YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Youngstown State University Faculty Union

Personal Experience

O.H. 1886

THOMAS SHIPKA

Interviewed

by

Stephanie Boggs

on

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B: This is an interview with Dr. Thomas Shipka for the Youngstown State University Oral History Program, on Youngstown State University Faculty Union, by Stephanie Boggs, on November 19, 1997, at Dr. Shipka's office, at 2:00 p.m. Hello.

S: Shoot away.

B: You can just start by telling me a little bit about your experiences before you came to Y.S.U.

S: Why do I not tell you my name?

B: Yeah. You can start there. [laughter]

S: Tom Shipka, Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies. Now, your first question was about?

B: Your experiences prior to Y.S.U. Just a little background.

S: I grew up in Campbell, Ohio, which is a little suburb of Youngstown east of Youngstown, once called East Youngstown. Most of the people that lived there worked in the steel mills. The largest employer was the Youngstown Sheet & Tube Company. My house where I grew up was about a mile from three blast furnaces, which spewed forth dust and dirt day and night so that when you washed the car, you had to rewash it the next day.

My parents went through public schools in Campbell, Ohio, as did most of my relatives. My brother graduated from Campbell, and I had a sister that probably would have been sent to Campbell. But, she died at the age of thirteen from trichinosis. My dad sent my younger sister and myself to Ursuline High School, so I went to Ursuline. I was very active in sports when I was a kid in Campbell. I played baseball in Little League and Pony League. Let us see, what more is there to say? I was a music enthusiast. I was a drummer. I played in a variety of bands during the latter part of grade school and all through high school.

My dad was a steel worker. My mother was a housewife, although my mother's mental health was not good, and she was institutionalized often at Woodside Receiving Hospital. My dad worked in the Campbell works of the Youngstown Sheet & Tube and was a member of local union 2163. Eventually he was elected a union officer, then president of that local union. Shortly thereafter he was put on the full-time, professional staff of the United Steelworkers of America in what was then called District 26, which was most of northeastern Ohio. He had a long career in labor, both as assistant director of District 26, staff representative in District 26, and president of the Greater Youngstown AFL-CIO (American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations) Council. And he was really a very strong influence on my life all

through my formative years.

I have an older brother. I would have had an older sister, but she died. And I have a younger sister. Both of my parents are deceased. My family is, in addition to my wife and my two children, we have my wife's mother and I have an aunt and three cousins on my dad's side. My brother lives in Columbus, my sister in California, and that is about it.

B: Okay. You went to college in North Carolina and then on for your PhD in Boston.

S: No, not to North Carolina.

B: John Carroll.

S: John Carroll University.

B: I am sorry.

S: My high school was Ursuline, and I was a classic underachiever preoccupied with football and basketball and girls and music and so on. I was class president. My dad had sent me to John Carroll because his brother, my uncle, had gone there and been quite a famous football player, and my older brother had gone there. So it was kind of a family tradition. I started there in 1961. I went for a year, and then I went for two years into a Catholic seminary, thinking I wanted to be a priest. I got over that in a hurry and went back to John Carroll and finished my undergraduate degree. I got into philosophy because it was the quickest way out of college, having taken so much philosophy in the seminary. But then, my philosophy professors talked me into taking the graduate record exam in philosophy. All along I was headed for the law profession, but I did well enough on the GRE that I got very fine scholarship offers. So I decided to take one of those.

I went to Boston College for my doctorate. It had a terminal doctoral program. The only people that got masters were people that washed out. Along the way I had nine months to kill between undergraduate and graduate schooling. So I worked for the Office of Economic Opportunity, which was a federal agency in the so-called "War on Poverty." I worked for a few months here, but most of the time I worked in Appalachia. I worked at the Institute for Regional Development, which was headquartered in Athens, Ohio at Ohio University. So I lived and worked in Appalachia for about six months helping local poverty directors and helping train workers for work in Appalachia, and then I went on to graduate school at Boston College.

