

Interview with Morris Weisz

The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training Foreign Affairs Oral History Project

MORRIS WEISZ

Interviewed by: Melbourne Spector

Initial interview date: July 30, 1990

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Q: Morris Weisz, if not the dean, is certainly one of the deans of the international labor relations service of the United States Foreign Service. Mr. Weisz has been active in many, many parts of the world, as well as in the United States. In fact, I had the pleasure of serving with Mr. Weisz for a time in the American Embassy in New Delhi, India.

Today we will be concentrating largely on his participation in the Marshall Plan, both in his positions here in Washington and out in the field, and his participation in its immediate successor agencies.

WEISZ: In connection with my own history, I am preparing a series of tapes for the Walter Reuther Archives in Wayne State University. What I would like to do today, unless you object to it, is cover a little bit more than you may have planned about the Marshall Plan labor aspects, and then ask you to give me a copy of the interview, which I will then arrange to have placed with the Wayne State material. This will serve both our purposes. *
See note at end of interview.

Q: That would be fine. That would be a pleasure.

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Morrie, tell me a little bit of your background before you got into the Marshall Plan. This is the first time in this series we're talking about the labor component of the Marshall Plan.

WEISZ: I want to encourage you to talk to other people, also, about the labor component of the Marshall Plan, because I only came into it directly in '52, and there was much that was done before I came. First, there was Boris Shishkin, of course, who has died; he was the special assistant to [Averell] Harriman at the beginning of the Marshall Plan, and you really have to get some stuff from his files. His widow, has recently retired from the State Department; and there are other people around, like Alan Strachan. He has already recorded some recollections which have been described to me as being not critical enough on some of the issues that he covered.

And, very important, Paul Porter, who was a mission chief at various places, and was, in the beginning, when I first came to Paris in '52, one of the four ambassadors at the Paris Marshall Plan Headquarters. Of the four, one covered economic activities or European economic activities, and Paul was that ambassador. He came from the trade union movement, also. I'll give you the names of people on the labor side, who would be more knowledgeable than I on this subject. As I said, I came into it fairly late.

My personal background, which will be covered in greater detail in the other tapes that I'm producing for Wayne State, is that I came to Washington in 1935, out of the trade union movement in New York, after graduation from the City College there.

You know the background of many of such individuals. I came into the labor movement as a young, active radical, a strongly anti-communist socialist; the big issue within political circles at the College was the battle among the various radical groups. Then, with my engineering degree in hand, I went to work for the trade union movement, largely because I couldn't get a job as an engineer when I got out of college.

Q: Your degree was in engineering?

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WEISZ: Yes, I have an engineering degree, but, except for a brief period during the War, I never was employed in any capacity that used my engineering education. On the other hand, I never took a course in economics, although I have taught the subject, as a professor of economics. But, I suppose I should confess that I am what is called a labor economist, and somebody once said that putting the word “labor” in front of “economist” is like putting “horse” in front of “doctor.” I’m a labor economist by practice and experience, I guess, rather than by education.

In 1935, when I was organizing, editing a journal, and doing general educational work for one of the locals of the Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, I was offered a clerical job here in Washington, as a result of having taken a Civil Service examination. A combination of factors led to my coming to Washington: the significant increase in earnings involved (I was getting \$12 or \$15 dollars a week — while negotiating agreements paying the members \$19 weekly! — and would earn \$27 as a clerk in the Census Bureau); the prospect for new adventure; and the fact that I could then afford to be married.

In 1937, a month after the Wagner Act was declared constitutional, I began working for the NLRB [National Labor Relations Board]. So anxious was I to work for a labor agency that I gave up a permanent clerical job at Census, serving in a capacity which I had been promised would lead to fast-track promotion to professional work; I accepted a 90-day temporary position, with no increase in salary, to come to the NLRB. There, however, I had friends who promised permanent status in this new agency.

Within two years, under the training of friends and the leadership of the Board's Chief Economist, David J. Saposs, I was qualified as a professional economist. I stayed at the NLRB, except for the war years spent at the War Production Board, until 1948.

It's relevant to point out that Dave Saposs, one of the famous labor historians and labor economists of that time, became my mentor and career guide. He was born in 1886, and like many of the leaders among labor economists, had been educated at the University of

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Wisconsin, under Professor John R. Commons. From that group came many of the New Deal economists who later found themselves in the Department of Labor, Social Security, NLRB, Department of Agriculture, Railroad Retirement, National Mediation Board, and a host of other new, and newly-oriented agencies.

Then, during the war, many of these mentors and their young followers went into the war agencies. On the nomination of George Brooks, who had been a senior economist on Saposs' staff at the NLRB, I was appointed to Brooks' staff at the War Production Board. (Saposs was already there in another senior post.)

At the end of the war, I went back to the NLRB. Saposs went into international work and was in the occupation forces in Frankfurt and Berlin, immediately after the war. And that is how I later came into international work.

Q: You were in the War Production Board, WPB. What did this have to do with the War Labor Board? I would have thought you might have gone to work for the War Labor Board.

WEISZ: The War Labor Board was the tripartite agency which kept a damper on wage increases by obtaining the cooperation of the trade union movement and management to keep to the Government's guidelines on wage levels. The War Production Board managed the war production effort, where, of course, labor cooperation was vital.

We had two labor offices in the WPB, one in charge of manpower recruitment and supply, and the other responsible for what was called labor production. (In those days, if the Government needed the cooperation of the labor movement, it had to have two of everything in the labor field, because of the competition between the AFL and the CIO.)

A remarkable, self-educated trade union leader named Clinton Golden, from the steelworkers' union, represented the CIO interests; he was the WPB Vice Chairman for Manpower Requirements; and another interesting fellow named Joseph Keenan, from the AFL building trades, originally an electrician, was the WPB Vice Chairman for Labor

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Production. Keenan and Golden were both excellent representatives of their respective organizations, in the sense that they got along personally very well, and were effective in advancing the common economic interests of Government and labor in the war effort. But the institutional differences between the AFL and the CIO were such that, below their level, their staffs were in constant disagreement on any issues that bordered on the political.

Saposs and Brooks, who is now a professor emeritus, at Cornell University's labor school, complemented each other. George Brooks had a good academic economics background — Yale, I believe — and supervised the group of economists assigned to the various operating divisions of the War Production Board. Saposs, more of labor movement theoretician, supervised a small group of trade union experts working on such special issues as women's employment and inter-union disputes.

At first I was assigned as a labor advisor to the pulp and paper division of the War Production Board, where we allocated the limited resources of these products to various claimants. Later on, I had a more responsible job, partly because of my engineering background, as the labor advisor to the War Production Board's Radio and Radar Division. My duties were mostly concerned with advising on recruitment and training programs for this entirely new field. Although my degree was in mechanical engineering, the feeling was that I could learn something about radar more readily than my colleagues whose expertise lay in less technological areas.

I don't know whether this is of interest to you.

Q: Yes, it is.

WEISZ: The WPB labor staffs, in the Offices of Manpower Requirements and Labor Production, under Golden and Keenan, respectively, worked on different aspects of war production, one on labor recruitment, etc., one on labor rights. But they came together at

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the operating level of the various industry divisions, so that, in effect, I was representing both Offices in the work I did.

Mostly, I was involved in the recruitment and training aspects, but there were also a few industrial relations issues involved in this entirely new industry. The whole radar technology was so new and secret at that point that we weren't allowed to discuss it publicly. In order to obtain sufficient materials (such as copper and aluminum), as well as the scarce trained manpower needed, we had, in effect, to fight the other divisions for priority access to these needs. The importance and secrecy of our products resulted in our having a good claim on anything that was scarce. As a matter of interest, our claims were second only to those of the Hanford project, which was the atomic bomb project, although I didn't know at the time what that was all about.

Q: But you didn't know what it was?

WEISZ: No, I certainly didn't.

I think one of the interesting aspects of the Marshall Plan is how many of those people in the War Production Board, and other war agencies, later found themselves in the Marshall Plan administration. At the end of the war, a number of employees of these war agencies who were not anxious to get back to their original work for a variety of reasons. In the labor field, especially, this included many who had the sort of special interest in international affairs that was the concern of old socialists and other radicals.

Saposs' expertise in the field — he had written extensively of foreign labor movements — led him to move directly from the WPB to an assignment with the occupation forces in Germany. Irving Brown, from the AFL, had been the top assistant to Keenan; he later became better known in connection with the Marshall Plan (he died a year or so ago and would have been a good source for your study), and Alan Strachan, whom I've already mentioned, had been on the CIO side. Both had backgrounds in the trade union movement, with a special interest in the political aspects of fighting Communist efforts

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there. It was natural, therefore, that rather than face the prospect of going back to duller work in their unions, and because the fight against the Communist challenge had moved to Western Europe, they would move to work there.

But these were only two of many. James Killen, with whom I worked in the WPB Pulp and Paper Division, had been a vice president of the AFL paper union. He had been highly regarded — one of the few trade unionists whose reputation went far beyond the labor movement which had brought him into Government service — also went on to Marshall Plan labor assignments. This was the case, also, of Clinton Golden, who then brought Strachan along with him to Greece, as well as his prot#g# from the Steelworkers' union, Michael Harris. Killen, Strachan, and Harris, as well as a few others who entered as labor advisors, because of their experience and excellent general abilities, later became mission chiefs.

In any event, I was not among those who went directly from the WPB into international work. I went back to the NLRB to head a small economics unit, which was all that was left of Dave Saposs' Economic Research Division. The circumstances, of this down-grading of economic research work at the NLRB are interesting, but not relevant to this interview. It represents an early manifestation of what came to be called McCarthyism a few years later. Saposs' job had been abolished in 1940 because he was allegedly a communist, but, as later investigations revealed, the only kind of communist he was, was an anti-communist.

Q: He was kicked out of the NLRB?

WEISZ: Well, they abolished his division and they recreated it in a very reduced form, which I subsequently headed.

What happened now was that, in '48, Saposs shifted from the occupation forces in Germany to a job that Shishkin, who was the top labor advisor to Harriman in Paris, had established in the Marshall Plan. No, excuse me. I take that back. Saposs came back from

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the occupation forces in '46 or '47, to become the head of the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Labor Advisory Committee.

The head of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Ewan Clague, had three advisory committees, each representing a different interest group concerned with the content, purpose and direction of the work of the BLS. All were made up of professional statisticians or economists; one, made up largely of academics, another of labor experts, and the third of employer experts.

Clague felt that it was necessary to have a person on his staff in whom the labor economists had confidence, but who would still be a member of the BLS staff and could advise the Bureau on which statistical proposals of the unions were reasonable and which were unreasonable.

This was not a full-time job; the Committee would have monthly or quarterly meetings, and there was a whole lot of correspondence to take care of, but there was time in between to do other things. Saposs was appointed to this position, and was named a special assistant to the Commissioner of Labor Statistics. Saposs stayed at that post for a couple of years, until 1948, when his old friend, Boris Shishkin, was appointed to the Marshall Plan labor job in Paris. That is how Saposs came to Paris.

Q: With Boris Shishkin?

WEISZ: With Shishkin originally, and then he stayed on with Shishkin's various successors, whom I'll mention when they come into the picture.

In Paris, Saposs was sort of a general advisor to the Director of the Labor Office in the Marshall Plan European Headquarters in Paris. He had good contacts with the European trade unionists, because he had written a very famous book on the post-war history of labor in France, under a grant from the Rockefellers.

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Q: *Very good.*

WEISZ: Saposs was a wonderful guy, perfect for that job. He left the BLS to try out the job in the Marshall Plan, and the problem arose as to who would be appointed to take his place. Since I had been associated with Saposs for so many years, I became a prime candidate. In fact, it was Saposs who suggested that I take his place on a one-year basis, while he tried out the Paris position.

Meanwhile, back at the ranch — back at the NLRB ranch, that is — the Taft-Hartley Act had been passed over a Truman veto. The new Act was conceived by some trade unionists to be a slave labor act. I didn't feel that it was that bad, although I had certainly opposed it — in fact had written some of the research behind the Administration's testimony against it — but I felt that it still contained many of the original Wagner Act's good provisions which labor should be able to use effectively. But, personally, I didn't have too much interest in remaining at the NLRB.

The Saposs job was therefore attractive to me; I think it would have given me a grade increase from what we used to call the P-5, to the P-6 level, but it would mean, again, leaving a permanent position for a one-year temporary assignment. This was a worry for me, a worry not too well understood by today's youth, whose psychological make-up is not encumbered by memories of the Depression.

