Note: E. - Ellickson, Katherine Pollak
M. - Mason, Philip P.

This is an interview on Sunday, December 15, 1974, with Katherine Pollak Ellickson at her home at 3420 McKinley Street in Washington (D.C.) and we thought that Mrs. Ellickson would explain the inventory of the papers that she gave to the University to show the ways in which they reflect her career in the labor movement, the women's rights movement and her various other activities.

E. These files are as they came from my offices as I moved from one place to another, and they go way back to my workers' education days. I did go through some of them and arranged them but pretty much in the order as they were as working files. They are not OFFICIAL files of the organizations I worked for, with perhaps a few exceptions. Mostly they were the files that I kept in my desk drawer or elsewhere in my own office so that I would be able to find stuff myself and not have to refer to a secretary. They duplicate in many ways official files which are also available: The Brookwood files; possibly some of the CIO materials; the NLRB stuff, which presumably are in the National Archives. When I say this I don't mean that the official records would have everything I have but they would supplement and in some cases duplicate what I have.

The CIO materials fall into two parts: '35-'37 and then '42-'55. They represent in part material that is not otherwise available. When the CIO merged I think some of the official files may have been in mine, in so far as they represented what the Research Department had been doing. We were told at that time that we should put stuff into packing boxes. The AF of L was not interested to any great degree in CIO files of the kind we had and a lot of them were put into storage somewhere, so I'm told. I think some of our research materials were. I don't know whether you have ever gotten hold of those...

M. No. We never have. In fact I didn't realize until now that...

E. When I say they were put into storage I don't mean that it was necessarily with a storage company. But we had great big boxes like this which were supplied by some kind of storage company, I believe. And I think there were other similar boxes that were shipped somewhere.

M. I'll look into that. Walter Reuther had some, and as president of the IUD that came to us, but from a later period. But I don't think before '55 and the merger that we've ever seen those except the files that we got from Jim Carey.

E. There were a lot of files at the time of the merger. Everything was packed, except that Ted Silvey has a story about having seen Jean Hanson destroying a lot of stuff. She was one of the staff people from the CIO.

M. We do know that a lot of the files of the AF of L were destroyed. For example, Sidney Fine, the historian from University of Michigan, at one time used extensively the files of the AF of L and he came back later and discovered they had been destroyed.

E. That was fairly recently.

M. Yes

E. Those were CIO files?

M. No, these are AFL files. So the point is that the AFL is not conscious of the value of their records and we know that they destroyed many of even their own files so it's possible that unless the CIO files were put into a warehouse where they might have been separate, that they may have been thrown out. But we'll check on that and find out just where they are because these would be vitally important to us to supplement what we got from Mr. Carey.

E. Oh yes, because what happened was, as I recall it, each department did its own job of deciding what should happen to its files and there were many departments.

M. Was there an actual break when the merger took place so that the departments that existed up to then no longer existed? Was there a transition in personnel?

E. Well, what happened was that the personnel were all absorbed into the merged organization. This was part of the agreement. But, let's see, the AF of L was building a new building and this was not ready until about May of '56. I'm not sure when we moved in. Maybe it was May. But for a while we stayed in our separate buildings, which was a problem. And then at some point, which say was May of '56, we moved together and that must have been the point at which something was done with the files. Now in my case, for example, I was put into the Social Security Department. I was not consulted as to where I wanted to go. When moving day came I was responsible for what happened to my part of the files. But this would have been part of the Research Department of the CIO and Stanley Ruttenberg is here in town, you know, and could call him and ask him what he knows about the whole thing.

M. Yes.

E. Of course, Al Zack comes out of the CIO, so there are enough people around. But I'm pretty sure that there was no effort made to transfer any substantial part of those files to the new building. So that was when the decision was made to put them somewhere.

M. I see.

E. And there would have been many, many of these big...

M. Transfer files or transfiles.

E. Transfer files, transfiles.

M. Well, the fact that they haven't turned up in any inventory during any attempt we've made to locate them might indicate that at one time since the merger they may have been discarded, for want of space or for any other reason, because they certainly did this with other records.

E. They were not taken to the new building.

M. They weren't.

E. That's my impression, I could be wrong.

M. Well, it's possible they're in a warehouse. We did find, for example, all the AFSCME records dating back to '35 down in Hyattsville in a warehouse and no one knew they were there. And the only reason they were preserved is because when Mr. Wurf took over that Mr. Zander didn't know that those records were there. Not all of them, but a substantial amount were destroyed before Mr. Wurf took over. But they were in a warehouse and we now have the early files of AFSCME.