B: What led you to come to Y.S.U. to teach?

S: When I finished my graduate program, there were several doors open. The market in higher education at that time was a collapsing market. I happened to

finish early. I was on a mission to complete my graduate work as quickly as possible, one reason being that I was now married with a child. I wanted to get a good job as quickly as possible. So, I finished about two years ahead of anyone else in my group -- there were only twelve of us -- in record time. And I hit the market before the collapse. So I had four or five places to go. And, in fact, I visited several campuses. I think I had three firm offers, and the other two were pretty much given that I would get the job. But, it was not a sure thing. We came here because we had my mother, my father, and my wife's mother and father all here. We had a young child, and we thought, for a few years at least, it would be nice for Anne Louise to see the grandparents and the grandparents enjoy her company. That really was the reason.

B: How did you perceive Y.S.U., generally, the first few years?

S: I had grown up here when Y.S.U. was Youngstown College and then Youngstown University, and it was a very, very, hometown university. It was a university with a peculiar mission. It was a university that seemed to represent or to symbolize escape from the steel mills to so many steel workers or their children. I saw it as, essentially, a commuter school with that type of mission that I have just described. I did not see it as comparable to a private school with rigorous admissions criteria. I saw it as an open door school here to serve, essentially, working class families. I think I had a bias, which I feel now was unjustified, that Youngstown College and Youngstown University were not as strong academically as many other institutions. Once I came here and got to see what the place was like and the quality of the faculty and the many programs, my bias disappeared.

B: What factors going on here at Y.S.U. encouraged you, in particular, and the rest of the faculty to feel that there was a need to form a union?

S: I might say, as part of my answer, that I had absolutely no intention to get involved in the union movement. I really wanted a very traditional professorial career. I love teaching. I had been fortunate in getting several articles published as soon as I landed a job. I was reading papers and teaching courses that I was able, really, to build from the ground up. The faculty in my department permitted me to propose courses and then to offer courses in my areas of specialization, Philosophy in America, Social Philosophy, and Political Philosophy. So I had no intention to organize the faculty, contrary to what President Pugsley would tell a lot of people later on.

I was also, frankly, on the timid side. I certainly did not see myself to be a mirror of my father. My father was tough, a no-nonsense type of labor leader who weighed 270, 280 pounds, was six feet two, and was arrested and jailed once for beating the stuffing out of a fellow in a bar who had called him a Communist. And he was a terror on picket lines. He had a goon squad that would take on any group that dared to try to break a strike. My father was the

Darth Vader of the Youngstown community in the eyes of the Youngstown Club, the Chamber of Commerce, and what you might call the blue bloods, the aristocracy. I did not perceive myself as that type of person.

So what happened to change me? I struck up relationships with a number of faculty across the campus, and two of them were a political scientist by the name of Dr. William Hunt and a political sociologist by the name of Dr. Bhagwati Poddar. Though they were not my closest friends, I got to know them and learned about their own sagas. In Bill's case, despite the fact he was chosen by the political science majors as Teacher of the Year, I believe in 1969 or 1970, he was fired the next year. I happen to know that one reason for the firing was that he had assigned a D or an F to a certain person who was, let us say, a celebrity, a well-known public person, and this had been overruled by the department chair at the time. I might say in retrospect that Bill was an oddball. He was a quirky guy. I am pretty sure he used marijuana and may even have done it with students present. He was as eccentric as eccentric gets. He was a strange guy but, apparently, a very fine classroom teacher, and he had some scholarship. The fact that this issue of determination of grades figured into this case and the fact that the administration did not seem willing or able to say, publicly or privately, the reasons for his dismissal, bothered me.