In his interview with me, Clague stressed that he could not assure me of continued employment after Dave returned from Paris. [Later, when I got to know Clague well, he confessed that he had been a bit suspicious of me because of the pressure upon him to hire me, especially by my trade union friends.]

The trade unionists, on Saposs' strong recommendation, approved of the idea of my taking his place for a year. They hoped to get him back, but I had the feeling that he would be gone for more than a year, and that overcame my worries about taking a one-year job;

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I felt that, when Saposs came back, they would find something for me in the BLS. I had many friends there, the job sounded interesting, and I'd be working on things I believed were important and interesting.

At the end of one year, Saposs wrote me a letter and said, "Can you stay another year?" I agreed. He stayed another year and I stayed another year. This went on for four years.

At the end of three of those years, it was 1951, and I was asked to attend a labor attach# conference in Paris. I think I mentioned the fact that the job I was holding was that of special assistant to the BLS Commissioner, and executive secretary of its Labor Advisory Committee, but that these duties would not fill up all my time, although they would take precedence over other work.

By this time, many other assignments had been given me. One of these involved talking to foreign groups about American labor history (I was teaching that subject in an evening course at the American University). These groups were coming over, chiefly under Marshall Plan or Point IV auspices. I was also speaking to domestic groups having an interest in what we were doing in the Labor Department during the Korean War. Another assignment, which I got involved in for strange reasons, was to become a speech-writer for the Secretary of Labor at the time, Maurice Tobin.

Tobin, a former Massachusetts Governor, was very active in Catholic circles, and I became his expert on Catholic labor issues, writing many of his speeches on that subject. As a result of the relationship which developed because of this, and my NLRB background, Tobin sometimes asked me to speak to some professional (not political) groups interested in the then-current attempts to repeal the Taft-Hartley Act.

(At a request for assistance from the new Senator from Minnesota, in 1949, Tobin had me stay up for forty hours, dictating much of my labor history course, which Hubert Humphrey then elaborated on, and improved upon greatly, in a speech he gave the following day.

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Which is how I first met Humphrey. But that is off the point of the Marshall Plan; it was in my India experience that Humphrey helped me.)

My first official exposure to international labor work also began at that time, when I was used as a lecturer on American labor history and ideology, in the Foreign Service training program for new FS inductees. I used to lecture in the A-100 course. Remember the A-100 course?

Q: Foreign Service Institute.

WEISZ: The Foreign Service Institute. But at that time, I would lecture there chiefly on domestic problems. I'm going on a little long on this background, I'm afraid.

Q: It's important.

WEISZ: The reason for this is that it serves as the introduction to my work on international labor.

Q: It's important to see this in its total context.

WEISZ: Right. I don't think it's irrelevant.

Q: No.

WEISZ: So, because I was doing this lecturing on current domestic labor issues, including the serious labor problems during the Korean War, the Assistant Secretary of Labor for International Labor Affairs, Philip Kaiser, —

Q: Didn't he become ambassador to Peru?

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WEISZ: No. Kaiser was originally designated under President [John F.] Kennedy to be ambassador to Senegal and Mauritania, then later on as Minister in London, and under [President Jimmy] Carter, he was ambassador to Hungary and Austria.

Kaiser was a friend, a neighbor and a member of our car-pool; he also knew I was doing some speaking on domestic issues, and writing speeches for the Secretary. So he said to me, one day in 1950 "We are going to have a labor attach# conference in Cuba at the Hotel Havana de Cuba. I'd like for you to come down there and give your spiel on labor problems in the Korean Emergency, because the labor attach#s have to understand what we, at home, are currently facing in the labor field." So it was a pleasant week or so I spent down there.

Now we've reached 1951, and the labor attach# conference which was held in Paris. Kaiser again asked me, "How about if you go to Paris and do the same thing that you did in Havana?" Afterwards, you can come with us to Geneva, to be useful to our delegation to the June Conference of the ILO. Naturally, I said I would be delighted to do this.

But of course, Kaiser being the friend I know so well and love so much, there was a price to be paid for that opportunity to visit Paris for the first time: I would have to write a speech for him, the one he was to give to the American Club in Paris. I did this very willingly, and it had some interesting and humorous aspects to it, which I won't go into, but I'll tell you privately later.

Kaiser said, "You can prepare my Paris talk and then give your own to the labor attach# conference." I said, "Fine, because now we're coming into the fourth year of Saposs' leave, and, while I'm there in Paris, I really want to talk to him about what he plans to do, because I can't continue here indefinitely in his job."

During my stay in Paris, therefore, I had a long chat with Saposs, and learned quite a bit about his interesting job. And, I must also note, I fell in love with Paris; I had probably been

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the only engineering student at City College who had taken courses in Racine, Moliere and Corneille, which must have infected me. So, in the firm belief that I probably would never get to France again, I spent a week absorbing what I could of it.

Saposs indicated that this probably would be the last year of his stay there, and he'd know by March of 1952 whether he wanted to extend to the fifth year, but I should probably plan on looking around for another job. I had already been pretty well convinced by Clague that I could get another job in the Bureau of Labor Statistics, so I was not worried.

(It may be of interest to note, also, that the Secretary of Labor was not anxious for me to leave. He was surprised to learn that I would be leaving the Department because the person I was replacing temporarily would be returning to the job I had been holding. So he offered me a Schedule C job, a political appointment, to work directly for him; I thanked him, but said I really did not wish to take a Schedule C job; I also pointed out that it would be embarrassing for him, during the 1952 election later that year, if it were found that he had given a Schedule C job to a living and breathing member of the Socialist Party, which I then still was.

(Tobin, like so many of the local-based US politicians, mistrusted anything foreign, and thought the idea of my going to Paris was not a good one. But after his death, Mrs. Tobin sent two daughters, for their third year abroad, to study at the Marymount College there. First, however, she told the nuns there that I should be made responsible for any of the students' permitted absences from the College. In asking for my agreement to serve in this capacity, she said she did so on the basis of my Catholic trustworthiness, if not adherence!)

I went back to Washington from that labor attach# conference fascinated with what I had seen of life abroad, and with renewed interest in international affairs, and especially the labor aspect of that field. It presented an interesting possibility to me, since I had to look around for a new job anyway, so I planned on adding that field to the areas I would look

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into, should Saposs come back the following year. I spent the next nine months searching frantically for such an opportunity.

Q: As far as you know, how long had there been labor attach#s? Had they been for a long time in the Service?

WEISZ: The labor attach# service began in 1943, with the assignment of Dan Horowitz to Latin America. A few Latin American labor attach#s were appointed at that time. There will be much detail on this in a long introduction to a labor attach# oral history project which a group of us are working on.

Q: So there were some. One of the things that I think would be interesting is to find out how the Marshall Plan maybe modified or changed or expanded the whole concept of labor attach#s. I have a suspicion that it did.

WEISZ: It certainly did; in some respects the Marshall Plan labor work duplicated some aspects of regular State Department labor attach# efforts. There were areas of duplication, even serious conflict, but also many areas of cooperation that had positive results. I plan on getting into that later.

Q: That's what I want to hear.

WEISZ: So, in March of 1952, as he promised, Saposs wrote me, confirming what he had hinted at the previous June, and said it was about time, for family and other reasons, for him to come back to Washington. He suggested I begin to look around for another job for myself. In typical Saposs fashion, he said: "And by the way, if you and Yetta [my wife] want to come here, I've spoken to the authorities and they'll be happy to have you."

By this time, Shishkin's place had been taken by Nelson Cruikshank, another old AFL'er, a former minister, also out of the Socialist movement in the United States.

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Q: I knew him.

WEISZ: He was head of the labor division in Paris at that time. Saposs had undertaken, without consulting me — I guess by now, with my history of following in his footsteps at the NLRB, the WPB and the BLS, he must have felt some duty to arrange for my employment — to talk to Cruikshank. The whole thing was laid out beautifully for us, if we wanted to go to Paris.

Faced by the choice of a duller job in the Bureau of Labor Statistics, or unemployment, or returning to the NLRB, none of which was attractive compared to the Paris I'd learned to love in one brief week there, I encouraged the family to agree to a real change. They did, although with a bit of trepidation.

In June 1952, without the family, I arrived in Paris for a one-month overlap with Saposs.

Q: Good idea.

WEISZ: Which he suggested, and thought I would find useful and enjoyable. He didn't want the family to complicate my introduction to the work during my first few weeks, because we had young children who would need more attention then. Also, there was a conference of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions [ICFTU] in Berlin, in June or early July, and Saposs thought this would be a good opportunity for me to meet people I would have to deal with.

So, again in typical Saposs fashion, he introduced me around at the Conference, to all the trade union leaders, many of whom he had known for decades, saying, "You may not know this guy, but he'll be able to take my place. Don't worry about the fact that he's so young." (I was 38, and Dave would have been over 65 by then.)

While in Paris for this overlap, learning the job even before we went on to Berlin, the Secretary asked that I be called to Geneva for a few days, to help with the formal speech

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he was to give there. I came there on call from our Delegation to the ILO Conference each year, from then on, but this was the first of many such requests while I was in Paris. I enjoyed these calls to Geneva, to help with the writing of the Secretary's speech or some others, because I now had this mixture of background in U.S. domestic and international labor policy.

This first time, however, I was loath to leave my new job to go to Geneva, so I tried to decline the Secretary's request, explaining about my new duties. So he spoke to the Ambassador, and I was told that requests from a Cabinet member — even one no longer my boss — should not be declined by anyone hoping to be a diplomat!

Q: That's all it took! (Laughter)

WEISZ: That's all it took. I went over to Geneva.

Q: Who was the ambassador at this time?

WEISZ: I forget.

Q: Milton Katz?

WEISZ: No, it wasn't Katz.

Q: Draper?

WEISZ: Draper.

Q: William Draper.

WEISZ: William H. Draper, later to become the guy on population, I think. Or was that his son?

Q: No, no. General Draper himself.

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WEISZ: But I don't think that Secretary Tobin actually bothered the ambassador, personally. I think he just called my immediate boss. It would have been Cruikshank or somebody, who would have cleared it.

So I came there to write his speech. As usual, it was heavy on moral issues, something on Catholicism. He and Monsignor (then Father) Higgins, the famous labor priest, went over what I was writing, in between drinks, with Higgins making suggestions and ultimately approving the completed speech.

Then the Secretary says to me, "I want to tell you I appreciate everything you've done in the last few years, especially my speeches. I have arranged to have a plane laid on to take me to Rome tomorrow, and I want you to come with me. I am having a private audience with the Pope, and I would like for you to meet him, so I can tell him about this Jewish man who's been writing our Catholic speeches."

Q: That's wonderful.

WEISZ: I said, "Mr. Secretary, I'd love to do it. I'd be honored. I just have to be in Berlin tomorrow. My trip here for this overlap with my predecessor was with the express condition that I attend the ICFTU meeting there, beginning tomorrow."

So he said, "I know what's bothering you. You're afraid you'll have to kiss his ring. You don't have to kiss his ring." (Laughter)

Well, I squirmed out of that one and went on to Berlin, where, incidentally, the next day, the same private plane brought Tobin to put in his appearance at the ICFTU, and I introduced him around. I also took the occasion to introduce him to Saposs, who was soon to return to the Department. Tobin was very pleased with Saposs, but he never used Saposs in the same way he used me; in the brief time before Dave retired his time was taken up by foreign labor research, I believe.

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In any event, I stayed in Europe that month, learning the new job until mid-July, and finally came to Paris with the family, arriving there on August 11th, the 2nd birthday of our youngest child.

Shortly after —perhaps even before I came to Paris after the orientation visit — Cruikshank had left Paris, and his place as the Labor Division Director was taken by Joe Heath, transferred from the Athens AID Mission. Joe was the antithesis of Cruikshank and Saposs — no socialist ideological background, no understanding of international affairs, just a basic, good-hearted American trade unionist out of the AFL. I became his “advisor” and, soon, his deputy.

The job was way above Heath. He had a basic intelligence which may have led to a feeling of insecurity, because of his lack of language facility and of a substantive understanding of the issues we were facing. His excessive drinking might be attributed largely to the frustrations caused by these inadequacies.

