

Paul Hawryshko

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CSU 52 Office

Interviewer: Winston Gereluk

Camera: Ron Patterson

PH: My name is Paul Hawryshko. I was born and raised near the town of Mundare on a farm. I started my education at a farm school called Ukraina. About grade 4, with the arrival of school buses, I started busing to Mundare school. I completed my school in Mundare in 1960. My family was made up of one brother who was 11 years older than I was. After leaving school I worked for a short term for three years to the Federal Government in the Family Allowances and Old Age Security.

Then August 1st, 1963 I applied for a job with the City of Edmonton working in the Assessors Department. After starting with the City of Edmonton Assessors Department, I was allowed to enroll in an assessment program at the University of Alberta. In that program we had to go two days a month to learn the assessment role in the provincial and municipal government. The program took three years to complete. After the three years I became an assessor. I was there for two or three years and then I went to a full-fledged assessor. About 1979 I became a senior assessor. I did a short stint in management for about 2-1/2 years. I had gotten a job as the director of commercial assessments, but I found out that assessing was what I did best. Sitting around in meetings was not what I did. I liked meeting people and I was good at math. Except for one of the high rise office towers in the city of Edmonton and the larger shopping centers.

Q: What is an assessor?

PH: When I became an assessor I did about two years of residential property. I was fortunate to have a gentleman by the name of Don Branscomb who had served in the forces during the Second World War. He was very meticulous. His shoes were polished, you could see your face. His pants had a nice edge. He was my teacher and he was very good. I was very fortunate to be his student or whatever you'd call it. One of the stories I remember is that he told me when he was residential, he said he was working in the Hudson Bay area, which is just north of the Royal Alec Hospital. Assessing requires you to go into a house, to measure the house, to make a complete description of the house, the rooms, and going downstairs. It also involves any finish that is downstairs, additional plumbing fixtures, and so on. He was telling me this one time he seen a room, he assessed it. He seen two bedrooms there and a rumpus room and he seen this door and it looked like it was a bathroom. So he pulled on it and it snapped back. He pulled again and it snapped back. So he put his foot down and pulled with both hands. At the other end of the handle there's a little old lady sitting on the toilet. He pulled it right off the toilet. I spent two years as a residential assessor. Quite fortunately, I went into commercial.

Q: Why do you say fortunately?

PH: I was allowed to take courses in the manuals that were not commonly used in Alberta but, through the Department of Municipal Affairs, they had invited these people from these; one is the *Marshall and Swift*, probably a manual that is used worldwide. On two or three occasions I was given the opportunity to attend four and five-day seminars which dealt mostly in evaluation of commercial property. This manual dealt with buildings that were not common. You have specialty buildings like breweries and packing plants that the provincial government didn't have the manuals for. This is what was the alternative method that we could use. I guess because of those courses I was given a quick exposure to working with commercial properties.

In a very short time I was doing the downtown high-rise office towers during the '80s when the boom was on – Edmonton Center, and every one except Scotia Place. I also have assessed Kingsway Garden Mall and I worked with another assessor to assess West Edmonton Mall and Londonderry Mall. I really loved this job for assessing, because I met people of all varieties. I met owners of buildings, I dealt with tax agents, I dealt with leasing agents. I had to deal with manufacturers for finding out some of the new materials that were being used. Assessment at that time was based on the replacement cost of the building. That means from the inside wall to the outside wall, and the different types of mechanical systems, air conditioning, heating systems. So I really enjoyed that work. In assessing from '66 to '96 I was an assessor and I really enjoyed what I did. I enjoyed meeting the people, dealing with them, defending the assessments in courts. Of course we also dealt with lawyers, because these corporations would have lawyers in court defending their cases. So I met a variety of people and made a lot of friends.

Q: How do you explain to the average citizen why you are performing such a valuable service? What does assessing contribute?

PH: Assessing is actually governed by the regulations of the provincial government. It's standard throughout the province of Alberta. But the purpose of assessment is to make sure that the properties are valued equally, which is to say that if you have a house in one area and another identical house 10 miles away, these houses should be very close in assessment. That information, the more accurate it is, it's used to provide the revenue for the city. About 65 to 75% of the revenue that the cities and municipalities operate is based on property taxes. They spotcheck these assessments and municipal affairs checks to make sure there's uniformity in the assessments. As I've mentioned, 65 to 75% of the revenues the city generates comes from these taxes. So it's very important that the assessments made are accurate.

Q: So you provide the basis for a fair taxation system?