E. And then as far as the Organization Department goes, Allen Kistler came out of the CIO. He might know. There's a whole series of people who might have some recollection about them.

M. In reviewing though and making your comments on your files it should be pointed out that you are reacting to the preliminary inventory made by the Labor Archives of the records which you have given to them.

E. Yes.

M. All right. That will make it a little clearer to someone on the outside.

E. Yes. And I have this substantial description of the collection.

M. Yes.

E. So continuing on with notes on where certain files are. Take my materials on Social Security activities after the merger. I believe that some of the official AF of L - CIO files of that period were shipped as part of Nelson Cruikshank's Collection to the University of Wisconsin. So there's some duplication there. The President's Commission on the Status of Women, was a government outfit; those official files are in the National Archives in Washington. There is a 2nd set that is not quite complete which is at the present time in the possession of the Women's Bureau of the U.S. Department of Labor. Materials from the President's Committee on Equal Employment Opportunity and my research on women and Social Security are represented in government collections. The material on health benefits is duplicated by the Corning Collection at Columbia.

Now a general comment on how I kept materials in my folders. I tended to keep a great deal of material so that going through my folders one would find some duplication between a typed version and perhaps a hand-written version of the same thing. By and large I tried to group the material of a given period by topics in a way that would be useful when I needed to refer to them. In the case of the collection on the Forand Bill and health benefits, at one point I was going to withhold some of those documents when Corning was going over them with me and I therefore put some of the sensitive ones in together so that those would be out of the working arrangement. But they're all now in your collection.

M. Fine.

E. And I have not restricted them. Time has passed.

M. Were you always in a situation where you had secretaries and filing clerks to take care of the files?

E. They didn't take care of these files. These are the ones I took care of.

M. But in terms of creating them, they were carbons of records that you did in the course of your various responsibilities.

E. Yes, that's correct. As I indicated, some of these CIO files leading up to '55 may not be duplicates. I knew that the AFL was not very interested in them, so rather than risk their being lost, I may have brought along home some of the materials that would otherwise have gotten lost. I'm not sure. Most of the time I had a secretary who - I guess all the time virtually - I had somebody who was doing the typing for me who would then have the official carbon and I'd have an extra carbon. And I would not always have the original if a memorandum came to me. I might or might not have that in my collection it might be in an official file.

M. You would have the answer though to...

E. I would have the answer.

M. So in order to make the collection as complete as possible we might want to go to those agencies which have the so called official copy of record of your papers such as NARS and the Department of Labor and get copies of those departmental records to supplement what you have given us or at least to indicate to our researchers where they might be?

E. Yes, though actually the value of my file system is mostly not in terms of correspondence back and forth. I did a lot of writing of articles, pamphelts testimony, and resolutions, and of these had copies. I was not primarily in the operating end of most of these things so that there would not be a lot missing. In the case of the President's Committee on Equal Employment Opportunity, there are invaluable materials in the official archives, namely the studies by the various government agencies of the degree to which contractors were complying with the Executive Order for Equal Employment Opportunity. These are not reflected except in very minor degree in anything I had. These archives have presumably been held confidential. But when available they would be extremely interesting...

M. Yes

E. for people to go through. I don't know where those are now, whether they're in the Archives or what. So much for the general comments. Now should I go on to biographical data?

M. Yes, I'd like to. I think this is very important. As you'll notice from the introductory material it's very sparse. We just didn't have, or Mrs. Miles who made the inventory, didn't have access at that time to the biographical data so I think it's very important for the beginning interview for you to tell us about your early career, college days, the people and the events that have an impact upon your thinking, how you happened to get into the labor movement, and the like. Why don't you start in a general way, where you were born and give us some information about that part of your life then.

E. O.K., and then you stop me if I'm not doing the way you want it.

M. All right.

E. I was born on September 1, 1905, in Yonkers, New York. My father was a young lawyer who was getting established. I was the youngest of three children. We shortly moved to Manhattan in New York City and lived at various places there, through my college years. My father died when I was eleven and this was a great blow to me emotionally, as to most children in a similar position. I attended the Ethical Culture School from the 5th grade through the 12th grade except for a year when we went to California after my father's death.

