Schrimpf was the first man to go up the gangplank and hit the deck; and when he hit the deck a scab longshoreman hit Henry on the head with his hook -- and caused an injury. So the cops were there -- they were just waiting for something like this to happen, and they fought with us and chased us away, you see.

I remember very clearly, this policeman was whacking me on my shoulders, and I swear to God he wasn't hitting me very hard. He was just doing his job. (laughing) And I could hear the Irish accent: "Git out of here; you're gittin' fair treatment." And the fair treatment was that he wasn't hitting me very hard.

Ward: (laughing) He was just tapping you?

HS: You know, he could have knocked my brains out with his club. Schrimpf had to go to the hospital to have his scalp dressed.

Ward: So he got sucked in on that one.

HS: He sure did. Some guys said it was a set-up, getting us all invading the ship.
Too Many Warehousemen

HS: I can recall that we were kicking the gong around, so to speak, and there was an individual there from the Stockton local; he may have been president of that local. He was the main objector to this proposition. He said to me, "You want to control everything, don't you?" And I said, "No, I'm just bringing up Harry's suggestion."

Ward: No. I'm not talking so much about what happened that day -- but in the light of the situation in the struggle between Bridges and Lou Goldblatt, it reached the point where Goldblatt, at least, thinks that Harry dared not produce an opponent in an election because the Warehousemen and Hawaii would have out-voted Harry.

HS: The Warehousemen and Hawaii?

Ward: The Warehousemen plus Hawaii would have out-voted anything Harry could muster among the longshoremen.

HS: This was when Harry made a proposition. It must have been at a convention. He made some kind of a proposition which, if it had been adopted by the convention, Lou wouldn't have been nominated to succeed himself.

Ward: That was the age 65 rule, wasn't it? Which the convention adopted, you know.

HS: But Lou was re-elected, wasn't he?

Ward: Yes, because this rule was to take place at the next convention. This was at the '75 convention, and they both went out at the '77 convention.

Fay: What he is asking is, in the light of all the happenings that have come about, would you still think that International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union would be a good name?
HS: Yes. Experience tells that the warehousemen might out-number us sometime from now, because our ranks are diminishing considerably.

Fay: But there's always been something of a controversy between Warehouse and Longshore; always has been. There was also a controversy where the Teamsters were concerned. All those unions had their horrors.

HS: We have an International secretary and he was a warehouseman, and he is an excellent secretary and he is a black man.

Ward: You're talking about Curtis McClain?

HS: Yes.

Fay: And also, as far as Lou Goldblatt is concerned, the longshoremen certainly benefitted by having that warehouseman as secretary --

HS: Oh, we have no -- a man with that kind of a brain --

(End of Tape 31, side A)

(Begin Tape 31, side B)

The Korean War

HS: In an effort to succeed myself -- I had been working on the waterfront for a year or so -- I was again a candidate for the presidency of Local 10. And the Korean War was already in motion, or maybe the possibility of a war between this country and Korea was in the making. It was advocated by some people, including myself, that this matter should be referred to the United Nations for the purpose of trying to avoid a war -- but the membership decided otherwise.

It's difficult to understand what other men may be thinking, but the majority decided that the war might be good for the world, so I got
They got more work out of that war?  
There's a war going on; there's much cargo to be -- the whole country becomes very prosperous, because industry has to make guns and other things and the longshoreman has to put it aboard ships.

Isn't it said that there was a recession on in 1947, two years after the end of World War II, and the Korean War pulled the country out of that recession?  
That may well be.

**Guns Wound Many Strikers**

Now Henry, referring to the '34 strike and battles that took place there, we see that there is a report that the LaFollette Committee in its later investigation questioned Ignatius McCarthy, the tear gas salesman. He admitted that he shot Jimmy Dugan (or Duggar). Will you develop that story?*

Well, I didn't see the event myself, but I knew that McCarthy was there. Everything was peaceful on the Fourth of July, but we noticed that all hell was going to break out the next morning, because we saw that those small trucks on which the photographers had mounted their tripods and

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*The LaFollette Committee report states that another tear gas salesman named Joseph Roush shot "Kentucky" and boasted he had shot and killed a Communist; p. 161
HS: their cameras, because they were going to record something photographically. Anyhow, Jimmy Dugan was injured that day, but he didn't die; he recovered.

Ward: I wonder how many people were shot that day. I have heard stories that there were as many as 400 who had gunshot wounds that day.

HS: That may very well be. There was shooting going on all over. All over the place.

Ward: You wouldn't place the figure as high as 400, would you? Or would you?

