

This is an interview with Sinway Young, President of the South Carolina AFL-CIO. The interview was conducted by Jack Bass and Walter DeVries on February 11, 1974. The Transcriber was Susan Hathaway.

JACK BASS: Are you saying that in the primary last year, you all were backing <sup>Jenrette</sup> ~~Gen Red~~ all the way, weren't you?

SINWAY YOUNG: Yeah, but we had the machinery in there.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Labor and the negroes combined beat ~~McNeil~~ <sup>McMillan</sup>

Young: But we had a coalition with the [blacks] and all the other groups, but we were running the campaign from an office that they hid really because we had the campaign right down the street and headquarters right over here; but the main thing was up on that Seventh Floor. We were sitting up there with a battery of telephones, we were taking inventory around the district and the election was the next day, and we come up . . . every where we turned we estimated we were 2,000 votes short from even getting in

the run-off, and that Craig was the second man. Well, we knew that if we had some of our people that had gone astray back in the Barry Goldwater campaign, and we had to pull everybody out of that Georgetown area, that was the . . . you know, the integration process and everything else, they just left us. Craig had really gone down and made some of business agents in those locals down there his campaign managers, and yet he was right in that same town representing management opposed to the unions, right then, right at that particular time, but he was keeping it away from them, and we couldn't correspond with them because they wouldn't let us. But it was raining cats and dogs, and was getting late in the afternoon and we were biting our teeth, and I said "well, I'll tell you B. C., let's , let's go into Georgetown and let's hit every mill gate in the Georgetown area tonight." So we . . . in the meantime, we called somebody to get some people out of personnel. We told them we said "ya'll meet us, we have the material and we'll get it there." So we dictated a letter, just a plain four . . . just put down four things about each one of them, and we put McMillan voting against Social Security, voting himself a \$34,000 retirement, we didn't do it, but we put it down, and I don't know what else, but there were four things. Then we put Craig, and we

captioned him and we put him out for really what he was. I mean we put ~~Generate~~ <sup>Jenette</sup> and the only thing we said down here was that ~~Generate~~ <sup>Jenette</sup> was for the working people, you know, with nothing, but to expose Craig and to expose McMillan with those people, because see they had been camouflaged, our material wasn't going past the agents hands, and they were mad with us to begin with. So we went to the Mill gates and hit the people. That night, the afternoon when they came off, the night shift when they went off, we had hit a staggered shift when they came out, and the next morning those people went to the plant before they voted and were getting off and voting, and we stayed in there, and we took the votes we said we had to take. In fact, we even had one of the business agents who later on was handing them out for us. He was a campaign manager for Craig, but we had him out there handing out the material, and we converted him in a short period of time, but then we had problems because some of those fellows were still bitter, and they were challenging us, and within a couple weeks time, we have had several meetings down there with them, but we kind of held it together so we didn't lose that area but the main thing that we lost was the primary and the run-off was too close to the general. We didn't have time to regroup our people over being mad with McMillan. now

we did a select . . . you remember how we do it selectively?  
So we took [Interruption] . . .

J.B.: But you had 75 people just at the gates in Georgetown?

Young: No, all over the whole district. See we . . .  
what we did, we had . . .

J.B.: That district is . . .

Young: Split up.

J.B.: As a congressional district, doesn't it have fewer labor union members than any other in the State?

Young: It did, but you see we didn't organize. We organized Georgetown. We took Conway. We got ~~that~~ County, we probably have 2,000 union members in that County now where it didn't have any three or four years ago. We had to have a strike for seven weeks and while we were on strike, we registered them and got them interested in the political processes because they saw it then.

J.B.: Was this in Georgetown?

Young: No, in Conway. Then we had the Georgetown strike, then we organized. You know, we had those paper mills and those unions in there. We organized. Then we came on up to Florence up in Marion and those places and we had been picking up plenty of plants you know, and so we picked up their membership. We were lacking in Dillon County, Marlboro and a few of the counties, just hurting in



those counties. So we had to join with Teacher groups. You know, you can name the groups that we joined and put the money in there with them and tried to work with them to do it, but . . . so we took an inventory, and we looked around and said "Okay, McMillan has been this way before." Everytime he had a run-off he just clobbered them in a run-off. He always did because he was the incumbent and you know the machinery works. So we played a low keyed image. We said "Okay, let's just hold it in this low key, but let's don't do anything to disturb the people in certain precincts, certain wards, or certain counties, but let's go select it to get our people that we knew were going to the polls. So we had what, 200 senior citizens over there that McMillan was going to haul to the polls at nine o'clock, ten o'clock wasn't it, or nine o'clock. We had already picked them up at eight o'clock and voted them. Do you see what I mean. We had senior citizens on the telephones, we had those batteries in there, but there were certain areas that we were calling into the homes to put the materials out or door to door campaigning with the literature. We stopped it, and just went into the groups that we knew we could get with us, and so by pulling that out, we beat him, and we knew we had him beat too. He didn't know it, but we knew it. We even ordered a celebration

for that afternoon because we knew how he was going to do, but politics are crooked in there, and it took us a few years to find out how you do it. You've got to have money, and you've got precincts that you can go in and take a few dollars and buy the whole thing on.

Unid. Female: We said we don't have machinery though, we have to do it by marking the ballot. You don't have all the machinery.

Young: There is a lot in counting and there is a lot in voting. We had three people running a precinct out there in the school, what school was that?

Un. Female: Wilson.

