

DAVID L. COLE

INTERVIEW WITH GEORGE LARNEY, INTERVIEWEE  
BY NANCY KAUFFMAN, INTERVIEWER  
May 20, 2009

**NANCY KAUFFMAN:** IT IS MAY 20, 2009, AND GEORGE AND I ARE IN CHICAGO DISCUSSING DAVID COLE. THESE COMMENTS WILL BE COMBINED WITH GEORGE'S TYPED REMEMBRANCES AND WITH THE SUMMARY FROM THE TRUMAN LIBRARY THAT THEY HAVE GRACIOUSLY ALLOWED US TO ADD TO THE NAA WEB SITE. SINCE WE HAVE BEEN READING THAT TYPED MATERIAL, IT SEEMS APPROPRIATE TO INSERT THAT FIRST.

DAVID L. COLE REMEMBRANCES  
by George Larney

My First Meeting With Cole

I had expressed an interest in working for the National Commission for Industrial Peace to a person that was very close to Cole on a professional and personal basis. The Commission had just been established by Executive Order [11710, April 4, 1973] by President Nixon That person arranged for me to have an interview with Cole for what I thought would be a staff position at the Commission. The arrangement to meet with Cole entailed meeting him at National Airport and then driving him to a destination where the interview was to take place. As it happened, I spent the entire day with Cole, going around meeting some of the labor and management members that had been appointed to the Commission – they were the same members that served on the Wage-Price Stabilization Board impaneled by President Nixon to fight inflation – the year was 1973. It was a fascinating day for me to say the least, for at that time I was working as a GS 11 Labor Economist in the Office of Labor-Management Policy Development [OLMPD in Bureaucratic speak] part of the Labor-Management Services Administration [LMSA] of the Department of Labor [DOL]. At some point in the day we met with John Dunlop who was then Chairman of the Wage-Price Stabilization Board and also an ex officio government member of the Commission. Cole exited during our meeting, leaving me alone to be interviewed by Dunlop one on one. This was at a time when Dunlop was getting a lot of press coverage, particularly with respect to his not suffering fools. It was a harrowing 20 minutes at the end of which Dunlop excused himself apologizing for having to leave telling me he was to be interviewed himself by Irving R. Levine. In any event, it was now the end of the day and Cole needed to return home to Paterson, New Jersey and I was to drive him back to National Airport in my Volks Wagon Squareback – a very small car but utilitarian. As was the case when I picked him up that morning, Cole was scrunched in the front passenger seat holding on to the handle that protruded from



the glove compartment. On the way, this very proper old time gentleman looked at me with a serious look of concern most likely for his safety and asked me, "George, do you really like this car?" When I reluctantly answered yes, he confided that his daughter had the same vehicle but that he never rode in it. I never again picked Cole up in my car, but as Executive Director of the Commission (which was the job he told me I had if I wanted to accept the job, which was a complete surprise to me) when I dropped him at National Airport, I would always arrange for him to be picked up in Secretary of State, George Shultz' limousine – a perk he obviously was accustomed to in having served in a multiple of roles under six presidents.

### Cole's Ethics

Cole once told me how fortunate he was to have always had a job he liked which included working as a young man in the silk manufacturing business owned by his father, being in private law practice, and as a public servant. He was once courted by the Democratic Party in New Jersey to run for the Senate but declined, and "Pete" Harrison Williams was drafted as the candidate instead and served many years in the Senate on the Labor Committee. The truth be told, Cole was too much of a gentleman and too ethical in his conduct to have ever become a politician in Washington – I truly believe he would have been very unhappy as a Senator and very dismayed at the machinations of party politics. As one example of his ethical conduct, even though the National Commission for Industrial Peace had a legal life of two years, he told me at the very outset that he wanted to conclude the Commission's business before two years as he did not want to waste taxpayer's money. A far cry from what is now happening in the present Administration.

