

impartial chairman for Boeing and the Machinists Union. From 1945 to 1967 he held various positions in the University of California's structure: Director of the Institute of Industrial Relations from 1945 to 1952, Chancellor of UC Berkeley from 1952 to 1958, and President of the University of California from 1958 to 1967. From 1967 to 1973, he directed the famous Carnegie Commission on Higher Education Study, followed by the Carnegie Council Policy Studies on higher education from 1974 to 1979. He has been on the front cover of *Time*, *Business Week*, and other publications for his work in the field of higher education.

Despite his extensive involvement in academic administration and research about the development of higher education, he maintained a presence in the labor relations field, serving on various presidential committees in this field or on public review boards for the Auto Workers and Upholsters unions. He was impartial chairman of the Pacific Coast Waterfront Longshoremen and Waterfront Employers' Association. He was the permanent arbitrator for Armour Meat Packing and the meat packing unions. He served as the interest arbitrator for the Postal Workers in 1984.

II. FIRESIDE CHAT

CLARK KERR**

James L. Stern: Clark, why don't you tell us what led you to get active in the labor-management relations field.

Clark Kerr: Well, the answer to that is that nothing led me to it. I was kind of pushed into the field of industrial relations. It happened this way. I had been, as you mentioned, a student at Stanford University in labor economics. My great interest was in what was happening to the unemployed at that time. You may remember that by 1932, one-quarter of the American labor force was totally unemployed and another one-quarter was partially unemployed.

I was terribly interested in how these people were making out, particularly studying the self-help cooperatives of the unemployed. At Stanford, the economics faculty was the old, classical type, which thought there was nothing you can do to help unemployment

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except to forget about it and let it go, because it will overcome itself. If you just let it go, unemployment disappears. In 1932, when I went to Stanford, unemployment had been going on for three years and didn't look like it was disappearing. So, I found that there was a professor at Berkeley who was interested in the unemployed and what was happening to them as individuals. He offered me a research assistantship at \$400 a year to transfer to Berkeley, and I could keep studying the unemployed. The professor, Paul Taylor, was an expert in agricultural labor.

I had just barely arrived there and plunked down about a quarter of my \$400 on a place to live at Berkeley for the year, when Taylor called me into his office and said, "I'm sending you to the San Joaquin Valley."

I was thinking, "What is there of interest in unemployment in the San Joaquin Valley?" But there had broken out at that time what turned out to be the longest and bloodiest strike of agricultural workers in American history—the cotton pickers' strike of 1933. All of the sudden, I was taken from my study of the unemployed to the industrial relations field by my professor's assignment.

I might say that that was an extremely interesting experience and one from which I learned one thing that I subsequently relearned many more times in the industrial relations field. That is, there is almost no such thing as a conflict between just management and labor. As a general rule, when you have a conflict between management and labor, you also have another conflict within labor and another within management.

I found myself in a situation where I became an investigator for not only Paul Taylor, but also for President Roosevelt¹ and Governor James Rolph.² They had appointed a fact-finding board, headed by Archbishop Hanna³ of San Francisco, to try to settle the dispute. I was used as their way of finding out what was really going on.

On the union side, the big battle was between the Communists, who ran a union made up of Mexicans, and the Okies and Arkies of *The Grapes of Wrath*,⁴ whose natural leaders were the ministers of the various fundamentalist churches that were so popular in those

¹Franklin Delano Roosevelt (Democrat), President of the United States, 1933–1945.

²James Rolph, Jr. (Republican), Governor of California, 1931–1934.

³Edward J. Hanna, Archbishop of San Francisco, 1915–1935.

⁴John Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939).

days. On the employers' side, the conflict was between the small farmers, who had 40 acres or so and who actually worked in the fields with the casual laborers, and the huge, commercial farmers, with their offices on Montgomery Street here in San Francisco, or working out of their homes on the waterfront in Santa Barbara. It was extremely fascinating because of this combination of two conflicts going on in addition to the usual one.

So, anyway, I got dragooned into the field of industrial relations rather than studying unemployment, which was my basic interest. That's the way I started.

James L. Stern: Well, then World War II came along—but you had your degree by then, right?