Young: Wilson, and we were in there four or five years ago or six years ago and we saw what was going on, but they weren't with us. So we decided that we had better get those people with us, and so when I checked with them on a certain day, he said "everything is set up, don't you worry about it." He said "don't you worry about it, seventeen people are already registered, we'll make that 117 in just a few minutes. You've got 'em." And that is what he said, and it is still that way and unless they go to a voting machine and clean it up, it's the most rottenst thing you ever saw.

J.B.: Is it like that all over the State?

Young: No.

Un. Female: Certain Counties.

Young: Certain areas, and that area is rough.

J.B.: The whole Sixth District or . . .

Young: The whole Sixth District.

Un. Female: And I see where the area that we have the least people in the Congressional District is not Florence, what's the one up here?

Young: Third.

J.B.: Is that right?

Un. Female: That's right.

J.B.: I thought you always carried strong in the Third.

Young: I meant to show you that chart over there a while ago. It gives you the concentration of membership and shows where we are the strongest.

Un. Female: But now we were working membership and non-union alike. We'd take people with non-union material, and we would send them to the plants that we were not organizing. In fact if it were organized, we'd take union material with the bug on it. We were going both. In fact, Sinway and I handbilled a plant that we had tried to organize, well not we, but somebody else did, we had given our help to the OCAW, Oil, Chemical, Workers. They tried it twice and we went out and handbilled them, but we used non-union material, and we were non-union.

Young: We used material that couldn't be identified with labor and with the fine print on the bottom that the candidate didn't solicit this material. We personally handbilled

that the afternoon before the primary ourselves.

J.B.: In Clarks Town?

Young: Right, yeah. The two of us because we had everybody out and we had one more plant, and we said let's go, we'll take it. Of course, we wanted to stay away from any plant that was being organized, we wanted to stay away from them, but this time we didn't.

J.B.: You have been President of the Labor Council for how long?

Young: 18 years.

J.B.: What changes have taken place in those 18 years in the role of organized labor in politics in South Carolina? You had how many members then?

Young: We had, Jack, about 11,000 we are up to 100,000 and some members now.

J.B.: A hundred what? Just barely over a hundred thousand?

Young: Yeah, we passed a hundred thousand just last year, but since then.

Un. Female: You could sum that up in two short words.

Young: What?

Un. Female: The change.

Young: What?

Un. Female: Like you were telling me at lunch. When they used to see you coming they would cross the street to

keep from speaking, and now they cross the street to speak.

J.B.: Is that right?

Young: That is what they say themselves. In fact, the Speaker of the House speaking at Greenville Saturday morning said that . . . and he was telling them, you know, the progress that we had made that it used to be when they saw me coming they would cross the street to keep from talking to you, and now they cross the street so they can get to us, and so the change . . . let me tell you . . .

J.B.: Why is that?

Young: Well, let me say this. The State is becoming a little bit more progressive. It is a little bit more liberal than it was. Now in this room, right here, we made the deal that saw that <sup>Blatt</sup>~~Blatt~~ would get out as Speaker of the House. I don't know whether you knew that or not. Sitting right here. It was finally consummated down town in another building, but it was right here where the decision was made that he would get out, and so we have had leadership within the state that was . . .

J.B.: How was that done really?

Young: Well . . . how?

J.B.: Yeah.

Young: Well really it was a coalition of young bucks we called them that came into the State that we helped to get elected, and for a long period of time we were working towards this. We weren't ready at that particular time,

but Rex got mad one afternoon and decided that he would make the move anyway, and thought he had blown it. So when he had made the move, then we had to move fast, and so we had lots of people going to the speaker telling him to "get out, bow out gracefully" and they really put the pressure on him. Well, let's go back to some other things. He had tried to make amends with us by . . . whenever his son was appointed to a judgeship, he came down and sat here and asked us if we would okay his son, approve him, give him a recommendation and let it go on through because we were trying to block him that he would vote with us; he would lobby for the minimum wage; he would put minimum wage on the book and he would be with labor. Well shortly after that we had the minimum wage up and of course, he did vote with us for the minimum wage, but he wanted to put the amount of money that would make up to the same thing, so therefore you would have the minimum on the books, but it would be no good. So we decided then that we would have to make the move to go on and get rid of him, and so it was just a people working together that just worked out. How it was done; we met with him eventually and he agreed that if we would let him serve one more term he would get out, and we wouldn't agree to that. We said that we would buy the half year and let him

resign and let Rex come on in. We were promoting Rex. Now we didn't want Harold <sup>Breazale</sup>~~Brezell~~ and who else was in there. We said that he would have to be totally supported . . . he would have to through his support that particular way and of course finally . . . and there is a letter over there on my desk right now, I think I hid it the other day where he had finally agreed to it, and that was where we took him, we took his word now with the understanding that we would give him a big banquet praising him to the high heavens on what he could do, and he kept his word, and it came about. And then this was the trend within the house. In the house of representatives you've got a lot of people in there yet that are still conservative and I think to one man, one vote will add a high membership that is concentrating in the metropolitan areas. We have more house members from those areas and less in the farming area so naturally you will have a change, and over on the senate side, we had some young senators like Dewey Wise and you know, some of the boys from Richland County that ran from the house over to the senate that want to see the State move from the 47th on up the ladder. So just that change in that climate has come about. Now our role has become more effective because our membership has grown. When you have 11,000 people in the State, you are not speaking for many and you are not controlling many votes, and when

you get to 100,000 and you have put on your full-time people, you have organized your central bodies, and in several campaigns, you know it in this state, the Democrats would not have had a national campaign would not have been carried on for the national candidates if we hadn't put in the money or the manpower throughout.