PH: That's correct.

Q: Did you ever come across offers of corruption?

PH: I did one time. Not to me personally, but to a friend of mine. We used to work together. The property was owned by an American corporation and they approached him

and said to him if he was interested in some financial gain. Of course he wasn't and he quickly refused them. He even told the supervisor that this was offered. That would've been in the late '60s or early '70s. But no, me personally never had any. It was always done in a professional manner.

Q: It must be tempting for some of these owners.

PH: Yes, but I don't think it ever was.

Q: Edmonton is a boom and bust city. How has the city changed over the years?

PH: When I started, especially in residential, housing was very basic. They were four corners, some had six corners, and that was it. The houses were all the same. They were pretty well built of the same material. They were painted cedar on the outside or they were stucco. Then you'd run into a few brick ones, but brick ones were more costly at that time. Then as the years progressed you could see the changes. There were bigger houses. In the earlier times they were all between 1,000 and 1,200 sq. ft. But over the years you saw bigger houses, two storey houses, houses with architectural design. You saw different kinds of materials being used.

Along came vinyl sidings and roofing. The same with interior finishes. When we started out, the basic house tile and the rug. That quickly changed to lino, which was more costly, and a better quality of rugs. It was just a steady progression in residential. Commercial was the same way. Most of the construction when I started out, low rise buildings was concrete block construction. It was stacked one on top of the other. As times changed there became a lot of steel. The steel held up the roof and everything. The wall itself became a wall that was a non bearing wall. As that changed you could see they went to pre-cast concrete.

Steel construction became a big thing in the office towers downtown. Steel was probably more costly but when it came on-stream it would come six months to a year earlier than building by pouring concrete. The mechanical system changed. Air conditionings used to be on one floor, then it changed where there were two floors. One was driving the air up and the other one was to drive the air down. Heating systems changed. The interior office finish changed. When it started out it was very basic. There could've been rug and drywall partitions. It became vinyl-covered partitions. Imported exotic woods, law firms especially and accounting firms. In the late '70s and early '80s they were paying up to \$100 a square foot just for the finish – that would be the flooring, the ceiling and the walls. You see them do a 10,000 sq. ft. floor area for over a million bucks. You saw the changes as the years went by. New technology came along and everybody took it. Some buildings were built with practically all glass. Those were still more expensive to build. When you valued an office tower you had to first value the outside structure, the walls and everything, the elevators, mechanical systems. Then you had to value each floor separately, counting the partitions and the quality of the partitions. You had pages and pages. You measured where you could but you did use architectural plans to draw up the drawings for the thing.

Q: How long would it take you to do a big office building?

PH: Manulife took probably three weeks at least. I think it had 56 corners on the office tower part of it. It was the same with shopping centers, you valued it from the inside wall to the outside and then you had to go and pick up all the partitions, the flooring. Everybody went into different kinds of flooring, like marble and granite and everything. That's where I found this job very interesting. There was always change and you were always learning something new. It wasn't the same thing over and over again.

Q: What happens with all these constant renovations? Do they have to be reassessed?

PH: Under the Municipal Taxation Act, yes. Before they can do anything they must apply for a permit to the building inspectors department. Once they apply to the building inspectors they put a value on the renovations they're doing. Then a copy of the permit comes to the assessment department and that's attached to the card for, say, West Edmonton Mall. Then at the end of the year when an assessor goes out, say we've originally done an assessment and five years down the road they did a bunch of renovations. You have to go and take out the finish that was in there and put the finish that's in there now. It could be more, it could be less. It's not adding onto the thing, it's taking one out and putting the new one in. It really doesn't change the age of the building or anything, but it's valued that way so it's not like a duplicate assessment. It's valued by taking one out and adding the other one in. Some renovations, say you had a residential or commercial building, and you took it out and gutted it and decided to put new flooring, new roof, new mechanical system, put in air conditioning – those you kind of revalue completely. But there you would also increase the affective age. Say if it was 1960 and you'd add on the additions and say, based on these renovations this building is now equivalent to a building built in 1965, or something like that. The assessment would be the same but the depreciation would be less, because you would be depreciating from '65 as opposed to '60.

Q: Is the only use of your assessment for city tax purposes?

PH: The assessment records that are given out are the actual valuation. A breakdown is only available to the owners of the property.

Q: If the owner wanted to take out a loan, would the bank refer to the assessment that you provided?