### Cole's Periodic Visits to Washington on Commission Business

Prior to Convening a Commission Meeting, Cole would come to D.C. the day before the scheduled meeting and we would dine together both for lunch and for dinner. Cole loved to dine at good restaurants and on these occasions, we always ate very delicious meals. But we also imbibed alcoholic beverages, that is, both of us would have a drink at dinner, but only Cole would have a drink at lunch – a Jack Daniels on the rocks, as I was not accustomed to drinking during the day and still don't. However, after lunch, I would always have dessert but Cole would never indulge himself. After many months and many meals together later, Cole broke down and ordered dessert at lunch and after ordering, he looked at me very sternly and said, "you have corrupted me, I haven't had dessert at lunch for at least 40 years." Even though we had lunch together many more times, Cole did not repeat this indulgence – apparently, I had not corrupted him enough.

### Cole's Favorite Story

Not only did I have the privilege of serving as Cole's Executive Director at the National Commission for Industrial Peace, I also had the opportunity of a life time to have delightful conversations about his life experiences both personal and professional. Being in his seventies however, Cole was prone to telling and retelling some particular stories



numerous times. I never ever signaled a recognition that I had heard the same story once again but always reacted in a way that indicated my delight at the story's conclusion – since, in fact, his stories were always charming and educational to boot. His favorite story, based on the fact he retold this one the most, was in the late 1940s when John L. Lewis was President of the United Mine Workers Union. Cyrus Ching was the first director of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service and George Humphreys was head of the Bituminous Coal Operators Association, later to become Secretary of the Treasury. The Miners were on a prolonged national strike and Lewis was resistant to continue bargaining. Ching was successful in arranging a covert meeting between himself, Lewis and Humphreys. Each traveled incognito to White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia where Ching convened a meeting in his hotel room. Ching began the meeting by thanking Lewis and Humphreys for coming and then launched into an exposition about bargaining in good faith and trying to resolve issues on mutually acceptable terms and ending his dissertation by noting that collective bargaining was a process of “give and take”. Ching then turned to Lewis and asked him, “What say you?” to which Lewis responded, “I’ll take anything that SOB Humphreys has to give.” Without hesitation, Humphreys shot back, “I’ll be damned if I give that SOB Lewis anything.” Upon which, both Lewis and Humphreys left Ching’s hotel room and returned to D.C. The strike continued for some time thereafter. It is interesting to note that Cole succeeded Ching as the second Director of FMCS.

#### New York Dinner:

I met Cole in New York for a jurisdictional hearing of two AFL-CIO unions. Following the hearing, Cole and I went to dinner at a restaurant named the Oyster. It was a warm and beautiful summer night and after dinner we took a walk in the midtown area. Several blocks into our walk, we encountered what I recall as three very drop dead gorgeous women. One of those women stepped directly in front of us and asked, “would you gentlemen like company tonight.” At the time, I was in my early thirties and Cole was in his seventies but very distinguished looking and both of us were in business suites – and of course, both of us were married. I looked at Cole who, when flustered or angry had a Charles Boyer vein that popped out in his forehead and his face would redden, had that look about him, I quickly turned to the young lady of the night and answered, “no, not tonight.” We then continued on our walk and for the next two blocks, Cole was silent apparently speechless over the incident. Finally, he turned to me and said, “George, I have been coming to New York all my life [Cole was born and lived in Paterson, New Jersey all his life] and “that” has never happened to me before.” He then paused and looked at me quizzically and said, “somewhere, those floozies have mothers.” I knew what he meant by the term “floozies” but it was such an old time expression that I had never heard it said by another human being. Given his very gentlemanly stature and his befuddlement over having been propositioned, I bit my lower lip to stop me from laughing at this absurd encounter. We never spoke of the incident again.



Meeting at the White House to Present the Final Recommendations of the National Commission for Industrial Peace to President Nixon

On May 9, 1974, Cole, Shultz and I went to the White House to present to the President the Final Report of the Commission. Cole expressed that he was not too happy to make this presentation by personal appearance as he did not like the President very much. And, for some unknown reason, the press selected this particular day to cover a "day in the life of the President." (One has to recall that this was at the height of the Watergate scandal.) At the end of the meeting the President lavished gifts on Cole for his service that included presidential cuff links in cobalt blue, a presidential hat pin in cobalt blue for Cole's wife, some presidential pens with Nixon's signature on them and then a half dozen golf balls also with Nixon's signature on them. As the President gave Cole the golf balls he said to Cole, "now David, if you happen to hit a hole in one with one of these balls, I will give you a dozen more with my signature" to which Cole replied, "I suppose Mr. President, you would want me to be standing on my head when I hit this hole in one." We all proceeded to laugh. As we exited the White House, Cole turned to me and said prophetically referring to all the gifts Nixon had bestowed on him, "I think the President is cleaning out his desk." Three months to the date later, on August 9, 1974, Nixon resigned the office of the Presidency.