J.B.: Of that 100,000 how many are black, do you know?

Young: I would say about 47% are black now.

J.B.: Has this created any problems with white members.

Young: No. If I said any problems, now Jack, any problems would be wrong. We've had some problems, but we have been able to work them out. In the building trades for years, you know, they were lily white, and the first integration of the building trades union was done by mine about 16 years ago with IBW, and it created some problems. More problems for me than for anybody else because the Ku Klus Klan hung me up and burned me a couple times over the State and then got into my re-election and tried to throw me out as business agent, and out of the State, and in fact, they instigated a few law suits against me, but I fought the whole battle and stayed on top.

J.B.: There was never any actual physical violence, was there?



Young: Oh yeah.

J.B.: In so far as you were concerned?

Young: Oh yeah. They even picketed the union hall.

J.B.: Was there any bombing or dynamiting or anything like that?

Young: No nothing like that. They destroyed one of my cars. You know, little damage, not much.

J.B.: How did you feel about that?

Young: Well the Sheriff had a man stationed with me and the State had a man stationed with me. I had two body guards for about six months, three months was real rough.

J.B.: This was here in Columbia?

Young: Right here.

J.B.: When was that?

Young: It's been more than 12 years ago now. Twelve, thirteen years ago. It was real rough. I had cars shot out, windshields shot out, and I personally <sup>threw</sup> through the Grand Dragon of the Ku Klux Klan out of the building.

J.B.: Who was the Grand Dragon?

Young: Who was that fellow? Hallman wasn't it, that lawyer. We ran him out of the State, and he went over to Tennessee and we ran him out of there. I don't know where he was at that time, but we had the Richland County Chapter was headquartered in the Carpenters Building next

door over here. We wouldn't go in that building after we found that out and broke away from them and came down here, and so we got the international to throw them out of there also. It was over the same issue, it was over the race issue, and then about seven years ago, we tried those cases in Court, you know, where they sued, and some had thirteen million dollars in law suites, and I expelled those members that became involved with the Ku Klux Klan, and they sued us saying that we had deprived them of their livelihood. It took us five minutes in the first case, and fifteen in the second case, and the other four cases they shoved over to Master Beck who then dismissed them. So we came out of them and then immediately after that I started working with the Building Trades to try to get all of the other trades to go along with integration, and it took me a long time. In 1962 we were making, you know, some real progress, and we had a committee of 100 within the city of Columbia, and you would know about this committee, but you wouldn't know who the Chairman was, that integrated the motels and the hotels, and the restaurants, and of course, you know, Clemson College came along about that year, the University and we were in there, in fact, I was coordinating a good bit of that from this building right here, and City Hall wanted to know who that membership was, who was the committee. The committee was composed of bankers, lawyers, the most prominent people within the State.

Then right after that, right before, in between the time that I had integrated my local here with the Ku Klux Klan, then I decided to have an integrated banquets with

J.B.: What happened on the first one

Young: The first one?

J.B.: I remember that you were the first group to have integrated banquets, but by the time I got around attending any it was the second or third.

Young: The first one was at Lake Murray. We chartered buses from Electric and Gas to carry the legislators out there. We had a barbecue and a dance that night, and it was integrated.

J.B.: Was this about '62?

Young: I believe it was about the same time, or maybe . . . I don't know the exact time. Anyway, all but a dozen of the legislators got the buses and went back to town, and so we had a nice time among ourselves. The next day in the legislature they were going to have a censure move over labor for doing this, and you know, then West was . . . I don't know whether West was . . . I believe he was a Senator at that time, and was running for Lieutenant Governor, or was going to be Lieutenant Governor, and he called me . . . a lot of them called me and they couldn't understand why I had made that move. Of course, my position was then that the Democrats in

South Carolina didn't move towards the national lines, and you know, we were already in trouble in our school systems. Jimmy Byrnes had put us into trouble over that, and that we were just getting farther and farther behind, and we had to make the move. Somebody has got to make it. Now that was a rough time, I tell you that was a rough time. I'd go in the legislature, and if I had four people to speak to me, it would be a miracle then, and we decided that we would continue each year for the next year until it became a little better, and a little better and then finally the Governor decided it was time for them to do, and Governor West later . . . we were at the table later when he said that he still questioned my wisdom at that time, but it was still the move that had to be made and was made at the right time, and . . .

J.B.: You sort of implied strongly without specifically saying it that labor's endorsement is now sought by statewide candidates?

Young: Openly sought. In fact, there are candidates today and now, that would not run without our support. We won't endorse any candidate that said I won't want this nomination. It has to be known and it has to be sought.

J.B.: When are you going to announce who your endorsed candidates are?

Young: Jack, we are under a new procedure for endorsement. I may have a copy of it here. I'll give it to you before you leave. Coming out of the Carter deal, and you know, the last Presidential election, we decided then that we had better change our systems so that we would have somewhat a little more control over it. We don't want to control them, but so we can make an endorsement and we want that endorsement to be labor's endorsement. So the endorsements are done like this and I'll get up to your . . . if it is on a central body level, the central body will make their recommendations to the State office. We in turn screen the candidates ourselves. It used to be that the central body could make it without our say so, and for the Congressional race; the local unions within that Congressional race have to meet and send their recommendations to us. Of course, we meet with them and of course, we give the records and see if we can reach a decision. To reach a decision 75% of the group has got to be for it, or else we can't make an endorsement. Then the State meets either in convention or by Executive Committee to finalize the endorsement, and we will not do this until after the primary is over with. . . after the qualifying times are over with. Although we have a latitude in the Constitution now to allow us to seek candidates out to run ahead of time; but this can only be done by the State Office and can't be done by individuals

in the field. Only one person . . . I might tell you this, that computer list over here is controlled by one person in the State.