Clark Kerr: That's right.

James L. Stern: So what did you do then?

Clark Kerr: When the war came along, I was at the University of Washington and already had a little experience in the industrial relations field. Again by assignment and not by choice, one day the president of the university called me up and he said, "I'm appointing you as arbitrator in a dispute."

It happened that there was a dispute in a coal mine. In the state of Washington there were some little coal mines in the foothills of Mount Rainier. They had asked the university president to get them an arbitrator. Going through the catalog, he had been looking for somebody who was in the field of labor law, but instead of a labor law person, he found that he had a labor economist. So he called me up and said, "I have appointed you to be the arbitrator in this dispute."

I said, "Well, what am I supposed to do?"

He said, "I have no idea in the world, but that's your job to find out and not mine."

After all, he was the president, and so I said, "Okay, I'll do it."

And then he said, "Well, there's one other thing I should tell you. I promised to have you down in Renton (where the hearing was going to be held, at the south end of Lake Washington) by two o'clock this afternoon. You'd better get going."

I picked up my papers and went to Renton. So I got into the labor relations field really before the war began. Fortunately in that particular case, it was a tripartite board. We came up with a unanimous decision, giving me the reputation of being a neutral and not partial to one side or the other.

Then the people at Boeing and the union heard about it. Boeing Aircraft, which was beginning to build up in preparation for World

War II, asked me to be their impartial chairman. So that's how I got involved in it. That led to the War Labor Board.

James L. Stern: And you enjoyed all that?

Clark Kerr: Well, I found it extremely interesting. I guess I've missed not having it to do again. But I might say that there was some tough going. The Boeing situation was one of those situations where there was more trouble *within* each party than there was *between* the two parties. Boeing didn't really care very much about costs. Most of the disputes were over the rates of pay for all of the different occupations in the aircraft industry. You've got everything in the world there. They had a cost-plus contract, so any time the wage went up, they made a little bit more profit.

But on the union's side, there was a terrible battle as the war approached. The U.S. government decided that it didn't like the idea of the Machinists Union in Seattle being under very left-wing leadership as we faced the war situation. It didn't make that much difference later on because, after the Hitler/Stalin pact was agreed upon, the far-left unions were as strong against strikes as were the Seattle Teamsters under Dave Beck.⁵

But at that time, the national Machinists Union had put in two people from Washington, D.C., to run the Boeing union. Because they were not allowed to strike, the left-wing shop stewards filed many grievances. The union didn't care that much whether they were won or lost. The company did not care whether they were won or lost. It was a very strange situation. This emphasizes the point I made earlier that conflicts between two parties often tend to be conflicts among four or more parties, at least—two on each side as well as the one between the major parties.

James L. Stern: Was this very different from the Longshoremen's cause you were involved with right after this?

Clark Kerr: Well, after World War II, I ended up being the impartial chairman on the West Coast waterfront. Although the war was over, the Cold War had begun and the far-left unions were no longer following a no-strike pledge. They were as active as they possibly could be. I got into a situation where the parties had long given up trying to settle anything on their own. In fact, they couldn't agree upon Wayne Morse's⁶ successor, which I was. I was

⁵David Beck, President, Seattle Joint Teamsters Council, 1933–1952; President, International Brotherhood of Teamsters, 1952–1957.

⁶Senator Wayne Morse, Republican and Democratic Senator from Oregon, 1945–1969; former Dean and Professor of Law, University of Oregon Law School, 1929–1944.

appointed by the Secretary of Labor in Washington, D.C., because the parties couldn't even decide who the arbitrator would be. It was a very difficult situation, where they made no effort at solving their own problems.

In one of the cases I headed up early on, the contract had a reopening on all money matters in the middle of it. They called me to San Francisco, and they just said, "Contract reopening."

I asked what this was all about. They said that their contract was open, and they had it placed before me to decide what would happen next. I said that this was rather unusual; that I might be somewhat old-fashioned, but it seemed to me that negotiation on the matters of changing a contract ought to precede arbitration. I said that I wasn't going to arbitrate this dispute until they negotiated.

I got up to leave, and they said, "Sit down. This won't take long."

