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Labor Series

MORRIS WEISZ

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INTERVIEW

[Note: This interview was not edited my Mr. Weisz.]

WEISZ: This is Sunday, May 16, 1993, and we're sitting in the charming home of Jim Leader and his wife, Caroline, and, by the way, I'm going to raise later with Caroline whether or not she would be willing to be interviewed for the spousal project, which I do some interviewing for, if the spouse of a labor officer has had experiences that are relevant. But today I'm not interviewing him, but rather he is interviewing me regarding my background in international affairs with specific reference to the India experience, which both of us had at different times and shared for a brief period. Jim, why don't you go ahead with whatever you want to question me on?

Q: Okay, well, this is kind of a novel experience, because when I've sat across the table from you in previous years, it was as a student and you as the guru, the professor, and now I get to throw some at you.

Well, you have such a rich and long experience; and you and I have such a rich and long experience together that it's hard to limit, but I think for purposes of this interview, if we can talk a little bit about how you got interested in international labor affairs generally and then move to how you got interested in India and happened to end up there as labor counselor in New Delhi. Then I'd like to talk to you a little bit about our shared experiences on Sri Lanka. We could start with your involvement in an early training program for labor attachés. I sat at your feet as a student at American University in a course on international labor affairs organized by Phil Kaiser, former Assistant Secretary of Labor and former Ambassador to Senegal and Deputy Chief of Mission in London. I think that was a two- or three-year experiment where American University in effect ran the training course for the labor attachés. I happened to be there as a student of American University and not as a present or potential labor attaché, but it was such a great course. You might say just a few words on how Kaiser got that established, why he came to you, and what were the results and what's the evaluation of that course as we look at a number of labor courses that have been run over the years.

WEISZ: Well, I think that's an important subject, and it's important to get it into the labor diplomacy oral history field. If we cover it thoroughly, we may never get to India. How I got interested in international labor affairs is clear from the interview in the Marshall Plan interview of me, which is in our records and in the other records which these interviews are being prepared for, that is the Reuther Archives that asked for much more about my history than will be covered by the labor diplomacy oral history. With my education at City College in New York, with my activity in socialist youth activities, and all of the problems that were addressed by our youth movement and our student movement at City College, it was just natural for me to be interested in international affairs. Although I never was a Marxist, the relevance of Marxist thinking and the deviationists from Marx to labor issues and the fact that the trade union for which I worked, the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, was very active in international affairs, had a socialist leadership, etc. So when I came to Washington in 1935, I did a few things relevant to international labor affairs in connection with my activities in the Socialist Party of Washington DC. I was very active in the Spanish Civil War situation both as a supporter of the government that was attacked so viciously by the Franco forces in Spain and within the aid effort to anti-Franco forces -- the support of the democratic socialist government of Spain against the Communists. This was my first direct experience in which we saw what Communists could do in the international field.

Q: Could I stop just a second there, because some of us just aren't as, in terms of adult history, familiar with this period. How did the Socialist Party differ, and what attitude did it support -- for instance, the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, or what was the distinction?

WEISZ: We had the Debs Battalion, because Eugene Debs was a Socialist leader. We didn't support but we didn't criticize severely what the Communists were doing. We were essentially on their side, but it was very distressing to see how they used large amounts of funds they got from the liberal establishment in the United States, movie stars and things like that, to give less support to the Government of Spain fighting the Franco forces than to their own wing in the effort. This was especially true with their vicious murdering tactics against the anarchists, the anti-Franco forces who were led by the government. This had elements of the socialist movement under Largo Caballero, socialists who were not as willing to be anti-Communist as we were after the experience we had, the anarchist movement, the libertarian movements, and all those were forces coalesced into an unevenly supported and unevenly strengthened combination of united front against Franco. Later on it became obvious, and later on in my own chronological history I'll be going into some details about that, but there was a joint committee to help the government of Spain in which we were active and the Communists were active. There were no anarchist groups active in it. This is where we learned the lessons about Communist tactics. Their medical supplies were geared to supporting only the Communist effort. They were very critical of some of the things that we were doing. When they established the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, which was made up of liberals and Communists but run by the Communists, we felt it necessary to show our support of the government by forming a much weaker Debs Battalion and supporting the military forces

of the government through that. We had a few people who went into the Debs Battalion right here from Washington, and some of them didn't survive. Many of the Abraham Lincoln people also didn't survive. The rest came back, most of them, bitter about the results, that is, the neutrality of the government of the United States and the unwillingness on the part of many others in Europe to support the government of Spain. And they were bitter about the fact that within the government the Communists engaged in activities which have now come to light, now that the records are clear, supporting many of the things that we merely suspected. Unless you have particular personages, I'd rather save that for a more thorough discussion. Let me just say that many students are now studying the archives of the Soviet Union and coming up with a whole lot of supporting material showing the secret financing of different groups by the Soviet government.

Q: We don't need to spend a lot more time on this, but I am personally interested and I think our audience would be interested in your growth through the socialist movement and your active role there. I remember in a labor class -- you go through school and maybe there are a couple of dozen things that really stick in your mind, you know, that a professor says -- you gave me one of those when you were talking about this potpourri of ideologies operating in Spain. You talked about the anarchists and some of the impracticality of their approach to the world's problems, but you stopped and paused a minute and said, "But, you know, I never met an anarchist I didn't love."

WEISZ: Well, that's very interesting. I say it frequently, because most people think of anarchists as bomb throwers, and I'm sure they had some -- what do they call it, the deed, the function of the deed -- and they defended murder and things like that of people who were exploiting others. But personally, I'll tell you, of the anarchists I got to know here in my early days in Washington and the anarchists I knew, the Italians especially, such great supporters of the Ladies Garment Workers Union and other unions in New York, even before I came here, they were just all lovable characters.

Q: Okay. I was also wondering, as background to this, whether you found that the Socialist Party's support of the coalition in Spain and just the perception that this was leftist and, by some members of the conservative wing in the United States, barely distinguishable from the Communists, whether the Socialist Party's policy and approach in Spain hurt the party in the war years and afterward.

WEISZ: Oh, we were so weak it didn't particularly hurt us, and everybody knew that Norman Thomas was a great guy and honest and all that. The activities hurt us within the trade union movement. Our failure to support completely everything that was done by the Communist element within the anti-Franco government, our failure to support that was used against us in the trade union movement in the fights that we were having in the government workers' and other unions against the Communists. I want to avoid that discussion. If people want to get into this difference among the various radical groups, the interview I conducted with Milton Zatinsky, an information officer in the Marshall Plan, which Don Kienzle encouraged me to go into some details about when I interviewed him a few months ago, that will be in our files. A much more complete discussion of the

internal disputes among radical groups is contained in those interviews. In the early ‘30s I was a young socialist active in the student movement and in the young socialist movement. I was never a member of the Young People’s Socialist League. I just went into the Socialist Party directly. When I came to Washington, I was active in the Socialist Club at City College. In fact, I was an officer of it, and I was sort of discouraged from joining officially the Young People’s Socialist League. They always needed an innocent guy they could say was not a socialist member because the Communists had all these people who were fellow travelers of whom they would say he’s not a Communist but he’s supporting us. Maybe that’s why, I don’t know. Suffice it to say I didn’t join any socialist political organizations until I came to Washington. But at that time, in the cooperative efforts among the various socialist groups, we had an operating united front with the Communists in organizations like the committee against war and fascism or something or other. We were all big anti-war people because at that time the rise of Hitler was becoming important in Europe and the Communists changed their line in ‘34 or ‘35 and were anxious to have a united front with the socialists. This is beautifully brought out in the materials in the Holocaust Museum, which I just went to yesterday. Until then they thought of the socialists as the big enemy in the late ‘20s, early ‘30s. The socialists were the enemy. The Communists had a saying that, even if the socialists came to power, that would be good because their failure would make it possible for the Communists to come into power. That’s how they defined the need to oppose socialists as being in effect pro-fascist. They had a saying, *“Na socialismus comanvia”*, “After socialists, we will gain,” because they didn’t take into account how effective Hitler’s activities would be against both. I’m straying, though, from the point I want to make, which is that at that time there was a group of older people. Norman Thomas was the leader of this group that believed let bygones be bygones, now we have a united policy against fascism, let’s have a united front. Norman Thomas, as you know from many things I told you, is a great guide of mine, but he made certain mistakes. One was not to listen to the people who within the Socialist Party we called the old guard. They had many faults, but one of their faults was not their warning us that, look, in 1917 we went through the same thing. The Communists took power in Russia against a democratic government that was elected, Karensky’s government. They began throwing out all of the decent elements in the Communist joint movement. This was before the Soviet purge trials when they murdered the people. This was the period in which their activity consisted of kicking Trotsky out of Russia rather than murdering him, which they did only later. These old guardists said to us, “Look, learn from our lessons. We made a mistake. They will betray you. You cannot join them in joint activities.” And they had characteristics which made it easy for us to look down on them. They were older. Some of them had been elected to office and were unable to do much in the city councils, etc., in New York state especially. So we ignored that advice. One of my problems now, since then, has been the difficulty in teaching, which is why I emphasized these points with you, I hope, when I taught the classes, that the greatest difficulty in political activity is to teach people the relevance, and sometimes the irrelevance, of past lessons and how you apply them. That is true many times in my history. I’ve got to point out that I was wrong at one important time. I came back to Paris in the ‘70s to work for the OECD after I retired. What did I find there but my old socialist friends had all gone into a united front with the Communists. I was tearing my hair out

because I was trying to teach them how wrong they were. I recalled one of the favorite phrases of the Communists when we were fighting them, when we pointed to their change in line against Hitler, then supporting Hitler, and then against Hitler. They always said, "Objective conditions change, comrade." What I didn't realize was that this French leader, Mitterrand, who had taken over the Socialist Party from the old-timers, he had some ideas -- the objective conditions had changed; namely, Europe was the issue, and a newly developing European Community, and that the Communist weaknesses were beginning to come to the surface. Mitterrand saw in the early '70s the future downfall of the Communist movement in Europe. Marx says in the opening lines of the Communist Manifesto: a specter, a specter is facing Europe, the specter of Communism.

Q: Yes, right.

WEISZ: And what Mitterrand learned from experience, from observing things, because he was an opportunist, he is an opportunist, a good one -- opportunism isn't bad, you know -- he saw that a specter was haunting Communism, and that was the specter of Europe. That was the big thing, the split in Europe. We have differences -- we Democrats, now that I'm a Democrat -- differences with the Republicans as to how much credit to give Reagan's strong defense policy for defeating Communism and how much to give just the failure of Communism once democracy was seen as something that couldn't be hidden by the Iron Curtain. Once that was seen, people just turned against Communism as a system. I give credit to both. I don't know how you'd analyze it. Anyhow, we've gone off the subject, but the point I wanted to make is that, from my point of view and from my direct experience, the Communists were evil people; that is, the Communist policy is an evil policy. They had many good people in the movement, but they were all fooled or bought off as the events took place: the war, the post-war period, the experience of all the labor movements that joined the united front with the Communist movement to form the World Federation of Trade Unions, as the '53 violence in Berlin where the Communists acted in such murderous fashion, '53, '48 in Czechoslovakia, '56 in Hungary, '68 in Czechoslovakia again. All along, each time, the Communist movement betrays a different group of people, and they suddenly see the light.

Q: The new group of betrayed sees the light.

WEISZ: Yes, sees the light. One of my occupations at one time -- we're really getting off the subject, but I don't care, do you?

Q: No, no.

WEISZ: When a guy quit the Communist Party and wanted to work for the government, under the remnants of McCarthyism, he had to fill out a Form 57, or 171 they call it now. He had to answer the question "Are you now or were you ever a Communist?" People generally, if they could get away with it, denied it, or they said, "Yes, I was a Communist," and then you had to explain the circumstances. I was once interviewing a guy in San Francisco, a friend of a friend of mine. The friend of mine said to this fellow,

"Well, you're a writer. You could get good jobs in the U.S. government in the writing field. I've got a friend who will help you file your form." So I interviewed this guy. I guess it was after '68, the '68 events in Czechoslovakia. Wasn't that the Dubcek period? This must have been about 1970.

Q: Prague spring.

WEISZ: The Prague spring. I interviewed him, and I told him how to approach this situation, to say how his development was and what made him see that there was something wrong there. He was a man of 45, 50 years of age. What happened in '56 when they murdered the Communists in Budapest or something? I remember it very clearly. He says, "Well, you don't understand the nature of the Communist movement. It is not simply a political belief that you have that you can cast aside. It's your whole life. If you're a writer, they get you publishers, they get you openings to people, your family, so that in '68 I saw all this and I tried to escape, and it took me over a year to escape. My family looked down on me. They threatened me. I'd never be able to publish anything." He says, "It's a whole complex of things. The easiest thing is," he said, "if you want to quit" -- by that time I think I was no longer a formal socialist -- "if you want to quit the Socialist Party, there's no problem. You just quit. But it's not wholly enveloping of your whole being." And that, I thought, was very important, and we should be more generous in explaining to ourselves how these people who seem so nice now could have been part of this vicious movement.

Q: Well, we're even seeing it in David Koresh's group. You see some very bright people, apparently well intentioned.

WEISZ: Intelligent, Harvard Law School.

Q: Yes, exactly. They just got caught up in the mystique and could not even yet find their way out of it. Well, I certainly don't think this discussion of the ideological antecedents is unnecessary, because I think, as I went through my labor attaché career, a sense of the kind of ideological schisms which had started in the labor movement and which still survived, at least up until the end of the Cold War, was probably the most important framework of thought I had in approaching each country I went to as a labor attaché. So I think that you could take some credit, Morrie, for educating many of us.

WEISZ: I give credit to the readings that I gave you at the time, which you probably forgot by now, because I have a set of reasons. Recently I gave a lecture in a course that Steve Low was giving on Italy. He had lived in Italy for three years, and what he wanted me to do was go over the impact upon current events of the history of ideology in the Italian labor movement and other labor movements. I think that that is true. For instance, the impact of my experience against Communists when I came to my friends from my earlier experience in Paris and saw that they were making the same mistakes: I went over all this ideological background without realizing that there were things that changed. But I think it is necessary to understand. One of the most interesting experiences of my life is

the long series of discussions I had with a person named Angelica Balabanoff. She was one of the founders of the Communist movement with Lenin, was the first Secretary of the Comintern and then, after the 1905 revolution in Russia, escaped to Italy and helped form the Socialist Party in Italy with Mussolini. She went all through these things, and I had a fascinating series of interviews with her.

Q: That would be fascinating.

WEISZ: Absolutely, but it's not relevant to anything.

Q: Well, sort of reminiscing, as you know, my first labor assignment several years after that course was in Sri Lanka. There suddenly I was confronted with an urban labor movement that was dominated by Trotskyites. So these things had a history, and they still had a relevance, but that does bring us to South Asia. Let's think about India and an ideology which I guess was still prevalent when you arrived, of what Daniel P. Moynihan called Fabian socialism, the Nehru era. You started your assignment in India in 1965, so Nehru was one year gone. He died in '64.

WEISZ: Oh, I thought he died in '62. Well, it doesn't matter.

Q: We were on our way back from Madras, and we learned the news in London.

WEISZ: And at that time he was succeeded by Lal Shastri, and that was before Mrs. Gandhi took over. Yes, there was a strong Fabian socialist background.

Q: What's that mean to you, Fabian socialist? Were you a Fabian socialist? Was the American Socialist Party a Fabian socialist party?

WEISZ: There were people within it. We threw such a broad net. We permitted anybody who accepted the general statements. We had people who were pacifists, and we had people who thought of themselves, as I did for a while, as a more revolutionary socialist. It was a broad net. We didn't have to follow any particular policy. There was no rigidity about it. It was a big tent.

Q: If you didn't belong to an organized political party, you were a socialist, huh?