My family were of Jewish background - completely Jewish in terms of genes but we were not Jewish in terms of attending any synagogue, because we didn't do so. My great-grandfather on my father's side, Michael Heilprin had left Poland where he went through the usual education of a Jewish boy, and gone to Hungary. He took part in the revolution of '48 (1848) in Hungary, which failed. After that he came to America. He broke with the religious part of his Jewish background when he came to this country. There is a book that was written by my grandfather Gustav Pollak about the Heilprin family which is available if anyone wants it. They were intellectuals; Michael Heilprin and his son Louis Heilprin were encyclopedists. My father was the oldest son of Gustav Pollak and Celia Heilprin.

On my mother's side: she was Inez Cohen and her family in Charleston, South Carolina, goes back to before the Revolution. Her father had fought on the southern side of the Civil War as a young man with his slave helping him in the army, according to my mother. He had died before I was born. That side of the family was ruined by the Civil War and then he came north. My mother's mother came from the Samuel family, from England. Morris Samuel, my great-grandfather, on my mother's side was I believe a first cousin of Herbert Samuel, who was active in connection with Palestine and became a leader of the British Liberal Party. That too is a matter of record.

I was brought up through the Ethical Culture School with considerable sensitivity to ethical problems. We sang lunchroom songs that gave you a feeling of service to the community. I went to Vassar College, which my aunt, Dr. Frances Cohen, had registered me for when I was born. I became interested in the Student League for Industrial Democracy, in which my sister, who was a year older than I, had already been active. And I'm sure this played an important part in my becoming interested in labor. I went in for debate and we had some debates with Brookwood Labor College while I was a student at Vassar. I had a very interesting course in the labor movement from Anita Marburg Lerner which again increased my interest in it. I was not the only Vassar student who became interested in this kind of thing. Andy Biemiller's wife, Hannah Biemiller, was a year behind me, as I remember, at Vassar and she too became interested and there are others. Is this the kind of thing you want?

M. Yes, it certainly is.

E. Oh, well am I going too fast?

M. No, not at all, not at all. What years were you with Vassar? Do you remember?

E. I graduated from the Ethical Culture School in '22 and went to Vassar that fall when I was just 17, and graduated in '26. I had become very interested in science at the Ethical Culture School. I had the same excellent science teacher who taught Robert Oppenheimer, who was a year ahead of me so I thought I would be a scientist. But then when I got to college I found I was not good at laboratory work, and I remember sitting with my aunt in England one summer and deciding I really wanted to go into economics because it would be more useful than science. After I graduated from college I taught history for two

years at the Ethical Culture School. (I'd majored in economics and minored in history at Vassar.) At the same time I started tutoring at the Women's Trade Union League. This was my first year out of college. My mother had been interested in the Women's Trade Union League and was also interested in the National Consumer's League so I had some influence at college because I tended to react against my mother as many young people do. Hilda Smith was in charge of the educational work at the Women's Trade Union League and because of her influence I decided to tutor at the Bryn Mawr Summer School. I did this in the summers of '27, '28 and '29, actually becoming more than a tutor, so that in '29 at least I taught a small class in economics. In connection with tutoring and teaching I, like others, found that the workers simply couldn't understand the materials that were available. We tried to use Fitch's Causes of Industrial Unrest and some of the pamphlets of the Women's Bureau of the U.S. Department of Labor but by and large any existing text on economics was just incomprehensible to these students. So I volunteered, since I was teaching at the Ethical Culture School only part time, to see what I could do in developing some simple materials. I wrote something called "The Shrinking Week and the Growing Wage" which along with some later versions of this same is in box 99 according to this guide.

M. In the Archives' collection.

E. And a commentary on the times: a later edition of this, published I believe in 1931, had to be called "Can the Work Week Shrink and Wages Grow?" It was because I had done this writing that Brookwood Labor College was willing to take me on the staff in 1929. I stayed there until the fall of '32. My main function at Brookwood was to prepare materials for workers' classes, but I also did a little tutoring. I should perhaps add that Brookwood Labor College had already been a place I had gone to because it was a center for so much workers' education activity and progressive ideas. I'll go into Brookwood more later if you want me to.

M. Yes, I'd like to go back to the Women's Trade Union League and Brookwood and even the Student League for Industrial Democracy later but this will give us a good framework of **your** career and how we fit different pieces into it.