PH: Not really. I think they would hire what they call a fee appraiser. He would value the property based on the income approach. There's a capitalization factor for a type of business. The assessment is there but ours is strictly replacement cost. Theirs is selling price. Assessment has changed in 1996, where it became market value assessments for residential and property. The assessment of market value is based on what a comparable house would sell in the neighborhood, and that's what they use for determining the assessments. What it's got in it, the size of the lot. From the sales that they have in the

area they develop a program and they apply that to the houses based on square footage. As far as commercial property, it's based on the income that the property generates. The higher the income, the more the property is worth. It's no longer got anything to do with replacement cost. It's how much it generates and the capitalization rate applied to it.

Q: How has the character of the city changed over the years?

PH: When I came, Edmonton didn't seem very big. Everybody knew everybody kind of thing. But it grew very quickly and expanded very quickly. During the boom in the '70s it really grew and expanded. Annexations took place and it became a large city. From a small city it became a large city. It became an essential hub for supplying the north country, and it still is. It's a center point for supplying the tar sands as far not only the equipment, but the structures that are built locally and transported by truck to Ft. McMurray. To me now it's a big city.

Q: What do you remember about Bill Hawrelak?

PH: Bill Hawrelak was a friendly person. He would talk to everybody and anybody. He never treated anybody differently. He was a people person. He'd talk to employees and he treated you like you were his friend.

Q: Was he a good mayor?

PH: I don't know about the politics of it, but when he was in power he had a lot of connections. Bill had a lot of connections in other parts of the world. He was able to bring industry into Edmonton. I don't know if there was a vendetta or whatever it was, but on technicality he got ousted out. I thought he was a good mayor. I'd like to tell you one about Ivor Dent in the '70s. Of course Ivor's youngest son Peter now is married to my niece. But anyway, at his funeral, I heard this and it's a true statement. When he was mayor in City Hall and he was at the elevator there, a little lady came up. He asked her what floor. He went up with her. She wanted to go to the 7th floor in the old City Hall. He went there and about an hour later he gets a call. The lady was still on the 7th floor and she says, there was an elevator operator and he was supposed to come pick me up and he didn't pick me up. She says, I want something done about it. He said, just one moment lady, there'll be someone there to pick you up. He went out of his office, got into the elevator, went up to the 7th floor, got the lady and took her downstairs. As she got off the elevator she said, young man, I'll let you know that I told the mayor about you, that you did not pick me up on the 7th floor when you were supposed to. This is a true story.

Q: What kind of man was Ivor Dent?

PH: I got to know Ivor in the last 15 years. When he was mayor I helped to campaign for him. Ivor too had an open door policy. If you had anything you could walk into his office and discuss it. He was instrumental in bringing the Commonwealth Games to Edmonton. He stayed involved until a few years ago. He was on the board of the games until a few

years ago, because of his health. Ivor was a compassionate man I would say; he was very compassionate.

Q: Were you allowed as a civic employee to campaign for aldermen and mayors? Was there a policy on that?

PH: No, there was never, I don't think, not that I knew of.

Q: You were active politically.

PH: I was, but not overly. What I felt, I could support. I campaigned for Ivor and I think that's about the only mayor I campaigned for. But I did get involved in the NDP a few times in my riding, for the NDP members that were running.

Q: Did you ever work on a successful campaign?

PH: Yes, what was his name? He used to be in city council - Ed Ewasiuk.

Q: When did you first encounter the Union?

PH: I joined the City of Edmonton, as I said, on August 1st of 1963. I got married October 13th of that same year. I was working in the assessors department and the shop steward, John Bushinsky, said to me, "You know, I'm having a hard time making meetings and I'm wondering if you'd mind attending."

I started with one meeting, I'd say in about '64 or '65. I went to meetings and was green at it, finding out what was going on. The first president I ran into was Harry Hartman or Harpan. John gave up the job, so I became shop steward, that's how I got involved in it. I started and it was about three or four years before I really got involved in it. I got onto some of the committees and took a lot of courses. At that time we were part of CUPE national. During that time CUPE national sponsored lots of courses. Ed McAllister was the training director for western Canada and Lofty McMillan was the national director for training. I learned about contracts, I learned about rules of order, and I got involved in lots of rules of order. I followed it through and it was pretty good knowing the rules of order. We were CUPE and we'd have provincial conventions. I remember going to my first one in Medicine Hat, I can't tell you the year though – I'd say about '66 or '67.

Q: What do you remember about your first CUPE convention?

