

### SS357.mp3

Unknown man: I'd like to comment. In constantly listening to you review these operational situations, you had an operational deficiency, not by virtue of any shortcoming of these men, you had an operational deficiency by virtue of a whole lot of dynamics and factors over which these men have no control. The thing is compounded by the situation that we both agree that the wage scale is inadequate. And, in effect, what you're saying, whatever your desires may be, the net effect of what you're saying is, in spite of your desires as a matter of fact, is that these employees are being asked to altruistically subsidize the shortcomings in the economics of the city. These employees are being asked to give up in terms of aiding other employees, and were willing to do it, but what we're saying to you is it's unreasonable to expect us to subsidize the operations of this city. We are saying it's unreasonable because for the very simple reason as tired, and as worn as the cliché is, nevertheless it remains true, when we purchase goods, when we purchase houses, groceries, automobiles, fuel, or what have you, we have to pay the same prices for goods as those who are earning a fair wage. We can't say we work for the city of Memphis, or the city of Memphis has an impossible tax situation, or the city of Memphis you know has this. You know, I was listening earlier and the rabbi was (muffled) you know, kind of like I know something about what I'm saying, and he was being very flattering, and you were kind enough to say something along those same lines. And then as I listened to you speak I was reminded of a situation. If I could take a little moment away from the (muffled) that you reconsider your position, reconsider how you can apply money, reconsider how you can manage money, reconsider how you can budget money, and sir I want to say this. I have represented public employees almost all of my adult life. I never found a budget that wasn't on the verge of going out of balance, a public budget. I have never known of one. Some of them go out of balance like the federal budget. I also never found that when there was adequate need, adequate necessity, some unforeseen circumstance, that somehow or another the administration in some municipality without terribly just threatening the municipality couldn't find a way to stretch out and meet this need. This has been my experience over 20 years now. It may be, that this is the exception to that experience.

Unknown man: I understand and appreciate the way you put, and I put it the same way. The public works employees, the whole city, all employees are being asked for understanding of the city's budget situation, and (muffled) we know how in an intolerable, impossible situation we are expected to come to grips with something bigger than we are. When we come to a final solution of it, it isn't going to be satisfaction (muffled), but it's going to be the best one that we can devise from what we are (muffled). Now, the creation of this problem is not out of control. The handling of it we have got to (muffled). The handling of it has got to be firm and fair, and this is what we are attempting to do. We are attempting to (muffled) what we have to each department of the city, keeping in mind the statistics and facts you have given us about the public works department, and a similar set of statistics and facts from (muffled). Certainly we can reconsider, I will reconsider, but I am honest enough to tell you after reconsidering an impossible situation, this may be the inevitable budget that you are talking about, because (muffled). I think this thing needs to be settled, and that's why

we're sitting here. There's a lot of work to be done by you, (muffled), a lot of work to be done by me. I know the gravity of it, and would like to settle it on a fair basis (muffled). But, on this money situation, I will reconsider, but when I come back the answer is the same. The money isn't here. The money isn't available. There is no way of getting the money.

Unknown man: Can I interrupt, and I don't want to upset you, I just want to interrupt. Could I ask this...could I ask that perhaps, Mr. Chairman, I am somewhat touched and impressed with the mayor's claim. I wish, well I shouldn't use the word (muffled) the mayor's position on this (muffled). But also, I just came from a meeting of these men, and I am equally impressed by what I saw there. I am equally impressed by the way these men feel about it, and I understand them, and perhaps there is no illusions about where my sympathy and my empathy, and my concerns are. I never pretend to be anything than I am. I am pro bono with people who (muffled) with responsibility. Now, perhaps, you would look at these pictures, look at their applications, and perhaps in the interests of while you're doing that, perhaps we can move on to some other item on this list and see how far we can go.

Unknown man: The revenues of the city were exceeded by the expenditures, and of course you know precisely what that means. (muffled) what it is happening day by day until this imbalance is balanced. This is the situation we face.

Unknown man: Believe me when I tell you that I don't think it's fair or equitable to ask these people to accept the kind of offer that you feel you are best able to make. I just don't feel it's fair to ask them to accept it, because I don't (muffled). I assure you, sir, that even if I did, it would be of no avail.

Unknown man: In that lies our problem.

Unknown man: You're not really making a suggestion, suggestion was made among the -- let us... I think all that can be said on this point has been said at this time.

Unknown man: Except, Mr. chairman that we are leaving a stalemate.

Unknown man: (Muffled) no control by law or in fact from doing what other (muffled) unions have done for many, many years in other public jurisdictions. In fact, if we go beyond that, then we say that for the period of time that we have an agreement, we will come back and make other agreements. We will send the money back to be used in Memphis. The mayor says, well some day you'll get the money. Perhaps we ought to wipe out the American labor movement to satisfy the mayor -- I'm not willing to do that. They (muffled) dues deducted individually by the credit union. Every credit union has facilities for doing this. We have (muffled) to pay the credit union what it costs them to make this deduction. We insist that the credit union is in no way the servant of the city of Memphis, it is a servant of those who are members of it, and they achieve membership by buying a share of it, or they achieve membership by purchasing services from it, or they achieve membership by (muffled) from it. But right now, the city of Memphis

deducts payment for loans for the credit union, deducts payments for shares on credit unions, deducts money for charitable purposes, the Shelby, is it called the Shelby United Funds -- is deducted by the employee, and in a similar jurisdiction the schoolteachers of this city have a right to choose an association, which is no different, it used to be different years ago but in recent years it has changed.