E. Yes. At the Summer School and at Brookwood especially, I learned a tremendous amount about working conditions and the labor movement, much more than I had learned at Vassar or at Columbia University, where I took some graduate courses in '28 - '29. In fact I found I had to unlearn a lot of the economics that I had learned at Vassar which still at that time had a rather old-fashioned approach to economic theory. I can't stress too much the importance of this kind of practical everyday contact with workers themselves as preparation for what I did later, because I just had gotten so I could think automatically in terms of the workers and the unions rather than in terms of the academic approach that many professionals have.

M. What impact did the period of the times which we're talking about when you went to Brookwood, such as the Depression, with mass unemployment...In what way did this affect your thinking and help change you?

E. Well, I went to Brookwood in September '29, as I'd arranged to do shortly before the crash. The actual Black Friday on the Stock Market came while I was at Brookwood that fall. I was not entirely sympathetic with the radical approach of some of the Brookwood people. My mind was divided about this. But of course the events of the Depression tended to confirm a feeling that something was wrong with the economy! Brookwood really had a quite remarkable faculty. Clint Golden was the business manager. I don't know if you want all this now.

M. Yes, well I do eventually so if it's convenient now and it doesn't detract from your account.

E. Well, maybe I shouldn't put it in here because it really belongs later. But through the excellent faculty, whom I'll go into later, I learned a great many practical things and also made some of the contacts that were later useful because Brookwood played a national role. As far as the files go, some materials from Brookwood itself are in my folders, including syllabuses. There was no university at that time that gave anything like the kind of detailed discussion of some of these union problems, actual organizing problems and details on labor history. The book that I prepared for Brookwood, with the co-authorship of Tom Tippett, Your Job and Your Pay, which was published by the Vanguard Press, was my main assignment for the first year or two. This followed an outline that Tom had developed from teaching in the coal fields of

Illinois at Brookwood, and at YWCA classes. That year '29 - '30, when I was working up the material, Tom was teaching classes for the Industrial Department of the YWCA in three Pennsylvania towns, and I went for him on one occasion as substitute. The resultant text was quite widely used in workers classes in various parts of the country because it presented a simple analysis adapted to workers' needs. Its approach had to fit the Brookwood point of view so in some respects it did not quite represent my own thinking. Tom provided the outline and the general analysis, the general philosophy. I did all the writing. I would show my draft to Tom and the other Brookwood people, like Clint Golden, Dave Saposs and Polly Colby. Then it would be modified some and used by Brookwood first-year students. The second group of things I worked on were six pamphlets, also for workers' classes, which I believe are in the files. They included "Why Bother About the Government?", "How A Trade Union Is Run", "The Labor Movement Today" and so on.

In the summers I did other things. In the summer of '30, I drove around the south with a girl, Eula McGowan, who had been a Brookwood student and came from one of the southern textile mills, I think in Roanoke Rapids, North Carolina. This was after the Marion Massacre and the Gastonia strike in '29. Brookwood was very close to Marion. Tom had been down there and helped organize after the strike began. He was writing a book on the south. I was eager to get first-hand experience, and Tom was down there too, though mostly he was doing something else. I and Eula traveled around to textile centers. I also visited the Southern Summer School for Women Workers, and I took the photographs of the workers evicted near Greensboro for joining the union which are in Tom's book, <u>When Southern Labor Stirs</u>. I also was interested in how the AF of L was carrying on its southern campaign and Eula and I attended some of their organizing meetings. In the fall of '30 I kept a file of clippings on and from Danville, Va., because this was supposed to be the big demonstration that the AF of L could organize the south. As we expected, it went the way of the other organizing efforts, with troops called in, injunctions, a lost strike and no union. When Tom's book was nearly done, I helped him edit it, and I think I wrote the whole chapter on Danville. He wrote a very nice inscription in my copy about my expert help. This southern experience increased my sympathy with the workers and what they were trying to do.

Then in '31 the mine workers of West Virginia, started to organize. Brookwood was very close to the coal miners. Tom had come out of the Illinois coal fields, and each year we had a certain number of coal miners from Pennsylvania, and John Brophy was on the Board of Brookwood. I went down, I think it was the end of March or early April, with Tom and one or two people to try to help the West Virginia Mine Workers organize. I stayed there until the end of August, and I have considerable material on that West Virginia organizing effort and lost strike.