Bhagwati Poddar, similarly controversial, was rather extreme in his views, something of a lightning rod. He was probably, at the time, the strongest scholar in his department -- Sociology -- and he was fired that department. Here again, due process was not offered. He was not given reasons publicly or privately, and by now the market had worsened from the time I had left graduate school. So his prospect of landing a good job was not very good. Bill Hunt eventually did get a job at Southwestern Minnesota State University in Marshall, Minnesota. Bhagwati Poddar did not get a job in academic life. He got a job in city government Portland, Oregon, I believe. Those firings bothered me.

Then, we had an unusual situation. I had been elected to the Senate in my very first year. We had a new governance structure on campus called the University Senate, which is the predecessor of our Academic Senate today. There were two things about it that I thought were peculiar. One is that the majority of the members were administrators. Many of them had faculty rank, but they were primarily administrators. And part of that peculiarity is that the Senate was chaired by the president of the university. The second peculiarity was that this governance body, populated mostly by administrators and headed by the president, determined virtually all facets of faculty terms and conditions of employment. Salaries, teaching loads and fringe benefits -- the Senate approved all this.

I was amused by seeing proposals come from the floor for certain raises or for certain types of teaching loads across the institution, and people would pop out of their seats to please the president and argue for lower raises and argue for higher teaching loads. I saw that many times. That bothered me. And then, despite the fact that there was a pattern of enrollment growth, we had a year where the enrollment went down. The president had just brought in, or was

in the process of bringing in, a couple of hundred new faculty since we had become a state university. The president called a special meeting of the faculty in Kilcawley Center and he announced that there would be layoffs of faculty. He would try to make them as minimal as possible; as few heads would roll as possible. That seemed to me to be simply stupid for a number of reasons. We had high teaching loads. We had low salaries, and lopping off parts of the faculty would simply mean higher teaching loads, probably with no substantial increase in salary. We had a very large limited service faculty, and it seemed common sensical that if there were a need to cut back here and there because of a modest decline, the most sensible thing to do academically and morally would be to lay off some part time help. Those were pretty much the elements.

When these and other things began to happen, it had a snowball effect. The threat of retrenchment was the straw that broke the camel's back. I was then still a bench sitter, not really anxious. There were people in the art department, physics, and one or two other places that were talking about a union and talking about unionization. I was taking a hands-off approach for a period of months, but I think that retrenchment scare won me over. So I began to talk more seriously with people on an individual basis. I started to attend meetings. I made a couple trips to Columbus to the Ohio Education Association to learn more about that organization and what it had to offer. Within a very short time after that, we had a chapter of the Ohio Education Association on campus.

Before we moved in the direction of the NEA and the OEA, we tried to persuade the existing faculty organization, the American Association of University Professors, to take up the cause of unionization and to seek to be the bargaining agent for the faculty. I was then a member of the AAUP and, in fact, under the auspices of the AAUP on this campus, I had chaired what I called the Hunt Fund when Bill Hunt was fired. He was down and out financially, and I was put in charge of raising money for him. We raised, I think, four or five thousand dollars, which was a lot of money at that time, to help him relocate. He very much appreciated it. But, the AAUP, nationally, had not yet embraced the concept of collective bargaining, and it was very cautious about unions. The AAUP on campus was certainly very much controlled by people who were not sympathetic to us. That is why we went to the NEA.

B: Can you describe for me how the union began to organize?

S: Sure. First, we established an official chapter of the Ohio Education Association. We called ourselves simply the Youngstown State University Chapter of the Ohio Education Association. For the first year, Bhagwati Poddar, who had been the person fired, was the president. In his case, we had gone go the federal court. We had gotten the federal judge to order the university to have a hearing on the merits of his firing. A court-appointed hearing officer conducted those hearings. As it turned out, we lost that one. Once Dr, Poddar was out of the picture, I became president. But, even before I was president, I was selected to chair an organizing committee.

We started in the fall of 1971. We rented office space, installed a telephone and hired a part-time secretary. We published a newsletter called "The Advocate." The National Education Association later created a publication for higher education called "The Advocate," although that is a very common name for a newsletter or a magazine. The theme was that we are the advocate of faculty rights and interests. I was also the editor of the newsletter, and I have a kind of a rhetorical style that excites and inflames and titillates and angers when I try. So I ran a whole series of newsletters on comparative salary figures showing that we were at the bottom of the heap. On work load we were at the top of the heap. We did not have the governance powers of other faculties across Ohio.