HS: I couldn't say.

Ward: But there were plenty of 'em shot?

HS: Oh, yes.

(End of Interview)
Joe Stalin's Picture

Ward: Henry, we were talking about the picture of Joe Stalin in the union headquarters in Honolulu. Would you give some more detail about that incident?

HS: One morning when we came to the office we saw a great big picture -- it must have been six feet high and maybe four and a half feet wide -- of Joe Stalin hanging there.

Ward: Was it a good picture of him?

HS: Well, yes, it was a good likeness. Of course I've never seen the gentleman myself; only photographs. And it was hanging there. We took it in stride. Everybody laughed; we knew the enemy had put it up during the dark hours of the night. So we had to get busy and take it down again.

Ward: Did you give it back to the enemy?

HS: No, I don't think so. I don't know what became of it, really. We had a good laugh. When the workers get together and demand higher wages and are going to strike then of course they are Communists. That's taken for granted. It is Communistic; it is so written in the Scriptures.

Ward: All right; thank you Henry.

(End of Supplementary Interviews)
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Ms. Willa K. Baum
Director
Regional Oral History Office (The Bancroft Library)
Room 486, Main Library
University of California, Berkeley
Berkeley, California 94720

Dear Willa:

I enjoyed talking with you yesterday over the phone. Here is the information you requested on our oral history project:

The ILWU-UC Berkeley Oral History Project, funded by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, is currently conducting interviews with middle-schelon leaders and rank and file union members. Longshoremen at Coos Bay, Oregon, warehouse workers in the East Bay of Northern California, cotton compress employees from the Central Valley of California, pineapple workers on the island of Lanai in Hawaii, and longshoremen, fishermen, and other waterfront workers in San Pedro, California, have been selected for study in this project which focuses on local working class life, culture, and history. All tapes are being catalogued and stored in the ILWU's extensive archives at the union's international library, 1188 Franklin Street, San Francisco, CA 94109. Access will be under the direction of the union's international executive board and the office of the Secretary-Treasurer.

I hope this does the job. Best regards from San Francisco.

Sincerely,

Harvey Schwartz
ILWU/UCB Oral Hist. Project
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Miriam Feingold Stein

B.A., Swarthmore College, 1963, with major in history.
M.A., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1966, in American
    history; research assistant - Civil War and Reconstruct-
    tion.
Ph.D., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1976, in American
    history, with minor field in criminology.
Field services and oral history for the State Historical
Instructor: American history, women's history, and oral
    history at Bay Area colleges, 1970 to present.
Leader: workshops on oral history, using oral history as
    teaching tool, 1973 to present.
Interviewer-editor for Regional Oral History Office, 1969
    to 1979, specializing in law enforcement and correc-
    tions, labor history, and local political history.
Estolv Ethan Ward

Born 1899 in Los Angeles; father a Socialist lawyer out of Rhode Island; mother an ardent feminist, daughter of a San Francisco Quaker merchant, and possessor of a Ph.D. from Swarthmore and an M.D. from Boston Medical School. The infant was removed to San Francisco at age two weeks, and with lacunae has lived in the Bay Region, mostly Berkeley, ever since.

Three and a half years of institutionalized instruction; otherwise his education came through tutors, travel, and daily family discussions.

Became campus reporter at U.C. Berkeley for the Oakland Tribune, proceeding to top rewrite, general assignment, and assistant city editor. Covered the San Francisco general strike in 1934 and in those three days learned things that changed his life. Became a founder of the local chapter of the Newspaper Guild and was fired and blacklisted by his publisher, Joseph R. Knowland. Became bailiff and court reporter for the California Supreme Court, meanwhile being active on his leisure time in the burgeoning CIO labor movement. Resigned his court job to become founding executive secretary of the Alameda County CIO Council.

In the next eleven years, he became successively first vice-president, California State CIO Council; CIO legislative representative, Sacramento, 1939; executive secretary, Harry Bridges Defense Committee, Angel Island trial, 1939; executive vice-president, California Labor's Non-Partisan League, 1940; radio writer, Los Angeles CIO news, 1940-41; organizer, Mine Mill and Smelter Workers' Union, in Los Angeles and Southern Nevada, 1942-44; San Francisco CIO radio writer, 1944; CIO-PAC director, San Francisco CIO Council, 1945-48. Following that, odd jobs and labor journalism.

Author, Harry Bridges On Trial, Modern Age, 1940; a labor novel published only in Polish translation, Renegat, 1953. Numerous labor and travel articles.