PH: The first CUPE convention we chartered a bus with CUPE local 30. It had to be about 50 or 60 people on that bus. Everybody was having a good time. I think some people bought some booze and everything. We were going to stop in Calgary for a break, so we stopped the bus. Two guys were relegated with the order of finding the nearest liquor store to buy booze so we could finish the rest of the trip to Medicine Hat. It was interesting. Being my first convention, I found it very interesting, what was going on and everything. There was lots of camaraderie. You met people from CUPE locals all over

the province. One story I can relate – I don't know whether I should use his name, but his first name is Larry. He was sitting in the bar there and said, I think I'd better go back to the hotel. So he phoned for a cab. The cab came and I can't remember the name of the hotel, but the cab came and asked for Larry. Larry says, okay I'm going to go home to my hotel. I says, “What hotel?” The hotel was the same hotel he phoned from.

Q: So it was a lot of fun. But there were also some issues of hot debate – do you remember what some of those issues were?

PH: There was always dues increase and stuff like that. It seemed to be there's always three or four sides. When it came to election time there was three or four sides, who are we going to vote for. A lot of backroom politics, who we're going to vote for.

Q: Did you hold any other union positions besides shop steward?

PH: Not at that time. After that time I got involved with the social committee. I got onto the committee that worked on the bylaws and constitution for a two-year term. After being on that I took an attempt at the vice president. There were three positions, they were not designated one, two, three as they are now. I didn't make it the first time but the second time I did make it. I served that for, I think you were elected for a three year term. They'd alternate, some would be one year, two year and three year, so there was always continuity. That would take me into the '70s, then I did a stint in management for about 2-1/2 years. After I got back I became a trustee. I did that for about seven or eight years. After that I was the secretary treasurer of CSU 52.

Q: What do recall about the union meetings?

PH: When I started attending, they were held on the 9th floor of City Hall, that's the old City Hall. They were very informative. Thanks to the president and whoever the treasurer and everything was, the meetings were very educational. I didn't find too much politicking at those times. We were still under CUPE. Our negotiations were held with the CUPE rep that was stationed in Edmonton. I found the meetings were well attended. I don't know how big we were at that time; I know we're over 4,000 now and we must have been half of that. I'd say there'd be over 100 people at every general meeting. The shop stewards would have their own meeting. There'd be two meetings a month. The shop stewards would be the second Tuesday of the month and the... no, the general meeting was on the first Tuesday of the month and the general meeting was on the, no let me get this straight. The general meeting was on the first Tuesday of the month and the shop stewards meeting was on the third Tuesday of the month. They were very informative. I was learning lots. After a while I began to see politicking coming into effect.

Q: Like what?

PH: Sides developing.

Q: Over what sort of issues?

PH: About the union itself. One wanted to do this way and the other one said no it should go this way. There became two groups. Then after that the meetings were not as informative, they were more disruptive.

Q: What was going on there?

PH: We had pretty good negotiations with the City of Edmonton. But in 1976 or '77 CUPE national sent a new representative by the name of Fred Pyke. We were in negotiations and we couldn't reach an agreement. We tried very hard to get an agreement but he suggested that we have to walk out. It was enough influence that we took a strike vote and we had the majority to go out on strike. We went on with negotiations up to the eve of the strike. We weren't able to resolve it but we were made an offer at that time. Then we went into the strike mode. We had really good support during the strike. There were people volunteering, people working the picket line, people taking coffee and sandwiches to the picket line. We picketed a lot of places and I think it was effective. One of the places we picketed was the construction of the Commonwealth site, and that brought on a million dollar suit against the executive because they said it was the executive that wanted to strike that place. We were all served with a million dollar document saying we were being sued. But what really settled that strike was the Amalgamated Transit Union. One morning they honored a picket line and the buses were not running and that was the end of the strike. So the strike only lasted seven, eight or nine days.

Q: What was the result of the strike?

PH: The truth is we got what we were offered the night before the strike.

Q: Then you had the anti-inflation board, right?

PH: Yes. Also at that time was the wage and price control. We had a workshop one day and were trying to figure out. I was working with Gloria van Helbert and we found a loophole which we had suggested. We were able to get our hike.

Q: Was Gloria van Helbert working for the provincial?

PH: No, she was an employee of the City of Edmonton. Alec Sczechina was secretary treasurer at that time.

Q: What kind of man was Alex?