I had to run the Division for Heath, with whom I got along very well; his gut feelings were always correct (from my point of view) and I enjoyed translating these into defensible bureaucratic proposals. Without the title of head of the division, however, I had difficulties in facing all sorts of pressures — from the Washington Headquarters, from the more conservative forces within the Paris Office, and from the CIO partisans (within the Productivity Division and the Labor Information group) who did not like Heath's AFL-oriented approach.

There were three elements within the Marshall Plan that had to do with labor. In addition to ours, there was, first, the Productivity Division, under a very competent manager who had a number of trade unionists on his staff (overwhelmingly from CIO unions).

Q: Everett Bellows.

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WEISZ: Everett Bellows. Bellows had under him this group of unionists who stressed the productivity aspects of programs which sometimes had harmful results to trade unions. While we did not have any authority over Bellows' staff, and were not at all anti-productivity, we wanted to ensure that all productivity efforts would take into account their possible disadvantage to unions. Our view was that, to be truly effective over the long term, the design of all productivity programs should take such possible negative effects into account.

Without any functional or administrative authority over the labor productivity program, we were unable to institute a more sophisticated program that would accomplish the best possible mix of productivity and worker protection results. I felt it would ultimately be more effective, even in terms of pure productivity objectives, if we could avoid creating a labor constituency vigorously opposed to the concept of productivity because of its perceived anti-labor aspects.

The third labor element in the Marshall Plan administration in Paris was also under a CIO person, Harry Martin, formerly President of the American Newspaper Guild, CIO; he was the Director of the labor information program.

Q: He was in the information part of it.

WEISZ: Yes. The Plan's missions in each of the participating Western European countries also had these three labor elements: A labor division, headed by someone from either from the AFL or the CIO; a labor productivity staff, located either within the labor division or in a separate productivity section; and a labor information staff. In countries with large missions, there might also be a labor division deputy director, usually from an American trade union different from that of the division's head.

Thus, for instance, in Greece, the labor chief was the well-known labor intellectual from the CIO Steelworkers, Clinton Golden, and his deputy had been Joe Heath, until he was

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appointed to Paris. Mike Harris, a Golden prot#g#, was the labor chief in Germany, whose unquestioned competence led ultimately to his promotion to the post of Mission chief in Sweden, I believe. Each mission also had a labor information guy who was always from the CIO, and perhaps a deputy chief from some other organization.

Q: Please forgive me my lack of knowledge of the labor movement. Had the AFL and CIO been brought together at that point?

WEISZ: Not until 1955. There were a whole lot of partisan labor pressures on us. I was not formally an AFL person, although I had been appointed by an AFL'er. I looked upon myself as more of a Government civil servant having a sympathetic interest and background in the labor movement, but fairly neutral as between the AFL and CIO. On many things I favored the AFL approach; on others, the CIO approach. I certainly had an AFL background, having been with the Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, AFL, before coming to the Government in 1935 . But I was also pretty close to the CIO.

There were serious issues within the Marshall Plan labor sections as to the policies to advocate, but most of these did not involve genuine economic or related policy differences between the labor organizations; they seemed rather to be reflections of personal and political differences, many of them brought to Europe as ideological baggage from past internal disputes within and between the AFL and CIO.

At this point I should mention the different approaches being taken by the adversaries. One issue was that of the attitude to be taken to the productivity program being pushed by the Marshall Plan authorities. As already mentioned, all of us understood the vital need to improve the productivity of the European economy; we differed on the relative importance to ascribe to the technological and social aspects. One question revolved around how to divide the benefits we hoped would accrue from increases in productivity, and on this subject all of our labor staff were of one mind as to theory, but not specific action.

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Theoretically, we were convinced that improved productivity would result in greater benefits being available for distribution among the parties. The issue was how such surpluses should be distributed: How much to workers to raise their standard of living and thus make the appeal of Communists less attractive; how much to employers as a return on investments; and how much to society as a whole, for future investment to spur continued growth. As a matter of principle, there was a general agreement that surpluses should be divided equitably, perhaps one-third each to workers, employers and governments in the form of taxes to be used to encourage societal purposes.

Some people, especially from the management side of the Marshall Plan, were not too sympathetic with the labor view; they covered up an essentially anti-labor bias with economic reasoning, arguing for a greater share for investment in the future, rather than immediate consumption. In response, we had to press for policies which would give labor a greater share, if only to ensure a rank-and-file constituency capable of an intelligent response to the Communists. In the Marshall Plan countries, the communist unions and parties concentrated on demanding immediate benefits for workers, attainable, they claimed, only if workers used the revolutionary tactics they advocated. (Of course we pointed out the anomaly of such advocacy, in the face of the belt-tightening tactics forced upon the populations of countries under Soviet control.)

Thus, at home, we would press for European aid legislation which would ensure labor participation in decision-making, so as to guarantee fair decisions in this process of dividing up an enlarging economic pie. In Europe, we would help the labor unions which conditioned their support for governmental economic policies on achieving equity in sharing the benefits of productivity gains.

It may not have been entirely fair, but I did feel that many of the CIO technicians (as against the practical unionists) were more inclined to emphasize the pure productivity objectives of the programs, at the expense of the conditioned response objectives. The basis for such an approach is the same as that advocated today: that, ultimately, gains

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would trickle-down to the under-dog. The suspicious, experienced trade unionists on both sides just treated it as, you know, “increased wages is good; any postponement of what you deserve is a sell-out”.

The more sophisticated attitude of many politically-oriented labor economists could be described as follows: “You're going to lose politically if you don't give these people a stake in their society, and this must be done quickly; a pie-in-the-sky approach guarantees failure.”

So, to sum up this matter, our disagreement with some of the technicians on the CIO side was that they were too much inclined to agree with productivity programs — and I'm giving it to you from my point of view — irrespective of whether or not there was a genuine, immediate benefit to the workers.

Complicating these intra-government disputes was the fact that the trade unions, themselves, had representatives in Paris. Victor Reuther, the brother of Walter Reuther, was the CIO European representative, posted in Paris.

Q: Not only was he there, but he's the brother of Walter Reuther.

WEISZ: Yes. Victor is a good friend, and I admire greatly what he has done as an American trade unionist and an international labor figure. But then, in Paris, and even to this day, 20 years after Walter's death, Victor looks upon himself as the representative of the Reuther spirit.

Victor had a program of his own in Europe, for which he was getting money from the American unions to carry on certain CIO-oriented projects.

Also, at this time, the AFL had a European representative in Paris, Irving Brown. Although they did not disagree on pure trade union economic issues, Brown and Reuther had a

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long history of political opposition to one another, in Washington during the War, and even further back, in the internal battles in the auto workers' unions in Michigan.

(At some point, Mel, your study should cover the history of personal and political differences that lay behind the Brown-Reuther competition in Paris in the '50's. I'll give you my own perspective on this, but you really need a fuller picture.)

My job for the government, of course, was complicated by that rivalry, and by the fact that I had the added job of overseeing — not supervising, but overseeing — what we were doing in the labor field all over the European continent, and reporting on this to the labor managers in the Washington headquarters. All of this, however, without any authority over the missions, acting as a sort of kibitzer.

Add to the trade unions and to our mission staffs, one other set of interested parties: The labor attach#s in the various American Embassies in the countries involved, where the Ambassadors had no direct line authority over the Marshall Plan missions, but, understandably, wanted at least to have a voice in how their work was to be conducted. These labor attach#s were relatively poorly-funded, while our labor officers in the aid missions were much richer; you can imagine the resulting rivalries.

I found the Paris job to be a great learning experience, frequently pleasant, especially in its cultural and social aspects, but also frustrating, in the sense that I was in the middle of all these disputes. I stayed there for five years, in successive one- or two-year terms.

Q: You were involved, being in the headquarters in Paris, with allocation of funds among the various—

WEISZ: In trying to influence that allocation, which was actually done back in Washington. I had to report back to Washington, but I visited the missions, and had a degree of influence in some missions and less in others, depending on personal friendships or differences in earlier associations. So, we had the aid program headquarters in

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Washington, the Paris administrative headquarters, and the individual country missions, staffed by a mixture of civil servants and labor skates having bi- and frequently trifurcated allegiances.

Part of the job of the Paris office was to keep an eye on what was being done by all these players, not because we didn't trust them to do the right thing — it was their business, they had their budgets — but to review the impact these actions had on the overall aid objectives.

WEISZ: I think it's relevant at this point to get into the differences between the AFL and the CIO, inside and outside the government, and especially the political aspects of the differences between them, which were having so much influence on the labor program of the Marshall Plan. Although I won't say these differences were controlling, there were many important individual instances where past internal political and trade union rivalries were to influence significantly the direction and content of the Plan's labor program. In any event, I am firmly convinced that a sophisticated analysis of the Marshall Plan's labor program requires the sort of early domestic background I propose to give here:

Victor Reuther was one of the three Reuther brothers who came out of a very well-known socialist family in West Virginia. The father, Valentine Reuther, whom I met a few times, had emigrated from Germany and was active in both trade union and political life in the United States. Three of the Reuthers' four sons went to work in the auto industry in Michigan in the '30's, because there was no work for them to do in their home state during the depression.

All three brothers were active socialists in Detroit and, working as they were in the auto plants, they also organized many of the new auto workers' plant unions, especially beginning with the sit-down strikes of the mid-'thirties. In fact, they were three of the major leaders of these strikes during this truly revolutionary period in the trade union movement.

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Walter Reuther later became the head of the United Automobile Workers' union, CIO. Victor, probably the most gifted of the brothers in terms of oratorical ability, was far from being the organizing genius that Walter was. Even today, long after his retirement, Victor is the charismatic leader of an influential opposition group within the UAW.

The third brother, Roy, happened to be the one I knew best. He died at an early age, from high blood pressure complications related to the fact that he refused to take a military deferment during World War II, to which he was clearly entitled, based on his job and family situation; he simply did not wish to accept an occupational deferment that would have been virtually automatic for anyone in his important position in the union. A tragic case; a wonderful guy, who was the only one of the brothers who got along well with the AFL, especially with Joe Keenan.

I got to know both Victor and Roy very well during the war. I didn't know Walter Reuther; met him a few times.

They were very active socialists, as I have said, until Walter Reuther felt he could not support Norman Thomas in the 1936 Presidential election. Already the leader of an important segment of the union, he felt that so much had been done for the unions under the New Deal that he could no longer support Thomas. In good conscience, he felt that he had to go along with his membership, and therefore supported Roosevelt. I think the other two brothers remained—I know Roy did—in the Socialist Party.

Within the UAW-CIO, the brothers were the most important leaders of its socialist-oriented, anti-communist group; around them, they built a caucus which also embraced a large number of independent, bread-and-butter unionists. Opposed to the Reuther caucus was the group led by members and sympathizers of the official US Communist Party, whom we called "Stalinists" in our circles, to distinguish them from the many Communist splinter groups such as the Trotskyites. This group also contained some independents who did not accept the Reuther caucus' alleged red-baiting attacks on the Stalinists.

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There was another active union of auto workers before the War, the UAW-AFL, under the leadership of Homer Martin, a populist minister/trade unionist. (This Martin was no relation to Harry Martin, who later headed the Marshall Plan Information Division.) Homer Martin had earlier headed a group within the UAW-CIO, where he had come under the influence of Jay Lovestone, the former US Communist Party General Secretary. Lovestone's later activities in the international labor field, during the Marshall Plan days, were so important that I believe it is necessary, now, to interrupt this story to give you some of his background, also.

Jay Lovestone had attained control of the Communist Party here in the United States at an early age. He was born in 1899 and died a year or so ago. By his early twenties, he was already General Secretary of the Communist Party of the USA. In about 1929, Lovestone was removed by Stalin, even though he was head of a party which was nominally independent, and of which Stalin was not even a member.

Lovestone thereupon formed a group called the CPO, the Communist Party Opposition, and still looked upon himself as a genuine communist for some time thereafter. Like so many disillusioned former Communists, however, he was soon devoting his factional talents and great energy to anti-Communist causes, especially in the trade union movement, where he found a base for the exercise of his talents.

His interest in international affairs led to Lovestone's being hired by the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, whose ranks already included many Lovestoneites who had also turned against the Communist Party. The union's President, David Dubinsky, felt he could use Lovestone's abilities very well in the international activities he was embarking upon in the mid-'thirties.

Under Dubinsky's sponsorship, Lovestone became the Secretary of the Free Trade Union Committee, which, during the war, did yeoman work in saving socialists, trade unionists,

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Jews and many others under attack from Hitler. This gained Lovestone an understandable and deserved reputation in the trade union movement.