J.B.: Are you . . .

Young: Right, I control it. Local unions and internationals don't want to work with you if they find out that the list is being misused.

J.B.: Now have you in the past been actively supporting legislative candidates?

Young: Yes.

J.B.: For how long?

Young: Even before the merger of the AFL-CIO.

J.B.: I mean, do you support candidates in every race?

Young: No, just in the legislative branches.

J.B.: I mean in every legislative race.

Young: No, just in some of them.

J.B.: Is that role being expanded?

Young: Greatly. It is 500 times what it was eleven years ago.

J.B.: Do you make campaign contributions to candidates?

Young: Jack, we make campaign contributions to candidates, and I don't really want to get into a full discussion of it, but you know in federal elections you have got to use free money. In the others, we can use money that is allowed. Free money means voluntary money. It cannot be dues money.

Then we collect money from COPE, which is \$2 per member that goes into the national office and then is sent back to us. We probably get back ten times in this State more money than we collect from COPE. The potential seems to be better here that we can have Congressmen in the Congress that will vote more to our liking than some of the areas now. So we are concentrating more and more.

J.B.: At one time there was sort of a repeal of 14B as almost a cardinal test to get a labor endorsement. Is that still considered a factor, or is that . . .

Young: No.

J.B.: Am I correct, that at one time it was?

Young: At one time it was, right.

J.B.: I notice in Virginia this year, for example, Organize Labor in Henry Howell's campaign, that they made it a point that they were not asking him to necessarily support the repeal right.

Young: We've moved 14B in the State of South Carolina and repealed it, but with 14B on the national level . . . but on the local level our endorsements for the house and senate now is . . . covers a multitude of things. Now I'll give you some of the priorities on it. One of them does deal with the right to work law, but it is in an agency shop clause, not outright repeal of the right to work law.

J.B.: What is the Agency Shop Clause do basically?

Young: The Agency Shop Clause allows the person that doesn't want to belong to the union to pay a certain amount of the dues that stays within the local union. You know, because we have to represent them whether they belong or not.

J.B.: Protected by the check-off system.

Young: Well, see the Right to Work Law in South Carolina today provides now that you have a check-off negotiating. We call it an Agency Shop, but we are changing the name of it. We are changing it to Freedom of Contract, which is an amendment to the right to work law under section 8 and 6, I believe.

J.B.: So then in effect then if you are working in an Agency Shop, you pay dues, but you don't have to have membership.

Young: But you don't have to belong. You pay your dues and that is based on. [Interruption] . . . it is based on, Jack, it's based on . . . these are not necessarily in order, naturally if you are going to get our endorsement, you are committing yourself to them, and if you will notice on the back page, read number eight on the list, and I say that it is not necessarily in order, the Agency Shop, and of course . . .

J.B.: Would that fee be the equivalent of dues?



Young: No. What we were basing it on was if the local union charges \$4 a month dues, and they send \$2 to the international, they could only charge that member the amount of dues that stays within the local union.

J.B.: In effect that is a bargaining service?

Young: Right, certainly. We are . . . when we first introduced everybody to the Shop Agency, it scared everybody to death and now it is catching on, and of course, in a lot of the counties where they are screening their first that is one of the highest things, where do you stand on the Agency Shop? Some of the central bodies won't even . . .

J.B.: Well, what is labor going to do this year say in legislative races? What sort of support will they give a candidate they endorse?

Young: Well, let's take <sup>Jennette</sup>~~Concrete~~ in the Sixth Congressional District should he run, and get our endorsement. We would use our mailing list to our people, we will be handbilling the plants. We'll put full time personnel in their to work with our people, and we'll give him money, and we'll put banks of telephones at least three different locations.

J.B.: In addition to that, how much actual money would a congression candidate you support get?

Young: Well, we are limited by law as to the amount of money we can put in. We will put in that race, if he

runs, the exact amount that we are allowed to by law, which is about what, \$6,000.

J.B.: That \$6,000 . . .

Young: From one group.

J.B.: But now individual unions can contribute in addition to that, right?

Young: So long as it is free money, and not dues money, and let me say, Jack, we went outside the State and got boocoos of money for ~~Concrete~~ <sup>Jewette</sup> and for Ziegler. You know, different international unions. They arranged meetings in Washington for them and let them go in and talk before the groups or went in with them, and we got big money from a lot of places. So to say how much money we will spend in this campaign, nobody knows. It depends on the priority. Let me go to this. We've got some marginal races and if we feel that right now in the Fifth Congressional District is going to be marginal, the Sixth Congressional District is going to be marginal, in the First Congressional District, Mendell Davis, if Mendell Rivers runs is going to be a marginal race, and so those races we will concentrate on very heavily. In this District right here, in the Second Congressional District, we have a man by the name of Kaufman that is fixing to come out against Floyd Spence in the next day or two. We will take a long look at that and see whether or not there is any need for us to really get in there. If

we think we can't beat Spence we won't spend a whole lot of money, but we will work with our people as we did with Fred LaClair when we had Albert Watson in there. We knew we couldn't beat Albert, but we thought he could be scared to death a little bit and show that he could be beat, and so we didn't spend a whirl of money, but we did a good bit of work. Now we will be in with Dorn's Congressional race depending on who all gets in that race whether we will classify it as a marginal race or not, and in the marginal areas is where we spend the money and the time.