Harvard Club Memorial Service

When he died, I was invited to a ceremony at the Harvard Club in New York to honor his life. My recollection is that there were several hundred persons in attendance with many dignitaries present. A number of them spoke, telling stories about David many of the stories were of a humorous nature. But most striking to me at the time was how much David was loved by all who really knew him and those were the persons who were in attendance at this gathering by invitation. I treasure that I was included among this gathering.

David L. Cole  
Truman Library Oral Interview

The following information comes from an oral interview conducted in 1972 by Jerry Hess for the Truman Library. The transcript of the interview is available on line at [www.Trumanlibrary.org](http://www.Trumanlibrary.org)

David was born in Paterson, NJ and educated in public schools. He then graduated from Harvard College in 1921 and Harvard Law School in 1924. He practiced law in Paterson and, for a short time, in New York City. He was exposed to labor relations early in his career in Paterson. In his early years, he represented silk manufacturers – his father was a silk manufacturer. Although the union had short lives, each year around labor day, there would be a strike, until about 1937 or 38 when Sidney Hillman became Chairman of the Textile Workers Organizing Committee of the CIO. David and Sidney worked out a program to make strikes secondary to resolving differences. In 1940 or 41, David was appointed chairman of the NJ Mediation Board by Governor Charles Edison. Shortly



thereafter, the War Labor Board was set up, and he was made one of the public members of the regional board of New York. Shortly after the war, he began doing private arbitrations as a neutral – the 3<sup>rd</sup> man on the board or as the sole arbitrator.

In 1944, David served on his first national labor dispute board during President Roosevelt's administration, on a national steel case. During a break, he was asked by the counsel to Bethlehem Steel how much he earned for serving as chairman of the board. According to statute, David was paid \$45.68 a day plus \$9 a day subsistence. The counsel was getting around a quarter of a million dollars.

After that, David served on many boards for national basic steel, the airlines, coal mining, and railroad. He met with Presidents Roosevelt, Truman, and Kennedy and provides interesting insights to them in the oral interview.

Not only did David serve as the President of the National Academy of Arbitrators in 1951-52, he was also the Director of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service in 1952-53.

With this preamble, we will begin our interview:

**GEORGE LARNEY:** David talks in this Truman interview about certain people. He had relationships with some of these people over many, many years. Let's take George Taylor for example. He used to tell me that he and George Taylor were extremely good friends, and that they made a pact between each other. If one found the other to be slipping, they would tell each other that to be the case. And so I asked him, "Well, has that happened yet?" And he said, "No, not yet. But it might happen." He mentions David Stowe and his role on these emergency boards. When the commission was coming to an end, he brought me over to meet David Stowe, and at the time David Stowe was Chairman of the National Mediation Board. He wanted David Stowe to know who I was so that if I left government service at some point, David Stowe would sort of guide me or give me a recommendation to get on the panels of the National Railroad Adjustment board so I could do railroad work.

This interview (Hess interview of Cole for the Truman Library) makes clear that he really had a lot of admiration for Truman. And as much as Cole admired Truman, that's how much he disliked Nixon. So when we went to the White House to present this final report -- and you'll see in the "Report & Recommendations" from The National Commission for Industrial Peace that there's a picture of David Cole, Dunlop, and Schultz with the president, and I was over here and out of the picture. It was Cole's belief he was



protecting my future career in labor-management relations by not being seen in a picture with Nixon whatever that career might be.

**NANCY KAUFFMAN:** RIGHT, AND I HAVE SCANNED THAT PICTURE SO WE HAVE IT.

**GEORGE LARNEY:** Cole really didn't want to go. And, it's interesting because in this interview, he talks about somebody calling him up from the White House and wanting him to come over to meet the President, for Truman to congratulate him on his work, and he said, "No; he wasn't available." Ostensibly, because what they [Cole and his fellow Board Members] were doing was celebrating what the board had done and they were drinking, and he wouldn't go over to the White House when he had been drinking. But, that was David Cole. He was just such an independent soul. It didn't matter whether the President of the United States wanted him to come over to talk to him when it was convenient for the President or whatever. If it was something he didn't want to do, he didn't do it.