WEISZ: That's right, and one of the things that distressed us later was when the Trotskyites decided that they wanted to join the Socialist Party. When we found out that they maintained a group that published secret papers to take over the party, it was sort of distressing for us. I guess I thought of myself, and one part of the Socialist Party did think of themselves, as Fabian socialists, but essentially what I looked upon as the socialist belief in India was a reflection of what I wrote about in a paper that we used as a reading on ideology. If you don't have a labor or a political movement that gives you things, benefits, wages, hours, working conditions, political power, etc., you lean on some ideology that will be a substitute for wages, hours and working conditions. There are

many things about the American trade union movement that I looked down on and still do: the interest in the pocketbook, you know, wages, hours. What about the broader things? People will say, well, the trade unions are interested in broader things and will point to various statements made. One favorite one is Philip Murray's statement at one time in one of his speeches that he wants a trade union which will give workers the opportunity to have their kids go to college and the painting on the wall and all that. But when there is a challenge between the basic wages, hours and working conditions and the long-term objectives of some ideal society, you have the trade unions in the United States and those that influence them coming out for the immediate benefit. Trade unions are formed in the United States not to revolutionize society but to gain benefits for workers, and we should understand that. Yet, yesterday -- I can't help thinking of the impact on me in so many regards of the visit to the Holocaust Museum. As you know, I have been doing a whole lot of volunteer work for the Jewish Labor Committee, which did wonderful work during the war getting funds and sending them to Europe to save people and going through the underground. But then in almost a parenthetical phrase, in one of the things that I listened to almost by accident, there was credit being given to the Jewish Labor Committee for its financial support and money collected and passed through illegal and underground means to the people who were opposing the underground in Europe -- in almost a parenthetical phrase after that. However, some discussion of the fact that we were not permitting the people who were escaping from Russia to come to the United States. It's almost like the current situation in Haiti. They had this boat that was right off the coast of the United States with thousands of Jews who had escaped from Europe, and we were sending them away. So, you know, not in my backyard -- we believe we should help you but not to let you in this country. And here the explanations are given, and here is the Jewish Labor Committee, this organization that I have given a whole lot of effort to and still admire, not supporting those people, a group of rabbis, none radicals and none trade unionists, who were saying let these people in. Here was the Jewish Labor Committee doing everything they could to support these people except relying on their support of the trade union movement, which they do, to say, "However, we agree with the trade union movement on their anti-immigration policy." That is a tragedy that we have to live with, those people who were involved with it in that time. And there are so many other cases in which the ultimate objective has to give way to the immediate one, and that's what we found in India. We had all these idealists, Jajiben Ramalfren, the great untouchable leader. He was a crook.

Q: How long did it take you to find that out?

WEISZ: I found out about it shortly after I came. I'm sure there were other people whom I thought higher of, but, as you may know, I love India and I love many Indians, but I don't fool myself that they are perfect. I said to a number of people that there are only two or three trade unionists in India who I would say were completely honest in my experience. I defend the idea that they couldn't be so honest. I came to India with the blessing of Ambassador Chester Bowles, not because of any great qualities of mine, but because people had spoken to him about it, and with a letter of introduction to Ashok Mehta. Ashok Mehta was the leader of the democratic socialist movement, as you know.

He had just spent some time at the University of Hawaii, the East-West Center. There he met and was under the influence of Norman Thomas, who shared so many values with him, democratic socialist values. Oh, I had three things going for me, I guess: Bowles; Norman Thomas gives me a letter to give to Ashok Mehta, which, you know, opened the way; and the third thing was that Hyman Bookbinder, our neighbor here in Bannockburn, who was an assistant to Hubert Humphrey, whom I had helped with writing a long speech for him, said, "Before you go to India, you've got to do something. Come to the Capitol. I'll tell you the exact time to come outside the Capitol. You've got to take a picture of you and Hubert together, and he'll sign it, and it will help you in India." I'm not the sort of person who collects things like that, but I liked Hubert. I had met him a few times, and I did this great speech for him in '49 when he was first elected. And I came down, I was interested. Then they took a picture of the Capitol in the background and Hubert shaking hands with me and all that. That was a great thing to have in India.

Q: Oh, I'll bet.

WEISZ: It was published in so many of the trade union papers. I'm normally not particularly modest about myself, but I certainly wouldn't have gone out to get a picture shaking hands with the Vice President of the United States. Anyhow, I had those three things going for me, and I got through to Mehta. I opened up this whole group of democratic socialists, and I was close, as you were, I imagine, too, to the HMS, the socialist-oriented trade union movement.

Q: That's the Hind Mazdoor Sabha.

WEISZ: Hind Mazdoor Sabha, and there were a whole lot of socialists there. So I opened it up. And the other thing is the remnants of the Royists. I guess we have to define the Royists for this purpose, don't we?

Q: Yeah, well, I think it might be useful just for a backdrop, since we talked about ideology earlier, to go through quickly the factions that you remember and where they came from, because that will tie in a little bit with earlier and I think it's an important backdrop for the next 20 years in Indian history.

WEISZ: It sure will. Well, among the people that both of us met were the old-time Gandhian pacifists who marched with Gandhi and who were pacifists theoretically but would think nothing of engaging in the worst type of violence once they got political power, and they would explain that away. They were still very strong in '65 when I arrived, mostly among the old people, the people who wore the white caps, having made varying degrees of adjustments in their pacifism and their outlook on the objectives of Nehru. Many of them were in parliament and engaged in political activity that made Gandhi turn in his grave, I'm sure.

Q: Let's catalog those men. Gandhians?

WEISZ: Gandhians, the old Gandhians.

Q: That's one faction that had a lot of influence in the labor movement still in '65.

WEISZ: Right.

Q: And then you mentioned the Royists.

WEISZ: Okay, I'll cover them next.

Q: Okay.

WEISZ: M. N. Roy was a Communist from the early days who, as a matter of fact, was a Communist agent in Mexico for a while and turned against the Leninists. How deeply do we want to go into this? The Leninists gave birth, some people think logically, some people think necessarily out of their outlook, some think of Stalin as being a deviationist, a deviant of Leninism. Whether you give Lenin credit or blame for it, he did not maintain what he said in earlier periods, the internal democracy of the Communist movement. He believed in democratic centralism. Once a person got into the leadership, he was to have the sole power. You can argue, and people are still arguing, whether or not he really believed that or that was just a way of getting into power. That's immaterial for this, but Stalin succeeded him, and within the Stalinist movement in the early periods there were a few different tendencies. That's a favorite word of theirs, tendencies. One of the tendencies was Trotskyism. Trotsky was a left socialist who believed you couldn't have socialism in one country, you had to spread it, whereas the anti-Trotskyites saw the opposite. Later on, of course, Stalin took that line when it served his purpose. So the earliest deviation was Trotskyism. So far as I know, that never had much influence in India, but it did a whole lot in Sri Lanka.

Q: Via the London School of Economics, not any visit of Trotsky to Sri Lanka.

WEISZ: That was thought of as being a left deviation. Trotsky left Russia, was able, permitted, in fact was thrown out of Russia, and then built the Trotskyist movement in different aspects in different countries. The right-wing deviationist was a guy named Bukharin. He had influences all over, one for a long while, I guess. I guess Zinoviev may have been part of that. I'm not too well versed on this, but a whole lot of it is coming out now. Bukharin was a ring-wing deviationist. He, according to modern interpretation, really believed that the Communist movement should be democratic. He had influences, and one of them was the Royists. He was murdered by Stalin.

Q: He had influence on the Royists?

WEISZ: Yeah, the Royists were his agents.

Q: In India?

WEISZ: In India for a while and in Mexico when Bukharin was still in the Stalinist group. So Roy went to Mexico with that in mind, and then went back and slept with Stalin when Bukharin was murdered. I don't know the exact sequence, but at any rate the anti-Communists within the political and especially the trade union movement, the Hind Mazdoor Sabha, were led by people who had been under the influence of the Royists.

Q: So in a sense they traced their ancestry back to Bukharin?

WEISZ: Right, although their ideology, once they turned away from communism, turned to humanism. You know how strong the humanist movement was and, so far as I know, still may be in India. So the Royists were humanists and people in the leadership of the Hind Mazdoor Sabha thought of themselves as humanists, Maniben Kara, Kotwal possibly, but much more the theoretician of the Hind Mazdoor Sabha and the man who was the theoretical leader of the HMS for many years, a wonderful old gentleman named V. G. Carnick. He was a Royist from the old days. The Royists maintained some influence in the youth of the Hind Mazdoor Sabha, but I would guess that by now that has pretty much faded away. But they were anti-Communists from the inner feeling of their problem with Stalinism. So they were never subject to the sort of cooperation with the Communists that other people in even the socialist movement but especially in the surrounding areas, like George Fernandes, who was in and out of the HMS, who certainly did not oppose as a matter of principle joining with communists. He was more flexible in his ideology and in his dealings generally. The other influences, the compromising done by the old Gandhians was done by the INTUC people, who were theoretically still Gandhian. They wore the white hats, but they made concessions to their Gandhian past as a necessity for maintaining strength in the trade union movement.

Q: What do you mean, they made concessions?

WEISZ: Well, their activities in the trade union movement were certainly not pacifist.

Q: I see.

WEISZ: They would make all the necessary bows to Gandhi and all that. However, they united with people who were a little too practical for the purposes of the old Gandhians, but internally they managed to maintain a unity among those people who continued their Gandhian principled activities. If you ask Ramanujam, who was the leader of the INTUC, the Gandhian trade union movement, if he was a Gandhian, he'd say yes. On the other hand, some of the people he was associated with and whom he defended certainly were not.

Q: One person that we haven't talked about yet that I'd like you to mention and see how he fits in this mosaic is Jayaprakash Narayan and his group.

WEISZ: Well, Jayaprakash Narayan was both a Gandhian and a socialist, and he was well

regarded by the INTUC people. He was not a trade unionist, but the INTUC people admired his Gandhian pacifist principles and looked upon his pro-socialist attitudes as an "interesting deviation but we're not going to criticize him for it" type of thing. Now the socialists looked upon his Gandhian principles as "well, he's just a nice old guy, and he doesn't realize the need for practical trade union activity, and we still admire him," much like I looked upon Norman Thomas at home. The first time I met Narayan, I told him about Norman. But in any event, the trade unionists looked upon Narayan much the way in the trade union movement looked upon Norman Thomas. He can feel free to criticize trade unions for things he did. He's such a great man. We admire him. We invite him to talk with trade union groups, but we don't necessarily take all of his lessons. A little bit like the old AFL now looks upon Monsignor Higgins. They let him stray from the path so that he occasionally takes a position that's not quite in line with the AFL, but they certainly admire him, as we all do, in spite of that. Now, we're going down the trade union rather than the political thing, but, of course, there was, before we get to the official Communist movement, the Marxist trade union, CPM union. They were accused of being pro-Chinese. I never found that out. They were a radical Marxist trade union group proclaiming their radical Marxism, but again, like any trade union, they were even less ideologically controlled by Marx and Marxism than any of the other groups were controlled by socialists or official Communists. They were interested in power, and the Marxist movement in eastern India, Bengal, etc., and occasional spots of strength elsewhere. This was a truly left-leaning, Communist-oriented trade union movement which was not worried about embarrassing the government in their trade union activities. We found evidence frequently that the official Communist trade union movement under -- if you'll tell me his name...

Q: Dange, S. A. Dange.

WEISZ: Dange, who was the leader both of the party, the Communist Party, CPI, and the trade union movement. Am I right in saying that he was the president of both for a long while while I was there, or isn't that your recollection?

Q: I did not realize he had such a senior membership in the party.

WEISZ: Oh, in the party? Oh, yes. That's my recollection. Later on he stayed with the party, and other people took over the day-to-day activities of the trade union, I understand, since I left. But there was a mutual, if not respect, a mutual accommodation, I felt, between the government of India and the CPI, the Communist Party. They were in many cases unwilling to embarrass the government because of certain things, objectives, they had in common in certain areas of the country.

Q: Well, that's, I think, one area where the Communist Party was identified by many of its enemies as being willing to violate ideology for the practical necessity of its relationship with the Soviet Communist Party. Was that your impression?

WEISZ: Absolutely.

Q: Because of the foreign policy influence of India in the Soviet Union.

WEISZ: And also because they were getting a whole lot of money. It's going to be interesting to see how much comes out of the students who have gotten a whole lot of research money to look at the Soviet archives, whether or not the same things will come out of those archives that came out about the amounts of money, enormous amounts of money, given to the Communist Party and to their trade unions by the Soviets in the '30s, which has now come out in interesting articles.

Q: In the United States?

WEISZ: In the United States. We'll see whether that comes out with respect to Russia, as I imagine it will, although it was easier to hide what was being done there in terms of monetary support for the Soviets, because they had so much trade and the payments for trade could filter out to the party much more easily.

Q: We had the impression, by the time I was in India at least, that the five percent commission that was normal for a commercial private sector transaction went to the Communist Party or its instruments as the commission for the deal.

WEISZ: That's interesting except the allegations made by people in our government, the intelligence people and others, were that it was much more than the five percent. The accommodations were there for political reasons. I did not find one case in which the Communist unions or the CPI, the Communist Party in India, deviated from Soviet policy to favor any policy of the Indian government against the Soviet Union. There were some things the Indian government occasionally did which opposed Soviet policy. I just can't think of any case in which under those circumstances the Soviets permitted the Communist movement in India to oppose Soviet policy, because otherwise they would lose some reputation or strength in India. I distinguish that, say, from the case of one Communist union that I can think of in the United States, the United Public Workers of America, a Communist-dominated government workers' union which at one point shortly after the end of the war was permitted by the party leadership which controlled the union -- they were later kicked out of the CIO -- to take a position on an issue -- it may have been the Marshall Plan -- in which they opposed Soviet policy. The other example I can think of in the United States is a Congressman, Vito Marcantonio. I don't know whether your generation ever heard of him, elected with some Black but mostly Italian votes in Harlem, Harlem having been Spanish Harlem, Black Harlem, Italian Harlem and Jewish Harlem. Well, in Italian Harlem he was elected. We all felt he was a Communist, because he never deviated from the Communist line on any issue. But the question of Trieste came up, with the Soviet Union wanting to control Trieste and with the American government feeling very seriously that we had to support Italy, with all our friends, the Italians, in the labor movement wanting Trieste to go to Italy.

Q: Versus Yugoslavia.

WEISZ: Versus Yugoslavia. At that time Yugoslavia and the Soviets were in accord. Marcantonio was permitted to oppose Soviet policy, the only case in which he did. According to our friends, there was a specific permission granted.

Q: So your impression is that the Indian Communist Party had even less maneuvering room than the American Communist Party.

WEISZ: Well, I put it that it wasn't necessary. The Soviets controlled the Communist movement in India so completely that the position was otherwise. The Soviets knew that the Indians would never criticize them, just like the Indians had us in a spot where they could make all sorts of stupid statements against the United States and yet, when you pulled somebody privately aside and said, "Why didn't you attack the Soviet Union for doing what they did?" well, they couldn't afford to do it. Isn't that your impression? They just didn't feel that they could afford to oppose Soviet policy.

Q: Yeah, or they would pretend that our understanding of the importance and relevance of the statement or whatever it was was just foolish, that it meant nothing. I had this probably most energetically brought to my attention with Ramanujam in the INTUC Congress in which they came out with a foreign policy applying particularly on disarmament, supporting the Soviet Union's total disarmament program. Glotniov just blithely took the Soviet position on this in this democratic trade union congress and then just could not understand afterward why this was so important to us. Didn't we believe in peace?

WEISZ: What was the substance? You didn't chide them and say, "Why did you go along with this policy?"

Q: Oh, yeah, sure, of course I did, yeah.

WEISZ: Well, you were more diplomatic, I thought, than that. You probably said, "What is your explanation?"

Q: No, no, I complained very strongly to Ramanujam for letting this plank go into the INTUC resolution package.

WEISZ: What bothered me, and I think it's very relevant to our positions in India, yours and mine, was that on nonpolitical issues, purely economic issues, they went along with the Soviets. When the Soviets decided that not only should the Indians have, with Soviet support, Indian steel plants to produce steel that they needed, the United States, of course, was wishy-washy on the degree of support we would give out of our aid funds for that.

Q: We've got to get into this, this policy, American policy.

WEISZ: But even, aside from American policy, _____ they had a very important

fractional horse power productive capacity in Bangalore. _____ They should have had ten such things, because fractional horse power motors could be exported for hard currency, no doubt about that. They needed anything they produced _____ in terms of avoiding importation _____ foreign currency or producing it for the foreign market which they were competitive in. He said, "Why don't you build ten such fractional horse power _____." "_____ the Soviets. This is their political interest. They want you to be dependent on them." _____ Well now, I think we would have _____. I said, "Well, if you don't want to buy American, buy German, buy anybody else's _____ to produce the heavy machinery if you want, but, for Christ sake, use your own capabilities a little bit more intelligently. The great disappointment of mine, the rationales that were given to me by the whole political spectrum with the exception of the Royist trade union, who saw the point, but I think they only saw the point because they realized the political advantages to the Soviets of doing that.