M. Were they attempting to organize as a part of the United Mine Workers?

E. No, the United Mine Workers had completely disappeared from the West Virginia mine fields by that time. Perhaps I should go over this rather quickly right now. Brookwood was in touch with the Progressive Miners of America, the nucleus of which was the Illinois group. The leaders of the West Virginia effort were the people who had been leaders in the United Mine Workers. And to many of the workers it made no difference, you know. A local union was their union and they didn't know what the regional or national outfit might be. From one of these coalcamps on Cabin Creek came Arnold Miller, now President of the UMW. And while the '31 strike failed disastrously, it's an interesting illustration of the way in which, in spite of the suffering of the people on the scene, there is a certain contribution through the education of other people and the publicity given. The Emergency Committee for Strikers' Relief raised money for it. Edmund Wilson came down and wrote some articles about it for the New Republic which appear in one of his books. They were a very isolated group. My files show some of the conditions. There's an interesting set of notes I took when the strike was on. I sat in the outer office, and as the delegations came in from the locals in various parts of the coal fields I would make a brief summary of what they wanted and shift it in to the people who were deciding what relief to give each local.

In the fall of '31, Brookwood was being increasingly hit by the Depression and I felt it was becoming too isolated. Muste at this time was moving in the direction of forming his own political party, making the Conference for Progressive Labor Action, which had been a kind of inclusive political organization to which Brookwood people belonged, into a separate political party. I and some of the other Brookwood people thought it was a great mistake. I decided to join the Socialist Party in

New York City and to cooperate with the young militants in the Socialist Party who were trying to move away from the rather conservative - at least what we considered conservative - attitude of Louis Waldman and some of the others. Muste didn't like the fact that I had joined the socialists because he felt they were a kind of rival to what he was trying to do - which was perfectly true.

Then I left Brookwood in June of '32, and lived for a year in New York and cooperated with the militants in the Socialist Party. This was in the depths of the Depression. There were some organizing efforts being carried on including the Doll and Toy Workers and the Consolidated Edison utility workers. I stayed in touch with the group at Brookwood who were sympathetic to my point of view, like Dave Saposs. And then there was an organization called the Continental Congress of Workers and Farmers which met in Washington in the end of March of '33 and I went down to that meeting along with Dave Saposs and some others. I have somewhat forgotten, but the sponsors of this tended to be from the League for Industrial Democracy, Emil Rieve, President of the Hosiery Workers, socialist groups in the unions, plus the Farmers Union, the Non-Partisan League from North Dakota and so on. They held a very big convention with about two or three thousand people in Washington. The New Deal had started but we hadn't quite realized what this was going to amount to. I drafted a "New Declaration of Independence which was slightly modified but used at that time - adopted by the Continental Congress of Workers and Farmers. And then in May of that year I decided to go out to Chicago and to volunteer to do some work for this Continental Congress. The national secretary of it was Clarence Senior who was also the national secretary of the Socialist Party in Chicago. Do you want all this detail?

M. Yes, by all means.

E. The Militant Socialists with whom I was working in New York were in touch with similar groups elsewhere: Andy Biemiller and his wife out in Kenosha, Wisconsin - or perhaps they were then in Philadelphia; a group in Chicago, etc. Some of the Chicago groups had a cooperative apartment.

It was arranged that I would stay in this cooperative apartment, and there I met Chet Ellickson and we married in August. He had, it turned out, been at the Continental Congress of Farmers and Workers but I hadn't known him there. He came from North Dakota and was a student and a graduate assistant at the University of Chicago.

M. Did he have the same philosophical views that you did?

E. Yes. He was active in the Jackson Park Branch of the Socialist Party. As was Maynard Kreuger who later became a professor of economics at the University of Chicago. And a number of other people who moved on into various positions, of some importance in the government and elsewhere. I then spent a year in Chicago doing part-time volunteer work for the Continental Congress of Workers and Farmers and getting adjusted to married life. Then, that summer of '34 I was asked by Hilda W. Smith of the Federal Emergency Relief Agency to head-up a workers' training school in the south. The FERA had a series of training centers for teachers where the teachers would get some training and their expenses were paid. They had to be taken off the relief roles, these students who were to become teachers. And so I left North Dakota long enough to do this job and recruited students in Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina and there was a fourth state, and ...