**NANCY KAUFFMAN:** SO ASIDE FROM BEING A GENTLEMAN, HE WAS ALSO AN INDEPENDENT PERSON.

**GEORGE LARNEY:** Yes. I think probably if I were to describe it today, I'd say he was probably a bit stubborn as well. But he was just his own man. And, he once said to me that he had never ever had a professional job or engagement in any activity that he did, that he didn't like. He was very fortunate, he said.

So, when he worked for his father in the silk manufacturing business for a while, he loved that job. Then he went on to law school, and he loved law school. He loved what he did as a lawyer. He loved all of his public service work that he did. And, in all these endeavors, but especially his public service work he made these great friendships along the way. As one such example, he and John Dunlop actually, bought a property, a condo together in Florida.

**NANCY KAUFFMAN:** WOW. THAT'S A LOT OF TRUST TO SHARE PROPERTY.

**GEORGE LARNEY:** Yes, it gives you kind of a flavor about their relationship. As another example, there was



his relationship with George Shultz. And Shultz was just somebody who had great admiration for Cole. I mean, I think probably in some way Cole was a mentor to George Shultz

By the way, when the Commission was coming to an end, and it came to an end eighteen (18) months after we started, (recalling that when a commission is established by Executive Order by the president, it's established automatically for 24 months). Cole said to me, "We're not going to do this. We're not going to go 24 months. We're going to finish our commission business in less than 24 months because I don't believe in spending the public money in an unwise way.

**NANCY KAUFFMAN:** GOOD FOR HIM.

**GEORGE LARNEY:** So we actually finished our work in 18 months rather than 24 months.

**NANCY KAUFFMAN:** AND, THAT DOESN'T HAPPEN A LOT IN PUBLIC SERVICE, DOES IT?

**GEORGE LARNEY:** No, it doesn't. I said to him, "Well when the commission comes to an end, I really have an interest in maybe getting a White House fellowship." And because of his dislike for the president at the time, Nixon, he discouraged me. He said he wouldn't do it, which I felt very badly about at this time since, in my view being a White House fellow is more associated with the Office of the President. It's a great honor to do that. It doesn't matter what Administration it's in.

**NANCY KAUFFMAN:** THAT'S TRUE.

**GEORGE LARNEY:** But, he didn't. And so, he brought me over to the National Mediation Board to meet and introduce me to David Stowe, the Board's then incumbent Chairman. He brought me over to the AFL-CIO, and we met with Lane Kirkland there. And, at that point in meeting Lane Kirkland, he said, "Well, you know, maybe after the Commission, George could come over to the AFL-CIO and do internal dispute work," meaning the jurisdictional dispute between two AFL-CIO Unions. And they actually gave me all these past internal dispute decisions to read and to study. But that never came to pass either, as at the time this professional endeavor did not appeal to me.



What happened after the Commission ended is that I transferred over to the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service. My job was to take the ten (10) recommendations that we presented to the President, in accord with the last recommendation to transfer the ongoing programs of the Commission to an established agency of government, which Commission Member Bill Usery, then incumbent Director of the FMCS urged that agency to be the FMCS, and implement the other nine (9) recommendations. The interesting thing is that having been the second director of the FMCS, but only for a brief period of time, Cole admired the agency but his impression of Bill Usery was that he was somebody who wanted to be an empire builder.

**NANCY KAUFFMAN:** OH. WE SHOULD JUST MENTION THAT THE REPORT ON RECOMMENDATIONS IS THE NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR INDUSTRIAL PEACE, GIVEN TO THE PRESIDENT IN MAY 1974.

**GEORGE LARNEY:** Yes. And the interesting thing is, as I noted previously, we met with the President May 9th, which was three months to the date that he resigned his office.

**NANCY KAUFFMAN:** VERY INTERESTING.

**GEORGE LARNEY:** Yes. So, Cole looked upon Usery as this empire builder because Usery was then not only Director of the (FMCS) but he was also an assistant to the president for labor affairs at the same time. Usery was very proud of this role and actually had a sign made for the door of his office that read, Director of the FMCS and Assistant to the President for Labor Affairs. And if Usery had had his way and could swing it, he probably would have taken over the National Mediation Board, as well, and melded the two agencies of government together.