J.B.: How about in the legislative races?

Young: We will be in every one of them it looks like this year.

J.B.: That will be something new won't it, won't that be the first time?

Young: The first time that we have been state-wide. We are even getting into the magistrate races and Sheriff races.

J.B.: What is the response to the legislature. I presume they know what you are doing? Do you tell them?

Young: Most of them, it has made them more respective to the working people they are representing them better, and most of them are pleased that we are at a meeting where we had Democrats and Republicans present last

Saturday morning. The Republicans there said "we want you to keep this equipment, your operation in effect because you are now the balance of power between both the Republicans and the Democrats, and it is going to be up to us as Republicans and to you others over here as Democrats to sell ourselves to the working people." This is what they think, and they are voting with us both Democrats and Republicans.

J.B.: To date, have you, at the Labor Council in South Carolina, endorsed any Republican candidates in this State?

Young: Yes.

J.B.: Who?

Young: Miss Fredrickson from Greenville. Not only did we work for her, but we kept her financially in the last two campaigns, and do you want to know why? Look at her voting record, Workman's Comp, Minimum Wage, and any other thing that you look at, she is a very liberal and open minded person. Now that is the only way so far, am I right, that is the only Republican endorsement?

J.B.: Is that because that is the only Republican who has had that kind of voting record?

Young: That is about the truth. So up to now, the Republicans now, in fact when they took this and it was explained to them and worked out, and they said when they looked back, most everything we can go along with, and

once . . . if they want our support, they just can't say we are going to vote for it, we say work for it. "Will you make speeches on the floor of the house or the senate, will you appear before committee, will you come out in the newspaper, and they are doing this now.

J.B.: Well, do you see this new political role, well, do you see it as a new political role?

Young: It is a new role.

J.B.: And do you see it as a liberalizing influence in politics?

Young: Very much, very much. In fact, I am going to introduce Hollings the week after next in a meeting in Atlanta, Georgia.

J.B.: Have you introduced . . . endorsed any black candidates in the State?

Young: Yes. A lot of them. We, in the Richland County race about four years ago, maybe six or eight years ago, ever since they have been running, we've endorsed them. We were surprised that we lost too. We had a little run in with the County Treasurer and it liked to have tore us out of the saddle, and we lost two real good blacks in the legislature. Both of them will run again this year, and they will have the endorsement along with two or three others. In fact, tomorrow night, we will endorse, we'll endorse . . . we have one black and two whites running for City Council and labor will endorse the black Wednesday

night.

J.B.: There are two blacks running aren't there?

Young: Only one, oh yeah, that's right.

when he ran in that race we went in there and worked with him to get him elected, and of course, way down in Charleston we about played the field and we lost to that Income Tax deal. The blacks this time, I would imagine that we are going to have world blacks on that ticket from all over, but we may have a few of our black members running from labor.

J.B.: How many members of the legislature now are actual labor union members? What are there about two or three?

Young: No we've got about eight or ten down there now.

J.B.: Who?

Young: From different unions that are in there. You were thinking about Jimmy <sup>Joseph</sup> ~~Josie~~ and of course <sup>[Charlie]</sup> ~~Powell~~ has been defeated. We've got <sup>[Sack]</sup> ~~Smith~~, we've got a bunch of them in there.

J.B.: Yeah, Jimmy <sup>Joseph</sup> ~~Josie~~ and Smith and who else?

Young: Give me the women's list and we will run over them. Yeah, we've got a good many of them that's got tickets in their pockets. Way back some of them have become lawyers and still got the membership in organized labor in the unions.

J.B.: Are those the only two though that have remained active from the standpoint of . . . active in the union, and remaining active in whatever the trades or crafts involve?

Young: Yes, right, right. Some of them were active in the unions and later went into other business, but still kept their membership, but they are the only two that are real active. We were surprised in the meeting Saturday where the Republicans and the Democrats both got up and said "here in Greenville we would like to have at least one member of organized labor on the delegation and if you have a member running, we will support him." The Republicans made the offer first, then the Democrats "me too," and thought it was a very good idea, and we are going to run a man from there. I don't know who it will be at the moment.

J.B.: What kind of a meeting was that in Greenville?

Young: What we are doing right now Jack. We are holding every Saturday morning we are holding legislative breakfast meetings with the legislatures to begin the season and then every couple of three weeks, if we need to on a state-wide basis . . . but then during the meantime we go back into counties or take multiple counties and put them together and we have the members from organized labor and members of the house and senate present for a breakfast meeting there and it usually lasts from two to

three hours, and we go over the legislative goals, and what is happening.

J.B.: This is just with the delegations.

Young: With the delegation and with our members, right. The delegations from those counties.

J.B.: How has the attendance been.

Young: Very very good and it is very very effective.

J.B.: Is this something new?

Young: Brand new.

J.B.: So a lot of this stuff is new since you became COPE Director, isn't it?

Young: Yes, all of it is new since then. We changed our way of thinking and our way of becoming involved, and we feel that our members need to meet with their delegates, their own members of the house and senate on a personal basis, and they can bring it with them and sit down and talk about an Agency Shop for minimum wage, or doing away with the Dairy Commission or Workman's Comp.