On the domestic trade union scene, Lovestone paid great attention to situations in which Stalinist strength seemed to be growing, especially in the CIO unions. His organization had adherents in many of the unions, as well as in university, youth, and anti-Fascist organizations. On all of these turfs his people fought the Stalinists and those “innocents” unable to see the dangers inherent in uniting with them, even in good anti-Fascist causes.

For the vital auto sector of the labor movement, Lovestone was not confident that Homer Martin alone had the background or ability to lead the anti-Communist cause there, so he assigned one of his most competent adherents to Detroit. This was Irving Brown's introduction to automobile unionism, and, ultimately, to a continuing battle with the Reuther brothers on the international labor scene a decade later.

Although Brown came from a trade union family, Lovestone believed it would be better if Martin, an auto unionist like the Reuthers, should retain the nominal leadership of his group; but it was known to all that, behind the scenes, strategy and tactics were under the control of Brown, reporting to Lovestone in New York.

A graduate of NYU, I think in the field of economics, and a rather brilliant in-fighter in political and union battles, Brown supplied the theoretical and intellectual underpinnings as well as much of the organizational vigor Martin needed so badly.

Neither Lovestone nor Brown trusted the Reuther caucus' true devotion to their anti-Communist objectives, and a bitter internal dispute in the union ensued. But the political climate of the time was not one in which the Lovestone type of appeal could win against the rank-and-file strength of the opposing Reuther and Stalinist-controlled caucuses. When the Lovestoneites failed to win control of the union, the Martin faction left the CIO, on

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the grounds that the Reuther caucus was not sufficiently anti-Communist, and would co-operate with the Stalinists. Martin became head of a new union, the UAW-AFL.

During the war, therefore, there were three competing labor groups in the automobile union: Within the UAW-CIO, there were the two opposing powerful caucuses, led by the Reutherites and the Stalinists, (with a number of unaffiliated independents, including the union President) and, in the AFL, there was the UAW-AFL, the Martin union led by the Lovestoneites.

The basic difference between the Lovestoneites and the Reutherites centered on the fact that the latter stayed in the CIO and, from the point of view of the former group, “betrayed” the cause of anti-communism. There are arguments to this day as to whether the Reuther brothers, and especially Walter Reuther, were too soft on the Communists and had decided to stay in the CIO because there was some measure of political agreement between them; a more generally accepted view is that the Reuthers' tactic was based on a considered judgement that they could ultimately triumph.

As it turned out, after the War, the Reuther caucus did gain control of the union in a battle based upon both trade union and international issues. The latter related to the Communist caucus's support of the Soviet opposition to the United States' economic, political and military policies in Europe, and especially to our Marshall Plan.

It is interesting to note that, during the war, this battle between the Reutherites and the Lovestoneites moved from Detroit to Washington, chiefly to be carried out in the War Production Board, but only in the relatively few political aspects of its work, say in whether necessary civilian production should be allocated to particular areas where one group or another would be benefited. There was little substantive difference between the two groups on WPB policy matters, but even the smallest differences were exacerbated by the history of the Detroit battles, reflecting, at least in some part, the historical differences between the Detroit antagonists.

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My point here is that, a few years later, in Europe, the AFL-CIO differences were again exacerbated by the history of the Auto Workers disputes. But in Europe, with a heavier ideological and political content to our work, they came closer to the surface, and were the subject of much more public attention.

With this as the domestic background, we can turn to the international aspects of US labor's activities. The "name of the game" of internal political rivalries in our trade union movement after the war soon moved to Europe, where the action was, just as it had moved from the auto plants in Detroit to Washington, the site of the action during the war itself.

So there they were, in Paris, Victor Reuther, as the CIO representative, and Irving Brown, after brief service in the Occupation Forces in Germany as an actual official in the military government, as the AFL international representative. Each had a small staff, operating outside the government, but in constant contact with many of their union brothers in government positions in the various aid missions.

In the firm conviction that the policies they advocated for the US Government as well as the European trade unions were best for all concerned, both tried to skew US aid in directions that would serve their purposes. Frequently, conflicting policies were urged upon the European unions actively engaged in their pursuit of economic and democratic development.

[Please don't forget what I have already mentioned, that these tapes reflect my subjective views after 38 years of hindsight, and that you should get other people to give you other perspectives. I'll give you names of some who might have other views on this, if you wish.]

From my point of view, in this situation, I always felt I stood basically apart from these internecine disputes among labor people — on the side of a government policy favoring intelligent labor programs, but not wedded to any trade union faction. I know directly

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from Lovestone himself, as well as a few friends on his staff, that he and many of his cohorts believed I was in the pocket of the CIO. On the other hand, I have seen the correspondence of others, on the CIO side (as submitted to the Reuther Archives at Wayne State University), which evaluate my performance as actually favoring the AFL, or, at best, as simply being a self-serving bureaucrat.

My own view of the appropriate purpose of a labor officer is to serve the broad interests of Government, which certainly include actively trying to affect policy in a positive manner, as far as labor is concerned, but not to become a tool of a particular labor faction, or, of a general labor cause.

On this issue, as I frequently say to classes in the Foreign Service Institute, the labor attach# or AID labor mission employee, personally, need not even be pro-labor; but he should have a sympathetic interest in the proper place that labor has in developing and administering a truly effective overall government policy. That is also what I've been trying to sell to some people in the labor movement. And perhaps that's what has gotten me into trouble with some of the labor people, who feel I may have been too much of a government bureaucrat, rather than a proponent of their policies. On the other hand, my insistence on stressing the need to take labor considerations into account in administering government policies subjected me to criticism from some within Government, who felt I was really an underground labor agent of some sort.

Q: You can't win.

WEISZ: No, but it is a relatively comfortable position to be in, as far as one's conscience is concerned, and especially if you've got a good retirement pension, and don't really have to worry about criticism from any quarter!

We had this situation, then, where those in charge of the labor program — Joe Heath, the trade unionist appointed to be their representative in Government, and I, his civil service deputy — both felt our positions to be endangered after the 1952 election. And as soon

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as the Republicans came in, early in 1953, they found ample grounds to get rid of Heath, whom I liked very much, though he was not at all fully qualified for the job, didn't have the background, got into a few scrapes because of his drinking, etc. The fact that his heart was in the right place, and his instincts commendable, were not enough to save him in the new era. He just did not have the background and abilities of his predecessors, Shishkin and Cruikshank, and even they might not have survived Eisenhower's election.

The question then became: who was going to be head of the labor staff in the Paris Marshall Plan office, which the Eisenhower administration decided had to be retained for international policy reasons?

Q: Now [Harold] Stassen had taken over.

WEISZ: Yes, Stassen has taken over and has Stassenized the agency, as you remember.

Q: Since I ran it.

WEISZ: You ran the Stassenization? That's very interesting. You and I have to have a conversation on that.

Well, I was asked to head the labor staff, but I'm too good a government bureaucrat in the labor field to accept a job that I felt — and that I knew the trade unions felt — probably should be held by a trade unionist. So I accepted the job on a sort of temporary basis.

This was not a satisfactory situation, as I stressed to our Ambassador. It was not as if I did not get along with the European trade union people I dealt with; it was just that they understood the necessity of having trade union brothers from the United States in responsible positions in our government, to assure them of assistance when it was needed — assistance of a political nature which no civil servant could give them. And even after their favored candidate lost the election, our American unions were still capable of exercising considerable influence.

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On their side, our unionists were also convinced of the necessity to be represented officially in the administration of the Marshall Plan program. — And, if truth be told, they also hungered for some jobs for the boys.

But it was not until late 1954 that an official trade union representative was appointed. After extensive Washington negotiations with the trade unions, a new trade unionist came on board.

The new man was Barney Taylor, of the CIO Auto Workers, but not a particularly anti-AFL man. In any event, by that time the AFL and CIO were close to the merger which was to be consummated the following year. Differences on the ideological aspects of the foreign aid program were therefore not of great importance to anyone, except perhaps the actual antagonists in Paris, Brown and Victor Reuther, and some individuals on the Marshall Plan staff.

Although theoretically in charge of the Labor Division, Taylor was content to allow me to remain in charge of the Paris headquarters labor work, while he concentrated on the relations with the labor staffs in the country missions. I was careful to keep Taylor in constant touch with what I was doing, and I cannot think of one instance in which he overruled my actions. Taylor was confident that I knew the field; he had heard nice things about me from mutual friends at the UAW headquarters in Detroit, and we became fast friends.

Taylor wrote well (he had been editor of the UAW paper) and got along extremely well with everyone on the Government side, as well as the unions at home and in Europe. Finding the life abroad to be attractive, Taylor himself was to become a labor attach# within less than three years after his arrival in Paris. Upon the nomination of the UAW, and with his willingness to accept a position which was understood to be a permanent one, albeit at a lower level than the temporary position he held in the AID program, he became a Foreign

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Service Officer. Based in part on Taylor's knowledge of Spanish, he was appointed as labor attach# in Honduras, Tegucigalpa; later he served in Vietnam and Mexico, I believe.

My problem in Paris was twofold: First, the internal bureaucratic situation, in terms of the labor interests in the Marshall Plan administration versus other elements of the Government; and, Second, our relations with the US and European trade unions regarding the direction and degree of assistance to be given them.

I don't remember the programmatic details of the disagreements, but I recall feeling strongly about the conflicting demands for different types of support, and the fear I had that duplicate grants might be made from different sources for similar or even identical purposes. There was, especially, the problem of how the Americans, in government and out, could make sure that these smart unionists —especially the southern Europeans, Italians and French, some of the others, Belgians, also — were not taking advantage of the variety of possible sources of funds by requesting funds for purposes already funded from other sources.

So without (improperly) seeming to butt into the business of the trade unions, I had to look into this question, very diplomatically, by regular meetings with our own unionists, as well as the Europeans with whom I had official dealings in the allocation of assistance.

While I didn't have any direct knowledge of what the CIA was doing, I had enough feelers out to realize that some of the Europeans unions were getting money from sources they did not wish me to know about. The Greeks and the Turks, operating in the delicate areas where our military policies confronted the Soviets most directly, were most likely recipients of secretly-allocated funds, allegedly through the AFL representative.

Q: Italy.

WEISZ: But also, as I've noted already, Italy, France, some of the others, and the ICFTU [International Confederation of Free Trade Unions] itself, headquartered in Brussels,

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to which were affiliated most of the democratic trade unions in Western Europe, the Americas and Australasia. Brussels was also the headquarters of the IFCTU [International Federation of Christian — mostly Catholic — Trade Unions], comprising unions in Italy, France, Switzerland and the Benelux countries, chiefly, where there were strong Christian political parties.

Here, for your purposes, a second set of background notes must be introduced: I have already mentioned the division within US unions between the anti-communists who had actually been communists — Lovestone & Co.— on the one hand, and virtually all others.

This second group constituted a disparate amalgam of anti-communists who had never been communists, as well as independents, many of whom refused to see the relevance of communist influence on trade union issues and activities. Within this second group, even the more sophisticated anti-communists, like the Reuthers and others in the CIO, had never had that searing experience within the Communist Party and the Comintern, that would make them as paranoid — and so dedicated —as were the Lovestoneites. It is therefore useful, at this point, to see how these divisions were played out on the international scene, when the US unions began their post-war international activities.

During the War, the Reuther people and many others among the non-communists in the CIO, were willing to work with their communist opponents in the CIO on international cooperation with our allies, the Russians, even though the Russians didn't have a democratic trade union movement. The attitude of these leaders was similar to that of the US Government in that respect — to accept the fact of life that successful prosecution of the war required such concessions at the level of governmental relations.

In general, however, the CIO officialdom carried over this attitude to their relations on the trade union front. (Nevertheless, many individual CIO leaders, Reuther and the CIO General Secretary, Jim Carey, for example, did go so far as to condemn the acceptance by the Soviets' so-called “trade unions”, of the widespread violations civil rights and

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political freedom in that country. But this was always done in the spirit of not endangering the stability of the political apple-cart, a most important vehicle in the effort to defeat Hitler.)

The AFL had a different view, born out of the greater conservatism of the old-line unions, and the influence of the Lovestone group of hard-line anti-communists who distinguished carefully between the need for our governments to cooperate in the war effort, but opposed extending that attitude to any Soviet official labor bodies. And the international policy of the AFL-CIO, after the merger, generally followed the old AFL line.