I sat down. Frank Foisie for the Waterfront Employers' Association sat across the table from Harry Bridges⁷ and said, "Mr. Bridges, we do not know what you're going to demand, but by God, the answer is 'no.'"

Then Harry Bridges pushed aside the cream bottles that he had to take for his ulcers, smiled rather sweetly at Mr. Foisie, and said, "Mr. Foisie, to tell the truth, we haven't made up our minds yet what we are going to demand, but by God, we'll never take no for an answer."

They then said, "Mr. Impartial Chairman, there is your case. Sit down."

So that was a really, really tough one to handle, where the parties had completely given up trying to handle their own problems and turned their disputes over to their impartial chairman.

James L. Stern: After the war, you started the Industrial Relations Institute at the University of California. What was that all about?

Clark Kerr: At the end of World War II, lots of these institutes were established all over the country. Two were established at the University of California—one at UCLA and one at Berkeley—under the initiative of Governor Earl Warren.⁸ Governor Warren was an old-type Republican of a very moderate orientation, very

⁷Harry Bridges, founder, International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's International Union, 1933.

⁸Earl Warren (Republican), Governor of California, 1942–1953; Chief Justice, U.S. Supreme Court, 1953–1969.

much like Hiram Johnson⁹ had been in the old progressive movement. Governor Dewey¹⁰ had also established an industrial relations institute at Cornell University.

Warren had strong support from the trade union movement. He had been nominated both by the Republican and the Democratic parties for governor of California. He worked very closely with the unions. Warren wanted us to show that the University of California had some interest in the trade union movement.

When I became the first director, I went through a little bit of history to find out whether the University of California ever had any contact with the trade union movement at all. I could find only one person in the university extension who had once given a course for trade union leaders. That person had then given it up as too difficult to handle when the American Federation of Labor split,¹¹ and he found himself in a controversial situation.

We came in as the very first effort of this big university to make contact with the trade unions. It was Earl Warren's way of saying that the unions were recognized as an important part of California society. There were other things we did, but that was the main purpose that Warren had in mind.

James L. Stern: A word about globalization. You started out interested in domestic industrial relations, and then you got that Ford grant that led to the international project. I think people would be interested in that.

Clark Kerr: At the end of World War II, the United States began taking on more responsibility for worldwide developments. The federal government began establishing area study groups. The Ford Foundation did, too. And a group of four of us, including John Dunlop¹² from Harvard and myself, concluded that the study of labor relations in the United States had been very ethnocentric. We had been looking at the American situation and not looking at what was going on around the world.

⁹Hiram W. Johnson (Republican), Governor of California, 1911–1917; Republican Senator from California, 1917–1945.

¹⁰Thomas Dewey (Republican), Governor of New York, 1943–1955; unsuccessful Republican presidential candidate, 1944 and 1948.

¹¹At the 1935 convention of the American Federation of Labor, the representatives of eight international unions announced the formation of the Committee for Industrial Organization.

¹²Honorary Life Member, National Academy of Arbitrators, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

We met with the Ford Foundation. The Foundation was then developing all these American studies of worldwide developments. We said that we'd like to study the development of industrial relations around the world. We carried on numerous studies. We thought we saw a tendency for convergence going on around the world in the direction of what was best practice. There was the fact that there were so many more educated people and so much more communication in the forms of newspapers and radio. Around the world, people knew what was working better and what was working worse.

It looked to us that what was working best in economics was welfare capitalism and what was working best in politics was democracy. We came up with a saying that we thought that the convergence going on around the world was away from monolithic control of politics as well as monopolistic control of economy. The direction of movement was what we called "industrial pluralism," which became our theme. We became something of a battlefield with people further to the left of the political spectrum than we were. We were looked upon as apologists for the American system. We weren't looking at just the American system; we were looking at worldwide developments. I might say that pretty much what we said has turned out to be true. Even more so around most of the world than around the United States, with the decline of the trade union movement here. That study was a source of a certain amount of dispute.

James L. Stern: You made the transition from the industrial relations field to university administrator, but you weren't the only one. There were others who we all know about who you might mention. And you might try to explain to us—what is there about our field that makes you guys good university administrators?