Unknown man: (muffled) this is (muffled) along with a change in the city's policy and (muffled). This has been identified many times over the past few weeks in all kinds of periodicals. I recognize this. I respect what Mr. Wurf is trying to do. This is business, and this is his life. Now, I feel in (muffled) what Mr. Wurf recommends goes along this line. With the abilities Mr. Wurf has demonstrated, and he certainly has plenty of ability and intelligence and experience in his field, there is no doubt in my mind that Mr. Wurf has devised a way satisfactory to the union, no interference from the citizens wherein the union could collect its dues. I don't think it's necessary for me to (muffled) at the location such as the possibility of a bank account of the union, such as anything else that the union wants to do. As a matter of fact, the union might do this. I welcome the union to do it in any way that the union sees fit to do it. This is the union's business. This is the principal involved, and when it comes down to principal, you've got to make a stand. My feeling simply is this, rightly or wrongly, and I feel rightly, and I think there are a lot of people who agree with me -- union people (muffled) union hierarchy. Nonunion people, but an overwhelming majority of this city, they want the union to have what's labors theirs -- the right to organize, and the right to conduct it's affairs, as so many unions in Memphis do. I respect the right (muffled). This is theirs, and this we'll respect. They want the city, their city to be above taking part in something that's not the city's affair. The city's affair is to run the business of the city, for the whole city, and for not any one segment of the city. And, when the city allows a segment to enter into the business affairs of the city, and direct how things are done, this is not representation of the city as a whole. Now, when Mr. Wurf talks about the control of the credit unions, I don't talk about control of the credit union. I say leave the credit union alone. I say that when Mr. Wurf says that he will see that the credit union does this thing, that Mr. Wurf is talking about controlling the credit unions.

(muffled)

Unknown man: The mayor has made the point that if the city gets involved in dues deduction in a way we are threatening the free enterprise system. I have heard President Johnson accused of a lot of things, but you know President Johnson has just been holding hearings (muffled) the mechanism that exists in the public service, including the check-off method. And let me say, sir, that whatever the accusations are against Mr. Johnson, nobody every accused him of threatening the free enterprise system. I have heard nothing but praise for John F. Kennedy. It was he who instituted the system that exists in the federal service. I have even heard some criticism of Mr. Kennedy, but I never heard anybody say that he threatened the free enterprise system by introducing this situation. I should have demanded that this city treat us no differently than thousands of other cities treat us. But, in an effort to be conciliatory last night, or this morning, or whenever it was -- in an effort to bring this to an end, cognizant, because you insist that

we be a little bit more cognizant than others, cognizant of the unhappy pressures in this situation, I came forward and abandoned my principal position, that it is reasonable to expect if somebody sells a television set to Mr. Jones, then the city makes it its business to collect payment for that television set. But if Mr. Jones wants to pay dues to a union, the city won't collect it, but it will collect it through the television dealer. There is something wrong with that kind of thing. There's an inconsistency in that kind of thing. There's an unreasonableness that makes our people question what we're really getting at here. We have a right to warn you. We have a right to say to you that we honestly know, that as working people, that we get our paychecks, if a deduction hasn't been made for the same reason (muffled) allow us to pay that television dealer, for the same reason that they don't allow us to pay the credit union, or the credit union won't let you pay back the loan by walking to their office after you cash the check, they want the money before you cash the check. For the obvious reason that people who don't earn enough money can't press the money out in all the directions that it's needed, it's a pretty obvious thing to people (muffled). For this reason, we ask this, because we want continuity for our union. No unions, lots of unions don't have check-off, but you will find that unions that don't have check-off of any kind, that don't have dues deductions of any kind, are unions that control a right to work, control access to the workplace, or have great influence on access to the workplace. We have no desire to have such influence, we have no desire to have such right, and we are not asking for it. What we're asking for is simply our privilege, and I use the word privilege, although it's been treated as a right, what is the law of this land nationally, what is the law of this land all over these United States from New England to Florida, from Florida to California, from California to Oregon, from New Hampshire to Minnesota, from Minnesota to you know, New Mexico -- in all of these places we have dues deductions. And even when we go so far as to allow a bank to perform a banking function, mainly the withholding of money in the same way as it would withhold it if we patronized that bank for a loan, or if we patronized that bank for savings, we are denied it. I say that when we get involved with the security and the well-being of the free enterprise system that we prize so highly, I say that there's something wrong with that argument. There is no misunderstanding on your part, sir, that I am not asking that the credit union deduct dues for everybody. I hope that you understand that this would be only on the basis without any coercion or what have you, that we would ask -- and all we're asking is that the dues be deducted only for those people who authorize it in writing, and that they can withdraw this authorization any time they see fit.

Unknown man: So I have a (muffled) with regret that I have to leave this meeting. I don't mean to be dramatic about it. Now one thing I want to make clear in leaving is that we are the members, those who have been participating, of the Memphis Ministers Association, I formed a committee very quickly, I believe it was last Friday. We don't act for anybody, and what I'm doing -- and I want it understood, that a member of the committee, the special committee, has graciously, generously consented to take my place here, and that is Steve (muffled). And, so if he will hold forth in the future, and I wish with all my heart that these deliberations will be fruitful, and that good will emerge from the conversations. Excuse me for going.

**END OF RECORDING**