Incidentally, this attitude, which persisted over the entire period until Glasnost, has benefited the International Department of the AFL-CIO considerably in recent years; it has greater influence with many of the emerging, genuinely independent, trade unions in the former Soviet bloc nations than those unions which had recognized the official communist official bodies.

So, towards the end of the war, we see a new organization formed, called the World Federation of Trade Unionists (WFTU), which looked forward to continued trade union cooperation in the post-war period.

The CIO, with the rationale I have described earlier, joined the new organization, despite the impending CIO split-up which was to result in the expulsion or departure of the pro-communist unions. For the time being — during the final years of the war and the early post-war years — both sides existed in relative comfort in the WFTU. The organization was seen by all except the AFL unions as an appropriate forum for cooperation on labor issues, just as the United Nations was intended to be on inter-governmental matters.

The AFL, of course, had refused to join the WFTU, a body they felt would be completely communist-dominated, conforming to the earlier experience of many of its own unions, in earlier attempts to work with communists. Those had resulted in disaster after World War I, as soon as communist political objectives were challenged. Soviet policies thus

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became an important issue between the AFL and CIO. I seem to be giving you part of my course on international labor, (Laughter) but I think it's relevant to an understanding of the Marshall Plan labor program.

So we had the World Federation of Trade Unionists, with an overwhelming majority of communist membership. The Soviets alone affiliated for virtually its entire labor force, to which were added the pro-soviet unions in other parts of the world. The CIO, including its Canadian members, plus the democratic European unions, presented far from any meaningful challenge to these forces. The result could have been predicted: the political differences which were soon to emerge would threaten the future of this united front of democratic and communist trade unions.

The breaking point in the WFTU came about as a result of the Marshall Plan. The CIO, a staunch supporter of President Truman, agreed with the latter's foreign policy; however, its communist unions followed the (Soviet) party line.

CIO president Philip Murray, head of the steelworkers' union, and originally from John L. Lewis' mineworkers, was an anti-communist, but he had so far refused to discriminate against communists, many of whom had been so effective in the CIO's early days. His staff was a curious amalgam of socialists, independents, communists and ex-communists, many of them appointed by Lewis, Murray's mentor and former CIO president. Murray's lawyer, and a trusted advisor, was a communist, undeclared as such until appearing before a Congressional committee years later; and many top CIO staffers were communists.

But Murray was above the battle among "you guys who came out of the radical movement." John L. Lewis had originally said, when he was cautioned about using so many communists in important positions in the CIO, "Who gets the fox? The hound or the hunter? I will control them." Until the Soviets showed their ability to control, and even to

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exercise disciplinary powers over some of the CIO unions, Phil Murray shared that benign view.

But when the problem arose as to whether we should help Europe, and the Marshall Plan became a vital part of US foreign policy, the CIO unions were sharply divided. The CIO's anti-communist leaders conducted a series of hearings in which it was discovered that communist caucuses within some unions determined their political policies, and carried these out without realistically consulting their memberships. (Incidentally, most historians of the period do not give sufficient importance to these internal CIO hearings. They prefer to attribute the split in the CIO to red-baiting on the part of reactionary forces, especially those in the Congress during the McCarthy period, disregarding the democratic investigatory processes within the CIO itself.)

More than any other factor, it was this exposure of the fact that some of its unions were controlled by an outside group's caucus decisions, that led to the expulsion of a number of CIO unions. Some left voluntarily when their communist leaderships were given the choice of following CIO policy decisions or continuing their undemocratic practices. In some important cases, however, the communist leaders preferred to leave the Communist Party, remaining in the CIO, and serving effectively as trade union witnesses in some of the internal investigations of communist tactics.

So it was on that issue of foreign policy, rather than on some more basic "bread and butter" question, that the CIO split. And it was precisely on the international facet of that same issue that the WFTU was exposed as a tool of Soviet foreign policy. This is how that came about:

It is not often remembered that the original Marshall Plan proposal presented to the Europeans was not directed to Western Europe alone, but to the entire continent, inviting all countries to join together to pool their requests for American aid. The Soviet Union saw a danger in this as representing a threat to its control over Central Europe. When

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Czechoslovakia, with its history of inter-War democratic structure, decided to ask for American aid, it was faced by strong pressure from Moscow to withdraw the request.

Ultimately, of course, Stalin decided that such independence could not be countenanced, and he ordered the Soviet Union to exercise force, and its army destroyed any vestige of Czechoslovakian democracy. It was this demand that Czechoslovakia withdraw its application for Marshall Plan aid that was the basis for the split-up of the WFTU.

Q: About that time, in Czechoslovakia, [Foreign Minister Jan] Masaryk died under very suspicious circumstances.

WEISZ: No doubt in the mind of anybody who knows anything about it, that he was killed by agents of the occupying power, although they announced it to be a suicide.

In 1948, then, we see another watershed period, in which many persons all over the world who had sided with the communists for a number of reasons — political innocence, honest conviction, opportunism, or a combination of these —decided they had enough. This was only the latest of a series of such political watersheds, characterized by sudden revelation:

— As early as 1905, we see many of the social democrats in the Russian underground revolutionary movement turning against Lenin on the basis of reading between the lines of his political “theses”, and detecting therein his essential purpose to turn a dictatorship of the proletariat into a dictatorship over the proletariat;

— In 1918, the Social Democrats who had joined with the Leninists in the successful 1917 Revolution against the Czar, denounced Lenin's moves towards dictatorship, but only after it was too late to take control away from him and his allies;

— In 1923, a dear friend of mine, Angelica Balabanoff, whom I had met in the United States in the thirties, and came to know very well during my Marshall Plan days, describes her own epiphanic revelation in her biography. After an association with Lenin since

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the unsuccessful revolution of 1905, and after her service as the first Secretary of the Comintern, she, too, was finally disillusioned with Lenin and Leninism, and left the Soviet Union just before his death;

— And, of course, after Lenin's death, Stalin did not change the direction of Lenin's purpose, but continued it, gradually increasing the pace — and cruelty — of the process of dealing with actual and perceived enemies: Trotsky, expelled in the mid-'twenties; Lovestone in the late 'twenties; the “trials” and execution of the old Bolsheviks in the 'thirties; the war-time murder of Jewish opponents of the pact with Hitler; and, after the 1948 events in Czechoslovakia, the execution of those involved in the “doctors' plot in the early 'fifties;

— And after Stalin's death, there was still no change in the accepted logic of Lenin's basic thesis that democracy was not to be trusted. The Hungarian democratic government was overthrown by Soviet troops in 1956, and that of the “Prague Spring” movement in Czechoslovakia in 1968;

— Etc., etc., with the inherent contradictions in the Soviet system only beginning to surface with the publication of the Khrushchev tapes of his “secret” speech of 1956, which resulted in his downfall. And, finally (we hope it is finally) the economic reality of the Soviet system's inability to survive without some measure of democratic participation by its people in the life of the country.

So, the question can be raised by any serious student in this field: what kept these people who left the communist movement at each of these watershed periods — what kept them in the movement all those years until their disillusionment?

Q: What kept them in after the Russian pact with Hitler? What kept them in after the invasion of Finland? And so on, all the way through.

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WEISZ: All the way through. In one of the tapes that I will be preparing, I will go through the various rationalizations and explanations.

Q: It would be fascinating.

Yes, but I'm afraid we've gone way beyond your original purpose in asking me about the labor element in the administration of the Marshall Plan. Nevertheless, I believe the historical background I have given so far supplies some necessary scenery for an understanding of labor policies in this period.

As I said before my diversion into the history of communist policy, it was on this issue of Soviet insistence that the WFTU reject any American aid of the comprehensive type envisioned in the Marshall Plan, that the democratic unions broke out of the WFTU. The combination of need for economic aid, and realization that no communist-controlled organization could really countenance democratic participation, led the overwhelming majority of Western unions to leave the WFTU. With the AFL now happy to join with them, they formed the ICFTU in 1949. So we now had both major American unions (as well as some important independents —the Mineworkers and Machinists come to mind) — in one international trade union federation.

WEISZ: What I have given you so far in this interview, is some personal background, and a discussion of the structure of the labor element in the Marshall Plan program, and the political context in which labor participation in our Government existed. I have also discussed — perhaps in greater detail than warranted for your purpose — the very important part played in this period by communists, by their activities, and by the response to these in the labor aspects of the Marshall Plan administration.

My one criticism of Brown in that respect was the manner — not fact or purpose — of his distribution of funds which the Italian and French communists, especially, were claiming came from the U.S. Government. I'm not saying that, at that time, the U.S. Government

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should have admitted being the source of covert support for some unions; faced by the funds available to our communist enemies on the labor front, there was no other source but government funds to do this necessary work. I simply felt that Brown was too obvious in the way he exposed his bankroll, and that, in selecting recipients of his munificence, he occasionally mistook greed for genuine support.

The whole burden of my view with respect to this period is that the people who are writing its history should understand the political and economic context in which our government acted, in both its open and secret operations in the labor field. Currently, judgments are more likely to be made in the context of very different current circumstances.

I would have preferred that all our support for democratic unions could have been openly made, but that would have defeated its purpose, just as it would have defeated the Soviet Union's purposes to have announced publicly the degree of support — much more than ours to our friends — it gave communist causes in Western Europe.

Later on, after the exposures in '67 of people like this — what's his name?

Q: Tom Braden.

WEISZ: — Braden's exposures, and after a period of time has gone by, I think it's certainly better that we should have shifted from covert to open support of democratic unions through the AFL-CIO institutes. At that time, however, although I never inquired directly, I suspected that the AFL was distributing abroad much more of its treasury than was accounted for in its financial records.

The only anecdote I can tell you that hints of an admission by Irving Brown that he might be a source of CIA funds to anti-communist causes is this: In one of my conversations with Victor Reuther, he told me that Philip Murray had just sent the Paris CIO office \$50,000 for a labor program of some sort; I think it was for Italy.

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Let me pause again, now, to go into this very instructive question of the differences between the AFL and CIO on the issue of how to deal with the Italian trade unions, where the communist federation was by far the strongest. The same issue was presented in France, and some other countries, but Italy was the most important illustration of the problems facing both the Marshall Plan and the trade unions in their efforts to support democratic unionism in the face of overwhelming communist trade union power.

The CIO people, just as they had done earlier on the question of joining the WFTU, as well as, still earlier, in the internal battles in the CIO and the UAW, felt it possible to stay within a larger organization to battle the communists, and had therefore joined the WFTU. The rationale was: you couldn't win any fight against the communists by remaining outside; you couldn't be seen to be an agent of the American government by taking the "reactionary" position of breaking the unity which won us the war, etc.

The AFL'ers, on the other hand, took the more principled position that free trade unions should not delude themselves that they could be effective if they joined with organizations controlled by governments. (Over the years, of course this principle was followed much more rigorously with respect to unions controlled by communist governments than by many developing countries that were very far from being democratic.)

Some of the more sophisticated European countries had still another view: that one had to stay with the untutored masses, join the WFTU, and constitute a democratic force within it, so as to expose the true nature of Soviet trade union policy when the expected conflict would arise. The Norwegians, with their history of joining the Comintern in the '20's and then quitting it on principled grounds, were the leading (secret) proponents of this view.

The disagreement between the AFL and the CIO, and their representatives in Paris, Brown and Reuther, was on how far to go in cooperating with unions that might be under communist control, but claimed they weren't communist, or at least contained elements which claimed to be moving towards independence.

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There certainly were some leaders within the Italian and the French trade unions who expressed independent views, and it was necessary to determine the genuineness of those views. Victor felt he had to show some measure of cooperation with them, but his man on Italy was a fellow who was much more friendly with the communists, and later turned out to be something of an opportunist.

Now, in this situation I found myself as the Marshall Plan officer recommending educational, training and other open assistance to labor unions and to the ICFTU, without official knowledge of what other funds were being distributed covertly for identical — or contrary — purposes. So I felt it desirable to find out the extent of US trade union support for those potentially independent leaders of the pro-communist Italian trade unions.

Here's Victor Reuther, then, telling me that he's going to go along with one of these programs that “you guys are so damn suspicious of. I think it's worth it.” And, he tells me, Phil Murray, has sent him \$50,000 for this purpose. (Years later Reuther was to admit publicly that, on this one occasion, he had accepted CIA funds.)

I put that in the back in my head, figuring that I'm not going to recommend giving duplicate funds to the Italian mission for such a project, because they'd be collecting the money from both sides, and I don't even know if they should get it from one side.