Clark Kerr: I can answer another question better, and that is—what made other people think we'd be good university administrators?! Several of us did get involved. John Dunlop became dean of the faculty at Harvard. Robben Fleming¹³ was president of the University of Michigan. I think what made us attractive to other people was that we'd been in controversial situations and could

¹³Honorary Life Member and former President, National Academy of Arbitrators, 1966, Ann Arbor, Michigan; Director, Illinois Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations, 1952–1958; Professor, University of Illinois, 1957–1964; Chancellor, University of Wisconsin, 1964–1967; President, University of Michigan, 1968–1979.

probably handle them better. I'm not sure, incidentally, that they were right about it. There was an advantage at that time in our experience with controversy. We didn't panic when a controversy came along, or get extremely rigid and so forth. We would try to work things out, and we took conflict to be kind of a natural way of life.

On the other hand, I think the tendency of all of us was to go back to mediation. Our approaches were generally that of the mediator. One thing that all of us discovered was that the industrial relations field is a very favorable field for mediation, because you are dealing with parties who both have pain. The greater the pain, the more likely they are going to welcome you and follow what you say to do. But we found ourselves in a situation where one party—the students—really felt no pain. The students enjoyed what they were doing; they were dealing with authority and putting authority down. They were making the headlines of the newspapers and the radio. They were the great heroes of the day, no longer the great athletes, but the great dissidents. They were enjoying very much what was going on and they would have wanted some places to keep it going forever if they could.

You couldn't really mediate with them very well at all, so I was accused at the University of California of having approached the situation as a mediator in a situation where there turned out to be no pain. Now you might say that there's the pain that they might be arrested. But to be arrested in those days was like getting a Boy Scout's badge of honor. That was no penalty at all.

The only place where they really established any pain was the University of Chicago under Ed Levi.¹⁴ The faculty there was conservative. Milton Friedman¹⁵ was one of the leaders, Ted Schultz¹⁶ another, and, to a lesser extent, George Shultz.¹⁷ They were willing to penalize students. In fact, something like 80 students at the University of Chicago were either dismissed or suspended for substantial periods of time. When the faculty showed that it would put them in some real pain, graduate students, in particular, were

¹⁴Edward H. Levi, U.S. Attorney General, 1975–1977; Dean, University of Chicago Law School, 1950–1962; President, University of Chicago, 1967–1975.

¹⁵Winner, Nobel Prize in Economics, 1976.

¹⁶Theodore W. Schultz, co-winner, Nobel Prize in Economics, 1980.

¹⁷George P. Shultz, U.S. Secretary of Labor, 1969–1970; U.S. Secretary of Treasury, 1972–1974; U.S. Secretary of State, 1982–1989; Honorary Life Member, National Academy of Arbitrators, Stanford, California.

concerned with keeping their careers going, undergraduates less so. There was pain put into it. Chicago had no more trouble at all.

But in most places the faculty committees in charge of discipline were very friendly toward the dissident students and generally let them off. I don't think enough of us paid enough attention to the fact that the industrial relations situation was really built for the kind of thing we'd been doing, which was mediating and both sides trying to escape pain. It comes to be quite a different situation when one side isn't enduring any pain, but only enjoyment. So that's why I answered the question of why *other people* thought we might be the proper people to handle it, because we knew something about accepting controversy. But we tended to go too quickly toward mediation when we were not mediators but rather participants, and in a situation where one party wasn't feeling any pain.

You know that those of us in industrial relations think that we've settled every dispute in which we've ever been. We almost never had anything that we couldn't settle. Then we found ourselves in a different situation where there wasn't this pain, this pressure on both of the parties. What we had taken credit for as showing how great we were was rather the impact of pain on both parties. The industrial relations field is very, very fortunately situated for the development of arbitration, as compared with the campus.

James L. Stern: There are a few stories from that era that have come up. I want to know if some of them are true or apocryphal. I understand that you were going through one demonstration where there was a kid with a big sign up that said "F-U-C-K." You stopped him. You looked at him and said, "What's that for?" And he says, "Uh, Freedom Under Clark Kerr."