I believe this now gets us into 1972. The organizing committee decided to convene a series of meetings for faculty to discuss union organization. We held those meetings off campus because people were really afraid to identify publicly with collective bargaining. We held them at my house, and I still live in the house. It is about 2 ½ miles from where we are sitting right here. It is on the north side of Youngstown. So every Sunday, for a period of several months, we had as few as three or four and as many as seven or eight people attending. We presented the case for collective bargaining, answered questions, and tried to deal with fears and concerns. Once we sensed that the troops were with us, the group decided that we should launch an authorization card drive whereby the faculty would sign a document indicating their support for our organization to represent them in collective bargaining.

The problem at the time was that the state of Ohio had no public sector collective bargaining law. So, we did not technically have a legal right to force our employer to bargain on the terms and conditions of employment. On the other hand, dozens and dozens of public employee groups throughout the state were engaged in collective bargaining. Police, teachers, firefighters, and many others. So there was that precedent, but there was no precedent at the state universities. We also recognized, realistically, the fear that people had. They knew that they were vulnerable, and that they could be fired or harmed in other ways if they supported the union. So, we looked for a way where people would have an opportunity to declare their support for our organization without doing so publicly.

I came up with an idea. We would go to a local judge that everyone in the community knew and respected, and we would say to the judge, "We want the opportunity to bargain collectively. Our people are afraid. Would you, Judge, agree to disseminate by mail these authorization cards to the faculty, have them returned by the faculty to you, not to us, and report to the faculty and to the Board of Trustees and the administrators, only the number, not the names, of those persons indicating support for the Y.S.U. OEA?" The judge I picked to do that was Judge Sidney Rigelhaupt. Sidney Rigelhaupt was a crusty old Republican war horse, who threw teachers in jail for striking, and there was no doubt in anyone's mind that he was not going to pacify a group of teachers up on the Y.S.U. campus by serving as our power. So I went to him. He said, "You

folks have a right to bargain collectively, but I have got a problem. I am a common pleas judge. If there is litigation that grows out of this battle, it could come to my court, and I would have to disqualify myself." He said, "Let me think about this for a day and come up with a solution." He did not send me away. He just said, "Give me an opportunity to think about this and come back."

I went back the next day, and he said, "There is a judge who is respected who would not have a conflict of interest because this would not come before his court. He is the juvenile judge." This was Judge Martin P. Joyce. Our juvenile justice center is named in his honor now -- the Martin P. Joyce Juvenile Justice Center. So he and I contacted Judge Joyce. Judge Joyce agreed to the whole setup, and out of that, about 44% of the faculty indicated support. That may not have been 51%, but it was still very high percentage and it was an indication to us that the support was there. It is hard for you, looking back today, to appreciate how much fear and concern were in the hearts of people. So for 44% to sign a document and send it to that judge, knowing that these documents could somehow be publicized in some way, was a good sign. The judge released the results to the Board of Trustees, the administration, and us. We publicized them to the faculty immediately.

We then sent a letter to the president of the Board of Trustees. His name was Robert Williams. He had been president of the Youngstown Sheet & Tube Company and was then, or later to be, president of the company now called Commercial Intertech. It was then called Commercial Shearing. We asked that the Board of Trustees either grant an election where we could vote or outright recognize the Y.S.U.-OEA as bargaining agent for the faculty. To build pressure on the trustees, we had a public relations campaign. We asked people in shopping plazas, wherever, to sign a petition. Over 4,000 workers at GM Lordstown who were on strike and came in for their strike checks signed the petitions. Their union leaders asked them to sign the petition before they got their strike checks. So we got seven or eight thousand signatures in a hurry and presented them at a Board of Trustees meeting.