The next time I saw Irving—and none of what Reuther was going to do was secret, only the true source of the funds — I said to Irving, “ what are your views on this project ?”

“Do you believe Victor got \$50,000 from Phil Murray?” says Irving. “Yeah, that's what he said,” I reply.

Irving: “You know what the problems are in the CIO. [The CIO, smaller than the AFL and just coming out of the expensive split, was known to be in serious financial difficulties.] Where are they going to get \$50,000 to operate one of those crazy schemes of Victor's?

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That is ridiculous. You know better than to think that Phil Murray could, or would give that type of scarce money for this."

I said, "Well, who else could have given Vic that money? Irving, you just admitted to me that you get money from the CIA."

He said, "What do you mean?"

I said, "Look. I know enough about the U.S. Government to know we would never give \$50,000 to the CIO without giving much more than that to the AFL." (Laughter) He didn't say anything.

My ultimate judgment as to the impact of our labor program in the Marshall Plan is that it was of great value. I think even the competition between the AFL and CIO, and also that within the different labor elements in the Marshall Plan, on balance, had net positive impacts, because the many genuine achievements could not have been realized without labor participation in the Plan, and such participation would not have been practical absent the rivalries. The rebirth of democratic trade unions in what had been an endangered Europe, made it all worthwhile.

There were other negative aspects of the labor program —serious disagreements in England, for instance, between trade unionists in the aid mission and the labor attach#, who had much less money at his disposal.

Competition was also frequent between a labor attach#, who felt above the trade union battles, and an aid mission chief, pressed by the labor person on his staff who was more inclined to advocate an active US government role.

It was almost like the disagreement between two types of people, one saying, "Don't stand there. Do something!" and the other saying, "Don't do anything. Just stand there." Sometimes one is right and sometimes the other. There's no doubt about it, that we were

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occasionally too much involved in essentially domestic matters, but there were other times when we neglected to use our influence and funds appropriately.

Q: On a case-by-case basis.

WEISZ: Right. I would submit that there was a function for both the labor attach# and the aid mission labor officer. Later on, as you know, I had an experience on the other side of the diplomatic table, as the labor counselor in India, where I had some influence over the labor work in that very large AID mission, as well as on the labor information program of our USIS operation. But in the Marshall Plan period, the Embassy labor attach# did not have any administrative authority, or even formal functional influence over other labor officers. Instead, you had this unresolved competition.

Q: The competition between your Marshall Plan—

WEISZ: No, no. Competition at the individual country missions, not at the Marshall Plan headquarters in Paris — between the Embassy's labor attach# and the labor person in the aid mission, generally more of an activist and closer to the operating level of the trade unions.

Q: The labor attach# in the embassy, then, could have been either from the Labor Department or could have been from the regular Foreign Service, is that correct?

WEISZ: Or from a trade union. A few of the labor attach#s were from the trade unions, appointed upon the nomination of a trade union, and found to be qualified for a temporary appointment in the Foreign Service reserve, after a State Department procedure which, of course, included the usual security clearance. (Oliver Peterson, a highly qualified professional, with a Ph.D. as well as excellent trade union credentials, was our labor attach# in the important Brussels post, for instance; I will speak of him later.)

Q: But he was under the State Department.

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WEISZ: Right. In some cases, a few of these trade unionists appointed as labor attach#s were so busy trying to get into the regular Foreign Service, that they would forget their origins. So we never knew whether their emphasis on strict diplomatic procedures resulted from personal ambition or from some genuine concern for proper policy. But I still submit that there was frequently a positive outcome from this competition between the Embassy labor attach# and the aid mission labor specialist. I can illustrate it best if I describe a specific case, the situation in Austria.

In Austria, we had a good, rank and file trade unionist in charge of the Marshall Plan labor program; he had little theoretical background in trade unionism, nor did he have a full understanding of the essential differences between the socialist orientation of Austrian labor and the pure “bread and butter” policies of his American union — he just wanted to do what he could to help the Austrian unions, which he had grown to love and respect.

As the labor attach# in the Embassy, we had Irwin Tobin, an experienced Foreign Service officer who came out of the State Department's headquarters group supervising the work of all the labor attach#s serving abroad, in the office that is now called S/IL, Special Assistant to the Secretary of State for International Labor Affairs.

Did you know him? He was a neighbor of yours here, two doors down from my house, an excellent fellow, who came into the Foreign Service after wartime work in some do-good pacifist outfit, I think. Without a trade union background, he nevertheless had an excellent appreciation for the positive role of labor considerations in US diplomacy. Tobin was a very engaging person, a bit straight-laced, but from my point of view, a perfect example of an effective labor attach#; that is, one who was not necessarily pro-labor, but had a sympathetic interest for what labor should be doing, could be doing, in Austria, especially in the unique circumstances existing there at the time, because of the four-power occupation which was still in force.

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As I have said, we looked upon Austria as being very important to us, in view of the vigorous efforts of the Soviets to at least neutralize the country in a sort of Finland-type of relationship to the Soviet Union.

I came to Vienna for the first time just before May Day, in 1953. Although there was a clear official purpose to the trip (we were trying to arrange exchanges between American and Austrian trade union and labor ministry officials) I chose that particular time in order to observe the rival Socialist and Communist May Day parades as they wended their ways through the four occupation sectors of the city, then still in existence.

[An interesting memory of that trip: Our ambassador there at the time was the Eastern Europe expert "Tommy" Thompson. The first thing that happened upon my arrival was that I was invited by the Austrian President to be on the reviewing stand at the Socialist May Day parade. (Some years earlier I had arranged a meeting for him in Washington, and when one of the trade unionists told him I was coming, he remembered me as one of the few living and breathing socialists — albeit by that time a severely backsliding one — he had met in the States.) So I went to Thompson and I said, "What do I do about this." "You go up there" he replied, "What the hell? You don't want to insult our important ally!"

[It was an exciting experience. The reviewing stand was right at the line between the American and Soviet sectors, and these brave people had much cause to worry about exposing themselves in that way, displaying anti-communist posters and shouting defiance to the watching Soviet soldiers and their Austrian communist supporters. It was one of the great events in my career, but it had little to do, directly, with my duties in the Marshall Plan program.]

But it was here in Vienna that I learned about the advantages of having a good labor attach# operating separately but very effectively, supplementing the work of an aid mission labor officer.

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In the course of visiting trade union and labor ministry officials, planning our exchange program, one of these officials gave me this insight into his relationship with the labor attach#:

“This labor fellow in the aid office is very nice, but he doesn't know anything about Austria, or Austrian labor, or anything like that. He's a rather conservative American trade unionist.” (He wasn't; he was from the CIO. But they thought he was conservative because he was a typical American, untutored in some of the main characteristics of foreign labor movements. I forget his name; I remember him as doing rather well, in Turkey, after his early experience in Austria.)

“He's always, almost automatically, on our side” continued the Austrian official, “but when I want your government's help on anything, I simply can't go to him, because if he presents my case to his mission chief, it would be regarded simply as just another effort on the part of a labor guy to get something for labor. But, when I explain what I need to the labor attach#, if I'm able to convince him about it, he is the man who can push it through the Embassy and the Washington bureaucracy. This is precisely because he is not an automatic supporter of a labor cause, and he has the influence with the mission, and if necessary, with the Ambassador.”

I believe that is a good example of my point about the different functions of embassy and aid labor staff, and even that some rivalry between them, can serve positive, complementary purposes.

Q: Back to the example in Austria. Wasn't it true that the Marshall Plan labor person was able to have more “goodies” that he could give to participant training in the United States?

WEISZ: Absolutely. On that visit in 1953, I arranged for an important “goodie” of that sort. The research director of the Austrian trade union movement, a trained economist, had been recommended to me as a good prospect for a study tour of trade union research

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activities in the United States. Tobin supported the idea, and I interviewed the young man, Heinz Kienzl, and arranged for him to have his first trip to the United States, routing him around the country to visit some of the model union research departments, as well as those of the AFL and CIO headquarters in Washington. (You will remember that I had contacts with these folks because of my work at BLS, and Saposs was back there to help with this important project.)

Kienzl is no longer in the trade union movement; he moved from there to a number of important government positions when the socialists came to power. And he is now the head of the Bank of Austria! So, when I came to Austria in 1984 as a USIA AMPART, to lecture on labor problems, it was the head of the Austrian bank who ran a dinner in my honor, with the chief bankers of the country, because he said he wanted them to learn about some of the things being done in America in terms of labor participation.!

By the way, the finance minister of Germany in the recent Social Democratic government there is another former trade union research man, who was a member of our staff in the Marshall Plan in Paris! He just retired. And still another member of our staff at that time turned out to be the labor minister in Greece, who was my host on still another AMPART assignment there, a few years ago. There are many similar examples of former labor personnel in Europe whose training we had arranged, and who later held leading positions in their countries.

And, since the Marshall Plan days, similar cases could be pointed to in the developing countries, where labor leaders who visited the United States on labor programs became political leaders in their nations. I only wish we appreciated better the long-term value of such training, and the desirability of investing funds for this purpose in Eastern Europe today.

Q: That is a very important point.

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WEISZ: Yes.

Q: I don't think we quite captured, though, what were some of the specific things that the Marshall Plan labor program did. One thing, of course, was sending participants to the United States.

WEISZ: We financed training, education. Not only bringing people to the United States, which was, I think, a lesser role than the educational programs we ourselves conducted with the cooperation of European institutions, or financed for others to conduct. There again is an example. We spent many thousands of dollars on helping unions to run institutes, about such trade union basics as how to organize, bargain, keep books, collect dues, conduct research, and the relationship between trade union objectives and the broader economic problems of the economy such as industrial productivity.

These were part of normal trade union work, in the overall process of rebuilding the total infrastructure of Western Europe. But our Government had to support this work because neither the European governments, nor their own trade unions, nor our trade unions could afford to do so. And the situation was urgent in both economic and political terms, not to speak of the actual military threat which the Soviets really represented in those days.

The object of the Marshall Plan was, in essence, to free the flow of what we called the three Ms: manpower, money, materials. We were convinced then (as we are in Eastern Europe today) that, ultimately, true economic and political stability could be guaranteed only if there were free labor markets, free flow of money, in the financial markets, and of materials, in the sense of free trade. Or, at least, we should adopt policies which would approach those ideal conditions.

It was within that overall program, that the labor division worked on the manpower segment. However, we could not achieve, say, the free flow of Italian labor to where they were needed in the Belgian mines, or Greek workers and Turkish workers to Germany,

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unless we approached conditions of freer trade and commerce. So our objectives and the possibility for achieving them were intertwined with those of free markets in trade and finances. For instance, arrangements had to be made for the transfer of money from the Turks who earned it, back to their families in Turkey.

A major purpose of the Marshall Plan, therefore, was to encourage the participating countries to get together in the OEEC, cooperating in their economic planning so that they could rationalize their demands upon us ("Marshalling" their resources and shortfalls, you might pun). They had to get together to deal with us. And it is precisely that element, sadly, which is absent in Eastern Europe today.

Q: They're not getting together. People talk today about a Marshall Plan for Eastern Europe, but the conditions are very, very different until they themselves get together. That was the big difference. There was a big battle within the State Department before the Marshall Plan was set up, as to what they were going to do. Some people in the State Department said, "We'll just tell them what to do." But the saner and wiser heads said, "Wait a minute. They have to get together and decide what they want us to do."

WEISZ: This was Harriman's contribution. But I thought [Dean] Acheson agreed with that.

Q: Oh, yes. Acheson did. Bohlen did. It was Clayton who was mostly on the other side, because Clayton was a doer. He was a businessman. "Let's get it done."

WEISZ: There's a little bit of that "do it for them" today. I'm a little worried about it. For instance — and it is impossible to discuss the past without clarifying it in terms of the present situation — in the Marshall Plan days, we examined OEEC proposals pragmatically: would the requests being made, if granted, contribute to our common objectives of freeing the flow of labor, trade and finances.

We did not look into the ideological base on which the various demands claimed to be grounded. So, we supported both the practical programs proposed by the socialist

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democracies of the Scandinavian countries, as well as those of the more capitalist-oriented governments of France and Italy, and of the conservative, much less democratic governments of Turkey, Greece and even Portugal. And — to emphasize my point — we even consistently helped those governments, like Great Britain and Germany, where power alternated between labor and conservative forces, as well as those like the Netherlands and Belgium, where governments consisted of delicate balances of ideologically conflicting parties.