Q: Very similar to Trotskyites in Sri Lanka, who often saw the motive behind the Soviet largesse.

I think this whole ideological question and the way in which practicality is sometimes masked by some political requirement of the Indo-Soviet relationship. One thing I would like to talk about in terms of the domestic Indian scene is a statement which came after your departure from India by Indira Gandhi but which I think had been felt by some Indian politicians for a long time that in fact Indian labor was a pampered class in India and that Indian labor stood in the way of programs and policies that could help many more people, rural poor for example, and that the trade union movement, by maintaining high wages and high costs of urban industrial production, really was hurting the truly poor in India. How do you react to that pampered class statement?

WEISZ: In the current political situation here, obviously _____ to what degree the textile workers and the garment workers are a pampered group in the United States. We should let the production go to Mexico. I guess you would say that I think in general the standard of living of the industrial worker in India was higher than that of the workers in the fields. How much less pampered they would be if the money that was used to pamper them were used intelligently in the agricultural field, I don't know. I think that there was a move to the cities, which was infinitesimally small compared to what happened in the last century and a half in the United States. I would rather have taken the position of improving the productivity of Indian agriculture rather than giving them money, with nothing stopping them from having improvements in the efficiency of agriculture. We certainly helped in that area also.

Q: I think it was in the time after you arrived, just about in time for the Indo-Pakistan War of 1965?

WEISZ: Right, I came there with that war and left with the '71 war.

Q: You were there in the inter-war period?

WEISZ: Right, between '65 and '71. That's right.

Q: And I believe it was not long after the war was over when we had increased leverage on both India and Pakistan.

WEISZ: Because of the need for food.

Q: The ship-to-mouth policy of really India surviving by ships arriving, and in that...

WEISZ: Which our ambassador didn't like it at all, because he was so interested in giving them more in terms of food.

Q: Which ambassador was that?

WEISZ: Bowles. Bowles was very pro-Indian and felt we were keeping them on too short a leash.

Q: There was obviously a Soviet element to that policy, a concern about India's closeness with the Soviet Union.

WEISZ: You mean an anti-Soviet element.

Q: In our policy.

WEISZ: Yeah, we felt if they want more food, why the hell do they suck up to the Soviets rather than to us.

Q: But there was also an economic development aspect of that in that we were going to hold the Indians accountable for improving their productivity, and in a sense we asked them -- if I understand it correctly, and I'd be interested in your reaction -- to quit subsidizing the city population with suppressed farm prices that kept the Indian farmer down; and if we were going to supply food in the short run to help them out of the potential famine, they had to make their agriculture more economic. What impact did that have on the trade union movement? Did they understand our policy? Did you have to explain that?

WEISZ: I certainly had to explain it, not too satisfactorily, because any group that's in a political or economic advantage doesn't like to be told. Witness what is happening in the United States when it has to give up some of this. We explained it in terms of the total economic situation. We didn't want to lower anybody's wages, but we certainly thought that the efficiency of Indian agriculture would be increased ultimately with appropriate policies, including cutting down on the subsidization of certain production. But the answer to that was much like the answer that I make today to the people who say that in

the long run it would be better if certain procedures were adopted here in the United States, if we go along with the treaty and allow Mexico to get all those factories from us and don't state all these conditions, which are now being argued about with respect to human rights, with respect to safety and health, with respect to wage standards, and with respect to environmental conditions. The fact is that any policy that's adopted -- I think I felt as strongly in those days then, but maybe I'm just reflecting my current opinion -- you cannot expect a group that's economically advantaged...

Q: And you would consider the organized labor segment of the Indian economy in that category?

WEISZ: Oh, yes, they were, because of subsidy and other things, at an advantage. There's no doubt about it. But you cannot expect any group like that to voluntarily give up the advantages they have because they are told in the long run you will gain, because in the short run you can starve. This whole question of efficiency, economic efficiency, I could never satisfactorily explain to the Indians or myself, why they should accept any policy that in the immediate sense would result in disadvantageous conditions for people who had gained those conditions. You should have a temporary economic development policy even if it results in increased taxes. Tell them that they should build up, using the money that we were willing to lend them and invest with them. We were in a better position there. We were closer to the Marshall Plan position where we had enough money so we could help develop their agricultural society, which we can't do today for the Soviet Union. We have to get others to contribute, but _____ as I do today when all these economists tell me that _____ on policies that help people, because in the long run we'll be substituting more efficient production for the less efficient textile industry. If we had a better -- I guess I'm getting into current politics, but the same will apply today.

Q: Well, you're getting into your background as an organizer for the Ladies Garment Workers.

WEISZ: That's right. I defend, even though I realize it's very selfish, but I defend not their opposition to the treaty currently here in the United States. I defend their statement saying the bosses get all the advantages of these treaties, and you don't ask them temporarily to give up their profits. They profit from it on a day-to-day basis, and they don't starve, whereas our workers, what are you giving them? You're not giving them trade adjustment assistance. That's gone down the drain. It was supposed to help them. What you need is a perceptive understanding of what has to be done in advance so the people won't be disemployed but there will be an immediate availability to them of substitute employment.

Q: Getting back to the situation in India, first of all, what was the attitude of the Indians when you arrived? You arrived right after the Indo-Pakistan War, a few months after the war?

WEISZ: The day we arrived...

Q: In Delhi.

WEISZ: ...was the first day that the lights went out.

Q: Okay, so you arrived at the beginning of the war? First of all, I'd be interested in what the attitude in Delhi and in India, particularly in the labor movement, was toward the United States during that war, our policy during the war. They condemned us, I believe, for having armed the Pakistanis before.

WEISZ: Yeah, and we were too hands-off. As distinguished from a much more friendly attitude at the time of the Chinese thing, we were criticized because in the battle between Pakistan and India we were neutral in favor of Pakistan.

Q: Didn't we cut off shipments, arms shipments, to Pakistan?

WEISZ: Yes, but by that time our, the Indian -- I almost said "our" -- the Indian reaction was "Look, you've given them so much before." It's like Bosnia today. There's pressure in the United States. We should arm the people who are being ethnically cleansed. At that time, as distinguished from the great assistance we gave India in the Chinese situation, the feeling was that we were favoring Pakistan by neutrality.

Q: I must say I'm a little hazy in my history right now. Had India by the '65 war already developed a relationship with the Soviet Union as principal arms supplier?

WEISZ: I don't know. I think so. I think they were either on the way to being there or they were being bought off with arms. At any rate, our attitude was contrasted very sharply with that of the Soviet Union. I don't know the degree to which the Soviet-Pakistan relationships were secretly similar to ours. For all I know, they may have had an accommodation with the Pakistanis, but they were always able to do things secretly that we were not able to do. But I think generally they did not favor Pakistan in that. Is that your impression?

Q: With the Soviets?

WEISZ: Yeah.

Q: Oh, absolutely. And, of course, they brokered the Tashkent meetings, which resolved some of the questions of the war. But as this policy evolved -- you were there at a very interesting transition time coming at the end of a honeymoon in the wake of the Chinese invasion when we were very helpful to India...

WEISZ: We still had, for the first year at least that we were there, USMISME, the U.S. Missions to India, whatever it was. We had a big military group there, and that did not

decline for at least a year, the first year we were there. But that was in terms of anti-Chinese policy, things we had promised them with respect to helping them against the Chinese.

Q: And there was sort of a succession: the Indo-Pakistan War in which India resented at least what the Pakistanis started with in terms of American armaments they could use in that war; kind of a more pragmatic, perhaps, bent in Indian policy and less ideological policy with Lal Bahadur Shastri as Prime Minister in place of Nehru; and then sort of a downward slope in Indo-U.S. relations in the wake of the food crisis and the coming Bangladesh War. I wonder if you could describe a little bit how the...

WEISZ: Well, this is a very _____ thing. I really should be talking about _____ labor aspects.

Q: Well, that's what I'd really like, how you saw it reflected in labor's attitude toward you...

WEISZ: Well, there was always so much suspicion, and once this damn thing happened that Kissinger went to Pakistan and from there went to China. This is their big enemy. We had helped them against China.

Q: This was in 1971.

WEISZ: Right, just before the Pakistan thing _____. Then we began hearing all over the place, even including the people, the old Royist group in Bombay, which was for the first time, I thought, not anti-American but took an attitude as if to say, "Well, we really don't have any friends that are permanent friends of ours," because they were anti-Pakistani just from their innards, and when they saw what they viewed as our betrayal... First of all, they were anti-Chinese because of their political background. Then they were anti-Pakistani because of the proximity.

Q: The geographic and historical background.

WEISZ: Yeah, and the whole partition split-up there. And then they saw that we were too practical. We weren't just friends with India, which they had hoped we would be, so that there was no open criticism of us from that trade union group. There was from others.

Q: From the Royists.

WEISZ: From the Royists.

Q: That's very interesting. This is a group that came out of the Communist background but became the most sympathetic to the United States. Was that partly because of the AFL-CIO attitude?

WEISZ: Absolutely, partly for the Lovestone element. Don't forget I told you that this guy, Jay, was the agent in Mexico and India for Bukharin, and the agent in the United States was Jay Lovestone. They had this friendly relationship to Lovestone because of the history, and yet on the trade union front they were very suspicious of Lovestone because of some of his political activities which they didn't like.

Q: Now, was Sokolove the AFL-CIO resident in Bombay back in the '50s?

WEISZ: No, Sokolove was the first labor attaché in the first, even before, period of Bowles' ambassadorship. He was a labor attaché before Burgess in India.

Q: Harry Goldberg -- I said Sokolove, but Goldberg -- I was a little confused on this.

WEISZ: Let me clarify that. The first labor attaché was Sakharov, who knew a whole lot of the people that we knew. We were so surprised, Yetta and I, when I interviewed Sokolove to find out that one of the things that Yetta, my wife, had become active in had been started by Hazel Sokolove. That's why I interviewed her for the spousal project. Yet there was no continuity, because in between was this very active and competent labor attaché who was anti-Lovestone, and that was Burgess. Now, what you said was, "Was Goldberg the resident?" He was a non-resident resident because of many reasons, personal and other. He didn't particularly like _____, but he was their man, he was Lovestone's man in contacting the three I's, India, Italy and Israel. He was their guy on those for a variety...

Q: Quite a geographic spectrum. Doesn't quite fit the State Department's neat categories.

WEISZ: By the way, he also was an expert on Indonesia. I called him a four-I's man, because he had a pair of thick glasses. He was interested in Indonesia. They kept him out of Ireland, as somebody pointed out to me the other day -- I guess it was Shea and our friend from the mediation service, the other Irishman, what's his name?

Q: Power, Jim Power.

WEISZ: Jim Power. They said that he never went to Ireland, which may or may not be true. Anyhow, yes, the resident expert for Lovestone was Harry Goldberg.

Q: Tell me again, where did Sokolove come from in the American labor movement?

WEISZ: He did not come from the American labor movement. He came from the War Production Board like Allen Strong, Irving Brown, myself, Dan Goode, and many other people came. When the war ended, they went into other fields. He went to UNROC and then was very interested in China, so they sent him to India.

Q: Now what was his relationship to Lovestone?

WEISZ: None at all. These are pure civil servants, cynical guys, hilarious, wonderful sense of humor, very cynical about Lovestone and me and anybody else who had any politics. He was a pure anti-politician type but very competent as a Foreign Service officer. His only labor post was India, and he left. There was a hiatus, a brief hiatus between him and Burgess. Burgess and Krishnan then came in about the same time.

Q: Okay, well, let's just back away. I was just interested in the fact that you mentioned that the Royists in a sense stayed the most friendly to us, but even they in this inter-war period...

WEISZ: But they were a little critical of our...

Q: Became critical of us.

WEISZ: Yeah, at that point, critical of our politics but also critical of our insistence on maintaining connections with the INTUC even though we knew what the INTUC was about. They wanted us to be partisan in favor of the HMS. Ambassador Bowles did.

Q: He wanted us to be partisan in favor of the HMS?

WEISZ: Oh, yes, he liked the HMS.

Q: What position did you take in that? That's very important.

WEISZ: I honestly feel that I realized then that we had to help everybody. My position was parallel to that of Dan Horowitz's in Italy. This business of favoring one unionist against another was a mistake. First of all, it wasn't any of our business. Secondly, as long as it was an independent union and relatively free of Communist control, we had to find out what was going to happen. We didn't know what was going to happen. If we knew that these people would succeed and these people would fail, I could see an understanding. I always wanted to keep contact with the INTUC. Personally, of course, I had more friends in the HMS, just like personally it is true that our wonderful assistant, Krishnan was closer to the INTUC, but it never interfered with his understanding that we had to have good relations and help the HMS. I had political leanings toward the HMS but not to the degree of wanting to favor them. I would be interested in offering programs to both, and I liked the idea that the HMS was willing to take our programs, because I had some responsibilities, which I haven't even discussed, in the aid and information area. I always favored offering the same sorts of assistance to both, and I was very happy when the INTUC accepted our help in many regards. You mentioned the Fabian socialists. I encouraged Bowles to support things that were being done in Aminabad by the INTUC where I felt it would enhance our reputation with the trade unions that were against us on normal political grounds. The second trip I took in India -- the first was to Bangalore the week after I came, which was fascinating substantively as well as personally -- the second trip I took was when Bowles went to Aminabad with my encouragement. I didn't have to

encourage him to go to Aminabad to talk, but he encouraged me to go with him to open up the Harold Laski Room at the Aminabad headquarters of the INTUC.

We're continuing this as Tape 2 of this series of tapes on my service. Today is Saturday, June 12th, and I'm sitting here with my good friend, Jim Leader, who will begin this tape. Thank you, Jim.

Q: Okay, I think we had been talking about your arrival soon after Chester Bowles was sent out from Washington. Is that correct?

WEISZ: The second time.

Q: The second time, yes.

WEISZ: Oh, I think he had been there about a year or so.

Q: Yeah, I guess so. He was sent in '63. How did he feel? Was he happy to be back in India, or did you feel that he resented the fact that he left as Under Secretary of State?

WEISZ: Well, he left there as Under Secretary because he felt that his advice was not being taken, and Kennedy was, I think, happy to see him go. India was his first choice. He loved it. You know, this was his second tour in India. He had served there before under Truman.

Q: Uh huh, '52, I think.

WEISZ: Yeah, and he was happy to be back. I don't think he was ever discouraged. He was a fascinating person in the sense that he did not take no for an answer. Whenever anything was proposed and it wasn't approved, he would go forward in a slightly different direction or what he called in a different direction. So he was gung-ho about India in general, as many of the people who served under him will remember. He was overly impressed with the progress India was making and found it difficult to take a position which ambassadors normally take as representatives of the U.S. government. He was always making understanding comments about why India wasn't doing this or that. However, it was also during the period when we were still very influential there because of the help we had given to India against China in the '61 period, so it was a more pleasant situation than it was later on when you will remember.

Q: Nehru had died about a year before you got there...

WEISZ: A year and a half.

Q: ...and during the early part of Chester Bowles' tenure as ambassador. Did he think, do you think, that the passing of Nehru made a fundamental change in the political scene?

WEISZ: Well, Shastri, who took his place, was a different type of person. He was more of a parliamentary politician. Nehru was the person who had been the political side as against Gandhi being the intellectual side of the fight against the British, and this was just a new regime. Shastri realized that things were changing. He had to make accommodations to the Soviet Union which were practical in nature. I had the feeling -- I was never there when Nehru was there -- that Nehru would put a gloss of a community of interest with the Soviets on the fact that he succumbed to many of their demands, whereas Shastri was just a politician and a good one, I gather

Q: And the Soviets hosted the peace talks between India and Pakistan? That was what Tashkent was about, correct?

WEISZ: Yes, I don't think there were negotiations themselves at that point. It was some part of the process.

Q: Just to complete the scene setting here at Tashkent, the active hostilities were over -- is that correct? -- in the Indo-Pakistan War of 1965.

