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MARSHALL UNIVERSITY

WVPH-1

ORAL HISTORY OF APPALACHIA

HUNTINGTON, WEST VIRGINIA 25701

ORAL HISTORY

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Date 24 Feb 83

Charles R. Dodrill
(Signature - Interviewee)

Box 1667
Address

Huntington, WV. 25717

Date 2/24/83

Randal C. Doble
(Signature - Witness)

DODRILL, CHARLES R.
WVPH-1
2/24/83

#374

REVIEW RELEASE

I, x Charles R. Dodrill, have reviewed by oral history interview made on 2-24-83 and with my signature below give permission for the use of my interview as agreed upon in the release agreement.

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x Charles R. Dodrill
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ADDRESS:

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WEST VIRGINIA POLICE HISTORY

AN ORAL INTERVIEW WITH: CHARLES R. DODRILL
HUNTINGTON F.O.P.

CONDUCTED BY: RANDAL C. DUNKLE

DATE OF INTERVIEW: FEBRUARY 24, 1983

TRANSCRIBED & TYPED BY: GINA KEHALI KATES

Charles: Okay, my name is Charles Dodrill. I'm with the F.O.P. I've been a member for 10 years; 11 years on the police department. And my position is financial secretary, which is a member of the executive board.

Randal: Okay, exactly what is the F.O.P.?

Charles: F.O.P. is basically a fraternal organization. It's meant to further the _____ to improve working conditions for it's membership, it's basically a fraternal organization. However, in recent years, it has become a bargaining agent between police officers and administration. This is one of it's primary, has become one of it's primary uh, primary tasks.

Randal: Uh, is it represented by a national charter?

Charles: Yes, sir. We have a national lodge, which is at this time located in Baltimore, Maryland. (do you pay dues?) Yes, sir. Dues vary from local lodge to local lodge. We pay certain fees to the state and national lodge which supports these two lodges. But as far as our own lodge, I can only speak for our lodge, what are dues our dues are...happen to be. I couldn't tell you what another one would be.

Randal: How long has the F.O.P. been active in Huntington?

Charles: The local lodge here formed as I recall in 1947.

Randal: How many members are there?

Charles: We have on the active roster 261 members. These are not only officers from Huntington but who represent the Cabell County Sheriff's Department, Wayne County Sheriff's Department, members of the state police detachments in the area. Milton, Barboursville, Kenova, Ceredo, Marshall University, are all people who are members of our lodge. (I see)

Randal: What group represented the police before the F.O.P.?

Charles: To my knowledge, there was no group that represented them.

Randal: Okay, I know that the F.O.P.'s involved in a lot of community activities. What exactly are some of these?

Charles: Probably the best known activity we're involved in is the sponsorship of the Golden Gloves. It's every February. Another one which has received quite a bit of publicity is the annual Christmas party for underprivileged children. That's where we contact various schools in the areas and ask the teachers to select children they feel are the most underprivileged or who would be most deserving of Having a Christmas party, giving each of the kids toys, clothing uh, we also if there's a family who has a particular need, we try to meet that, as far as possibly some medicine or if

the children have a particular need for shoes or some other item they are really in need of. Or we've been known to even help them out with heating bills, this kind of thing, make it a little better Christmas.

Randal: Does the F.O.P. receive much cooperation from other community groups, such as the Lions Club, Kiwanis, Chamber of Commerce?

Charles: Not as a rule. Some of the local organizations ask for our help financially. And if we're able to, we will from time to time make donations to certain select organizations. But as a rule, you know, they have their programs, and we have ours. And if the two cross paths, well, that's fine. But as a rule, we just have our own programs. And that's pretty much a full-time job to take care of those.

Randal: I see. About your membership, are all policeman members of the F.O.P.?

Charles: No, on a local level, I would say just a guess would be somewhere between 90 and 95% of local officers. We do not go into Kentucky or Ohio. We're prohibited from that. On national level, I think a rough guess would be about 160,000 police officers are members of the F.O.P. You have to meet certain requirements to become a member of the F.O.P. As soon as you put a badge on, that does not automatically give you membership in the lodge. You have to meet certain requirements.

Randal: I see. Can a civilian become a member of the F.O.P.?

Charles: A civilian can become a member of the associate lodge. Uh...and that person has to be recommended to membership by either an associate member in good standing, or an active member. There are two basic qualifications of membership: Active refers to police officers, associate refers to civilians. They support the lodge through their dues and some of them donate time and talent and so forth. But a civilian cannot become an active member of the F.O.P.

Randal: I see. Uh, unions, such as the teamsters has expressed interest in organizing the police. Do you have any knowledge of that?

Charles: The teamsters as such, no. I know I've done a little bit of reading on I think in Michigan, and several other places that the teamsters do have a police local or whatever you want to call it. And they do represent some police officers. But to my knowledge, the teamsters have never tried to come in here.

Randal: I see. And you said the F.O.P. is a collective bargaining agent of the H.P.D.?

Charles: No, that...the city recognizes the F.O.P. as the bargaining agent for the Huntington Police Department. The contract specifically reads, if my memory's right, for all police officers who are or will become members of the F.O.P. Now that contract excludes the Chief of Police. The current chief is an active member of the F.O.P. But uh, it's...it's not recognized as union. It's recognized as a bargaining agent for the police department.

Randal: I see. What is the future of the organization, in areas such as the Golden Gloves where controversy has developed?

Charles: I really don't know. If the differences between the two organizations, the two boxing organizations, could be resolved, I don't see any problem at all. The Golden Gloves is the main source of income for the Fraternal Order of Police. I suppose if something happens to it, we could find something else. I hope it doesn't come to that. But I...our main hope is that, is the problem will be resolved successfully.

Randal: I see. Officer Dodrill, I'd like to thank you for your time. And uh, for answering these questions. Thank you very much.

END OF INTERVIEW