PH: Alec? When I was starting out, when Alec was involved in the union in my earlier years – he didn't come into the picture until the late '60s or early '70s – and when Alec did come into the picture I thought... he came from a different union. He came from the same union the Safeway workers belonged to. Being a rookie, he sounded like he knew his stuff. But then I found out after four or five years that he was a bit manipulative. I

think he tried, but he had certain goals that he was after. I honestly think that he worked for the union. He had a little bit of ulterior motives but I believe in my heart that he worked for the best for the union.

Q: The strike resulted in a lot of hard feelings. Describe what happened.

PH: During the strike we said we would give the people \$10 or \$15 a day strike pay. When we asked CUPE if they would, we figured we were always contributing into a strike fund, so when you went on strike you'd be covered. But we were told differently. He says, we'll give you the money but you'll have to pay it back. That's when there became a kaffuffle. The people said, we're paying union dues, we go on strike and now we have to pay back the money back to CUPE national. Then there was a move started to try to break away from CUPE national. I wasn't directly involved with what the moves were, but they had lawyers involved and everything. CUPE tried to sue us on a number of occasions. After a number of years they failed to pursue it anymore.

We registered as a society, and I feel that CSU 52 has done well with breaking away from CUPE national. We have been able to develop quite a large strike fund. We own the building we're in. I served quite a few years in the '80s in negotiations, on CSU 52 negotiations. We were dealing directly with the City of Edmonton personnel department. Sometimes some calls had to be made to the mayor or to the city manager. The difference between those negotiations was that we were dealing with these people on a much friendlier basis. They were tough but at the end we were able to get like wage adjustments. I remember one time I got a large increase for the assessors. I did a study across the province and I presented a comparative report. They refused and refused it, but when I was able to prove it to them, they accepted it and they gave it to us. Since that time there's been a good working relationship between CSU 52 and the other unions as far as bargaining goes, the bargaining process within the city of Edmonton.

Q: Did you feel something was lost by breaking away from CUPE and the AFL and all that?

PH: Yes, because we became like a lost island. We no longer had affiliation with the CUPE locals throughout the province of Alberta. We were isolated there. We used to have the provincial convention each year and we sent delegates to the national convention. I was down to the national one in 1975 in Toronto. Then of course we could no longer belong to the Alberta Federation of Labor.

Q: Did you ever go to an AFL function?

PH: I've been to a Calgary convention at the Palliser Hotel. I probably only went to one AFL convention that I can remember.

Q: What gains do you remember besides the wage increase?

PH: We were able to negotiate quite a few wage adjustments, like the technical people. We were made up of clerical, technical people. For the technical people we were able to make some gains. In fact I found a card the other day, the guys thanking me for the negotiations. Everybody signed it. Also I was instrumental in setting up the car allowance program that the City uses for car allowance.

Q: Just explain what that is.

PH: Certain people in the City of Edmonton, like assessors and building inspectors, are required to work outside the office. They're paid a car allowance by the City of Edmonton. There was no real rule; it was a flat rate kind of thing. Back in the '70s I took it upon myself, another friend who was an office worker that worked with me, Len Kozak and I worked on and developed a ... like I said, originally it was just a flat rate program. The flat rate program was taxable. Then we found out there was different people using their vehicle different ways. So him and I sat down. I got a book put out by Powers, a company that estimates the cost of operating cars. I was able to develop a system where you'd get four choices. There'd be a flat rate, you could base it on so much a kilometer, you can go on a straight kilometer, or there was one... no I guess that's the three of them. The City accepted it and I think it still is what they use. With that system, the one that the City uses is mostly the one where there's an amount plus so much a kilometer or the so much a kilometer. They still use that system. It's adjusted every year according to the cost of cars, gasoline, depreciation, and everything that goes into operating a car.

Q: Tell me about other things you may not have been involved in but that were going on with your union. You quit your union job how long ago?

PH: I quit July 5th, 1996.

Q: You must remember some things that the union was able to accomplish for its members.

PH: Well I thought that CSU52 had developed a really good benefit package over the years that came from negotiations and that.

Q: What was good about the benefit package?

PH: Well we had a benefits package where if you didn't use your days they were accumulated and they were used in the payout at the end. It worked both for the City and the employees. I'm not saying you shouldn't be sick, but if you've got no excuse to stay away you got rewarded for it at the end when you left the City.

Q: What other parts of the CSU52 contract do you think are particularly strong? Is it a strong agreement?