WEISZ: Right, and they were settling it. Needless to say, I had nothing to do with that except as an observer and a student, but I was busy with the labor function. I think I'd like to go into a little detail of this either now since it's so important to my impressions of India and my work with AID and with the Ambassador. Let me do it now with the understanding that I'll refer to it later on when I go into the subject of the transferability of American practice to foreign countries. It was my really first experience on the problems that arise when American or any other models are used in a way that does not bode well for success for collective bargaining or negotiations. The Bechtel Corporation has a long history, subsequently to be represented by Secretary of State Shultz, but this was before Shultz came to Bechtel, long before it. This would have been the end of '65. The Bechtel Corporation gets a contract to construct Tarapur, which was about two hours' drive north of Bombay, big installation. In typical fashion for an American construction corporation which has had a history of dealing with the construction unions, they go in there with the idea of, you know, we're building a labor force, let's find out what the labor situation is, let's establish good labor relations on both sides. In the typical fashion, again, for an American corporation, they realized politics are important in a foreign country. They, therefore, decide to deal with the government, find out what's the situation, how should we go about it, we don't want to have any stoppages -- you know, a constructive attitude. They go to the governor of the state -- first mistake. They didn't know nor did they have the intelligence to go to the embassy, which also at that point wouldn't have advised them. I had just come there and I don't know if anybody else knew this -- I'll bet you did -- that the history in India is that you appoint a governor for a state from another part of the country. You don't want to get him too involved in the local politics, you want him to be above it all, as it were.

Q: It's like the British tradition of having the armed police be from another district so

that they don't actually get along with the local...

WEISZ: So they can kill people.

Q: Yeah.

WEISZ: This is part of the British tradition. I'm sure they inculcated this thought, but it was one that had some measure of intelligence to it and practicality. They didn't know that. They didn't know that the governor of the state of Maharashtra where Bombay was and they didn't realize that the guy who was the governor of the state had come from the other side of the country, Bengal, Calcutta, with all of the institutional attitudes of that part of the country. They go to this governor and he says, "Oh, I've got the guy for you. He's a very good labor leader. He's got constructive experience in my state. I know him," and he pulls in some friend of his probably to be the man who will advise them about how to hire people and arrive at a constructive agreement -- first mistake. They don't realize that this guy is, if anything, an enemy of the local trade union people. Second mistake was that, like any good American corporation which wants to have a stable industrial relations system, they're going to arrive at a very good agreement with the people. So they practically agreed to the demands of the people without realizing that in India demands are only a temporary thing. Within a few months, you've got Christmas bonus period, you're going to ask for a 13th month. Whenever anything happens, you go hat in hand and say, you know, "We need some more money. The people are starving," or whatever. "There's a drought," or something like that. You bargain leaving a cushion for giving you an opportunity to be very generous later on when these poor people, who are right at the edge of poverty at all times, come with what to them is a reasonable demand, whereas the American corporation says, "What are you talking about? We just arrived at an agreement that's to last two years. Now you're coming around for more? It's impossible. We arrived at an agreement. The agreement is the thing."

Q: Had the wrong rhythm for the negotiation dance that happens in India as opposed to the United States.

WEISZ: And I'm so glad that you have had the experience in India so you can appreciate how foreign this situation was. Now, why they sent the guy in there without Indian experience, I don't know. I don't even remember who the person was. So you have a situation of people, people who are dissatisfied. I think they may have given them the 13th month, which is, you know, common, but they certainly didn't want to do anything else. I imagine somebody told them, "Well, this is very common. Why don't you give it?" But there were many things that they refused to give in on, so the people went out on strike. But going out on strike, they're not going to do what the head of the union, this guy brought in from Calcutta who was probably a CPM type, Communist Party Marxist, but we don't know. Maybe he was just an ordinary. He certainly wasn't an INTUC man; that I remember.

Q: Not in a union affiliated with the Congress Party?

WEISZ: Definite not, as I recall, and certainly not HMS either, because HMS would have been much more constructive at that point. They go out on strike, and the state police, of course, try to break the strike. The strike leader is a guy they pull in from Bombay who had just had some very successful strikes for the taxi drivers, your old friend and my old friend, George Fernandes. I had never met him before. Fernandes runs this strike. The police come in. Twelve employees are shot dead, creating a political uproar, and things went from worse to still worse in that situation. George Fernandes at that time, much younger than when you knew him later, much younger than when I knew him later, was a very obstreperous trade union leader. And the embassy is called in. You know, you've got to do something about it.

Q: Called in by whom?

WEISZ: By our ConGen.

Q: Our Consulate General in Bombay.

WEISZ: In Bombay, whose name, fortunate for these recollections, I don't remember. He agreed entirely with the company. They signed the agreement. Why the hell do we need somebody from the embassy to do this? So I came in in a situation in which the ConGen felt as though he could run this situation well. I knew enough to know that I knew very little about it. The AID labor man came with me -- that was Tom O'Connor -- and we agreed on the approach that should be taken, which was, you know, you've got a union and there's a strike, you've got to deal with the union. We proceeded to sit down for the first time with George Fernandes. He didn't know me, but I was able through the HMS people -- and he was out of the HMS at that point, too -- and through names I mentioned, to convince him that -- also through my political background which impressed him very much, impressed him more than it did the embassy, as you will see later on, not the embassy but the ConGen. When we started discussing political philosophy and socialist objectives and why a socialist should agree to a contract even though he was a revolutionary, the ConGen was a little bit nonplused. We got nowhere, because Bechtel was still concerned about it. This took a number of trips to Bombay during which we tried to get the parties to deal with one another. On one of the trips to Bombay, Fernandes was in the hospital, not on a starvation diet which he would normally be in a strike situation at about this juncture, but he was a member of the local parliament, the state legislature. So while he was ill, they put him in a fairly good hospital as distinguished from others in which I visited on other occasions, where I had to step over bodies. He had a room to himself, and I went into the room to tell him what the state of play was with somebody from the ConGen's office. I wanted to bring them in, or maybe they insisted on it, I don't know, and somebody, I think from the local Bechtel management, from the management hired by Bechtel America, who reported back to the company. We went over rather constructive ideas, because George didn't have his troops with him. He was there alone. Anyhow, we came to some conclusions, which would have required the company to make some concessions, which it obviously should have done. George Fernandes also making

some connections, which he would later refer to as not concessions but great victories. I thought we had things pretty well in order, went back to Delhi, reported to the Ambassador and to our AID chief, who was John Lewis, the AID chief because AID funds were used for the project. That was the initial rationale for our becoming involved. They were rather pleased with the progress I had made. Then a cable came from Washington saying that they had just heard from Bechtel that Mr. Weiss, the labor counselor, had visited Mr. Fernandes at a fancy hospital bringing him flowers as a gesture of good will, and had agreed to concessions which the company just didn't feel it should have. Then came a cable from Bechtel more or less agreeing with that. I felt I was in the soup until I drafted a cable, very diplomatic, saying this was the best we could do. I showed it to the head of our AID, John Lewis, who by this time was a friend of mine. I had reviewed his book Quiet Crisis in India very favorably many years before. He was a wonderful guy. He threw out my cable, and he wrote one that went something like this: "Weiss did the best possible under the circumstances. The other witnesses to this negotiation agree that, far from bringing him flowers, Weiss did not even bring a rose for his lapel," and more or less told him to shut up. The negotiations proceeded. The final agreement was cleared with the ConGen at the ConGen when George Fernandes finally deigned to come into the enemy's headquarters at the Consulate General. He had outside a few hundred people who were going to make sure that settlement was arrived at to their favor. Everything went along fine until George got up at one point -- I'm telling you these details because you know him so well and you can appreciate -- he gets up at one point and says, "Will you excuse me? I've got to go outside to lead the delegation, because they're going to come up to the door to shout." The ConGen was ready to blow his top, and I said, "Calm down. This is just theater, you know." Came back and everything was okay. This gave me my first insight into Bombay, into Fernandes, into the status I had to achieve within the embassy. Luckily John Lewis was involved in this, the head of AID, which was a big operation at that point. I guess I have to go back, because before the actual agreement was arrived at or was finalized in some form, the central government started, "What's going on?" because they had heard a whole lot of things from this governor who was overtaken by events. The Ambassador said, "I think you'd better brief the Labor Minister on this," so we make an appointment to visit the Labor Minister. During the course of our conversation, he nodded quickly, "Okay, okay," because he had just gotten the cable about Shastri's death at Tashkent, and he was Acting Prime Minister not only pro tem but actually until Shastri's successor was selected by the party, so that those were the circumstances.

Q: Until the successor to Shastri was selected?

WEISZ: Yeah, his successor was Mrs. Gandhi, of course. We just proceeded, you know, with suffering our very important thing. In terms of putting me into operation as the labor counselor with more involvement, more authority even than I had thought I would have had, it had the good function of establishing a status within the embassy with the ConGen. From then on, whenever I went to the Consul General in Bombay, everything was very pleasant. INTUC was not happy about it, but they didn't enter into it, because the union that had negotiated the agreement was not an INTUC union. I had to do quite a

bit, and I visited Bombay fairly frequently in order to balance out my relationships, which were favorable by that time, with George Fernandes, who became a genuine friend, as he was of yours, wasn't he?

Q: Well, by the time I was in India, his star was...

WEISZ: Oh, that's right. When I came back in '79, he was in power as a minister kicking Coca Cola out.

Q: And IBM, as I recall.

WEISZ: And IBM. Because he had dealings with some German firm. You know about that. But it did establish me with Fernandes. I needed no help with HMS people in Bombay because of letters that had been sent about me because of the general attitude they had toward my friends in politics in America.

Q: A favorable attitude?

WEISZ: Yes, and as you know, Maniben Kara was a friend by that time. So the real problem was INTUC, and I had to spend a considerable amount of time in boring meetings at the INTUC to meet all of the old Gandhiites who were in power, and spent a whole lot of time at the textile workers. It was interesting. The collective bargaining aspects of that were more interesting than their attitude towards Gandhiism, their effort to hold on to the Gandhian philosophy while they made concessions to it in the day-to-day work that they had to do. I would have understood that, but they tried to fit it in, and I went to Aminabad for that reason, because of the strength of the INTUC and the textile workers in Aminabad.

Q: That's kind of an interesting point, because Gandhi, while a believer in nonviolence and also believed in civil disobedience and really in confrontation in a passive and nonviolent way, but...

WEISZ: So this gave the INTUC people the opportunity in anything they did to engage in everything short of personal violence on the part of the trade unionists, all sorts of things which stood in the way of trains running, of the machines operating, all those things, as Gandhi disciples, while at the same time they used that pressure very effectively in many cases to stop operations until agreements were reached. From their point of view, this was a bona fide application of Gandhi's philosophy. I saw it going much further than that on the picket lines and in the threats that were issued especially in Aminabad.

Q: Do you think they went beyond the tactics of an American union, which stopped short of violence but took a very militant stand against an employer in a serious strike?

WEISZ: The Americans?

Q: No. As you compare the tactics of the INTUC...

WEISZ: I don't accept your premise that the American unions didn't use violence.

Q: No, no, I'm saying let's take a case, a comparable case where the union leadership and the union did not use violence but nevertheless maintained a very tough strike. What was the difference between that and what the INTUC people did in India?

WEISZ: For one thing, I think, the American unions' efforts to go as far as some of the INTUC unions did in terms of stopping production, stopping goods arriving, which can be considered violation of state law in many cases and, you know, where there's actually a group of people standing in front of the plant where violence has to be used against them and state police get involved: No, I think it was a practical application of what they had to, but what bothered me a little about it was their insistence on explaining it to me in terms of Gandhian philosophy rather than... My feeling was, oh, I can understand what you're doing, you're in a tough situation. I used to tell them stories about how when I was organizing for the Ladies Garment Workers Union, we would try to get our objective, try to get people to sign up for the union. When we had 30 percent or whatever it was, we would demand an election. But before NRA and before NLRA, the Wagner Act, we countenanced the use of violence. I'm sure in other things that I'll be talking about, I will give the example of this strike in the '20s in the ILG where, when I had a strike in the '30s and before NRA in Newark, they told me how they used to destroy. The cutters of the Ladies Garment Union used to destroy 300 thick sheets of silk that were ready to be cut, and they used to cut it into strips and destroy it completely. Well, when you have no other recourse such as that given to you, no other peaceful recourse like an election, you engage in that sort of thing and you don't need any philosophical discussion of pacifist theory to say this is what workers will do. They may have to go to jail, and meanwhile the employer loses. Anyhow, that was one of the things that I won't say I told them I was bothered by it, but it sort of was unnecessary covering up of what to me is practical trade unionism by molding it into Gandhian philosophy.

Q: You mean the spiritual aura that was really a very practical <u>real politique</u> approach. Did you find a quite different approach to negotiations among the main contenders for leadership in the trade union movement in India, the Communists, the INTUC people and the Democratic Socialists of the Hind Mazdoor Sabha?

WEISZ: Yes, the Communists shouted a whole lot and accused people. Well, I don't know. The HMS also made accusations, but the accusations of the Communists were always in terms of -- and I'd love now to get into the records of the Communist Party in the Soviet Union. I'd like to see whether it is true for India, as it is now coming out true for the United States, that they actually got funds tied to demands that they would make against the American embassy or American company activities. They would always posit their demands either in terms of a specific American condition if there was an American employer like IBM, which subsequently gave me -- no Remington Rand was the worst one -- gave me the duty and opportunity to demand that the U.S. government do

something about Remington Rand's operations in the Calcutta area. So in the Calcutta area, Bengal, where the worst anti-labor activities of American corporations were extant, both the Communist Party and the CPM blamed Americans. This would not have been the case with the sort of charges made by either INTUC or HMS in that area. So the demands made always had an anti-U.S. aura to them, even though in other parts of the country and even among friends in Calcutta, they were sort of apologetic about blaming it on the Americans. "You know that this company's a lousy company. We're not blaming the American government, but do what you can to bring them in line." And this was the case of this fascinating RSP in Calcutta. I don't know whether you knew him, Jogesh Chatterjee. Did you know him?

Q: No, not really. I knew of him.

WEISZ: He's a cynical guy who was the head of the revolutionary Socialist Party. I was fascinated by all these different revolutionary parties. But he had his own trade union. It wasn't a CPM trade union. Have we gone over the difference between the CPM and the CPI and the RSP and the relative unions in this? I forget.

Q: Well, I think it would be useful just to quickly sum up.

WEISZ: The INTUC was the Congress Party union which, of course, said that they were not affiliated and they weren't officially with the Congress, but they found it difficult to criticize the Congress Party. The HMS was more loosely related to the Hind Mazdoor Sabha, more loosely connected to the Socialist Party of India in its various forms, and they had some that were leaders of the HMS that were not even in the Socialist Party, in any of the socialist parties. And you had -- what was the name of George Fernandes's, HMP was it? The Hind Mazdoor something else.

Q: Panchayat, wasn't it?

WEISZ: Panchayat, yes. He was in and out of the HMS depending upon whether he thought he could be made president of it. That was his political connection. He was a leader of many unions, some of which were formally affiliated to the HMS, some to the HMP, some, like his brother's union in Bangalore, which was independent. And then there were the Communist organizations, the CPI, Communist Party of India, which had its own trade union movement which was called the...

Q: All India Trade Union Congress.

WEISZ: AITUC, right, which once sent the head of the Communist Party, who was the head of the All India Communist Union, to a meeting run under the auspices of, financed by the American AID program. That got them all excited. I found nothing wrong with it. In fact, I loved the idea of having this guy come so that they would have the excuse of inviting me to the union, and it was the closest I ever got to debating Dange. I wrote a paper which we subsequently published and sent all over India, but until that happened,

the confrontation happened, everybody was a little wary. You know, where are our AID funds going? Pull back our AID funds if we have some Communist coming to speak. I thought it was great, and with the help of our AID chief, I found no difficulty. Anyhow, the AITUC was the official Communist-affiliated union. I think it was actually affiliated to the Communist Party.

Q: And one that really went back to the beginning of the trade union movement in India and included people of all stripes.

WEISZ: Right, and they only broke away. It's just like in the international field which we know so well. The WFTU included everybody except the AF of L, which wanted to stay out, but it was all inclusive and included the CIO until they showed their stripes and only the Communists remained and the independent unions in Europe and the United States pulled out. So similarly with the AITUC. It was the original trade union movement, I think dating back to before World War II. Do you know?

Q: Yeah, back to the late '20s, I believe.

WEISZ: It broke up, and the other unions were formed, the INTUC because of the Congress Party and the HMS, but then in different places you had groups like in Calcutta.

Q: We should mention the CPM.

WEISZ: And then you had especially formed originally in Bengal but in one important case spreading beyond that, the Marxist unions, the CPM, Communist Party of India (Marxist) which had its own unions. They were alleged to be Chinese oriented. What was your reaction to it? I never found any sentiment particularly close to the Chinese.

Q: Well, before the Chinese invasion in '62, they were fairly openly pro-Chinese, and then they had to back away.