**NANCY KAUFFMAN:** MM-HMM, MM-HMM.

**GEORGE LARNEY:** So, you know Cole had some reservations about Usery. But the striking thing is that in this interview with Truman, there are strains of who Cole was as this independent person.

**NANCY KAUFFMAN:** RIGHT. AND WHAT WE'RE REFERRING TO IS AN INTERVIEW THAT WAS DONE FOR THE TRUMAN LIBRARY.

**GEORGE LARNEY:** Yes.

**NANCY KAUFFMAN:** AND, THERE IS GOING TO BE A LINK BELOW TO THIS WHOLE INTERVIEW THAT MENTIONS THE ACADEMY JUST VERY



BRIEFLY AT THE BEGINNING BUT MOSTLY FOCUSES ON OTHER THINGS.

**GEORGE LARNEY:** Exactly. On page 18 of this 39-page document, the interview, there's an accounting of something that he said, which I'd like to just add to.

**NANCY KAUFFMAN:** GO AHEAD.

**GEORGE LARNEY:** Cole is talking to interviewer Hess who says, "Besides, two years later in 1948, Mr. Whitney was one of Mr. Truman's supporters, where Whitney was a union official who didn't like Truman very much." Cole says, "Exactly. Precisely what the President said to us: 'Were you aware of the fact that he really supported me and that he contributed money to my cause?' And I said, 'I'm amazed. I really didn't know it.' Of course, after he made that speech I said, 'Nevertheless, I was terribly, terribly affronted by what he said. It was disrespectful of the office of the Presidency, a president and disrespectful of you, Mr. President.' 'Oh,' the president said. 'That's nothing; that's nothing. We expect those things.' I said, 'I don't expect them really. You had a wonderful retort to make and I wish you had made it.'" This is Cole talking to the President.

**NANCY KAUFFMAN:** RIGHT.

**GEORGE LARNEY:** He could have told this guy what -- and so Truman says, "What was that?" And Cole says, "And I said, 'Well, when he said you can't make a President out of a haberdashery clerk, you can't make a purse out of a sow's ear.'" Well, actually when he related the story to me, which he did, in another context, the actual thing he said is, "You can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear." I don't know whether Hess left it out or not or I don't know whether Cole, you know, didn't say the whole thing.

**NANCY KAUFFMAN:** RIGHT. AND, THE TYPICAL PHRASE IS "A SILK PURSE."

**GEORGE LARNEY:** Yes.

**NANCY KAUFFMAN:** WE ALL LEARNED THAT PHRASE AS CHILDREN.

**GEORGE LARNEY:** Cole said to the President, I think if I were you I would've said, "That may be true, but you can't make a labor leader out of a sow's ear either."



**NANCY KAUFFMAN:** OH, DEAR.

**GEORGE LARNEY:** So, I mean, this is just typical of Cole as this independent person, who on occasion would say what he really thought about things, but in this particular instance it shows that he had some sense of humor.

**NANCY KAUFFMAN:** EXACTLY.

**GEORGE LARNEY:** And a very dry sense of humor, too. He didn't often display it, but he had it. He, like Dunlop, didn't suffer fools either. He couldn't do that.

**NANCY KAUFFMAN:** MAYBE THAT'S WHY THEY WERE SUCH GOOD FRIENDS.

**GEORGE LARNEY:** Yes. You know, a couple of things: in this interview, Cole is saying that he didn't want to be the Director of the FMCS. He was asked to run for the Senate in New Jersey, and he turned that down. And in his place, Harrison Williams, known as Pete Williams, the Democratic Party ran him. And, Pete Williams won that election and was in the Senate for years. And, my take on that is that I think Cole was such an ethical person and so unbending when he thought he was right and used to having people listen to what he had to say that I don't think he would have fared very well in the Senate.

**NANCY KAUFFMAN:** PROBABLY TRUE.

**GEORGE LARNEY:** I just don't think so.

**NANCY KAUFFMAN:** RIGHT.

**GEORGE LARNEY:** And, I think if he had ever been elected, he probably would have served one term and then he would have given it up. He also turned down the offer to be an NLRB chairman.