PH: I think it is. I don't think you can write a perfect agreement, because there's always a word or something that can be interpreted either way. But I think that as far as job

classifications, I think there's strength in that. I think the wage analysis that they do to arrive at the wages, I think the wages were very fair with the City of Edmonton in comparison to say province wide in the same profession or job. I think the car allowance is a very fair plan. They negotiated a thing with Revenue Canada that if you're on so much per kilometre that you don't claim it as taxable; it's accepted by Revenue Canada. They figure that that equates to around 50 some cents a kilometre and the government accepts that.

Q: What's the gender mix in your union? What's the percentage of women to men?

PH: I'd say when I left I would say it had been about 65-35, 60-40 in there, 60 percent being female and the remainder being male.

Q: Did this make a difference in the priorities the union had in negotiations? Did you go for any sort of gender equality, any effort to make things better for women?

PH: Oh yes, there was always that to make sure in certain positions where there was a female that it was made equal to whatever the male was. I think that's pretty standard now. I think if you go back you'll find males in clerical, you'll find females in clerical, so there is no gender difference.

Q: But there used to be.

PH: Yes.

Q: Do you remember when that changed?

PH: Oh I don't know, I think it was progressively changed by giving adjustments to Assistant Clerks or Clerk 1's and 2's. I think that probably happened over 15 or 20 years before they brought them up to where they're at.

Q: Are women pretty strong in taking positions in your union?

PH: Yes there's always been good women involvement in the union. Not by ratio wise, but... One person is Sonyes Oshenia, she started probably five or six years after I did. She's still working and her involvement is still in the union. I'm trying to think of Maria Halushka, and she has been involved in executive committees and stuff like that.

Q: Was there ever a woman president?

PH: Yes, Shirley...

Q: Shirley Woods?

PH: Yes, Shirley Woods, right. Shirley Woods was elected president after I think Frank Zaprawa; after that she got elected. But there was a bit of controversy then.

Q: What was the nature of the controversy?

PH: There were two camps there, there was two camps in the union – one was pro-Shirley and the other one was anti-Shirley. I didn't follow it that closely, I just know that there was two camps. One would agree with her and one wouldn't, and it just kind of split the union. Right after that I think she left her position with a settlement, and that's where Marion Leskiw came in. I was asked by a lot of people at that time to run for president.

Q: Why didn't you?

PH: I looked at it and that's not what I like doing. My thing is I like working with figures, I'm good with math and calculating. I liked the job of secretary treasurer and I stayed with it until I retired. One thing you've got to say about Marion, he was probably one of the most straightforward presidents that there ever has been. Marion, in executive meetings and stuff like that, they would try to influence to pass this and pass that but Marion set it straight right from the beginning. He said, you vote as you please, I respect you for it. He never wavered on that, he would never hold it against anybody if they voted against it or so. I believe that he's been very fair, and I'm glad that I didn't run and that he took that position. Really I do, that's the way I feel about it.

Q: What sort of union is it, looking at it globally?

PH: I would say CSU52, because it's an independent union, is strictly for itself as opposed to province wide or something like that. They have created the association of the City – the fire department, transit union and that – they work together on negotiations and exchange of ideas and that. But I'd still say they're a little bit by themselves province wide.

Q: Do they get involved in political or social issues at all?

PH: I think they do at the municipal level, I don't think they do at the provincial level. I think they do it more at the municipal level.

Q: Do you remember any fight that they took on at the municipal level? Were you around when Ed Tel got privatized?

PH: Oh yes. When Ed Tel was being privatized, we had in fact hired a member from CUPE to work on the thing. There was lots of controversy. There were some members that were working one way but I'd say the majority of them were working the other way.

Q: Which other way?

PH: Well they didn't want to let Ed Tel go, yet there were some employees that figured that they would do better off if they went the other way.

Q: What position did you take, and why?

PH: I always thought that Ed Tel generated a lot of revenue and helped to keep taxes down in the City of Edmonton.

Q: Do you think the coalition is a good idea, the coalition of civic unions?

PH: I think it's good for bargaining purposes. Usually when they discuss who's in bargaining and what position they're in, the first one sets the trend and usually the other ones follow through except maybe for the police or something like that. They just got a 4 percent increase and I was kind of surprised, in economic times like this. I want to say this. At times I felt sometimes maybe unions were sometimes asking too much. But what I've seen in the last year, the unions deserve every cent and more. What has happened in these big corporations, AIG, locally Alberta Treasury Branch, where the guy makes \$480,000 a year and gets paid a bonus of \$400,000 because he lost \$2 billion, I say the unions deserve every cent and more.

[END]