WEISZ: In my day they were fairly independent, and they became influential in other parts of the country, even in south India, I think, but definitely in other parts of the country and the north. And then a union which became influential only in Bengal, was the RSP, which I'm coming to now. The Revolutionary Socialist Party, which was not revolutionary in any sense that I understood, not socialist, and not even a party really. It was an individual, Jogesh Chatterjee, one of the most cynical, fascinating people I ever met in my life. I'm sorry. He probably died before you came there to the job. You've got to describe this guy. He was a member of the CPM-controlled government of West Bengal. They would give him a ministry. I visited him many times in his ministry office. He was also the head of their union, the RSP union, the name of which I forgot.

Q: The United Trade Union Congress, UTUC?

WEISZ: Oh, yes. You remember it. You mean it was in existence when you were there?

Q: Yeah.

WEISZ: But without Jogesh Chatterjee. You would have remembered him. He probably died from drinking too much. He was so interested in America that whenever I went there and I would call on him in his ministry office, he would insist on seeing me elsewhere so he could get the feel of what was happening in the American radical movement, as if it was as important as it was in India. So I used to serve that purpose for him. He would know names of people whom the ordinary labor person or even non-radical politician would not remember, so we would see each other. I would see him formally, I would call on him, and he was minister of something, sometimes labor minister, other times other things, and we would talk about trade union or labor issues in West Bengal. Then he would agree to my invitation to take him to lunch, which fortunately, Bowles being what he was, he gave me a good representation allowance so that I was able to pay for all his drinks that he would have at lunch. His lunches generally were a little bit more liquid than solid, and you get an insight into this man's intelligence and cuteness. I said to him the first time, "Do you want to meet at this hotel?" It was an Indian hotel which I stayed at once and would never stay at again. It was the fanciest Indian hotel...

Q: In Calcutta?

WEISZ: In Calcutta, yes.

Q: The Grand?

WEISZ: No, the Oberoi Grand was where I stayed. That was a pretty bad place too, but at least it was up to our low standards for Calcutta. No, this was another one -- Near East? It had the word 'East' in it someplace. I said, "Would you like to have lunch there? We'll have a room." He said, "You don't understand. If we meet privately for dinner or lunch there, it will get around, because the guy who opens the door to the hotel is probably a member of my union, and it'll get back to the CPM, and there I am having a secret lunch with this American imperialist quasi-radical. What we have to do is take the most prominent table in a corner so that, one, I am not hiding my association with you, but, two, we can still have a good lunch and do that." Isn't that clever? So, of course, we did get reports back. One of the reports I got back was from a person in our Consulate General I always suspected, because I didn't go into these things, was affiliated with our intelligence operation, who said, "Oh, I hear you were having lunch with...," so you see it went all around. It shows you that Jogesh was quite correct. He would tell me things about what was going on in politics especially and in the trade union activities which I would get from no other government person. I would get hints of -- we had a few very good management people who were contacts there, introduced through our friend Krishnan -- and I would get a feel for when the government was going to break up, the Marxist government, or what the balances were.

Q: Okay, you talked about your extensive conversations with _____ and the

esoteric subdivisions of the Marxist movement in Bengal. Why was this so important, why did you spend time on it, and how did you interface with the Consul General?

WEISZ: Well, it was important for a number of reasons. The political developments affected so seriously issues like the jute problem, the problem at the port. The port workers were very important. I regret to say that the name of the HMS leader there, who was so wonderful, whom I used to have other conversations with about the trade union part of it, he was an HMS person who was not active politically particularly, but he ruled a large segment of the waterfront workers. Therefore, as you know, the combination of political and trade union activities were important. On the trade union side I would see all these trade union people and management people. Management people were very much more effective in analyzing the trade union situation than individual trade unionists who have their particular interests but who did not have a dispassionate view of the movement. But the relations with the Consul General were solidified by the fact that I would...

Q: Your relations?

WEISZ: My relations, yes, and the labor office generally, that is, Krishnan's and all the others', were solidified in a few respects that I will mention. First, the fact that I would go back to the Consul General, usually every day. It was sort of the headquarters rather than the hotel. We never spoke about these things at the hotel, for obvious reasons; not that much of what I had was classified in the sense of confidential or secret, but it might have been embarrassing to my contacts for it to get back to the government of India through a conversation in the hotel. I would talk to them about these political developments, and they felt, I think they felt, at least they welcomed me so well, that I contributed to the totality of their political understanding. I can't give any case in which I actually did political reporting from Calcutta. I would give it to them, although occasionally I would report. If a Calcutta trade unionist visited me in Delhi, I would prepare a report on it, but there were a couple of other respects. One of them was AID. A whole lot of aid was going into American corporations there, and we were very interested in that relationship so that the AID office was practically a third home of mine.

Q: These were American companies that were contractors in AID projects, AID-funded contracts.

WEISZ: Right, and I had no job there, by the way, in educating the ConGen about the importance of labor as distinguished from what I mentioned about Bombay. I'll get into that in a moment. And I said that would be a third area. The second was, so far as I know, unique in India with the possible exception of Burgess -- I don't know his work with USIA -- and the possible exception of yours, Jim; and that was that we had a problem at the embassy whereas I had plenty of representation funds, largely because of Bowles' generosity. I don't know if he ever kept any himself. He was pretty well off, although he once came into -- this is an interesting aside -- he once came into a country team meeting saying, "I don't understand the list." The Fortune 500 list of whatever it was came out,

and there is Benton, who had been his partner in Benton & Bowles, the advertising guy. "It says he's got $500,000,000. When we broke up the partnership, we each got one and a half million dollars. I've still only got one and a half million dollars," or five million or whatever it was. But Bowles was quite generous about that. I never had any trouble with representation funds, but we did have some limitation on travel funds. What I did with the collusion of Lewis and the AID people and the information people, because we had a labor information officer -- I've got to get into that at some point -- we arranged that my travel and usually my per diem would be paid either by AID if it was any AID-related activity, like this case in Bombay, or Information. So when I got there, I would give one or two lectures at the USIS. The lectures helped me with contacts and good publicity -- you know how publicity is in India -- and also gave me an opportunity to get into that whole area of theoretical exposure of U.S. practices in the field to an audience much broader than just the normal government, trade union, management contacts I would have. We used to have meetings in Calcutta, Bombay, Bangalore, and Madras, all over, which served the double purpose of advertising the views of the American Embassy, and then some of my speeches would be -- I never prepared a speech in advance -- summarized in a series of pamphlets put out by the USIS and India through our labor information officer, who got wide publicity of that. They always were asking us for articles to appear in journals, anniversary journals. This happened to you too, didn't it?

Q: Not really, not so much. We're talking about two periods in which the relationship with the United States was remarkably different.

WEISZ: Plus the staff. You didn't have a labor information guy. You didn't have an AID labor guy. You didn't have...

Q: We didn't have an AID program of any great size.

WEISZ: You didn't have an AID program, so I'm not to be construed as criticizing you for not having these. What I'm saying is that it was lucky in my situation in that period to have resources and to have the resources utilized by a friendly government, friendly management people, friendly trade union people. The INTUC people weren't as friendly as the others, but they sure loved to have me write an article for their magazine, etc.

Q: You were at that time publishing <u>The American Labor News</u>. Did you start that, or did that start with Dave Burgess? This was a kind of journal that brought together important happenings in the American industrial relations field.

WEISZ: Right. We have to spend some time on information, and maybe now would be a good time to go into the embassy and my status within the embassy and the different functions including information.

Q: Calcutta, we understand, was very valuable, because you were dealing with people that they had some trouble getting to and could read back to them the attitudes and some of the posturing, which was different than the true attitude, I presume, of these labor

leaders.

WEISZ: Right. Let's just put a little bit of a caveat here, and that is what I described to you is from my perspective. I thought I was doing great, and that should be weighed into this, although I don't know of any specific criticism except with respect to the AID person. As time developed I did have difficulties with the AID person, which I don't think I want to go into because they were largely personal.

Q: Let's talk about Delhi and your role in the embassy. You certainly arrived with great advantages.

WEISZ: I do want to get back to Delhi. Can I spend a minute on Madras, because we had a ConGen there too, a totally different situation, as you know so well. In addition to the other trade unionists, they had one important one who as an independent trade unionist but worked very closely with the HMS particularly. What was his name?

Q: Anthony Pillai.

WEISZ: No, Anthony Pillai was an HMS leader, a wonderful guy, a former radical of some sort.

Q: Yeah, well, he was very close to the Trotskyites in Sri Lanka. He was Sri Lankan. He was from Sri Lanka.

WEISZ: Yes, originally Sri Lankan. Tony Pillai.

Q: Left when the Lanka Sama Samaja Party had to go underground when the British were really going after anyone who could subvert the war effort.

WEISZ: He was an Oxford scholar. Did you know that?

Q: I guess I didn't.

WEISZ: Yeah, he was an Oxford scholar.

Q: Very intelligent.

WEISZ: A brilliant man who devoted his life to trade unions. One of the few, on the fingers of one hand, guys I really felt sacrificed himself for the trade union movement. He's another one I used to see regularly just to bring him up to date on radical activities. Every time I came there he ran a meeting for his union, which used to be overcrowded. He used to invite my wife always to come to the meeting. The only time I had a tearful occasion was when they had a farewell meeting for me the last time I was in Madras. Little did they know they would have many more every time I came back, but this was a touching experience. No, the person I was thinking of was the head of the Simpson

Workers Union. What was his name? If I think of it, we'll insert it. Anyhow, he was an independent trade unionist, but he served an important purpose there when he was in and out of leadership of this group of people, because he had a different dimension to his trade union activities. He would think in broader terms. He would think in terms of getting a wage benefit that would be translated into money put aside for a bicycle so that over a period of months each of his workers got a bicycle, which made them able to travel a little bit further. He was an imaginative collective bargainer, and it didn't even bother me so much that he was the financier of the fund that laid out the money for the bicycles. Somehow I have the feeling, as is always the case in India, that somehow or other this manipulation of funds results in a one percent -- I don't know what it was. This was more than a feeling, because we did have evidence to that effect. I'm not casting unwarrantedly negative aspersions on him, but the benefit to the union was clearly there, so he was there. And another thing: the relationship with the Consulate General there was open and much more friendly.

Q: Bert Franklin was Consul General still, my boss when I was in Madras.

WEISZ: When you were in Madras, yes, that's right. Very friendly, as you know, and it was the only place where I felt as though there were public meetings at which I spoke, rather than trade union or labor. I don't know why that was. I want to mention two other things about Madras, and then I promise you I'll get to Delhi. One is that Krishnan, of course, our assistant who did so well, was from Madras. His father was down there, and he always was pro-Tamil, pro-Madras, and wanted my understanding of India to reflect the importance of that area, which he did not exaggerate too much. His father was there, so he would always want to go down there. I was there less than a week when he suggested strongly that I go down to Madras because they were having a very important meeting here and he had arranged for me to be scheduled to come to the meeting. This was not a trade union meeting. I don't even know if it was a meeting about labor, although labor was on the program. So I went there. This was my first stay at an Indian hotel, and you can imagine what my reaction was. I was there literally less than a week. I met everybody including Krishnan's father, whom I came to know and admire very much. I go to this meeting to speak. I'm going to speak about American trade unionism or whatever it is. They gave me a copy, and in walks the governor of the state. Whole lot of excitement. "Mr. Governor," or "Your Excellency, you're not due till tonight when you give the final speech of the conference. We're sorry, this mix-up," and he turns to the guy who came to the door to greet him when he came. You know the way a governor of a state comes in with an entourage, etc. He said, "I know I'm supposed to be here tonight, but when the labor officer of the embassy is here, I want to hear what he has to say," and it turns out that every time there was a meeting with any of our labor people, before then and certainly every other time that I was in town with this governor, who was named (Varahagiri Venkata) Giri, who later became vice president and president...

Q: Former Labor Minister.

WEISZ: Former Labor Minister, authority on labor, wrote the big, fat book on...

Q: That's right. He wrote really the definitive book on Indian labor.

WEISZ: Studied not in England, because he refused to go to England, but he got his degree in Ireland, because the Irish were against Britain, as distinguished from those people who would want to be educated, including Gandhi, in Great Britain. He was a genuine friend. He was genuinely interested in trade unionism, so he had this relationship on a broader basis in Madras, I think, than in most other places. Okay, back to Delhi.

Q: It's important, I think, to talk about the regions of India, because it is a nation of nations, 14 language groups, at least 14 different cultures, more probably, major cultures, as diverse as the diversity of Europe certainly, the difference between Greece and Finland, so it is a very, very complex country culturally, and every region is very different.

WEISZ: And within the region. I have not even mentioned the fact that in the Bombay consulate, in the Calcutta consulate, and in the Madras Tamil Nadu consulate, we had different situations in the different parts of it, including different languages. So Hyderabad -- I went all over the place as you did too -- was just fascinatingly different. We had labor conferences in at least three or four places in the Calcutta Consul General, many in the Bombay one including one in Goa, Aminabad...

Q: When you say we had conferences, do you mean these were seminars that the U.S. embassy sponsored?

WEISZ: Seminars that the U.S. embassy would have in the labor field, and there again, that was part of my covering of labor in that area. You remember the conferences you arranged in '83. They enabled you as the labor officer to follow up.

Q: I went to Bangalore, I believe.

WEISZ: Oh, yeah, that wonderful meeting in Bangalore. So that each of them was a country in itself with many more subcountries.

I could not have imagined as successful a series of relationships that had been nurtured by many people, including beginning with Burgess through myself and others, could have been continued as well as you did.

Q: Well, thank you.

WEISZ: This is the advertisement for my friend and former fellow worker and student, Jim Leader. Okay, you come to the embassy with a little bit of advance notice to the staff that this guy is here because Bowles wants him. He's a friend of Bowles, which wasn't true. I didn't know Bowles before, but he spoke as if I was a friend because we had so many friends in common, including Esther and Oliver Peterson and Victor Reuther and

many others. The sentiment around the embassy as I detected it was one of extreme friendliness on the part of my boss.

Q: Your boss was the DCM?

WEISZ: No, my boss was Leonard Weiss, who had a new job that they created at the same time they created this counselorship. He was the minister counselor for political economic affairs. Bowles had the idea that politics could not be separated from economics, an intelligent idea that hasn't been carried through after he left.

Q: It's kind of interesting in terms of Foreign Service history that he had two sections. Didn't he have an external political economic and an internal?

WEISZ: He said what is more logical difference is to have under the DCM, a guy he got along with personally, but I could see from the relations that intellectually he thought this guy was a striped-pants diplomat.

Q: Green?

WEISZ: Green, Jerry Green, a nice guy really. I got along with him famously, but as I said, my immediate boss, Leonard Weiss, whom I had never met before -- and have to emphasize that he spelled his name differently and was not related -- he had been at home on either home leave or something else and was instructed by Bowles to get to know me, and we hit it off immediately at a lunch in the Vienna Restaurant on Pennsylvania Avenue. He was just attuned to what Bowles wanted to do, and he was quite impressed, because he had a long bureaucratic history, quite impressed by the fact that I had been a deputy assistant secretary and actually I think I took a slight cut -- believe me, it wasn't much; I would see to it that it wouldn't be much -- in salary to come there. Anyhow, we hit it off perfectly. To this day we are very good friends. And I was well greeted by our neighbor here in the Bannockburn community, where we're conducting this conversation, by the administrative counselor, counselor for administration, Mel Spector. Do you know Mel?

Q: No.

WEISZ: See, it's funny. You're a neighbor of his. You're less than a hundred yards from him, up the way. A very nice guy. To have a friend in administration and your boss as a friend and the ambassador insisting from the word go -- I mean, when somebody raised the question, I am told, "Is he going to be a member of the country team," because I was, you know, three layers down, Bowles, I understood from someone, looked at him as if he was crazy. "Of course, he's a member of the country team. He's the first labor counselor in the history." That was something that he insisted on establishing.

Q: Oh, you were the first counselor for labor affairs?