M. Were these male and female students?

E. No, these were just female students.

M. Just female students.

E. This training school was smaller than some of them. It was to be held in connection with the Southern School for Women Workers in Industry, which was one of the affiliates along with Bryn Mawr and Barnard of the Affiliated Schools for Workers. While I was down in North Carolina that summer my husband took a job in North Dakota as assistant director of the N.D. Rural Rehabilitation Administration which was part of one of the relief organizations. And so then like a good wife, I had to join him in North Dakota, and spent the year '34 - '35 mostly in North Dakota, in Bismarck, the state capitol. I

was pretty much a fish out of water in North Dakota but there were a few bright spots. I was able to get authorized by the American Federation of Teachers, to which I had belonged since '26, to do some volunteer organizing for them. And I also did some volunteer representation of the State Federation of Teachers at the legislature which met for two months. (End Tape 1, Side A) (Tape 1, Side B)

My husband and I attended weekly meetings of the N.D. Farmers' Union at which legislative strategy was discussed. Through these insights and substantial reading on farmers' movements, I further broadened my understanding of methods of social change.

In the spring of 1935 I investigated company unions for a BLS study headed by Dave Saposs. Using carefully prepared instructions and forms I visited plants in mid-western states, interviewing employers and employees. The experience was fascinating. I was amazed at how much one could learn in a few days. This was a period in which unionization was proceeding rapidly, superseding company unions. At the Allis-Chalmers plant near Milwaukee, for example, the union people who wanted a real union had just taken control of the work's council there and among these were some of the young communists who later were active in the Farm Equipment Workers. The materials on those company unions should be somewhere in the National Archives. They're fascinating material, the kind that Sidney Fine worked up in his book on The Automobile Under the Blue Eagle.

Then in the fall my husband got a job with the Resettlement Administration in Washington and we moved to Washington. I did not have a job at first and I studied credit unions on my own and I think some of that material is in the files. Then I went to the CIO Convention in October of '35, out of interest. And of course that was the dramatic convention where John L. Lewis declared his independence and punched Big Bill Hutcheson in the jaw. Very shortly after that, I was asked by John Brophy and Dave Saposs to have lunch with them. John Brophy was to be the director of the new CIO, and Dave Saposs wanted Brophy to get to know me better. I was hired to help start the office of the national CIO. I had known Brophy very slightly from his being at Brookwood. But I had known Dave Saposs very well there because he had been the editor of these pamphlets. We'd had many contacts as I had with all the Brookwood faculty.

On November 15, 1935, John Brophy who was on the Mine Workers payroll, and I and Brophy's niece Bernice Welch opened the national CIO office in the Rust Building. My files on the CIO start from that time. My title may have involved research, but in fact I was a general assistant to Brophy. I was the only person with professional experience on the CIO staff itself until January, I think it was, when Len DeCaux joined the staff. Bernice was Brophy's secretary and general assistant in certain ways but primarily his secretary. (She later married Milt Murray, the head of the American Newspaper Guild.) My responsibilities at the CIO expanded as the CIO expanded. One of my functions was to take notes at the CIO meetings and at meetings when delegations would come in to see Brophy and these notes are in the collection.

M. On the question of notes, did they not keep official notes? Is it true that John L. Lewis disliked keeping records of all meetings? I've heard remarks like that made.

E. Well, we had official minutes of the CIO which I wrote up from my notes after I typed them up. Before I gave you my CIO records, I had made them available to the Roosevelt Library at Hyde Park, through Herman Kahn. It was when I started going through these ... I think you were the one who had pulled these out from under the low roof of my attic.

M. Yes, I remember it.

E. ... that I realized that I hadn't even typed up the detailed notes on some of the CIO meetings themselves, although I had prepared the necessary minutes. So I then typed them up. From my detailed notes I would develop more condensed minutes which Brophy then signed as the official secretary of the CIO or as director. At that time there was no secretary separate from the director.

M. But the records that you kept might be more complete than the typed and signed minutes that went out as the official minutes of the CIO?

E. Yes they are.

M. One of the difficulties, and this is a bit of an aside, is that we've never been able to even find the printed or typewritten official notes of the CIO. According to the information I have, Carey took them with him and they remained with the IUE in Washington, whereas the rest of his papers were sent to Camp Kilmer in New Jersey near Rutgers. Now we got the Carey, CIO papers from Rutgers with the aid of Walter Reuther. But the minutes were missing. I'm told by Al Lowenthal, who as you may know works or did work with Dave Selden on the AFT, that the bound or loose leaf notebook minutes of the CIO were still in the IUE. And I've written to the president of the IUE, and a man named Dave Compton who is administrative assistant several times in trying to find out whether they have them. I've never got an answer from them. So keep this in mind that if any advice you can give me on where they might be. This is one of the missing links in the whole story of the CIO.