J.B.: Has there been anything insofar as organized labor getting representation on state boards and commissions?

Young: Yes, and we are now. I guess we have more members now on state boards than we have ever had in our life.

J.B.: Appointed by West?

Young: Appointed by West. In fact, every board that



is conceivable just about, we are on . . . Manpower and Development, you name it.

J.B.: Are you on any?

Young: About a hundred. I am constantly at meetings, all the time, from Comprehensive Health, Educational, Technical, Vocational.

J.B.: But a lot of these are study committees aren't they?

Young: Study committees and meetings that are functional meetings.

J.B.: Right, but how about actual, you know like the State Highway Commission or the State Board of Mental Health?

Young: On the Mental Health, I am on the Board there.

J.B.: You are on the State Board of Mental Health?

Young: I sure am. I've been on that.

[Interruption] . . . and on the Dairy Commission, we naturally have no force. The only way you can get into public service is to get in the legislature.

J.B.: Yeah, right, elected by the legislature. I mean Department of Corrections, Youth Services.

Young: On the advisory boards, youth services, manpower, we were on all of those committees, and on the , on the State, you know we have an advisory council on that and we have twelve members on that and we have twelve members on that board, but on the ones that

are real paying, where you get paid for, there is only a few of them.

J.B.: I wasn't thinking so much of the ones that you got paid for, but those that actually . . .

Young: Making policies.

J.B.: Policy making, like Social Services, or Welfare Boards.

Young: We are on the Welfare, we are on the Social Services, we are on the Mental Health, we are on . . . we have a new role now. You know the State is going to a Uniform Code System on building, and the legislature passed it last year and it is being implemented now. There is about 10 or 15 people all tolled on the committee and we are represented on that committee which is the policy making group. We were instrumental in getting it passed and so the Governor immediately put us on the Board. We are going for Uniform Codes, and Electrical Codes and Constructional Codes whether we would use the national or whether we would use the circumstances and all this is being formulated right now. We are, in fact, there are some of those committees that we serve on as Chairman, Secretary, and what not.

W.D.: Have you ever compiled a track record on your endorsements? I mean how many people that you have endorsed have gotten into office?

Young: That have been elected?

W.D.: Do you have any idea whether it has improved now over say two years ago or four years or six years?

Young: Yes, it has very much improved. In fact, let me go back to this. Last year, the last election we had in Richland County in the house race and the senate race, we did not lose any one of our senators. We elected all of those. On the house race where we had been making endorsement and probably have six out of the eight would have out endorsement, or sometimes we had the whole thing, all eight of them. We had a set back in Richland County. Now that set back was not due to anything that we did in labor, it was a deal in the County Treasurer. The County Treasurer had gotten too big. Tom <sup>Elliott</sup> ~~Alford~~ had gotten too big for his own britches and he was just about running the County in the . . . and we had to fight among the Democrats.

[Interruption]

J.B.:

Young: So we had with this race going back for many many years, we had never lost an endorsement, but our own people, we couldn't get them together over the issue. It was pretty well cut throat. You know about it, you were there.

J.B.: Now wasn't race a secondary issue in that too? Coming over from the school board election?

Young: Yeah, Hayes ~~and~~ Mizell. Well you take Hayes ~~and~~ Mizell and the School Board, and not . . . Hayes is a friend of ours, don't get us wrong, but we are talking about facts in the thing and that was it. We just couldn't get the people back together and that was all it was. We had the Chairman of the party, the Richland County party was Louis ~~Cromwell~~ <sup>Cramer</sup> back then and Lewis decided to leave and go to the Republican side and run for office, and then we had a black man who was co-chairman and he moved up to Chairman, and this irritated a few people. You know, it hurt, and we had problems, and our endorsements didn't go. See we endorsed those colored boys. We had elected them two years before that and then lost them two years later. Overall our endorsements have been real real good. Now, we endorsed ~~Concrete~~ <sup>Jennette</sup> and old red John, and of course we thought we had that race won, but we lost it. Mendell Davis had our endorsement and Mendell would not have been elected in the last campaign if it had not been for labor. In fact, we had a hard time getting him out to do any campaigning. We set up a headquarters. In some areas we had as many as a dozen telephones with people working on them. Roughly speaking, we had pretty close to a hundred people working in that campaign the last six weeks.

W.D.: Is it fair to say that when you started out that

your endorsement was the kiss of death?

Young: Yes.

W.D.: Did it change suddenly, or was it gradual?

Young: Gradually.

J.B. Are you going to publish your list this year?

Young: Whether we publish it or not will be decided by the Executive Committee, and my position is that the list should be published because we have groups of people that we can't reach that want to know. They are constantly calling and they are constantly writing who is your candidate. You can go along the filling stations now, they are used to shaking their head at this now, but she knows it. But you can put your courtesy card down and the owner of the station will say "who are we going to endorse, we are waiting on ya'll, we're waiting on labor." We find this even in the smaller places. Let's take <sup>Horry</sup>~~Cris~~ County, five years ago if you went in there and said unions, you would get shot. In fact, I got my windshield shot out in that area and today we are well respected in there. We have an office down there, and we have the respect of the community, we have Klanish people, we've got bootleggers. You name them down there, it's rough, but we have the blacks and the whites and we had to get them together, and then we had to organize them, and we organized our A. Phillip Randolph Chapter, and as we moved and played honest

honest with all groups, we have come out on top, and so we can make an endorsement in ~~Gre~~<sup>Horry</sup> County right now and just about put that man in with the endorsement because of our coalition with the blacks and with the labor groups, the labor groups that are there. Another thing, I guess we have set up A. Phillip Randolph Chapters. We have eleven in the State right now.