Was that correct?

Clark Kerr: Well, the answer I got back was not "Freedom Under Clark Kerr," but "Fun Under Clark Kerr!"

James L. Stern: What was the other one that Dave Feller's¹⁸ wife was interested in?

Clark Kerr: I was asked whether it was true that I had said that the three great problems in academic life were athletics for the alumni, sex for the students, and parking for the faculty. Yes, regretfully it is true.

¹⁸Former President, National Academy of Arbitrators, 1992–1993, Berkeley, California.

But the situation was that this was kind of a smart-alecky statement that I made. I was the new and very young chancellor at Berkeley in a field of no scholarly importance. At every faculty meeting, they'd ask me, "What are you going to do about parking?"

One time I just got really exasperated about being asked about that again and not being able to do anything. We had just gone through this terrible breakup within the Pacific Coast Athletic Conference over the alumni on a number of our campuses illegally giving support to athletics. We'd also gone through a panty raid at Berkeley. Then here they were again, asking about parking.

So I made the statement about the three academic problems. Then I added, quite unwisely with this aging faculty sitting in front of me, "Not only are these the great academic problems on the Berkeley campus, they are also a commentary on the average age and consequent interest of the three groups involved." I have not lived this down. This got picked up by *Time* magazine and then by another magazine about which I had never heard until then—a magazine called *Playboy*.

I got home from a regents' meeting in Southern California, and on my desk were the usual series of folders and a note from my secretary: "Be sure to see the first one right away."

I opened up the first folder. It was a letter from the editor of *Playboy* magazine saying, "We've run across this quote of yours and we think it indicates so much of your understanding of human life that we are featuring it on the second page of our current issue." Then there was a P.S. on the letter stating, "We were so impressed with this quotation that in our next monthly issue we are going to declare you Playboy of the Month."

My heart jumped into my throat, because I could see this two-page foldout of me as Playboy of the Month. What was it going to be like! Then there was a P.P.S., "We consider this to be such a great honor, naming you Playboy of the Month, that we've sent a copy of this letter to every member of your Board of Regents."

I began to guess that something might be wrong and I took a good look at the typing of the letter, and the typing for the P.S. and the P.P.S. were quite different. I decided that my secretary had indulged in her sense of humor. It didn't correspond with mine at that particular moment!

James L. Stern: All the while you are doing all of these things on the California campus, you had enough time, however, to be chair of the Armour Automation Committee from beginning to end. How long did that last?

Clark Kerr: My connection with the meat packing industry went from 1944 to about 1974 in one way or another. In 1944, of course, meat was terribly important to the war effort, and in 1944 there was a meat packing strike and President Roosevelt appointed a committee under Ed Witte¹⁹ of the University of Wisconsin. I was made a member of that Meat Packing Commission to settle that particular strike.

It turned out to be a lot easier than what you might expect, because at the time the strike came along it was in the midst of winter and all of the sudden a terrible storm blew in over Lake Michigan. The temperature went down to something like 30 below zero, and there was a blizzard. Meat packing workers were very low paid and lived from hand to mouth. They weren't able to buy heating oil and it was a terrible situation for them. We were very successful in getting that strike over with in a hurry, but it was really because of the weather.

After that I was asked to become the arbitrator for Armour & Company and several unions that it dealt with. That led later to the setting up of the Automation Committee for the meat packing industry. The meat packing industry was going through a lot of changes about that time. People talk about the automobile industry being the first to have an assembly line. Actually, the first assembly line in American history was in the meat packing industry—except instead of getting bigger and bigger, things got smaller and smaller as they went through the process.

There were absolutely no job descriptions whatsoever. Jobs were just by their name, for example, "slit throats" or "slice bacon." Thus, the jobs were cut down to such small skills that it became rather easy to put in automation for them. So one of the companies, Armour, decided that because of its closing down its plants and reducing employment within the ones that stayed open, they would have a program, which was quite an experimental one at the time, of giving workers as long an advance notice as possible so that they could start looking for other jobs. Then, if they were still around and became unemployed when the plant closed or when its employment was reduced, they would get a chance to go to some other plant and bump workers there, or a chance to go to some other location around the country to take training to learn another

¹⁹Edwin Witte, recognized as the "Father of Social Security"; Professor of Economics, University of Wisconsin, 1933–1957.

occupation. It was a very forward-looking policy with which I was involved for quite a while. George Shultz became involved later on, as you did.