E. Well, my connection with the CIO terminated at the end of '37.

M. That's right.

E. And the period I'm talking about now, when I kept the minutes, would have been through '36 and I'm not sure how far into '37.

M. These would be the later period. But in case you ever heard or have any insight as where they might be, we are interested.

E. All my materials that I kept from that CIO period were made available to and put on microfilm by the Roosevelt Library and I think were made available to other universities. Now maybe I should mention what my main activities were for the CIO though I'll go back to the CIO in more detail on a separate occasion. I would prepare working papers for Brophy that he would take to Lewis as to what the CIO might do in its formative months.

M. Brophy's official function at this time was ...

E. The Director of the CIO.

E. I also wrote and was responsible for publishing the first pamphlets published by the CIO through '37 or the early months of '37 at least. Some of these of course were Lewis speeches, official documents, so I did not write those. I also drafted speeches for Brophy and drafted some letters for him. I got together necessary materials on the past history of some of the unions. Then I helped when the Steel Workers Organizing Committee was getting under way. When Lewis was moving in the direction of steel, I took the notes on the very interesting meeting between Lewis and the representatives of the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers, which held the AF of L Charter. It was at that meeting in the spring of '36 that Lewis got Tighe, the president of that organization to agree to a joint organizing drive with Lewis, with Lewis putting up $500,000 and Tighe in effect giving the charter rights to Lewis. The AF of L had refused to really help Tighe. They didn't believe steel could be organized.

Than as the organizing drives were successful, particularly in the spring of '37, there was a tremendous demand from the field for more organizing help. We had a tremendous flood of correspondence. I gradually got authority to hire some people with Brophy's approval to help me in my work. In effect I developed the systems of mailing lists, the system for chartering unions, and also the draft constitutions for the local industrial unions, which were the directly affiliated unions, and the industrial union councils. We kept urging Brophy to get Lewis to give us more staff because this was a tremendous undertaking.

Lee Pressman had been brought in by Lewis, first as general counsel for the Steel Workers and then as general counsel for the CIO. He came to the CIO in the spring of '37. I will explain this more separately but Lewis at that point started consolidating the authority in his hands and putting in charge people he felt he could control. This meant pushing Brophy aside, and putting Lewis' brother-in-law, Bell, in charge of most of the office. Lee Pressman was interested in spreading Communist influence, in pushing people who had communist sympathies and discarding known opponents.

At the end of '37, as the recession made some retrenchment necessary, I was among the group that was laid off including most of the people Brophy had brought in, including all the people who had been working for me. I'll explain this a little more, but this was of course a traumatic blow for me

because I had done so many different things and the excuse on which I was laid off was that I was doing research, that I was in the Research Department and that the Research Department had been largely abolished. But that wasn't what I was doing in 1937. And of course this was contrary to union policies. Brophy was anti-Communist and had never retracted his accusation that Lewis had stolen the election in '27 from Brophy when Brophy ran against him for president of the United Mine Workers. Brophy and I would talk and both of us knew that Lewis had his limitations and that he had done a lot of damage to the Mine Workers. Which at the time was something nobody talked about but which became quite evident in more recent years when the sad results of all that became obvious.

M. By this time when you left the employ of the CIO was Brophy also replaced or was he set to the side?

E. No, no. Brophy was not replaced. Brophy was out of town when this happened. I called him in Pittsburgh, where he was, and he said he would do something about it but never quite did. He was dependent on Lewis, and I think he felt that he could still make a real contribution, which he did. He stayed on for quite a few years. He was later made head of the Industrial Union Council Department. And Tony Smith who was a lawyer, who had worked in the legal end of things, became Brophy's assistant in the Industrial Union Council Department.

Then Dave Saposs wanted to hire me for the National Labor Relations Board, where he had become head of the Division of Economic Research. As soon as the North Dakota quota permitted my appointment as a Civil Service employee, I joined the Division of Economic Research at the NLRB. I had previously taken that Civil Service exam. This wasn't until April 1938, I believe. Meanwhile I had decided that I might just as well have children even though the world was not such as I wanted to bring children into, but since there was no other world available, I would go ahead. I wasn't immediately successful in that effort.