**NANCY KAUFFMAN:** DID HE EVER TALK ABOUT THAT WITH YOU ---

**GEORGE LARNEY:** No, no.

**NANCY KAUFFMAN:** --- AS TO WHY HE TURNED THAT DOWN, HE JUST TURNED IT DOWN?

**GEORGE LARNEY:** No. He talked to me about being approached to run for the Senate and that he turned it down. I don't recall exactly. I mean we had a discussion about it, and I asked him why he would do that, because I'm



interested in politics, and if somebody came to me and said the party is behind you and would you run for the Senate I probably would do it. Because I have run for office. I ran for Congress in 1994, 20 years after the Commission ended.

**NANCY KAUFFMAN:** BUT THE NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS BOARD MAY BE MORE OF SOMETHING HE COULD HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL AT.

**GEORGE LARNEY:** Yes, I think he probably would've felt too constrained by the bureaucracy and all the game playing and all of that. I don't think he would've tolerated it very well at all.

**NANCY KAUFFMAN:** SO PERHAPS HIS SERVICE WITH THIS COMMISSION TAUGHT HIM WHERE HE WAS GOING TO BE HAPPIER. JUST BEING HAPPY IN THE JOB SEEMED TO BE IMPORTANT TO HIM.

**GEORGE LARNEY:** Yes, well, I think, you know, by the time he did this --

**NANCY KAUFFMAN:** HE HAD HAD ENOUGH.

**GEORGE LARNEY:** (Continuing) -- which was in 1973-74, he had done so many things. He served in some capacity under six Presidents.

**NANCY KAUFFMAN:** WOW.

**GEORGE LARNEY:** And I think he was happy, you know, maybe having a gig, let's say, for a very temporary period of time and then leaving.

**NANCY KAUFFMAN:** DID THIS TRUMAN LIBRARY INTERVIEW TALK ABOUT ALL SIX PRESIDENTS? DO WE KNOW WHO THE SIX ARE?

**GEORGE LARNEY:** No, but Roosevelt was the first and Truman the second. So, there was Roosevelt, then there was Truman and Eisenhower, then there was Kennedy, then Johnson and Nixon, and then I don't know whether he served the next President, who was Ford. (but Roosevelt through Nixon were the Presidents he had served at the time the National Commission for Industrial Peace was established.

**NANCY KAUFFMAN:** I THINK SO.

**GEORGE LARNEY:** Yes. Well, actually Ford, because Nixon resigned. Interestingly, while we personally presented the final report of the Commission to President Nixon, by the time the hardcover edition of the report was



printed [multiple copies to be given to each of the Commission Members] with the President's name on the cover, because Nixon had by this time resigned and Ford ascended to the office, we had to reprint all the copies of the hardcover edition of the report removing Nixon's name and replacing it with Ford's name.

**NANCY KAUFFMAN:** DID HE EVER TALK ABOUT HIS WORK WITH THE ACADEMY?

**GEORGE LARNEY:** Very little. I'm sure he was very honored to be President of the Academy. But, you know the Academy today is so much bigger and larger than it was when he was one of the founding members of the Academy, so there was this camaraderie among these people. He had a very close relationship with Nate Feinsinger. And, to give you an idea about what kind of guy Cole was, Feinsinger had suffered, some kind of a debilitating illness. And, some parties called Cole up and wanted him to do this something special. I can't remember what it was. But, he knew that Nate was suffering and he knew that Nate's practice was diminishing. And, he said, "I'll tell you what," he said, "I would love to do it, but the guy you really would like to talk to, to do it is Nate Feinsinger." And they actually engaged Nate Feinsinger to do to what they wanted Cole to do. Cole could've done it.

**NANCY KAUFFMAN:** MM-HMM.

**GEORGE LARNEY:** He was in a good position to do it. And he never told Feinsinger that he did this.

**NANCY KAUFFMAN:** THAT'S VERY NICE.

**GEORGE LARNEY:** Yes. It was just --

**NANCY KAUFFMAN:** AGAIN, THE GENTLEMANLY SIDE COMES THROUGH.

**GEORGE LARNEY:** Yes, I mean, you know, just a thoughtful kind of guy. Even with me, for example, I mean he was very interested in what would happen to me after the Commission ended and we would talk about it again. I told him, you know, I had this interest in the White House fellowship thing. No, he said, you don't want to do that, George. He would try to direct me to certain people if I was going to have a career outside of government. At the time I had worked for the Labor Department. And then I switched over to the Commission. So, I really wasn't attached to any Cabinet Department, really. And what could



have happened is when the Commission ended, I would have been out of a job.