WEISZ: Absolutely. Never before had anybody been counselor. And that, I should mention in terms of the rest of our project, was instituted under circumstances which I should describe because it has great relevance to the status of labor in an embassy generally. The labor function in State, when it was under a political person rather than a career diplomat, was always interested in upping the level. If we had a labor reporting officer, it should be a labor attaché. If we had a labor attaché, we should increase his status somehow. The 2 level at that time, which is now the OC level, was as high as a labor person had ever gotten. The 1 level was what they wanted to have for a selected group of labor attachés. Now at this point, let me say, should I go into this now? I think it's just as logical, because I don't know anybody else, and we may have to continue some other time. The 1 level was what they wanted a labor attaché to have as a labor counselor at some time. They could not, either under the political leadership of S/IL, Phil Delaney, or under previous and subsequent civil service or foreign service types, they couldn't achieve that. One of the advantages under the political leadership of Delaney, he was able to do things that the Foreign Service people in those jobs were unable to do, simply because he had the connection, that he exaggerated, but was believed by the leadership in the State Department, but that wasn't very great to what we call 16th Street in the AFL-CIO.

Q: But that's what makes politics happen.

WEISZ: Absolutely.

Q: It's illusion, like actors, not all reality.

WEISZ: "Jesus, do I have to go over to what today? You know, I played golf with George Meany recently," which he did do. "The next time I play golf with him, I'll have to mention I'm having these troubles with you." Well, anyhow, Delaney was always insistent on that, and finally he got a guy, Bowles, who for totally different reasons wanted to have somebody in that job.

Let's now talk about the things that you will have personal things to add to.

Q: One of the things that's most interesting, I certainly want to get it in, because your long tenure in India was sort of sandwiched in between my two residences there in the Foreign Service at least, Madras in the time of the Chinese invasion and a very close relationship between India and the United States and...

WEISZ: Now, you were not there, however, as a labor officer.

Q: No, I was in the consulate as...

WEISZ: But you were interested in labor?

Q: Yes, absolutely.

WEISZ: If I know you, you got into it.

Q: Well, that's when I met Anthony Pillai and found out about his salon connections.

WEISZ: But you had been trained in the labor field. Was it your first assignment, was that it?

Q: Yeah, Madras was my first assignment, and the idea was you had sort of a pattern of your first three assignments that were not specialized, very general. Anyway, I saw India from 1955, when I was there as a student at a time when the United States did not figure very large in Indian views, to 1962 when we become very important to India as we supported them in their war with China, and then back in 1981 when relations were terribly strained with the United States. You sort of in your tenure, probably more than anybody else who has been in the embassy in New Delhi...

WEISZ: Had a favorable period.

Q: Well, had a period in which the transition took place. And that's what I wonder if you could get at. You mentioned your very critical role in the negotiations that Bechtel was involved in with the labor union in Bombay, and certainly you were sort of persona grata to come into this situation. How did that change during your tenure, and how did it look in 1971 after India felt that we tilted toward Pakistan?

WEISZ: More than felt like that.

Q: We did tilt to Pakistan.

WEISZ: Yes, that's an interesting thing to cover. First, you said the critical participation I had in those negotiations. That was the deepest I ever got in specific negotiations. I used to rail within the embassy about practices of American companies, etc. But as I said, I came there under circumstances that established my status within the embassy very well. Because of goals that extended during the early period that I was there, I remained a part of the country team. It was Bowles' idea that the labor function should perform at a high enough level so that there could be a labor dimension to everything that was done by the embassy, whether or not this was in programs that were only technically within the scope of his authority, not administratively within his authority but functionally. For instance, AID: I don't think the AID mission chief was under him. He was financed and he certainly accepted, under John Lewis, Bowles' status. I don't know what the administrative function was, but he was a member of the country team. I don't know of one case in which he did something that Bowles disagreed with. There might have been cases in which things were involving AID that he didn't take up with him, but the policy was there. Bowles led the country team in a way very different from the other ambassador I served under, Kenneth Keating. The AID situation was different then. Information similarly was financed by the USIA, but the person took the leadership of Bowles.

Otherwise he wouldn't have stayed there. Bowles had enough there. Then there were the elements within the embassy which were administratively and functionally under him, the commercial service, which then at that time were not outside.

Q: No. it was part of the State Department.

WEISZ: Then part of the State Department. I used that one case of Bechtel, which never happened again in the six remaining years I was there, to say to the ambassador, "We've got to educate these commercial people. Why should we wait until there's a terrible strike with the onus of 12 deaths?" because everybody was saying that the Americans killed... There was actually a headline that said, "American bullets kill 12 Indians."

Q: The Blitz.

WEISZ: Yeah, probably in Blitz. But it went beyond that. We had to have an actual investigation of the bullets used in that thing to show that they were state police bullets. It's terrible. Anyhow, it enabled me fairly early to go to the ambassador and say we have a positive job to do here, and that is the job of educating management. Now how do we do that? When I go all over to give speeches, etc., we invite them in. If they come, fine, we know them. But isn't there a further duty that we have? Bowles came up immediately with the idea, "I have a monthly meeting with American businesspeople. American businesspeople get together once a month in our consulates to talk about problems. Labor is a very important problem." I was put on the agenda of every one of those meetings if I was in town or at least had permission to participate in the meeting. The status of labor in India was usually on the agenda of these things. It enabled me to put pressure on companies like Remington Rand, although we had no authority over them, I'm sure, but the possibility of embarrassment to the U.S. government if things went wrong. If I mentioned the Bechtel case once, I mentioned it a thousand times.

Q: Well, not only that, but the effectiveness of our commercial presence on profit in a country like India.

WEISZ: When I was there last in '83 I tried to get our commercial attaché, I couldn't get him interested in something that was so close to what was necessary for American business, and that is to get involved in a solar energy project such as the French were getting involved in Ronshee. I was very disappointed by that. So that even the areas which were administratively and functionally under the ambassador, we had to weigh in if there was anything relevant. I remember having something to do with our agriculture attaché, who was subservient to the Agriculture Department. There was some effort to organize agricultural workers by some old INTUC type; I forgot who it was. The Ambassador felt as though in those areas, especially where we had separate labor functions, AID labor and USIA labor functions, there should be a person with, if not administrative authority, at least functional leadership over these people. This worked out very well in the case of our information person, who was appointed after I came, with my participation in the appointment, Shoals, who was absolutely perfect for the job. He,

Shoals, resuscitated the American Labor Review. Nowadays when you go to India, three people are mentioned: Burgess, Weiss and Leader. Burgess started that, and it was resuscitated in much different form, smooth paper, regular magazine of which I had three yearly volumes given to me when I departed, but now it has gone down again. You put it out for a while, didn't you?

Q: The whole time I was there we put it out.

WEISZ: As a mimeographed paper?

Q: Yeah, right. It was a very primitive thing, but we got a lot of response, we got many letters.

WEISZ: We had it in a few languages for a while. Then we cut out the languages. We had sections of span devoted to it. We had money. We had all these rupees. That's another thing you didn't mention that occurred after I left, which is Moynihan giving away all the rupees.

Q: Rightfully, I think.

WEISZ: Rightfully, yes. I told him when I saw him years later that he made the right decision even though he could have another labor attaché conference. Now what gave Bowles this idea? What gave him the idea was, first, he felt that labor was important.

Q: You mean of having a labor counselor?

WEISZ: Right. He felt that labor was important. When he was the head of the price administration, he had a separate labor advisor who supervised a wide variety of labor participation and price administration all over the country in each area. His labor advisor, fortunate for me, was Oliver Peterson. That's how he got to know Oliver. So, one, he thought labor was important. Secondly, he was a friend of Walter Reuther's, and that presented opportunities for the labor officer and disadvantages. Shortly before I came there, Reuther, Victor Reuther, visited. When Burgess was there, he got Walter Reuther to visit. It was publicized. The Reuther people became famous, as famous as they were in India, as negative did that have an effect at the AFL side of the AFL-CIO. There was a hatred there, which I cover in my -- I don't know. Did you read my review of my years in Paris? You remember, I cover the background of the Reuther/Lovestone dispute in the UAW and the War Production Board continuing on to this day as far as I know. So that was a great advantage as far as the India program or the relations with Bowles were concerned.

So Bowles had, I'm sure with the encouragement of Krishnan and of Victor Reuther, a visit from Victor Reuther a few months before I came. Early '65, late '64 and tells -- they talk endlessly. I think he stayed with Bowles -- and he outlines a labor program, a broad labor program for India. This is translated into a program that goes in some formal way to

Washington with Bowles indicating that this is the basis for having a labor counselorship set up, improved relationships with the other elements of the embassy -- you can imagine. The substance of the report had some very good things in it, and it had some things that I knew would not fly with the AF of L. That set Bowles, in typical fashion again -- and this is the one negative thing I found about him -- to search out for status for this thing going beyond his labor attaché, who was a wonderful guy named Nilly, a good friend of ours. This must have happened in '64. Going from Vietnam to France on my way back to the States, I obviously had to stop in Delhi to see the Taj Mahal, which I knew I'd never see again.

Q: Right.

WEISZ: And I stopped there. I was introduced to Bowles. Neither of us made an impression on the other, but the reason I know the date is because I was coming back in November right after the election. It was already decided that Millen was to go, that they were going to try to get a senior labor officer there. Bowles did not talk to me about it. He was negotiating with Washington about it. I knew about it, because my host, in terms of introducing me around the embassy, was the assistant labor attaché.

Q: Lenny Sandman, huh?

WEISZ: No, no, not Sandman, Blowers.

Q: Jay Blowers.

WEISZ: Jay Blowers, who took me around and introduced me to Bowles. I attended the country team and spoke to the country team as a visiting Department of Labor official. I got back to Washington after my two weeks was over. I saw the Taj Mahal. I got back to Washington, and there was a cable in to Wertz referring to a cable to State...

Q: This is Secretary of Labor Wertz?

WEISZ: Secretary of Labor Wertz -- saying, "I've already told the Department," and this had been orchestrated at the Washington end by Delaney for totally different reason. I come in, and Bill Wertz, the Secretary, had gotten this cable. He turns it over to his Assistance Secretary -- no relation again -- for management, Leo Wertz, who had been the Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Affairs and was in charge of management, and says to Wertz, "Find somebody who... [end of Tape 2 Side B]

Okay, let's begin. This is Tape 3 of the interview with Jim Leader, and it's Side B of that tape, and it follows the one that will relate the circumstances of the appointment to India.

Q: Right, as labor counselor. This has you there having successfully involved yourself in the Bechtel negotiations with labor on the Tarapur project, and we talked about Shastri's death at Tashkent and Nanda's, the former labor minister's, temporary sojourn as acting

prime minister, and then, as I remember my Indian modern history, Indira Gandhi is appointed Prime Minister by the Congress Party. Is that correct?

WEISZ: Yes, with the Congress Party leaders figuring that this little woman will stay for a couple months and then we'll get one of us in, and boy, were they wrong. She acquired power very competently and used it for many years.

Q: Did you notice a difference? Could you detect a difference in the relationship and the labor job as Mrs. Gandhi took hold?

WEISZ: Absolutely, the embassy did. Bowles tried to be friendly to Mrs. Gandhi, but she had other axes to grind. The beginning of the suspicion of the United States began for a wide variety of overall political reason which histories will show, and I don't want to talk about, I'm not qualified to talk about except insofar as the labor impact of that change. But basically it was Mrs. Gandhi's lack of a tenderness in the relationship with the Americans unlike what we had with Nehru. I would say from what I heard, not only from Bowles, Nehru was a friend of his. Mrs. Gandhi was not a friend of his. Therefore, every new issue began to be an issue in which the trust had to develop out of the circumstances surrounding that issue rather than out of a history of good relationships.

Q: That's a good point on the change.

WEISZ: And that was not successful, because many of the people around her were frankly... Whereas Nehru had a pro-Soviet slant that created problems for America and the American labor movement, especially because Meany once said he was a Commie, or words to that effect, that was not serious. I didn't have the feeling, never having been there during the period that Nehru was a leader, that this pro-Soviet stance of Nehru's was a real problem for Bowles. He made excuses for it, and he later would make excuses for the things that he would describe as Mrs. Gandhi having to do under these circumstances favoring Soviets. But the staff certainly felt, and certainly the intelligence people felt, that she was really an apologist for this. Her total bringing up was one in which the atmosphere in Britain, where she went to school... Nehru, of course, went to school in Britain before the Communists were a power. She was nurtured in Great Britain in an educational system -- and I'm just inferring this from the time, I have no evidence of that -- but she must have made friends among people who were apologists. That's putting it as gently as I care to put it. Other people think that she was practically an agent of them. But I imagine it's her friendship with Harold Laski and that crowd in Great Britain rather than any underground Communist connection that I know no reason to feel existed.

Mentioning Laski makes me remember my first trip to Aminabad was for the installation of the Laski Room at the headquarters of the TLA, the textile labor. At which they invited Bowles to speak. If you can think of a stranger connection than Bowles speaking there as the American ambassador in a room dedicated to Laski, I thought that was hilarious. That was my first trip to Aminabad. He insisted I come with him. I had just arrived. Well, so I think that Mrs. Gandhi was closer to the Communists, not because of any pro-CP leanings

but rather she was suspicious of us, and we gave her reason to be suspicious, the whole President Johnson attitude of holding back on the food and all these other things.

Q: During the virtual famine conditions in '66.

WEISZ: Yeah, we had to practically demonstrate that people were starving before he would free the food coming in. So she had plenty of excuse, whereas the Soviets appeared to be more generous. Similarly I referred last time to the fact that they were generous. Their generosity was in terms of loans and things like that that had to be repaid. Their generosity was in terms of financial transactions that allowed them or encouraged them or permitted them freely to siphon off some of the funds to finance Communist activities, but nevertheless they appeared to be more generous.

Q: There were showcase projects that seemed to affirm India's aspiration to great power status, the steel mill, the great steel mill.

WEISZ: Well, the steel mills may have been necessary, as I said last time, but the idea of having machinery and equipment that was underutilized was not. But they did appear to many Indians -- the showcase, that's it, the showcase idea, and they were very good at their propaganda.

Q: And they had an outlet, a propaganda outlet system, in India that nobody else had really, even the British didn't have.

WEISZ: That's right. The British had the British Council, but they didn't spend the millions of dollars that the Soviets did. So the circumstance of a graph in which one line is going down and another one is going up began gradually, and our aid began to go down, and our information funds were cut down. It was very foolish of us, especially with the favorable situation in terms of the rupees we had, for us to have been so chintzy with AID programs. I remember the AID program going down in Europe. I felt it was much more gradual and only reflected a realization that Europe had already built up its infrastructure so that we could cut down on aid without any negative effects to the European economy in the '50s. But we were chintzy toward India because of the fact of their relations with the Soviet Union. We were very suspicious of it, as indeed I thought we had reason to be. In the labor field it hurt me, because I wasn't able... They always had to be apologetic. One of the most interesting relationships I had with them was in the '66-'67 period when they had a national commission on labor. We had something to show them. They had a national commission on labor which they were going to examine their labor function, government and labor functioning, labor legislation, labor standards, employment, training and all that, and with an emphasis on labor relations. They decided to study the systems of various other countries. It illustrates both a type of relationship, the function in which that relationship was carried on, and the results in terms of influence of both our influence going down and the Soviets maintaining if not increasing theirs. The National Commission on Labor was created about 1966, reported a year later, and it was parallel to the Donovan Commission, which you have heard of in Great

Britain. Let's examine everything, you know, and study everything, and come to conclusions.

Q: A rational approach to an irrational arena.

WEISZ: Yes, something not transferable. The head of it was the retired Chief Justice of India, Gajendragadkar. Early in the game he called me in to find out what he could learn about the American practice. I said to him, the United States is not a model for you to adopt. It's one of the things you have to look at to see what is relevant that you can adapt to your situation. Years later in '83 I was pushing that same concept in connection with what we did in the project in Bangalore. He was a brilliant man, educated in Britain and a famous lawyer. He could not get that point. I, therefore, said to him, "Are you going to send any delegations abroad?" "Good idea." I said, "I will do two things. I will arrange for a delegation of people to come here to examine what you're doing and give you a report if I can get AID funds to do it." Subsequently we got it. "But before that, you have a team of people going to the United States to explore our country to find out why we developed our system, so that you will have in mind the structure and function, ideological background of our country in which we developed our labor system." Great idea. They set up the idea of traveling to a few countries in Europe with the help of the ILO and the United States, but for Christ sake, he said, we've got to go to Russia too. They'll be offended if we don't. I didn't care if they went to Russia, as far as I was concerned. But later on when, for reasons that I don't know, but suspect it may have been that the Russians didn't want them around because technically the Indians believed in freedom and the Russians didn't want them to examine their system. But for whatever reason it was they decided, either the invitation was pulled back or never given, so they couldn't go to Russia; the logical thing, therefore they can't go to the United States. So already it was hard to further the basis of my teaching them, not the irrelevance of the American system, but the relevance of putting it into context before they decide to apply it. Subsequently we did get a team to come over, one guy from the NLRB and one guy, wonderful people, the secretary of the NLRB, Ogden Fields, a very high official of the mediation and FMCS, Yeager.