By the time I had 30 years involved in the meat packing industry, Armour & Company was sold to Greyhound. Greyhound had very bad labor relations. The attorney for Armour & Company had been Fred Livingston, who was a very remarkable guy and who, from the management side, was a person who wanted to take care of the workers. This tied in with Armour & Company's paternalistic attitude toward its workers. But when Greyhound took over, it closed about six plants all at once. Then it, as had been its practice before, said, "We're giving you this notice, and your rights are as follows to bump other people and so forth and so on around the country."

However, when the company then began to add up how much this was going to cost, it said, "It's costing too much. We want to change it." Greyhound called a meeting of the Automation Committee and put before us their plans for cutting back the benefits due to these people under the existing contract. I said, "I refuse to accept the case." This was not an arbitration under the contract, but an effort to change the contract when all of the employees had already been told what their rights were going to be. This was a very bad practice and I refused to hear the case. The management people picked up their papers, looked at me in total disgust, and walked out. That was the end of my participation in the meat packing industry.

James L. Stern: Let's turn again to another industry. We have people from the Postal Service here, and you were involved in the Postal Service settlement in 1984. What do you want to tell us about that one?

Clark Kerr: That was a really interesting one. The parties had been bargaining for nine months. At that time they had had mediation, they had had fact-finding, they had had all kinds of things. It got to be a couple of weeks before Christmas, and the union had announced a strike for Christmastime.

They had been bargaining for nine months, and they were still \$14 billion apart. They finally decided that they would try arbitration. I was told that they got a list of 2,000 arbitrators. They ended up with only two names acceptable to both sides: One was Bob Fleming and the other was my name. Bob couldn't get away for two weeks at that particular time and I could. So I became in charge of it.

We had hearings and a lot of testimony. Three days before Christmas, we had made no progress at all. I had a sense that the unions were really worried about striking, because of President Reagan's²⁰ having gone through the air traffic controllers' episode. I got the sense that they were really kind of fearful. Suppose they did close down the Postal Service of the United States and make everybody in America upset? What might President Reagan do that would be the equivalent to what he had done to the air traffic controllers? I got a sense that Postal Service people were worried, too, because at that time, you may remember, there was all this talk then about how terrible the Postal Service was, how their prices were going up and the mail wasn't getting delivered or was misdelivered.

I had a feeling that something had to be done to get them to really negotiate. So with three days to go, I had a special meeting. The night before, I had stayed up almost all night writing two opinions: one opinion saying that I thought the Postal Service was being too recalcitrant and responsible for the deadlock, and another opinion saying that I thought the unions were being too intransigent.

I sat them down and went through both opinions. One party was smiling some of the time and the other party was smiling the other part of the time. Then I said to them that we were facing what would be a national tragedy if a strike happened. I thought that it would be a tragedy for both parties.

I told them that I'd be back at nine o'clock the next morning and that I hoped that both of them would be there willing to really try to settle the dispute. However, if only one party came, then I would sit down with that party and we would then write out a new contract and the other one would be left out of it completely. So that was kind of a tough night for me, and I guess for both of them.

The next morning, I showed at nine o'clock and the unions were there and said that they were ready to go to work, but the Postal Service was not there. I said, "We'll wait one-half hour."

We waited one-half hour and nobody showed up. I said, "Five more minutes."

As I got up to leave, the door opened and there were the representatives from the Postal Service, saying that they were ready

²⁰Ronald Wilson Reagan (Republican), President of the United States, 1981–1989.

to work it out. Within a couple of hours, we narrowed the \$14 billion difference between what was demanded and what was offered to zero and came out with a unanimous decision.