Our questions were limited to the chances that democratic forces would be strengthened, and the prospects that more stable economies would be enhanced, not the theories or ideologies of their proponents. Thus, by economic assistance, we hoped to avoid the tragic policies of economic reparations which had been followed, after World War I, when peoples' misery led to dictatorship and war.

Today, in Eastern Europe, I fear we are stressing too much the concept of free market capitalism as the sine qua non of creating economically stable democratic societies. We seem to be saying that the downfall of the Soviet economy was due to the failure of Lenin and his successors to see the inherent wisdom of economists such as Milton Friedman and his coterie of free marketeers.

From my point of view, the failure of Soviet-style “socialism” can be attributed more appropriately to its failure to institute the curative medication of democracy, with its built-in corrective devices for overcoming the extremes of either the social welfare state or the unbridled freedom to exploit. Why should we accept the evil nature of Lenin's “socialism” rather than the benign nature of Sweden's version of the term, which accepts its perfectibility through the democratic process of giving up power? Are we realistic in trying to sell our system of accepting 9% unemployment to other countries, where many of its citizens can already point to the fact that “at least, under Stalin and Hitler we all had jobs.”?

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Q: I thank you very much.

WEISZ: I thank you very much for forcing me to think about this history, and especially about its relationship to current issues of international aid policies.

Q: I will give you a copy of this tape.

WEISZ: Good. As I said earlier, before I got off on all that comparative stuff, in 1953, with the election of Eisenhower, and the decision by the government to continue the Marshall Plan—was it ever in doubt?

Q: Not really, I don't think.

WEISZ: Was Stassen the first Eisenhower AID administrator? I don't think he was the first administrator under the Republicans, was he?

Q: Yes.

WEISZ: I thought there was somebody in between. There was a period of time in between, because I know that when Stassen came in, he decided to embark on cutting of personnel, which may have been necessary because of financial problems. He politicized that, as you know.

Q: He not only wanted to cut, but he also had to, under the law. He had to reduce by 27% to 28%.

WEISZ: Yes, and that process of reduction worried us very much in the labor field. I should say at this point that my day-to-day operations in that period were divided into supervising a staff in Paris and reporting to Washington on the work of the various missions, insofar as it related to our overall responsibilities — we still had some Paris-based educational, training and housing programs. Another function of the Paris Labor Division staff was to

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represent U.S. Government interests on the manpower committees, and a couple of other minor committees, of both OEEC and NATO. That was an important job.

Q: *Very.*

WEISZ: At first I was merely supervising the work of a small staff on manpower, part of the labor division. We also had a staff on housing, active in helping establish union-based workers' housing programs. We had three people at one time working on encouraging and devising housing plans, under a very competent city planner who had worked with US unions, Donald Monson.

Q: *The housing program was under labor?*

WEISZ: Trade union housing. But that included not only trade union housing programs, but also general cooperative housing programs to benefit the entire population of many of these countries. So it was pretty broad. I really should look at my records to see what else.

But on the manpower side, we had official committee representatives, perhaps me, or maybe it was one of the two guys working for us on manpower. One of these was David Christian, a Labor Department manpower expert, and his deputy was Bob Hubbell, from the Bureau of the Budget, I think. The scope of the Manpower Committees of the OEEC and NATO included coordinating the various countries' recruitment and training programs, their overall labor market activities, and the general manpower work of the labor ministries in the OEEC countries. I, myself, worked on the scientific manpower aspects of the countries — and was, each alternate year, the chairman of the highly classified NATO Scientific Manpower Committee.

I also did considerable work on the industrial relations side of labor operations in the various countries, because of my NLRB experience; this was done in cooperation with our ILO Delegation in Geneva, and probably was the background which helped me become,

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after retirement from State in 1972, the director of the new Industrial Relations Division of the OEEC's successor organization, the OECD.

When Stassen came in with a need to cut down people, I was told that I had to fire one of the two persons on the manpower side of our operations. I said, "Fine. Let's let Hubbell go. He has a job in the Budget Bureau back there."

Q: He had re-employment rights, probably.

WEISZ: Re-employment rights in the Budget Bureau. And besides, he was the junior guy. Christian was a remarkably competent fellow, with better manpower experience than Hubbell; he who had been recruited much earlier, from the National Securities Resources Board, I believe. In any event, he did not have any re-employment rights.

This would have been early in '53? Later in '53? Whenever it was. The word came back that it was not to be Hubbell, but was to be Christian who would have to be let go. I said, "I can understand that we have to cut one person, but I have no reason to feel that it should be Christian, because he's more experienced, etc., and besides, he doesn't have another job." (Later, it did take him quite some time to get a job, which he finally did, back in the Labor Department.)

The word came back that the decision had been made by Mr. Stassen personally. However, if I wished, I could have five minutes with Stassen himself, to discuss the matter during a brief visit to Paris which the Director was to be making shortly. Ultimately, I was informed, it would be Christian who would be let go, unless I could convince Mr. Stassen otherwise.

I called Christian in and said, "What the hell is this?" By that time, of course, we knew all about McCarthyism and all that, and it was rumored that at least some of those chosen to be among the required number of dischargees were caught in that enormous net which embraced a few Communist fellow travelers, protected by a vast number of total

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innocents. Christian said that he had a security problem, because when he worked in some agency, perhaps it was the NSRB, he had an office-mate named Remington.

Q: Ah-oh.

WEISZ: And he said, "I had nothing to do with Remington particularly, and you know my views. I'm sort of a liberal Democrat." And, of course, I did know him very well, and he certainly wasn't any communist. So I said, "Well, if that's all it is, I will tell that to Stassen."

So I had my five minutes with Stassen, which probably was less than five minutes.

Q: Here, in Washington?

WEISZ: In Paris. He came there. If you know anything about this, I'd like to know it.

Q: No.

WEISZ: I was called into his office, and I said, "If it's a question of the quality of his work, I can just tell you that Christian is better qualified than the person you want to keep; also, he's the senior of the two." I think at that time he, Christian, was the official American representative on at least one of the OEEC committees I've mentioned.

Q: Christian?

WEISZ: Christian was. I said, "Now, if it's not the quality of his work, then it's politics. If it's politics, believe me, he is less of a danger to this government than I am, because I am a socialist and have been for years. If you want to get rid of radicals, you get rid of me." (I don't want to give you the impression that I was so damn brave; I had re-employment rights at the Labor Department, and they had been talking to me about coming back.) "Why keep me? And if it's quality, why keep Hubbell?"

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So he said, "Mr. Weisz, I don't have to explain to you why we're letting Christian go or why we're keeping you." (Stassen was willing to keep me, I believe, because of the trade union business; they had not yet decided what their relations would be with the labor group, since it would be quite embarrassing to cut their ties with this important element in the aid program. Either that, or perhaps he just had enough troubles already on his plate. Besides, I had a well-known record as an anti-communist.)

I said, "Well, I'm not going to sign any form designating Christian for discharge".

He said, "That's fine. I'll sign." (Laughter) So he signed off on it, or Ambassador Draper, or whoever signed off. At least I could go back to my friend, Dave Christian, and tell him that.

At that point, since I didn't want to become the head of the division, and didn't feel I should, I said, "I will step down and be Acting Director of the division, and my full job will be as representative on the manpower committees, with the other, supervisory work performed in the acting capacity, until a director is formally designated."

A year later, they abolished Hubbell's position in the next personnel cut, and I remained as the only manpower employee. I took a down—not a downgrade. I kept my grade and my salary, but in the hierarchy, I was simply acting head of the division and representative to the two committees. That's what happened.

It stayed that way until the end of '54, when this new labor division director was appointed. Everyone was outraged at an inexperienced person being appointed "over" me. The other division directors, not knowing I had refused the job of division head and the reason therefor, went up to Ambassador Draper's deputy, who was our chief—I forgot what his name was—and complained that I wasn't getting the recognition I deserved. So he had to call on me at the staff meeting to explain that I had voluntarily taken this downgrade.

I found the manpower work fascinating — I had had some relevant experience in the War Production Board — and I had been teaching labor subjects at American U., so I knew it

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pretty well. And it had the added advantage, since I'm crazy about the theater, of requiring me to go to London every six weeks for a meeting of our committee with the chairman, which I always planned on a Friday so that I could spend the weekend seeing plays.

Q: How wonderful! (Laughter)

WEISZ: Isn't that great? As a result of which It added to my collection of 60 years' worth of play bills which I donated to the Kennedy Center recently and got a valuable tax break for it.

So that, from '53 to '57, I was really handling labor work as a side thing — I mean the trade union aspects of labor work — and was covering manpower, although they were very closely connected, especially the Manpower Committee of the OEEC, more actively.

That leads me to the end of my service, in Paris, in 1957.

Q: You were in Paris, then, from 1952 to '57.

WEISZ: Mid-'57, when we had a family meeting and decided that it was time to go home. We all wanted to stay on in Paris, so I felt it must really be time to go home unless we wanted to make a career of overseas assignments. We loved Paris too much. So I decided that we would leave.

I wrote a letter back to Saposs and told him I was coming back, but I didn't want his job. (Laughter) By that time he may have retired, as a matter of fact, so I would have told his successor that I didn't want that job back, but that there was something in the Labor Department for me.

The BLS Commissioner, Clague, had already asked me whether I would be interested in heading his Division of Foreign Labor conditions, which covered training foreign labor ministry staffs, under the aid programs, and conducting the Bureau's international

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labor research, including that based on manpower developments abroad, as well as on international trade union activities.

Simultaneously, however, a new situation arose, involving the possibility of changing my domestic civil service career for one in the Foreign Service. This was the background:

During the entire five years in Paris, one of my most pleasant tasks was to cover the extensive Marshall Plan interests in the work of the ICFTU, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions. So that, at each biennial Congress of that organization, two persons from the U.S. Government were there: our labor attach# in Brussels, Belgium, which was the headquarters of the ICFTU, and myself.

I had a very good relationship with the Brussels man, Oliver Peterson, the husband of Esther Peterson. They were old friends of mine. Later on, I became Esther's deputy in the Labor Department.

Q: That was when I met you.

WEISZ: Yes, that's right. Oliver was wonderful. When his term of office as labor attach# in '57 was to be finished and I wanted to leave Paris, he raised the question as to whether one of my options shouldn't be to enter the Foreign Service. He said, "You would be ideal to take my job here, because you've been working with me, attending the Congresses, and already know many of the leaders of the ICFTU."

Oliver and I worked together perfectly. You have no idea of how well, as distinguished from some State Department labor attach#s and some mission people, before and since. There wasn't one ounce of difference between us. We stayed at each other's homes, our kids knew each other. Until this day, we remain good friends of Esther's; Oliver, unfortunately, died a few years ago.

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As a temporary FSR appointee, coming from a highly paid Labor Department job, I had been appointed as an FSR-2; Oliver, coming from outside employment as a lower-paid employee of some poor, albeit well-motivated organization, had been taken advantage of when he entered the Foreign Service, and had been appointed as an FSO-3. Many of the labor officials at State felt that the Brussels job should be classified at a higher level — as happened later — and liked the idea of my going there, perhaps for that reason alone. In any event, I had support from that end, as well as from my friends at Labor. A problem arose later, however, with getting the necessary trade union support for me to be transferred to Brussels.

Oliver introduced me to our Ambassador in Brussels, I think it was a fellow named Alger, a wealthy Republican, who thought highly of Oliver because of the latter's ability to gain access to the trade union and Socialist members of the Belgian Government. The ambassador said he'd like to have me. I reported this to the Marshall Plan people and, I guess, the State Department people: "I would like to put in an application to be a labor attach#. Oliver has arranged for me [which was a mistake, as it turned out] to see the ambassador, and the ambassador will be writing to you about that."

The word came back that I could not be a labor attach# because Jay Lovestone opposed my appointment. So I guess July of '57—

Q: Where was Lovestone at this point that he could oppose your appointment?

WEISZ: He wasn't in the government. He was very influential in the AFL-CIO. At that point, it would have been appropriate, within the context of labor politics, for me to go to my union, the ILGWU, and David Dubinsky, its President, and say, "Please clear up this problem for me." It probably would have worked, because Lovestone's influence in the AFL-CIO was due to his relationship with Dubinsky. But I never felt comfortable doing things like that. Since I had left the ILGWU in 1935, I had never asked them for anything. I did many things for the unions which I felt were entirely appropriate in terms of being

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within existing government policy, but I guess I didn't want to be beholden to them for personal favors granted me, as so many of the labor attach#s do, sometimes to their career advantage.