The Indian report came out in maybe '67 or so, and there it is: Let's adopt the American system of majority representation. And I railed against it. Frankly this is an Indian failing. Even Krishnan felt that you could transfer this election system from the United States to India where one union is designated as the majority representative, the exclusive collective bargaining agency and nobody else. You can't do that in a country in which there's a diversity of ideological unions. Ideology doesn't lend itself to compromise. When one union wins over another union in the United States, the other union members join the majority union because they want to be represented, but when ideology is at issue, you can't do that.

Q: I've had Indian trade unionists tell me that they just don't understand our system. It's undemocratic to not give representation to the minority viewpoints in a workplace.

WEISZ: So the point is that our relationship with... As part of this deterioration in the labor field, I would put this irrelevance of the American labor system as one to adopt. After that, beginning with '67, '68, after that report, all over the place they were having meetings on how to deal with the situation of majority representation recommended to them by the commission led by the Chief Justice of India. They were trying to accommodate to a thing which they couldn't accommodate to. On the other hand, I will say that later on the parties themselves, I felt, as a result of the irrelevance of the copying tactic, they adapted to it in the steel industry. I think I told you I was very impressed when I came there in later years to see that they had this system of both parties sitting on opposite sides of one table at which all of the unions were represented but none has the exclusive. They had to join together to find out one demand to make, because unless they agreed on one demand, it would be an inoperable situation. It was the contrary demands that they made and threats to strike, etc. So you can adapt an experience of that sort, but you have to do it intelligently. I would put down as one of the labor aspects of the deterioration of relationships, not as important as the political one, of course, was that we... I was still welcomed wherever I came. I spoke all over India on the report, my attitude toward the report, and the fact, saying as delicately as I could, that, "Gee, it wasn't our fault. You didn't come to the United States like we invited you to, and you would have seen this, but too bad. Now you have the problem of dealing with this." I made many trips, but there was that. Now, another aspect of the deterioration was the insistence of the INTUC that they would not deal with the AIFLD (American Institute for Free Labor Development).

Q: When was AIFLD established?

WEISZ: I would say '62.

Q: Was it that early?

WEISZ: Oh, I know that they had somebody come there a few years after that. They had been active in other places. '62 strikes me as correct, but it wasn't until '66-'67 that the then head of AIFLD came to India for the first time. His name was Paladino. You knew Paladino?

Q: Yeah, who served as the head of AIFLD until just three or four years ago, I guess.

WEISZ: Right. He died recently. Paladino was an American trade unionist, practical trade unionist. By a strange coincidence, many years after I left Local 91 of the ILGWE, he had the same job I did, as assistant education director, after Gus Tyler incidentally. We were friends, good friends. So he came there with a positive attitude toward me, a little bit suspicious about what he had heard about the Asian regional organization and its leader, V. S. Matur, whom you knew very well.

Q: Who was an Indian.

WEISZ: He was an Indian, and one of the disadvantages of having an Indian located as a regional representative in India because he was too much involved in Indian labor politics. Parallel to this business of having the governor of a state, Rajasthan, come from the other end of the country, because there the Indians learned the disadvantages of having done that, and the ICFTU never learned or could not overcome the pressure to have an Indian as the head of it. He got all mixed up in a whole lot of things. Now, Matur was an old friend of yours and mine. He was not the most imaginative trade union leader. His imagination was concentrated on trips and getting exchanges of people that were frequently of only marginal importance. But AIFLD wanted a relationship with the Indian trade union movement subject to two things: One, they did not want exclusive bargaining relationships with the INTUC. Just because the INTUC was the party closest to the Congress Party didn't mean that they should only deal with INTUC. They had many friends on the HMS side from the old Harry Goldberg days who had some influence in the AF of L side of the AFL-CIO.

Q: Who was also a member of the ICFTU, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, a brother or sister union.

WEISZ: Right, and they could not refuse. INTUC, of course, did not say they should refuse to do it, but everything that was done they wanted to do in areas in which INTUC was strong, etc., so INTUC took the position that, gee, we shouldn't take money, that's a government-supported organization. To me, and I said so very openly although privately -- I said it directly although privately to the INTUC leadership -- "What the hell are you talking about? What about the British Council, which is government supported and you accept money, not to speak of the Communist Party of India, which through the various things gets its funds into helping your organization?" "Oh, no, no, no, no." They denied that as indeed they would have to deny it. But you could see that they had the excuse of the alleged CIO past of this thing. I said, "Well, whatever the past was..."

Q: The CIA past?

WEISZ: CIA past, I'm sorry. "Whatever the past was, this must have stopped, because now the government is openly giving money for trade union purposes, and we think you ought to accept it, just like the British Council funds projects." Well, that was another labor facet of this increasing negative thing. Now, the AFL-CIO did not take the position "We're poor as church mice. We don't have any amount of money to give you, so we have to get it from the government." They took a matter of principle. "This is a union-to-union thing. We are free of the U.S. government. If you want to deal with the American labor movement, you have to deal through us." We had a person who just got in touch with me who happened to be in town a couple weeks ago, Rush, Tom Rush. Did you know Tom Rush?

Q: I knew of him. I didn't really know him.

WEISZ: He was there briefly. No cooperation. Tried to get the INTUC to cooperate. So

we had a negative relationship. As China receded, our military -- don't forget, when I first came there, we had USMISMI, the U.S. military mission to India, which went out of existence within a year or two after I arrived.

Q: You say when China receded. Do you mean when China receded as a threat to us, perceived threat to the United States?

WEISZ: No, when China receded as a threat to us and, therefore, caused us to be more neutral with respect to China and India. India carried on its feelings that we had helped them and then turned against them after our generous help during the '61 war. So the suspicion as to our aid to Pakistan, which was there -- I mean the aid was a fact -- and their opposition to that as distinguished from withdrawing our military mission and everything that supported it -- we used to have a daily plane coming from the military when I first came there, on its way around the country, and that military mission stopped with a whole lot of economic impact on employment in the Delhi area, which had some effect. I think also the prospects for good smuggling relationships was another one. So I think there was that political deterioration with its manifestations in the labor field. Let me see if I have any others. A more disparate relationship between the labor office in the embassy and the trade union movement as independence groups grew up certainly...

Q: The groups that agitated for independence from India?

WEISZ: No, no, no, independence from INTUC and HMS, the independent union that I mentioned before in Bangalore that was sort of closely associated with the HMP but not a member of the HMP, but it was led by, from my point of view, the best of the Fernandez brothers, Michael, who was a real good trade unionist and swore to me -- and I know I wrote a report on it -- that he would never get into politics, and then when I came back to India in '76 or '79 and certainly in '83, he was in politics. It's a shame, but that's the name of the game in India. I found him to be a very good person. How did you find him?

Q: I liked him. You recommended to me that I look at this guy, and I found him to be very effective and honest.

WEISZ: And much less emotionally oriented than his brother George. He made many critical comments about George to me personally, because he realized George's failings, but publicly he would never criticize him, and I guess he just fell in with him. I don't know what the situation was in -- what's the new name of that state which Bangalore is in?

Q: Oh, Karnataka.

WEISZ: Karnataka, originally Mysore. I don't know what the internal politics were in the state of Mysore that forced him to become politically more active than he swore to me he would not, but plenty of people swear one thing and do another.

Q: Did Mrs. Gandhi make changes, did she feel it necessary to make changes in the INTUC top leadership as she consolidated her power, because as you mentioned briefly earlier, Mrs. Gandhi came in as what the political Congress Party establishment saw as a puppet to be manipulated as they figured out the leadership sequence?

WEISZ: Wouldn't you give anything to be a fly on the wall when they had those discussions, which we all read about in the papers? It's not my insight; we read about it.

Q: And then I think she won the 1970 election, I guess, when they had national elections.

WEISZ: '70 was not the first national election she won. She won one shortly after Shastri died, didn't she?

Q: Yeah, but she was still...

WEISZ: She was put in.

Q: Yeah, she was sort of titular leader, but then as they went into the, I think, 1970 or early '71 elections, the old leadership of the Congress Party pulled out in the Congress O and she became the Congress I.

WEISZ: I for Indira.

Q: Yeah, and I think there was considerable speculation that she was going to lose and that either Congress O would win or some coalition would have to be put together.

WEISZ: And she won and remained in power, and a whole lot of the old-line people were Congress O and some of the people who were closer to her, Congress I. I regret to say I don't know -- I know there was a shift toward Ramanujam, but I don't know if that was because the others pulled out. I just don't know, I'm sorry. You probably would have a better recollection of the state of play when you arrived.

Q: I just don't have a very good feel on whether she actually had to knock heads and bounce people in the INTUC, whether it was important enough to her politically to do that or whether the INTUC leadership just saw the writing on the wall and made the shift to the Indira center of gravity to retain their position. Was the trade union important?

WEISZ: I honestly don't think so. Did a group remain outside of the Congress I party? Weren't there some of the old unions that went to Congress O?

Q: Well, the TLA.

WEISZ: Yeah, but aside from TLA, and that may be one of the reasons that Ramanujam went up in the INTUC, because one of the bases for the leadership in the INTUC was the TLA. Is the TLA the only one or the main one?

Q: It was the main one, I think, that stuck with the Congress O, and, of course, Morarji Desai was one of the four horsemen or the four whatever they were called.

When did you leave India?

WEISZ: I left with what I thought was a good preparation of my successor, Herb Weiner, by arranging for Herb and me and our wives to take a trip around India where I could introduce him to everybody. I got the embassy to pay for Herb's wife, and I paid for my own wife, because I couldn't think of a reason. We went around India and couldn't go to Calcutta because of certain riots related to the war at that time.

Q: Was the war on?

WEISZ: It was so close to being on, yeah. We went around the south and landed in Bombay. I think it was October 26th. At that time we could use our rupees to pay for sea travel, and I had the most glorious part of my Foreign Service career by being taken by ship from Bombay around Africa stopping off at various places and landing in Barcelona. This doesn't happen anymore in the Foreign Service -- all of it on per diem. But anyhow, in October was the farewell ceremony that Maniben Kara and the HMS and INTUC unions, they got them together, and they had a farewell party for me. There comes the day before we left, and the day we left, up on the gangplank comes Maniben Kara, the head of the HMS railway union and dearest friend that we had there, carrying one of these Indian elephants, which we had to carry around all over Europe before we got back to the States. But that was October '71 that we left, just during the terrible situation for India when Bangladesh broke away. There was nothing to be done on labor at that time but try to maintain our relationships in the face of these awful things going on.

Q: Of course, you had had to deal... Obviously there was some cooling of relations even in the Johnson administration, but then when the Nixon administration came in and the tilt toward Pakistan started...

WEISZ: Amazingly enough, however, Giri remained a very close friend. I would see him relatively frequently, certainly whenever...

Q: By that time he was President of India?

WEISZ: Oh, yeah, he was President of India, ran a wonderful farewell tea for me and my successor so I could introduce him. It was an amazing thing that that remained, partly because of his feeling about American trade unionists. Pretty close to the end we had a visit from an American trade union research type who was a friend of mine in the railway research field. I was arranging for his trip. I had him meet a few people in Delhi, and then he was going to go around, and I thought it would be nice at the end of the trip to have him meet the President of India, who was a former railway labor chief. During this initial period in Delhi, I get a telephone call from the assistant of the President, who was a close

friend of Krishnan's. This was the basis for our relationship, lest you give me too much credit.

Q: Another Tamil Brahman, I suspect.

WEISZ: Yes, yes, yes, both of them Tamil Brahmans. This assistant calls me up and says, "I understand," which means that Krishnan told him, "that you want to have this visitor of yours meet the President before he leaves in two weeks," or something like that. I said, "Yes, wouldn't that be nice. I hope you can arrange it." And he said, "Well, you don't understand. The President wants to see him before he goes around too, so he can tell him what to look at." I said, "Well, of course, I'll be happy to arrange it," and immediately rearranged his schedule. Oliver, Eli Oliver. I bring him around, and the President sort of chides me and says, "I heard you were planning this trip around India without checking with me. I want to tell him about it."

Q: Want a brief giving the right context for his interpretation.

WEISZ: By that time Oliver could go all over India and say, as he did, more vociferously than warranted, "The President of India told me to look you up, and I was very happy to." And then they had another meeting before he left. And a whole lot of personal relationships. The personal relationship was always still pretty cool with Ramanujam, but other people in INTUC were quite friendly. One of them, the editor of their paper whose name was Banerjee, was friendly only because he got liquor from me, but the others were. Romwell Thocker -- do you remember him? -- was personally very friendly. His wife taught at the same school that Yetta -- that's my wife -- helped out at. Maybe I'm exaggerating this down-trend. All of the HMS people were very nice to me with the single exception of Mahesh Desai, and even he put on a niceness about him, but they were nice in the sense of apology, a "we can't discuss it with you" attitude. "We know you must feel that your government is wrong in this tilt toward Pakistan, but we don't expect you to say so" -- that type of friendliness, which was true, I must say. So maybe I'm exaggerating this. I was still invited to conventions. You know, the garlands and all that: that happened. I don't know.

Q: It's interesting because by the time I got there in the '80s, I remember I went to the INTUC Congress in '83, I suppose, in Bhubaneswar.

WEISZ: Bhubaneswar, what a place!

Q: And they had a militantly pro-Soviet line on disarmament. In fact, the Soviet line was outlined in the INTUC resolutions.

WEISZ: When was that?

Q: That must have been '83. And I had to take on Ramanujam and tell him that this was not a constructive approach to disarmament. So it's very interesting. I felt, despite my

long association with India and many friends and comfort in dealing with Indians and having a very good relationship personally, by the time I got there in 1981, the official relationship was sufficiently cold that there was an effect.

WEISZ: Well, it was even earlier than that. It was on one of our earlier visits. We left in '71, came back in '73 very briefly, and '76 for a USIA tour, and then '79 for a three-month grant. It was in that '79 one, I think, if I'm not mistaken, that my wife, Yetta, refers to in her interview for the spousal project of oral history to the fact that one of the ladies who had been a very good friend of hers explained that they couldn't be friendly with the Americans anymore. There's some reference there to that. Nevertheless, when I came in '83, they seemed to be friendly. Was I wrong about that?

Q: No, it was friendship on a personal basis, but...

WEISZ: Officially, absolutely, you're absolutely correct. It was '83 that you had this conflict with Ramanujam. By '85 the negotiations were going forward in such a way that it looked as if there would be success in disarmament negotiations. The tape I made last week with our negotiator, Max Kampelman, discusses this issue of how his labor background and labor negotiation background helped them in negotiating an agreement with the Soviets, which we always looked upon as being the enemy, and it was successful.