End Side One, Tape One. Begin Side Two, Tape One.

Young: In forming coalitions we found out that there was so much friction there that we should do something else. Of course labor did that on the national basis. A. Phillip Randolph was President of Sleeping Carporters, and we just called it A. Phillip Randolph because it is headed up by them. What we do is to organize a chapter in every County, or the Counties where we have a high concentration of black vote and our people disseminate the information, the meet and they endorse the same people that we endorse. We give them the money to operate within the black community, and the material to operate and get our program across by trade unionists going in and running the leadership away from the so-called factional groups. Some counties would have as many as seven different black groups working within one county, and everyone of them was wanting a hand out and nobody was really endorsing.

J.B.: Alright, but what are A. Phillip Randolph Chapters, are those strictly black union members?

Young: They are the officers and the policies are made by labor and they are primarily black. However, we have had such good success with them, we have had a number of our white people that want to go to the A. Phillip Randolph meetings and to help out with them.

J.B.: But do they include blacks who are not union members?

Young: No, it includes only union blacks, but they go into the community and work with the ministers and what not getting our programs across?

J.B.: Do they get involved in voter registration drives?

Young: Yes sir, that is the main object.

J.B.: Are you doing anything?

Young: Right now, Jack, we are fighting real hard . . . you saw this paper here, you didn't see it but the first item that we have on our list right now is registration by mail to . . . you know, by the computer we can tell every local union how many people are registered and how many are not registered. So we are concentrating both on our people and on people in the community. Now if we go to the registration by mail, either federally or by State, than we are going to put the same forces that we have out now, we are going to . . . the ones that are not already Notary Public we are going to make Notary Public and let

go in and take those lists and go into the communities and to register the members of organized labor and register the others, and yes, you asked us if we are doing anything in registration right now, we are very active in registration in Orangeburg, Greenville, Rock Hill, Florence, ~~Free~~ <sup>Homr</sup> and let's see, these Chapters are pretty old, oh, ~~Lawrence~~ <sup>Laurens</sup>, we don't have one in Newberry at the moment that is working.

J.B.: Do you think that South Carolina needs to have some sort of a mandatory voting machine law?

Young: Yes, definitely.

J.B.: That is not on your list at this time though, is it?

Young: Definitely, I think the State of South Carolina, we have a lot of money in revenue sharing, and somewhere along the line they could buy the voting machines that could cut out the problem. I don't worry about fraud in registration, but I do worry about fraud in areas where there are paper ballots, and when you go behind closed doors to count them, you don't have enough people to put in there as observers, it's real easy. They could have a basket, and they have a piece of paper in those baskets because they don't want those votes to go through the bottom, and underneath those paper baskets they have hundreds of votes, tickets already marked so all they do is just push right through the bottom and stir them in with the rest of them, and you can take some of these



counties, you could elect every person that you wanted to with . . . what did we estimate, \$17,000 could buy off every vote. I mean enough so that they are there, and that is wrong. So yes, we are definitely in favor of the voting machines.

J.B.: Do you find a real distinction in these counties that do have voting machines?

Young: Right. Spartanburg, Charleston, Columbia, all of the areas that have voting machines. Who else has voting machines? [Interruption] . . . We have a county, we have a meeting when is it, Thursday on the County merger. [Interruption] . . . Five states started several years ago.

W.D.: I was thinking about the South.

Young: In the South, yes, I would think so.

W.D.: What were

Young: We have completed the membership list that was in the computer by the international, and it is now being keypunched and put on magnetic tape to go back into the computer, which within could be completed within ten days. Now we are capturing lists that were not in the computer. So we are in a continuous process, but ours is complete and of course the Cheshire machines and the equipment that we bought will be delivered within 30 days and we have had ten days on the order already.

J.B.: Where do you see the major, the next major increase? I am assuming that you are seeing a continued increase in union membership in South Carolina?

Young: In public employees.

W.D.: What percent of the work class is organized?

Young: Well it is a question mark right now. If you would ask the Chamber of Commerce they would say 7 and if you would ask us we would say 11, but the Bureau . . . no, but the Bureau of Labor Statistics out of Atlanta has been giving us about 14% now.

W.D.: Is that higher than it was five, ten or fifteen years ago? Is it a steady increase, or is it about the same percent?

Young: Oh no. About three years ago we jumped 37 $\frac{1}{2}$ % increase.

J.B.: What Walt's question is, I think, the work force is increasing also and are you keeping a steady percentage of the work force or is your . . .

Young: We are gaining on the work force now. If the work force was increasing and we were increasing so we were just about holding our own at what was estimated at about 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ %, but we are gaining on the work force now. Let me say this, it is so hard to keep up, it's awful hard to keep up. Last week we took in how many plants were organized in the paper, you can see in the paper how many people signed agreements with us on a card check. We had two plants in

Camden alone in Herchall County by card check. We won in election after election and we are just moving , and the climate . . . there are over a hundred organizers in the State right now, and that is just a drop in the bucket to what we could have.

J.B.: Is this going on South wide?

Young: Yes, and I think that we are having more success in South Carolina though than most of the states.

J.B.: Why?