Some weeks after, Mr. Williams called me and said, "Tom, I just wanted you to know that I am going to recommend to my colleagues that we have an election." He said, "I have worked with unions in my role as a manager for years, and we get along fine. And I respect their role in American society. I do not see any reason why college professors should not have one." Very enlightening position. But, he had opposition within the trustees, especially from Attorney John Newman, who was later president of the board. As it turned out, the AAUP rose from the ashes and decided to try collective bargaining. On the ballot, there appeared two organizations. The vote was in two stages: for or against collective bargaining. I think about 90% were for. And then, a week or so later the second ballot had the two organizations. Y.S.U. OEA got about 59%, and Y.S.U. AAUP got about 41%. So, we were the winners.

B: So now the OEA is the official collective bargaining agent. Can you describe the events that led up to the first contract negotiation?

S: The elections that I just described took place in the last week of May and the first week of June in 1972. That summer the union established a negotiating team, which was elected in a secret ballot election by the faculty. I was elected to that and elected by the team to chair the team. We worked all summer on proposals for the first round of collective bargaining. We were hopeful that we could get a contract wrapped up in a matter of weeks or a couple months. It took us all summer, working day and night, to get our proposals in order. We fought like cats and dogs, tooth and nail, among ourselves on language and proposals and concepts. Finally, we had a package to put on the table, and so we requested that we proceed to bargaining.

We started to bargain in the early fall of 1972. In addition to negotiating a comprehensive labor agreement, we wanted to try to block implementation of layoffs that had been promised and talked about, but never clarified or detailed. We met a couple of times a week at the site of what is now the McDonough Museum. There was a building there owned by the university which was once a motel. Through the late 1960's and early 1970's, that building functioned as an office building for several of the departments in Arts & Sciences, including mine. It had a very nice kitchen area, which had been the dining room of the motel. We used that for negotiating headquarters. We constantly challenged the administration to explain the rationale of retrenchment. And they hemmed and they hawed and they stuttered, but they could not do it. And, finally, just before the promised date of implementation, the chief negotiator for the administration, who was a local attorney who represented management in labor negotiations, Attorney John Weed Powers announced at the table that the university canceled plans to entrench. So that was a wonderful Christmas present for the faculty.

We carried on with negotiations all through that academic year, nine long months, and we hammered out the first labor agreement covering public university faculty. We finally reached the agreement in May, but not without difficulties. The then president of the Board of Trustees, Attorney John Newman, had heard news reports that the two sides were close to an agreement and an announcement was imminent. He felt that the trustees had not had sufficient opportunity to review the various tentative agreements on promotion, salary increases, work load, and so on. And so he phoned during the middle of negotiations, interrupted negotiations, and told his chief negotiator that negotiations would cease and resume only if the board had approved all of the tentative agreements and authorized the negotiating team for the university to return to the table.

That prompted me to convene a special meeting of the faculty and to take a strike vote. It was a secret ballot vote, and it essentially asked the faculty to authorize the leadership to call a strike if we felt it was necessary. This had never been done here before. We did not know what to expect. Dr. Hassan Ronaghy got up in this meeting and said "You know, this reminds me of an airplane. And our pilot is standing up here telling us that we should take a particular path, a particular heading in our flight, and we, the passengers, are here bickering whether the pilot really knows what he is talking about or is taking

us into a storm." And he said, "You know, what you should remember is that the pilot will be in the same mess as we will if he has misjudged or misadvised us. Let us give the pilot credit for showing concern for his own safety, if not for ours." It was a clever talk, and I think it summarized the feelings of a lot of people.

We voted by secret ballot. The faculty voted to authorize the strike. I think that the vote was 239 to 51 or 251 to 39 or something like that. We informed the administration and the board that very moment that the faculty had authorized the strike. Within 24 hours we were back to the table, but we were back to the table with instructions from the board that John Weed Powers had to back out of several tentative agreements. Our negotiators had to make a tough decision. Do we strike or not? I made a tough call. I felt we should go along with the best package we could get rather than strike the university. [tape stops]

B: Following the 1972 negotiations, how did the ones in 1977 or about then compare to the first ones?