I might say that it was one of those situations where you have a possible strike coming, which I felt neither side wanted, and something drastic had to be done to break them out of it. That was the only thing I could think of. But let me say that I got this idea of what you can do with opinions from Wayne Morse, when he was impartial chairman on the West Coast waterfront. Under Wayne Morse, all opinions of the impartial chairman became part of the contract. So I had to get to know all of his contracts and I found out what he was doing was that he had both a decision to make and also an opinion to make. In that situation, which was real class warfare, people cared somewhat more about the opinion than about the issue. What Wayne Morse seemed to be doing was, as I interpreted it, giving the decision to one side and the opinion to the other. He also, I think, figured out that the employers, in this ideological battle, were more ideological than the union and that he could get away with giving the opinions to the employers, blasting the union, and the decisions to the union. Both sides were happy.

Anyway, I picked up from this Wayne Morse idea and thought, "Well, here is a chance to see what might be done with the weapon of an opinion that jogs the parties into really going to work." I might say that out of that I got a good impression of the people. I really had a terrific board. Ted Kheel²¹ and Peter Nash,²² who had been head of the National Labor Relations Board, were really experienced people. They became more public members working with me to get a settlement than they were representatives of their parties.

I also developed a very good impression of the American Postal Service, on both the workers' side and management's side. I found out that we have one of the lowest postal service rates in the world. Even at that time it was lower than in small countries like Belgium and Switzerland. Also, the percentage of mail that went wrong was almost close to 0 percent. It was a very fantastic performance that the Postal Service does for the United States in the way of real service.

²¹Theodore W. Kheel, Executive Director, National War Labor Board, 1944–1945; attorney; arbitrator; mediator; and author.

²²Peter G. Nash, General Counsel, National Labor Relations Board, 1971–1975; attorney; and author.

James L. Stern: I've got one more question. I want to ask about a different segment of your life. Probably the most significant work that you did in terms of national appraisal is what you did for higher education when you were with the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education. People know this generally, but they really don't know what the essence of it was. In a few minutes, can you tell us about the Carnegie study?

Clark Kerr: I think the biggest thing we did was get the Carnegie Commission into terrible trouble. The Carnegie Foundation appointed us. All sorts of colleges were going to Congress and asking that money be given to them in lump sums to spend as the presidents of their institutions saw fit. The Carnegie Commission, after a lot of discussion, came to the conclusion that this was very unwise.²³ If the government gives money to 3,000 to 3,500 institutions, it would have a lot of strings on them, a lot of controls on them. The institutions would not have the autonomy they might wish they would have. But suppose the economy turns bad, as it did a few years later, and the government starts looking for places to cut money. How influential would 3,500 college and university presidents be in keeping that money for purposes of higher education? Won't it just be taken back? We were also worried about the question of church and state. Would the federal government be able to give money to Catholic institutions, for example?

We came up with a completely separate idea and that was to give the money to the students and let the students choose the institutions, whatever they want. It could be Catholic or Protestant, public or private. The institutions then had to compete to get the students. It would be very, very hard for the government to control students once they got the money, their money. Every association of universities and colleges in the whole United States condemned us. Alan Pifer, the head of the Carnegie Foundation financing this, told me that he got backed up in a corner by the head of one of the largest American universities. He thought that he was going to be physically assaulted for having supported the Carnegie Commission.

We then established this principle that has been followed now by all the states and the federal government—give the money to the students. Now also let me say that our concern then was to spread equality of opportunity around the country, and we were con-

²³The report was published in 1971 as *New Students and New Places*.

cerned that left to the devices of the presidents, if they had the money in their hands, they would probably take care of faculty salaries and their own salaries and other things like that first and not do very much to expand opportunities for other students to come. We were then concerned about bringing in the minority groups.

Out of that big battle, we did a couple of things. First, we established a principle of giving money from the federal government directly to students rather than to institutions, thus reducing the chance of control as I explained. But also the other thing we did was to establish ourselves as an independent group speaking *about* higher education but not *for* higher education. We reported a whole lot of other things. We had this reputation that we were talking about what was the best thing to do for higher education for the sake of the nation and not just self-interested proposals. In those days, I was going all over the country, and Jimmy Carter,²⁴ who was then chairman of the Southern Governor's Council, said, "The only group in the whole United States that we can trust on higher education is the Carnegie Commission. They are willing to recommend what is best for the nation and not necessarily what is best for organized higher education."