I didn't feel comfortable doing that sort of thing, or perhaps I was proud of my ability to progress in the civil service without outside influence exerted in my behalf. I got along pretty well without such "connections". As a matter of fact, when I was leaving the Labor Department in 1952, there were friendly letters to the Secretary from both AFL President William Green and CIO President Philip Murray, praising my work.

So I accepted the reality of not getting the Brussels post, and wrote Clague to accept the BLS job. But the next time I saw Lovestone, I raised the question of his opposition to me.

This took place at the ICFTU Congress in Tunis, just before we left Europe, late in July of 1957. As usual, Oliver and I were there, covering it for our agencies. As soon as I saw Lovestone, I said to him, "What's the reason for this? I'm not bucking you on it, but I'm curious to know what you have against me."

He said, "Well, the CIO has had . . ." (Esther Peterson had worked as a lobbyist for a CIO union, and by Lovestone's lights, this meant Oliver was also damaged goods.) "The CIO has had that job for some time. I think it should go to a non-CIO guy now."

Well, I was a non-CIO guy, but Lovestone felt he could not trust me entirely, so he didn't want me. I like to explain his attitude to me by saying that I just wasn't his type of anti-communist; I had never been a communist, so he believed I really did not appreciate the true nature of the communist menace. And I was independent, trusting my own judgement on political matters; many others in the government labor field who also had never gone through the fiery experience of communist membership were nevertheless beholden to Lovestone, and he therefore trusted them to follow his line. It is also true that I was

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then, and still am, a friend of Victor Reuther's, but I never shared with Lovestone my disagreements with some of Victor's actions in Europe.

I then went to Irving Brown, who was also at Tunis, and told him of Lovestone's attitude, and that I would be returning to the Labor Department. I asked him — since he had been observing my work in Paris — if he did not agree that Lovestone had been unreasonable.

He said, “Look. I wouldn't have interfered if you had gotten the job in Brussels, but I certainly would not support you if Jay [Lovestone] fought your appointment.” Many years later Irving did oppose (unsuccessfully) my continuing to work on a State Department assignment, but that story will be covered as part of the Labor Diplomacy Oral History Project.

As a matter of fact, after Lovestone opposed my appointment to Brussels, the State Department did offer me a position, probably at the instigation of my outraged friends in Washington, but it was not to somewhere that Lovestone felt strongly about: the post of labor attach# in Australia, at the 3 grade, with the promise that I would easily move up from there.

I refused that offer; I didn't want to take a cut in salary, and have to face the Lovestone influence the rest of my career. It is true that I had always been fascinated by the Australian labor movement, and the country's peculiar industrial relations legislation, on which I had done considerable research and writing a decade earlier, while I was at the NLRB. Fortunately, I finally was able to go there later, while on an OECD assignment in 1973, and later even had a visiting professorship in Melbourne for over a year. Besides, by that time the family was ready to go home, so that's what we did.

Anyhow, so much for my experience.

Q: Thank you very much.

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Postscript on the loyalty program

I would like to add my personal observations on this subject to the excellent ones by another retired labor officer, Eugene C. Martinson, as they appear in his article, "Loyalty on Trial: a McCarthy Era Memoir", in the Foreign Service Journal of August, 1991.

Martinson, a good friend, entered the Foreign Service in 1951, with a background in Michigan trade union and socialist activities. His first post was as labor attach# in Oslo, where his success in working with the aid mission resulted in his assignment to additional duties as the mission labor officer. He describes his anomalous situation during the aid cutbacks in 1953, when, fully cleared for State Department service, his ancillary assignment in the aid program led to "questions" about his loyalty. After a year of purgatory —at least it was paid purgatory — he was cleared, but only after Walter and Victor Reuther "vigorously interceded on [his] behalf, and their efforts won me a last-minute reprieve and a reversal of the ... RIF decision". He then went on to successful labor assignments in three other posts, before retiring in 1968.

Martinson's good-humored description of these events does not hide its worrisome effects on his family, the fears they inculcated among his colleagues, and the harm done in our relations with the various socialist-oriented governments and trade unions in Western Europe. As recently as two years ago, when visiting the now-retired head of the Norwegian Labor Party when Martinson served there, he remarked to me on how the Martinson affair had given support to the enemies of the United States — not the least among them being the communists in his country.

My own career's security experience was even more fortunate than Martinson's — at most, I believe, my 1965 assignment to India may have been delayed a few weeks, until Ambassador Bowles intervened. (Bowles simply told the security staff that it was precisely my socialist background that he thought would be of advantage to his Embassy, if I could just get there quickly, please. I was cleared within a few days!)

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But, to get back to the McCarthy days, let me describe one of my own Marshall Plan security experiences to illustrate the harm done by the McCarthyites, and how US interests can be affected adversely by the incompetent administration of our security policies. And we should remember that such instances occurred both before and after the 1952 election, and, regrettably, still happen today.

Shortly after the 1952 election, Secretary of State Dulles appointed a Capitol Hill staff member friendly to Senator McCarthy as the Assistant Secretary of State for Administration. His name was Scott McLeod.

My only personal encounter with McLeod prior to my departure from the Paris assignment was when he visited the post shortly after his appointment. Our top staff was asked to be kind to him, in view of his position and connections on the Hill. We decided to host a staff lunch for him at an excellent French restaurant on the Rue Royale (near, but not at, Maxim's; we had to pay for it ourselves). McLeod felt it necessary to proclaim his 100% Americanism by asking the waiter where, on this menu that was being translated for him, he could find "a good American steak". We had the impression he was inferentially criticizing his hosts, who were ordering French salads, probably out of consideration for their pocketbooks rather than out of any Francophilic- gustatory tendencies. His visit went downhill from that point; he left Paris to do his real damage from the seventh floor of the State Department.

What affected me most directly, however, was the policy McLeod enunciated publicly later in 1953, to the effect that no socialist really belonged in any important State Department position. (This would have been after my encounter with Stassen regarding Dave Christian, which I have already mentioned.) Since some of my duties involved representing the Department on a number of highly secret NATO committees, I marched up to our chief and told him he had a problem, in that I was a living and breathing member of the Socialist

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Party, and a prime example of someone McLeod thought should not be in a responsible job. What should be done about this?

(By then, if truth be told, I was already a backslider in my socialist views, in that, with Norman Thomas not a candidate in 1952, I had voted for Stevenson. But I retained my Party membership, out of nostalgic sentiment and personal friendship with Thomas. Besides, objecting to McLeod's policy was a matter of principle, and one of my friends in the aid mission in Germany had already been told his job had been abolished, and we all understood that the action was "security-based.")

The Ambassador — a New York Republican establishment type, named Hughes, I believe — using a sort of "this too shall pass" tone, told me to calm down and forget about McLeod. I replied that the McLeod announcement did not only reflect a very bad personnel policy, but also might have dangerous repercussions in the international community, where US foreign policy objectives were tied so closely to those of many European governments in which socialists were represented, and, in some important cases, were even dominant. As far as our Marshall Plan efforts were concerned, I feared that McLeod's off-hand announcement would be misconstrued by the many European socialists we were dealing with in various European countries, and in NATO and the OEEC.

It was finally resolved that, before I made any fuss about the matter, I should write to Norman, asking what was being done about it in Washington, and soliciting his advice. The Ambassador told me later that he had believed that Thomas would have a more mature attitude than I was displaying, on what could be done most effectively in response to the situation created by McLeod. And indeed he did.

When I wrote to Thomas he told me he had already been in correspondence with his fellow-Princetonian, Foster Dulles, on the matter, because he had been worried about our friend in Germany, and another socialist in the London Embassy. It seems that Dulles — who must have known better — felt he had to support McLeod, and was not at all

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interested in Thomas' suggestion that McLeod be reversed. So Thomas went over Dulles' head, and asked for an appointment with the President to take up the matter.

Eisenhower agreed to see him, and according to Thomas' letter to me, said that any loyal citizen who was a socialist had the right to be trusted in any government job for which he was qualified. Further, he authorized Thomas to ignore the usual limitation on quoting the President after a private conference, and said that, on leaving the White House, Thomas could repeat what he had been told to the usual crowd of newspapermen gathered outside. Thomas also sent me the clipping from the October 28th New York Times, in which this view of the President was cited.

Sherman Adams, who was present at the interview with Thomas, was instructed to pass the President's view on to the State Department, but, so far as he knew, Thomas reported, no correction had as yet been forthcoming from that quarter. This might have been the reason Eisenhower had suggested that Thomas speak to the newspapermen on his departure from the interview. All in all, Thomas was impressed by the President's fairness, but said he regretted Eisenhower's and Dulles' general unwillingness to do battle with McCarthy or McLeod.

So what was the outcome?

— As far as Martinson was concerned, his appointment to Tel Aviv wadelayed a year.

— I finished out my Paris tours in 1957, and returned to the LaboDepartment.

— The job of the fellow in Germany was abolished in the 1953 aid mission cutbacks, and he did not get another posting until some years later, when he began a successful career as a labor attach# in Africa. As a matter of fact, that came about as a result of a typical appeal from Thomas, who wrote to (Eisenhower's) Secretary of Labor, James Mitchell, asking him to do something about a new assignment for our friend. It was arranged.

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— Our friend in London remained in the service, without a break, for many years, until his retirement.

But what of the many real innocents, who did not have the Reuthers, or Norman Thomas, or other like souls, to speak up for them? And what of the many, many highly dedicated government servants who refused to remain in the service under such circumstances? And, most importantly, what of the young people who never would apply for government service, and who could have been there to replace the aging New Dealers who left during the McCarthy era? A whole generation of imaginative young people was lost in that period.

My second, and last encounter with McLeod: Back at the Labor Department in 1958, I was again sent to speak at the Labor Attach# Conference of that year, held in Munich. In those days, international air travel permitted stopovers, en route to European destinations. And, since I had never been to the famous Abbey Theater in Dublin, I decided to spend a few days in Ireland, after a number of official stops on my return trip from Munich.

During my stay in Ireland, a political officer in our Dublin Embassy decided to have a reception for me, to which he invited some of the labor, management and Labor Ministry personnel I had dealt with in Paris and at ILO Conferences in the past. As a matter of protocol, he also invited the Ambassador, who turned out to be Scott McLeod, who had finally been gotten rid of at the State Department, although not because of his tragic personnel policy. When I was introduced to the Ambassador, the following ensued:

He: "Weisz, with a "z"; sounds familiar"

I: "I believe you once had some doubts about me, or my affiliations, and ultimately changed your mind."

He: "No, I didn't change my mind; it was changed for me."

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* Although the interview was originally conducted on this date, and a transcript given to me shortly thereafter, I did not get around to completing the slow process of editing it until a full year had elapsed. A major reason for this delay was my wish to place some of the matters discussed into the context of contemporaneous US and international trade union events, with special reference to the institutional, personal and political rivalries involved.

Behind this purpose was my conviction that the labor aspects of Marshall Plan operations cannot otherwise be fully understood by future researchers — especially by academics who have not been immersed in post-war labor history.

Therefore, in the editing process, I inserted considerable detail about labor's differing approaches to domestic and international affairs, including the conflicting attitudes on how to deal with the problem of communism.

It should be noted, however, that this discussion represents my subjective analysis, and persons using my interview should check it against other sources, among them the US National Archives, the George Meany Archives (especially the records of the International Departments of the old AFL and the AFL-CIO), and the very extensive collection of material in the Walter P. Reuther Library of Labor and Urban Affairs, at Wayne State University.

Another, more personal, purpose behind my extensive additions to the original interview, was my wish to be able to use the entire document as part of the 1952-57 element of my personal papers, which I have promised to donate to the Reuther Library; this interview, so supplemented, could cover that part of my career.

Lastly, just as I was completing the editing, I received the August, 1991 issue of the Foreign Service Journal, official publication of the American Foreign Service Association, with its instructive article by my friend, Gene Martinson. After checking with the interviewer, Mel Spector, and telling him I had neglected almost entirely the matter of

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loyalty investigations in the interview, he encouraged me to append my comments on that subject to what I was preparing. I did that.

I hope all this will be of some use both to the oral history collection on Marshall Plan administration, and to any studies of the labor aspects of American diplomacy.

End of interview