Young: I think that the people became educated to the fact that we weren't all farmers and that as we had a diversified industry come in and some industries paid good money and others low, the people in the lower paying industry looked at those other plants, and they wanted their money. The cost of living has gone up so much that the people had to do something, they had to bound together, and right now it is a constant . . . I guess that we average five calls a week in this office steering us to people who want to be organized including managers of plants. We had one industry within this State that has stores, now I won't call the stores because you would know them, and they have 64 store managers, 55 of them signed cards to join the union, the managers. So that'll give you an idea. Insurance agencies are forming unions, teachers, you know we have . . .

J.B.: How about other public employees, besides Teachers.

I mean are garbage workers organizing?

Young: Well in Florence in ~~the~~ Rock Hill and these areas, they are coming real fast.

J.B.: How about firemen?

Young: Firemen are just about completely organized over all the state, and in here, I think there are only about three firemen in the whole city that don't belong. The firefighters have joined with the teachers, not with the American Federation of Teachers but with the NEA, and they are having a seminar next week here, which will have . . . will be attended by the School Teachers and members of organized labor. We are going to be all sitting down together and going over the problems. [Interruption]

J.B.: Where is Bob McNair these days?

Young: Bob McNair is going to run for Strom Thurmond's position in the United States Senate. If Strom doesn't retire, then he will run against him, and will defeat him.

J.B.: He has altered his position towards labor?

Young: Yes, right now I'd say Bob is 100% with us. I'd say right now he is committed 100%. He got himself in a box, you know when he was Governor on that same hospital strike by making it a policy, and Governor West, do you remember the rift that developed between them, Governor West said that "if I was Governor, I would have handled it differently" and they told him to stay quiet. Well, he became Governor and he has handled it differently. He has

organized behind the scenes, and I hope to use this lightly, he has organized many committees of real outstanding people to work on collective bargaining and he paved the way so it would get through the legislature, including the University, Clemson. We had to stay out of it because if we got in there and pushed it then we felt like it would be a deterrent to us. So we let other people handle it. But we fed the information to him.

J.B.: Let me ask you this. You mentioned that when you had the committee of 100 in Columbia to work on racial problems ten years ago, lunch counters and so forth, you worked very closely with business leadership of the city, financial leadership of the city, and you suggested that at some of these other meetings that you worked closely with management people in different categories, and on different programs involving the State, how do you characterize the level of cooperation between business . . . between labor and management in this State?

Young: Let me say this to you Jack, labor and management have come together moreso in this State than probably any other state in the South. Let me go back into this right now and I am not hedging your question by any means; but the Chamber of Commerce came to us. We didn't go to them. You know the Chamber always fought us, Textile manufacturers always fought us, and it seemed like we could have no boundary lines that we could step over. We

were always at each others throats. Finally, this began to change. The Chamber of Commerce came to us and said that there are grounds, we would like for your people to join the Chamber of Commerce. Well we decided that it would be best if we stayed out, but at the same time we would not bury our heads in the sand to their ideas and they would listen to us, and so we did, and in the last election you would see advertisements in the newspaper by labor and the Chamber of Commerce jointly, paid for jointly by labor and the Chamber of Commerce and this was on the mini-bottle. We were looking for open bars. The Textiles, we joined them on imports and exports because their position was the same as ours, and we joined hands, and this year when we were going for the Comprehensive Workman's Compensation, you know, changes Workman's Compensation, we had Committees appointed, Advisory Committees, Legislative Committees and Study Committees, and these Committees got together and we signed an agreement by labor, management, Chamber of Commerce, the plaintiff attornies and others that we had reached an accord on a vast, comprehensive change in Workman's Comp, and neither side is going to fight it. We are going together on it, and this calls for \$40,000 death and total disability. It is one of the most comprehensive you will find in the South and one of the best.

J.B.: Does it extend coverage to forestry, lumber

workers, and this sort of thing.

Young: It covers everybody. It takes the numerical number down to two. We'd like to go to one. It takes in the farmers and the farm workers, migratory workers, casual workers, and there was an agreement by labor and industry. Now let me say this, I think management took a different look towards labor, and we decided that we should set up trust funds and committees within labor that would include management people on, and suppose you take this local union right here. There is nothing done in this local except by our own membership meeting that management is not 50% part of. On every trust agreement that we have, for the training program, for the health and welfare, the vacation, everything that we do, but so there you will find out now that so many lawyers and a lot of management have joined unions.

J.B.: But on this workman's comp thing, has this passed, is that going before the legislature?

Young: No the draft is completed now.

J.B.: What industries will be excluded, or what type worker will be excluded?

Young: Very little. [Interruption] . . . and I am not going to give them to you right now, but you can see in the South that we have the best in all categories under the unemployment comp right now and the worst on workman's

comp until we pass it. If you get sick, I mean if you were hurt on the job you could draw \$63 maximum. You could get out of work and draw \$83. It doesn't rhyme does it. [Interruption]

J.B.: Let me ask you this question. You talk to labor people in all the other southern states and you people get together and meet, right?

Young: Yeah.

J.B.: How do you rate the conditions now in South Carolina in so far as economic opportunities for blacks are concerned . . . rate, compare it with other southern states.

Young: I would really probably have to say that South Carolina has the best climate for blacks now than any of the other southern states. Although the per capita maybe greater in some of the other southern states, I think the opportunity is here.

J.B.: Why?

Young: Jack, I don't really know. It seems like the attitudes have changed drastically and they just went ahead and did what they should have done.

J.B.: Why did it change like that?

Young: I don't know. I can't tell you why.

End interview