But he said, "Maybe you want to go with the Federal Mediation Service, because we need an agency of government to try to do this [that is, to implement the recommendations of the Commission]." And Usery, being an empire builder, according to Cole, wanted the programs, the ongoing programs of the Commission at the time to be transferred over. And, as it turned out, I had been in that part of the Labor Department, the Labor Management Services Administration, where Usery was Assistant Secretary before he became Director of the Federal Mediation Service. So Usery knew me prior to assuming the position at the Commission.

Well, anyway, I had worked in the Labor Department for LMSA and, Usery at the time was Assistant Secretary of Labor. And then he became Director of the Federal Mediation Service during the time that we were doing our Commission work. And he had no problem with me transferring over to the service to try to implement the other recommendations. Then I went to Usery a year later and asked him -- I actually said to him -- if I was going to stay with the agency, I wanted to do the work of the agency. And, he thought that I was a little nutty for suggesting that for a couple reasons. I would have had to give up two GS grade levels. Although in doing that, I didn't give up much salary because with the GS schedule if you go down a grade level, you go across the steps and equalize out your salary. And so, that happened. But, I dropped two grade levels. And he asked me where I wanted to go. And I said, "Well, my family is back in Chicago. And, it seems to be a good place to mediate because it's a heavily unionized town and area. And Usery said, "Well, nobody's ever asked me to go to Chicago." So within six weeks of my request, I was back in Chicago.

**NANCY KAUFFMAN:** ANYTHING ELSE ABOUT DAVID COLE?

**GEORGE LARNEY:** Well, I'm looking at this interview (for the Truman Library) because there were some things that were very striking. Well, here, he says in this interview, he admired Truman. And he said on page 35 of this 39-page document -- he said, "I don't think the Presidency ought ever to be downgraded by anybody including the President." And Truman certainly didn't do that. And, I think that was probably the basis of his dislike for



Nixon because he did downgrade the Presidency. I thought that was interesting about what he had to say there. As an aside, though he had great admiration for Truman, he noted to me that the first couple of times he served Truman, and then met with the President, Truman could not remember who he was.

**NANCY KAUFFMAN:** DID COLE EVER TALK TO YOU ABOUT ARBITRATION IN GENERAL?

**GEORGE LARNEY:** Oh yes, we talked a lot about arbitration. I mean, we would talk about the process and how it worked. And, he thought it was a great way of resolving disputes.

**NANCY KAUFFMAN:** DID HE TALK TO YOU ABOUT HOW HE HAPPENED TO GET INVOLVED IN SETTING UP THE NATIONAL ACADEMY?

**GEORGE LARNEY:** Well, I think from what I know, from our discussions, it was kind of a happenstance thing. These guys all came out of the War Labor Board. They had formed friendships with each other. They probably, informally, got together at some point and decided that if there was going to be a profession of arbitration, which there really wasn't, ---

**NANCY KAUFFMAN:** RIGHT. I MEAN IT SEEMS TO ME THE ACADEMY MAKES A VERY BIG DIFFERENCE IN MAKING IT INTO A PROFESSION.

**GEORGE LARNEY:** Yes, yes. That there ought to be some kind of professional organization that had arbitrators in it and that they could advance the profession of arbitration. And, I really think that's probably the impetus of what happened. And so as far as I know, there was a gathering of a dozen or less people that got together. I believe Pearce Davis was one of them. I taught at Illinois Institute of Technology under the Departmental Chairmanship of Pearce Davis. I went to graduate school at Northwestern under Carroll R. Dougherty; so, Carroll Dougherty, Pearce Davis, Cole and some of the others got together, I think, on an informal basis and started talking about starting a professional organization. I think that's how it came about.