S: None of them was ever easy. I think in the first negotiations and even after the first negotiations, there was still hope within some segments of the Board of Trustees that unions would go away. At the same time that we reached an agreement, the president of the Board directed the president of the university -- Albert Pugsley -- to prepare a letter to the Ohio Attorney General asking him to rule on a long list of issues including the legality of collective bargaining, the legality of arbitration in our grievance process, and a whole series of other issues. They were trying to get the attorney general to pull the rug out from under the labor agreement, and to their great shock and amazement, the attorney general said, "All of this is legal. You freely and voluntarily entered into this contract, and both sides are legally bound." Once it was clear to all sides that the union was here to stay, then the question was, "How do we live together in an amicable productive way?" So, that is what we are trying to do.

B: Do you feel that it has been pretty successful?

S: All things considered, in retrospect, remarkably successfully. Consider the fact that we now have one of the really fine contracts, not just in this part of the country but in all of American higher education. We have gotten there without a strike, except one one-day strike. And when did that one one-day strike come? I think it came in 1990 or 1991. I was already out of the picture. I was now a department head. I was no longer in the position of union leadership because of a conflict of interest. I was not permitted to be a regular member or leader under the constitution of the faculty union, which I helped to write. So, the fact that we could live together, work together, negotiate very extensive and detailed contracts, deal with hundreds of problems along the way over this twenty-five or twenty-six year period, and always, I think, keeping the best interests of the university if not at the top of the list, then very high on the list, the fact that we could do that with one tiny one-day strike. I think that shows that we have been

marvelously successful.

Students did not lose one day of classes in a quarter century. Tuitions did not skyrocket. The union did not invade management rights or demand that management surrender its legal and appropriate role. Management rights have been protected. Faculty have made significant gains. There is due process. All of this was done over a long time with very little rancor. There were always times where, in the heat of the battle, I said and did things I regret. People on the other side said and did things they regret. But when you put this in perspective, how many cases can you find of a twenty-five year old labor relationship which was precedent-setting, where they had one one-day strike? Where they work together and serve on committees and in the Senate and do so much together in community relations? I think it has been marvelously successful.

B: Considering all that, what do you see as the major accomplishment of the union as a whole?

S: It has guaranteed faculty authority over curriculum and academic policy through the language of the contract at the department level, the college level, the university level. This is done at the undergraduate level through the Senate, and the graduate level through the graduate faculty. We, the professionals, control curriculum and academic policy. It has given reasonable job security to the faculty. We have marvelous protections against premature layoffs. It has raised faculty salaries. It has established very fine fringe benefit program, and it has done all of this while attracting very fine talent to the campus and nurturing the talent through good pay increases, through research professorships, through faculty improvement leaves, through sabbaticals, and through reassigned time.

Also, the faculty union at Y.S.U has done as much as any faculty union in this country to promote research and professional development. We are, so far as I know, the only university in the land that pays people 100 percent salary on sabbatical. That is a marvelous benefit, especially for young or middle aged faculty that are struggling to pay bills. There is a disincentive to go on sabbatical if you have to take a 20 or 50 percent cut in salary. In this department, in a typical year, I will have one person on sabbatical, and I will have one person on research professorship, which is essentially time off for a quarter to do a book or a paper or some other project. We will have, throughout the typical year, anywhere from three to five people on what we call reassigned time, some form of teaching load reduction. I have two people who are co-directors of the Dale Ethics Center. They teach a reduced load. I have the University Professor of Islamic Studies. He teaches a reduced load. I have a person developing a new course on religion and the environment, with reduced load. And it goes on. The faculty union has provided the basis for all of this in various parts of the agreements. Those are, I think, some of the main achievements.

B: What do you consider your major accomplishments during your stay in the union?