We had a reputation for speaking in the national interest and in the interest of the American people in what higher education did, rather than just going along with what the top leaders at the moment happened to say. I might say on that one, speaking as a university professor now, James Conant²⁵ had been making a study of the American high school for ten years for Carnegie. I went to see him to get his advice as to how he conducted such an effective commission. He said, "Well, the most important thing is to pick targets of people who, if you make a recommendation and they like it, can actually put it into effect." Then he said, "Do not, under any circumstances, make any recommendations that, to become effective, require the majority vote of an academic faculty." And he said, "Beyond that, do not make any recommendation to a school of education whether there takes a majority vote of the faculty or not." It's sort of a commentary on the nature of our academic profession.

²⁴James Earl Carter (Democrat), President of the United States, 1977–1981.

²⁵James Bryant Conant, President, Harvard University, 1933–1953; U.S. High Commissioner for Germany, 1953–1955; Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany, 1955–1957; scientist; and author.

James L. Stern: Let's see whether there's any last question or two that this group of arbitrators wants to ask.

Jack Stieber: You were chairman of the Wage Stabilization Board during the Korean War for a time. I wonder if you might say something about that, and then, I'm not sure about this, but I believe you also served on President Kennedy's²⁶ Labor Management Advisory Committee. Perhaps you might talk a little about both of those things.

Clark Kerr: Well, Jack, on the first, I was not chairman of the Wage Stabilization Board during the Korean War. Cyrus Ching was the chairman. John Dunlop and I were the two members of the Board. The Wage Stabilization Commission really accomplished nothing that I think was of value. The Korean War was not considered to be a great national issue that World War II had been. So the efforts that we undertook to get support on wage stabilization were really worthless.

Now, President Kennedy's Labor Management Committee, which he established when he came in as president and which Lyndon Johnson²⁷ continued, was a very interesting group. There were top leaders from industry and top leaders from the trade unions and then two or three of us who were on the public side.

The thing that I might say impressed me the most about it had nothing to do with national policy, but personal relations. Henry Ford II²⁸ was one of the industry members. Henry would come to these meetings having been briefed by a man by the name of Yntema.²⁹ Yntema was an economist. Henry would then have a rigid position. Frequently his position was different from that of the other industry leaders, like, say, Tom Watson³⁰ from IBM. The industry people would try to persuade him to do something, and he would just sit there shaking his head. Then Walter Reuther³¹ would speak up and say, "Now, Henry, I wonder. Have you thought of this, or thought of that?"

²⁶John Fitzgerald Kennedy (Democrat), President of the United States, 1961–1963.

²⁷Lyndon Baines Johnson (Democrat), President of the United States, 1963–1969.

²⁸Henry Ford II, President, Ford Motor Company, 1945–1960; Chief Executive Officer, Ford Motor Company, 1960–1979; Chairman, Ford Motor Company, 1960–1980.

²⁹Dwight B. Yntema, statistician and economist, U.S. Government, 1936–1946; Professor of Economics, Chair, Department of Economics and Business Administration, Hope College, 1946–1967.

³⁰Thomas J. Watson, President, International Business Machines Corp. (IBM), 1915–1956 (IBM was known as the Computing-Tabulating-Recording Co. (CTR) until CTR changed its name in 1924).

³¹Walter Reuther, President of the United Auto Workers, 1946–1970.

Henry would start nodding his head and would then come around and agree with Walter Reuther. They were looked upon as great enemies in public life, and in a way he would not agree with Tom Watson and the other leaders of the industry side, he would agree with Walter. It is very interesting to me about how that personal relationship developed. As a consequence, Walter Reuther became the man to talk with and to have talk for industry and for labor in persuading Henry Ford, who was a terribly important member of our group.

I think that group gave Kennedy some good advice as to how public opinion, or at least the opinion of top labor and industry leaders, might go about whatever he was trying to do. He brought up lots of different issues before us that had nothing to do with labor management directly. But to me, the most interesting thing was the personal relationship back and forth between these two people.

James L. Stern: Well, we've talked pretty hard for about an hour. Thank you very much.

APPENDIX A

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