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WEISZ: The last tape ended with Jim interviewing me on the beginnings of the efforts by Ambassador Bowles to establish the first labor counselorship and my accidental involvement in that matter, because I had passed through New Delhi at an earlier stage. Secretary of Labor Wertz received a copy of a cable from Ambassador Bowles to the State Department announcing his decision to establish a new post in New Delhi. The cable was passed on to the State Department S/IL office, the Special Assistant to the Secretary of State of International Labor Affairs, who was Phil Delaney, an old friend of mine. He was enthusiastically supporting the idea of establishing labor counselorships, not particularly for New Delhi but wherever he could. The idea of the initiation of this policy by Ambassador Bowles gave him the opportunity to support it enthusiastically. Secretary Wertz, therefore, as I indicated, turned to the former Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Affairs, who had been promoted to be the Assistant Secretary in the Labor Department for Management. It was logical, therefore, with his background in international affairs and his post in charge of personnel and management at Labor, to be given the task of finding a candidate for that job. As I said, because I had just recently been in New Delhi, although I had nothing to do with the substance of this, I had passed through Delhi in November of '64, and this would have been at the beginning of 1965. With the agreement of the Assistant Secretary of Labor for International Affairs, George Weaver, I took upon myself the idea of exploring, with people in the Department and the trade union movement and in the State Department, the identification of a good candidate. Before long I found that there was a unanimity that absolutely the best possible

candidate for this new job would be the labor attaché in Beirut, who had a responsibility for following labor events in the entire North African area and many of the states that were involved with Israel, the Arab states. He was an extraordinary person, he is an extraordinary person, and happened to be, although of a very different temperament, a cousin of George Weaver's. He had made an excellent reputation for himself as a thoughtful, effective labor attaché after service in domestic affairs in Washington and in international affairs as a representative of the transport workers union, CIO. The person everyone thought so highly of was Harold Snell. Harold Snell had served in Beirut, our records would indicate, at least ten years. He couldn't be moved out of there because of the protests of all the people involved in the embassy, trade union movements, management people in all these countries, but nevertheless we felt that if there was a promotion possible, it would be a good idea to nominate Harold for it and see what the reaction of Embassy India was. Harold Snell had one other advantage, or disadvantage depending on how you looked at it. He was one of the very few blacks in the labor attaché service and the senior one among them and so highly thought of that it would have been of some advantage to assign him this task if only to open the way for the appointment of more blacks with his sort of background to labor attaché posts. As I said, the proposal, I don't know who originated it. I know I put it forward on the basis of my knowledge of Harold as well as the reputation he had and the urging of many other people. The State Department was enthusiastic about it and sent the nomination on to Ambassador Bowles, who in typical liberal fashion saw the advantage of introducing a person of Harold's caliber to a senior post with the added advantage of his being a black. So the proposal was sent to Lebanon. The offer was made to Harold. He tentatively accepted, and then the reaction of our Ambassador Bill Porter there was so negative on the idea, he just couldn't think of having that post filled by somebody else, especially on relatively short notice. So he either talked Harold out of it or in some other way convinced Harold that he should remain. Many years afterwards I also found out that Harold Snell's wife's health condition was such that he really had some doubts about whether he should go to India. In any event, that was withdrawn.

My second proposal was one which no one else had initiated, or it didn't get the favorable reaction in the foreign field that Harold's name brought forth. That was a person I've always considered to be the best civil servant that I had ever had anything to do with, and that was another Deputy Assistant Secretary of Labor, Philip Arnow. Arnow was the civil servant's ideal civil servant. He had had a considerable amount of international experience in connection with GATT negotiations, labor aspects of GATT. He was highly thought of by everyone in the Labor Department and those people in the international affairs agencies who had worked with him. He had been on many delegations abroad. I thought it was a great idea. I posed it to Phil, who seemed to be favorably disposed toward getting it except for one thing: he had just been promised an opportunity to take a year off, non-paid leave, in connection with a sort of a scholarship we had to be offered to senior civil servants in the Labor Department, permitting him to take a year off to do anything he wanted. Phil had tentatively accepted or applied for this grant. It was a grant during which you could do, as I said, anything you wanted. In his case, what he wanted to do had nothing to do directly with the work of the Labor Department. He wanted to do

sculpting. He was a wonderful amateur sculptor. Our Secretary of Labor to whom I spoke about this, Bill Wertz, said that in the first place we would be depleting the senior civil servant staff in the Department. We had just permitted, a year or so before, Charles Stewart, who had been the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy Planning -- or Manpower, I don't know which. He might have been the predecessor of Phil Arnow. Phil Arnow was the Deputy Assistant Secretary to Pat Moynihan. I don't even remember that we discussed it with Pat. In any event, the whole idea was shot down for two reasons given by Secretary Wertz. One was that we were losing too many staff people to these ideas they had about international activity, Charles Stewart, myself later on when I became another candidate for the job, and he couldn't see allowing Phil to go. He liked the idea of Phil's taking a year off -- he had been under terrific strain -- to do the sculpting, but that was only a year. So Phil turned it down, or his boss turned it down by the Labor Department. I don't know whether we submitted his name to the post at all.

We then went looking for a third candidate, and when Wertz asked me to go around and continue my search to get a third candidate, I said, "Well, frankly, the third candidate would be me," and he said, "If you were interested in the job, why didn't you say so in the beginning?" I said, "Frankly I thought that Snell and Arnow would have been better candidates for the job," with all due modesty, or immodesty. I thought I could fill the job but I thought it was better for them to get it than for me to be offered it. Esther Peterson had agreed, when I took the job with her as her deputy, that I could serve for a year and then return to international things. I had been doing international work, and since I had served three and a half years after a commitment of only a year's service, she felt as though she could let me go easily enough. People were generally pleased that I was willing to go. I had not submitted my name earlier, not really because I thought these other fellows were too much better than I but because it was the middle of the school year and we had many complications. My wife was working as a teacher and couldn't leave it. But by that time I could see that the appointment would take some time to mature, and it was close to the end of the school year, so we all agreed that my name could be put forward. My personal friendship with Phil Delaney, with whom I had worked on ILO assignments and had written a whole lot of speeches for, his general friendly attitude toward me led to support within the State Department. I was given an examination to enter the Foreign Service laterally as a Foreign Service reserve officer. The committee that interviewed me hadn't heard of the difficulty. It consisted of Delaney himself, a Foreign Service officer whose name I don't recall but who was a little bit overwhelmed by the way my name had been presented -- and he certainly didn't oppose it -- and then the third person examining me was the Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Affairs, Harry Weiss, again no relation, who was Weaver's Assistant Secretary, Weaver's Deputy.

So we had a group of people with whom we chatted at great length about my work as a teacher in the field, as a lecturer, as a Foreign Service officer, reserve officer during the Marshall Plan. So I had an easy time with that committee, and my name was proposed to Ambassador Bowles. I don't think he even remembered having met me in Delhi, but the vibes coming from Washington were very favorable. At first he inquired as to why Esther

Peterson was willing to get rid of her deputy, what was wrong with him, and he also checked with his former labor assistant at the Office of Price Administration, who was Oliver Peterson, who was a former labor attaché himself and a very dear friend of mine. After checking with various people, he approved. I think he also checked with Victor Reuther, about whom I'll speak in a moment. So there was no problem. The only problem was getting me out there as soon as possible. The administrative counselor, Mel Spector, at the embassy tried to rush this along. I met my future boss on a trip he made to the United States, so there was sort of an impatience in getting me out there as soon as possible.

I want to relate the circumstances of my security clearance. There was no trouble about my security clearance ultimately, but I did have a long record which involved many FBI contacts with me, not in terms of criticizing my own politics but sort of in the course of investigation of former students of mine, former colleagues of mine, former underlings of mine. I had been supervisor in a number of different areas in the Labor Department, so I had many former employees that the FBI would come around to talk to me about. Generally I tried to give them what I thought they needed very badly, which was an education in liberal radical labor affairs so that they understood that the purpose of the government at that time, and would be later also, was to keep Communists out of government jobs and not to keep liberals or labor people or former Communists or unreliable types out. This was always a difficult job. I had had many clearances in the past, but there was a delay in clearing for me for the Foreign Service lateral entry. This clearance matter illustrated something about the bureaucracy of the State Department and the keen and sophisticated way in which Bowles approached the problem, which taught me one facet of his character. Bowles had been, before he lost out in internal politics within the State Department, Under Secretary of State -- now that job is called Deputy Secretary of State -- under Dean Rusk. He was a persistent type with his ideas, Ambassador Bowles, and when his ideas were turned aside or ignored, he was very dissatisfied. I think he felt that really he -- he never said that -- was easily as good as Dean Rusk, who was appointed to the job.

The parting of the ways came about in friendly fashion, and Bowles went back to India for his second tour in India when he left the job of Deputy Secretary of State. He came in on some mission or other to report back to the Secretary and take up some matters involving, I think, the AID program. In any event, he came back -- this nomination may have been made as early as April or May -- he came back in early July of '65 and told the person who was helping him in the Department that he wanted to see me. I was very happy to go over to see him, and he said, "Well, why the hell aren't you out there? We need you. We've got this new program." I said, "Well, I'm ready to go. My wife has finished at her school. The kids are all ready. We're packed up and ready to go." As a matter of fact, we had for a while moved out of our house, which we had rented, and actually were staying with friends in the Bannockburn community until time came to leave, and I still didn't have the security clearance. I said to the Ambassador, "There's some silly business about my security clearance, and I certainly have a top secret security clearance at the Labor Department. I've done a whole lot of classified work. I had a Q

clearance, which is a special NATO clearance, during my service in the State Department, and I just don't know what the hell is the matter with them, because everybody knows me. One, they know my politics, which were clear at all times. I wasn't one of the people who said I never had anything to do with politics. I just don't know what the reason is." He said, "Well, let me show you how to approach a problem like this." He said, "I'll call the person in charge of this," and he put a call through to the man in charge of the security investigation and he said, "We want Weisz out there as soon as possible. I don't understand the delay, and I'm leaving town on Tuesday." This might have been a Thursday. I don't remember the exact dates, but this was the burden of his comment. "I'm leaving town Tuesday, and can you please let me know by Monday so, if necessary, I'll do what might be needed. Let me know by Monday when we can expect to have that clearance so I can take appropriate action," and he hangs up. Of course, the clearance came through by that Monday. At that point he turned to me, because I was sort of surprised that he didn't say, "Rush this along." He said, "If I had asked them to rush it along, they would have said, 'Yes, sir, we'll do what we can,' and then they would have forgotten about it, because it has to go through a long procedure, which might or might not be justified in your case," he said to me, "and based on what I heard, I don't think it's justified. But if I tell them to let me know Monday, then he will see to it that's it's finished by Monday." And sure enough, by Monday the clearance came through, and within a couple weeks -- as a matter of fact, on August 11th -- we actually departed for the post.

I started work immediately, and I want to spend a little time describing the circumstances of the subject matter. The other side of this tape goes into some of my experiences, and I'll merely say that I will have referred to the circumstances of the Reuther family, that is, Walter Reuther coming to India in a very well received visit during Bowles' first -- Bowles was a friend of his -- during Bowles' first tour of duty as Ambassador under President Truman. Then Victor Reuther, who was the UAW representative in international affairs, he had the post of Washington representative and international representative of the UAW on all international matters. He too was a friend of Bowles' and he had visited Bowles. As a matter of fact, I believe pretty definitely he stayed with Bowles for about a week, during which period he had many discussions with Bowles and prepared what he conceived of as a program of American involvement and assistance to India's labor movement. Upon my arrival, I was given the assignment by Ambassador Bowles to draft a program for India, a labor program for India, that would bring together, in accordance with the functional supervision he felt I should have over all labor matters in the embassy and other agencies. When I say other agencies, I do not mean the CIA, which is always referred to as an 'other' agency, but rather AID and Information and I even worked on commercial problems and various others. He told me that he'd like for me to prepare as soon as possible a program to be submitted to Washington, an overall AID program, heavy on what we would do in the AID program, which was then very heavy, and what I would be doing in the Information Agency. They were going to assign, and subsequently did assign, a full-time with local employees in the budget to produce materials for distribution in India, a full-time labor information officer. They already had a labor staff and many AID projects, but he wanted me to pull these together in a report.

To assist me in that, he also gave me a number of personal comments as well as a report that Victor Reuther had prepared. Victor Reuther, incidentally, had supported my candidacy for this job wholeheartedly, and I have to step back for a minute to say that in the course of my appointment for this job, I originally said that I wanted the job but that I did not want it if there was going to be any opposition from the AFL side of the AFL-CIO to my designation. Anybody who is interested in this can go into the background of my relations with the Lovestone/Brown group during my service in Paris, where I covered it very thoroughly. In any event, I felt as though the person, whether he was nominally the head or not, the person who really directed international affairs was Jay Lovestone, who had his staff members all over the world. His staff member for Italy was an old, old friend of mine, but we disagreed on many things, Harry Goldberg, who came frequently to India while I was there. Harry Goldberg was a specialist. He was called the four-I man. He was a specialist for Lovestone in Italy, Israel, Indonesia, and if there wasn't another I -- I know he wasn't in Ireland -- maybe he was a three-I man.

In any event, Harry Goldberg was an old radical, a socialist, a brilliant pianist, by the way, and he used to come and tell me what to do in correspondence. Of course, I was friendly to him, but I didn't do what he wanted. I couldn't do what he wanted, just like I couldn't do what Victor wanted, but the circumstances of the appointment were such that I told Esther that I didn't want to be nominated for the job if I was then going to be embarrassed or -- we went through a whole lot of things -- have opposition from the AFL-CIO because of my history with Lovestone. Esther, who also is a good politician, picked up the telephone, called George Meany and said to President Meany, "Do you remember Morrie Weisz, who used to be in Washington and all that?" I don't know whether he actually remembered me or not, but in any event we had met many times at ICFTU and other conferences in Europe. He said, "Yeah, what about him?" And she says, "Well, the State Department wants to appoint him to be a top labor guy. We're creating a new post in India, and Weisz doesn't want to take it if there's any problem with it from your point of view." Meany said, "Why should there be a problem?" She said, "I think he's great. I'm letting him go against my better interest, but, you know, he's a guy who certainly may have made some enemies in the international field." Meany said, "If it's okay with you, it's okay with me, Esther." So later on at one of my farewell parties before I left -- of course, I never told anybody in the State Department whom I didn't trust that I was being considered for this job, because as soon as it got over to Lovestone, he would have taken steps to see that it wasn't done.

I had known Lovestone, and other parts of my personal history will indicate the favorable relations I had with him in connection with training work I did, but I certainly didn't want him to know that this was in process, because it would have stuck a monkey wrench into the machinery, I believe. At one of my farewell parties, he said to me, "I want to congratulate you on how you negotiated my impartiality" -- something to the effect of impartiality -- "in your appointment." He had a good sense of humor. In any event, I come to India with an assignment from the Ambassador to start a project to formulate a total program. He wanted it done immediately. I said I would have wanted to get more experience so I could put my own input in it rather than gather together other people's

ideas. I knew nothing about India, and I certainly felt as though the tendency had been in the past to misuse American experience as a sort of a doctrine to be adopted by foreign countries. This is something I had fought in all the teaching that I did, the training of labor attachés and teaching I did at universities in the Washington area in international affairs and my work on the Marshall Plan, as I said, that you can't just transfer this. So I wanted to learn more about India. He was very insistent, and he was the boss. He wanted me to do it immediately. So I drafted a program which I thought could meet the AFL side of the AFL-CIO, that is, the Lovestone/Goldberg emphasis, and also the very many intelligent proposals made by Reuther, but discarded some of the imaginative but unworkable proposals.

I had known Victor for years and still regard him as a friend of mine, but as everybody who knows him knows, he is very obdurate in his insistence of not revolutionary ideas but ideas that may have not been well thought out. I guess that's all I want to say on that, except that I had to cut out many of the things that he and the Ambassador had become very enthusiastic about but I thought, in the light of budgetary and political relationships problems, would certainly not be approved of by the State Department or AID and certainly not when it got over to the AFL-CIO, which would try to do that. I hadn't counted on the fact that Victor in his enthusiasm had gone back from his visit with Bowles and had proclaimed that he had devised a program which Bowles was going to send back to Washington. Well, you can imagine the impact then when the cable comes which Harry Goldberg was not willing to examine on its merits but merely tried to do all he could to cut out many parts of it on the basis of what he had heard around town and about the visit that Reuther had had with Bowles. So many things in what I proposed were not only cut out of the program, which might have been appropriate -- in any event, in the administration of the program we could get around some of the opposition, which I tried to do as well as I could -- but other things. I was told, for instance that, "You should have known not to propose this because we wouldn't have approved it." Well, this was a government program. I didn't think they had to approve of it, but I did think that their comments should have been taken into account, and many of them were and were countered, were thrown out, for what I thought were bad reasons.

In any event, that was my introduction to the program. When I prepared it, this was a detailed airgram which went to Washington and got the response I have indicated, but also within the embassy was thought of pretty well. It certainly fitted well into Bowles' ideas. Some of the members of the staff felt that it was a little bit grandiose, but this was what the boss wanted, and they saluted appropriately. I did do one thing that I would like to mention if only in fairness to my predecessor, Bruce Millen. I wanted to show Bowles a little bit of independence and also establish a relationship with him in which I thought he would understand my independence of him personally in terms of wanting to feel free to criticize. So when he praised my program so highly, I pointed out the points in which I had agreed with some of the ideas given to him by Reuther. I also pointed out ideas in there that were actually in memoranda that my predecessor, Bruce Millen, had tried to get through him, Bowles, unsuccessfully. And I said, "Now, here, Bruce recommended something like this. What was the problem?" And he hemmed and hawed, and finally the

only substantive criticism he had was not of Bruce's work but of the fact that his then wife, Bruce's then wife, Betty, from whom he is divorced, and Mrs. Bowles hadn't gotten along. That was, I thought, very unjust, but it was typical of the personal way in which Bowles operated.

End of interview