S: It is really hard to separate personal from organizational. My main personal achievement was in growing a backbone. I have become a tough critic. I am not easily intimidated by anyone under any circumstances. I guess, in my own way, I have become somewhat like my father. I am not out there a bully on a picket line with a goon squad. But, I am a tough person, and I do not back down. I am ready to fight if I have to, and the other side knows it. That is probably why we respect one another and we get along so well. So, one personal gain for me has been developing, I think, the courage and persistence to build this organization and to sustain it. It was seventeen years before I left to do administrative work.

Secondly, I think, is having the opportunity to do something unique. We were the first faculty in the state to unionize. Ashland College, a private college, had unionized before us, but they had a right to unionize under the National Labor Relations Act. We were the first public university faculty in Ohio to unionize, and we did not even have a law to help us. Being in that role was unique. That is special. I take great pride in seeing the contract and the impact the contract has had on the institution and especially the faculty. I find a lot of satisfaction in that. And now that I am probably in the latter five or ten years of my career, it surely is nice to have the income that I have, to be able to do the things that I do. And, had we not had a union fighting for faculty salaries all these years, I would be in a very different costume, I am sure.

B: What would you like to see the union accomplish in the future?

S: I have not been happy with the direction of this union since the late 1980s. I think it has blurred the line between management and labor, and I do not support the blurring of that line. I think it has tried to involve itself in the role and work of the administration, and I believe that is a mistake for a number of reasons. I would like to see the union return to traditional bargaining such as we had before rather than the novel approach they have tried recently. I would like to see language taken out of the agreement that I think is silly and unrealistic that says the faculty and the department shall have a say-so about everything! Nonsense, unworkable, stupid. But having made those criticisms, all things considered, the contract continues to be very fine. The faculty continues across the board to support our union and support its goals and objectives. So I would like to see our union revert to the old way in which we knew who labor was and who management was and we could work together without a strike. I guess if I had my druthers, that would be the one change I would like to see.

B: I just have one final question. Do you sometimes, in weak moments, regret having to leave the union for administration?

S: One of the provisions that the founders made in the constitution of the union was limits on terms of office. We did not want people to go on an ego trip so that they defined the union as themselves, so that it was their union, their empire, so to speak. Although I had strong organizational skills and I was in the right place

at the right time for this faculty, I knew that this union would be stronger and better off in the long run if those so-called "indispensable guys," like Shipka got the hell out of the way eventually and let new faculty, many of them bright, energetic, tough and politically savvy, take over.

My father always instilled in me a sense of humility, and despite the fact that many people I know are stunned to hear that, I really am a humble person basically. I know my own limits. I recognize that there are no indispensable people. I am privileged to have been able to play a role in an important moment in this university that, perhaps, no one else could have played, but that is gone. We are in a new time, a new era with new challenges, and we need more and more of the faculty to get involved in union work, in union committees, in union projects.

I miss the union, I miss the role that I had, I miss being number one on campus when it came to calling the shots. But, in terms of the long-term welfare of the union, I had to leave. I used to think that it was impossible to be as busy as I was when I was in the union. I had a full-time load. I had an office in the National Education Association. For a time, I edited a journal for the National Education Association. I spoke at more than 100 campuses across the nation over a period of years. I was head of the higher education council of the NEA and the higher education caucus of the NEA. For a time, I had a state position in Columbus with the Ohio Education Association. I even took leave for most of a year to do organizing on campuses. I used to think I could never be that busy again, but I found in the administration that the work load is enormous. I never catch up. So I found ways to occupy my time that I never thought I would.

B: Is there anything else you would like to add?

S: Just to thank you for looking into this project. I had always worried that our movement and this saga would go unnoticed and unappreciated. For a graduate student at our university, especially in the history department, to take time out to chronicle it, to study it, to interpret it, to evaluate it, that is a wonderful thing. So my thanks to you.

B: Well, thank you.

End of Interview