**NANCY KAUFFMAN:** THERE IS A BOOK THAT DENNIS NOLAN, GLADYS GRUENBERG, AND JOYCE NAJITA CALLED "FIFTY YEARS IN THE WORLD OF WORK" IN WHICH THEY DESCRIBE THE HISTORY OF THE ACADEMY INCLUDING HOW IT GOT STARTED. VERY GOOD, VERY GOOD READING.



**GEORGE LARNEY:** Actually, I did my dissertation under Pearce Davis while I was a full-time faculty member at IIT. And, Pearce Davis and Carroll Dougherty both taught at Hunter College in New York. So, when I was in graduate school at Northwestern under Carroll Dougherty, Dougherty actually gave me a recommendation to teach at Illinois Institute of Technology where Pearce Davis was chairman of the Economics Department. And, I went over and had an interview and they hired me. It was at a time when the Vietnam War was going on, and teaching at the college level represented a deferral from being drafted.

And in the interview Pearce asked me what were my views on getting a PhD, and I said I had never thought about it. And he said, "Well, if we hire you, we want you in a PhD program." And I said, "Well, I have to find out if I can teach. If I can't teach or I don't like it, there's no reason for me to get a PhD." Actually, I think it was a shortsighted, you know, way of looking at things. But, as it turned out, I said, "Give me a year," to make a decision. IIT was on the two-semester system. And after the first semester was over, Pearce came to me and said, "We would like you in a PhD program now, if you're going to continue." And I said, "If you pay for my PhD, and I can take it here I'll do it." And so, as a result, I have a Ph.D in Labor Economics and Collective Bargaining from IIT.

But, why I tell you this is that when I had become aware that the President was going to form this National Commission for Industrial Peace, I was working in the Labor Department and didn't really like what I was doing there. When Cole was apprised of my interest in a position at the Commission, he wrote Pearce a letter inquiring as to his view of me, and Pearce gave me a glowing recommendation in a letter he sent to Cole.

**NANCY KAUFFMAN:** OH, THAT'S HOW YOU GOT TO FMCS?

**GEORGE LARNEY:** Yes, and so there were other connections with David Cole as well. These connections all made it known to Cole that I might be interested in a position at the Commission. And then we arranged to meet with each other in Washington D.C.

**NANCY KAUFFMAN:** ALL RIGHT. ANY FINAL WORDS ON DAVID COLE?



**GEORGE LARNEY:** No, like anybody else that's instrumental in your career, I have the greatest, fondest feelings for Cole. And, it's too bad that there aren't many people around today that are like him.

I miss having a connection with somebody like David Cole. I mean, regardless whether he could do something for you or not, he was just a wonderful human being.

**NANCY KAUFFMAN:** I THINK THAT'S A WONDERFUL NOTE WHICH TO END.

**GEORGE LARNEY:** There's, there's just one more thing. He had great admiration for his roommate at Harvard Law School. And, I can't remember what his name was, but Cole actually named his son after his roommate. It's an odd name. I never met the son, but Cole thought enough of his college roommate to name his son after him.

**NANCY KAUFFMAN:** SO, HE WAS LOYAL TO PEOPLE ALL THE WAY THROUGH?

**GEORGE LARNEY:** Oh, yes.

**NANCY KAUFFMAN:** I THINK THAT'S ONE OF THE THREADS THOUGH YOUR COMMENTS. THAT HE WAS NOT ONLY A GENTLEMAN AND ETHICAL BUT HE WAS LOYAL TO PEOPLE AND CONTINUED TO HELP THEM TO NETWORK, AS WE SAY THESE DAYS, WITH ALL THE PEOPLE THEY NEED TO KNOW.

**GEORGE LARNEY:** No question.

**NANCY KAUFFMAN:** AND CARED ENOUGH TO MAKE SURE THAT EVERYONE COULD SURVIVE WITH DIGNITY.

**GEORGE LARNEY:** Mm-hmm. Yes.

**NANCY KAUFFMAN:** VERY GOOD.

**GEORGE LARNEY:** No question.

**NANCY KAUFFMAN:** WELL, THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO DO THIS. I REALLY APPRECIATE IT. THE HISTORY COMMITTEE REALLY APPRECIATES IT.

**GEORGE LARNEY:** Okay. Well, I wouldn't do it if I didn't feel it was quite an honor.

**NANCY KAUFFMAN:** I THINK THAT'S TRUE. THANK YOU.