In March I helped a little with a final editing job on a report of the National Resources Planning Board. The Division of Economic Research under Dave Saposs was quite a remarkable place, with many very capable young people working there. My major job for the NLRB was working on the Western Union company union, which was a fascinating study. It was

one of the oldest company unions, dating back to World War I. Some of these materials are in my files, and the National Archives undoubtedly have considerably more. This I would think would be a fascinating research project for some potential Ph.D. student. During this period I had my first child, a daughter. And then in '40 I was laid off. Dave Saposs was a strong anti-communist and the communists were out to knife him, to put it a little bluntly, but that was about what it amounted to. And shortly after I was laid off, the whole Division was abolished. This was partly because of an alliance between some of the communist sympathizers and some of the reactionaries in Congress.

M. To go back a bit, when was your daughter born?

E. She was born in September 1939.

M. And what was her name?

E. Margaret Katherine who is now Mrs. Dickerman. She has one child, Samuel, and has become a social worker.

Then when I was laid off by the NLRB I got a job with what was then the Social Security Board, in the Bureau of Research and Publications. Shortly thereafter, in 1941, I had my second child, Robert who is now a visiting associate professor of law at the University of Chicago Law School, on leave from the University of Southern California. My work at the Social Security Board at that time gave me a very considerable background in social security because they had a very good training program that I had to take, and I worked on things like the annual report and the Social Security, including the welfare parts and the various social insurances. It was a deadly job as far as I was concerned, but I learned quite a bit.

Then after my 2nd child was born I decided to stay home and look after my children. We had just moved into our new house, which I am still in. I had been very lucky in finding a very good English-trained Irish nurse to look after my children and had just let her go when we found that Chet had tuberculosis. We fortunately could get the nurse back. Her name was Barbara O'Leary. She was invaluable in making it possible for me to work during this whole period because I was not the kind of woman who had tremendous energy, who could come home and just take over and do everything. Chet was away for three months with T.B. and then came back, for he luckily got

over it very fast.

Meanwhile, I got a job with the Labor Bureau of the Middle West, with Eli Oliver, which did some work on collective bargaining for various unions especially the Amalgamated Association of Street and Electric Railway Employees. This gave me a kind of practical knowledge of collective bargaining which I hadn't done very much with before.

M. This was non-governmental?

E. Yes, this was an outstanding independent labor research group, one of the few in existence. Eli Oliver had been research director for the Railway Clerks. Then, the war having broken out, men were being drafted. And in December '41 Ray Walsh, the new research director of the CIO, asked me if I would come and work with him. I had been recommended to him by Clint Golden who had known me at Brookwood, and who was now one of the regional directors of the Steelworkers. Stanley Ruttenberg who had been in charge of research for the CIO was drafted. And Ray Walsh had not had my practical experience. He came out of the academic world. So Eli Oliver realized how eager I was to go back and let me go back promptly.

I had an arrangement with the CIO whereby I worked 30 hours a week, so that I could leave early and come back and see my children, and the hours were flexible. It was a very nice arrangement. I was in the Research Department but in this capacity I became secretary to the CIO Social Security Committee. My files during this period, from the end of '42 through '55, at the CIO reflect a very wide variety of assignments that I carried. Kermit Eby became director of the combined Research and Education Departments some time during the war when Ray Walsh left. And then Stanley Ruttenberg came back and became director after the war was over. My assignments during most of this time - I take it you want me to go into this ...

M. Yes

E. Social Security, and all its ramifications, which were wide, because Social Security included public assistance and the Employment Service, and the Employment Service included Farm Labor and also included all Manpower problems. And perhaps as part of that I worked on post-war planning and Guaranteed Annual Wages. Another whole area of my responsibilities was to serve as liaison between the union research directors of all the international

unions and the government research agencies. This included initially the Bureau of Labor Statistics. But then some time in '43 or '44 Sol Barkin, who was research director of the Textile Workers, suggested we should set up a Labor Advisory Committee to the Bureau of the Budget's Office of Statistical Standards. And Sol and I went to see Stuart Rice, the Director of the Office, and Stuart Rice was delighted. So we set up a Joint Labor Research Advisory Committee. Through the Office of Statistical Standards of the Bureau of the Budget we could reach any of the other government statistical agencies! Census, HEW and so on. And again, this like the Advisory Committee to the BLS, was joint, including the AF of L research directors as well as the CIO research directors. This was a very important function in that the meetings we had of research directors in preparation for the meetings with the government people gave us a chance to interchange ideas. We had some extremely competent staff people in the international unions as well as on the CIO staff. It was really a very fine place to work.

M. At this period what was your relationship with the AF of L?

E. At this period the relationships with the AF of L were of course very unfriendly in many organizing areas. But as far as the research staffs were concerned, we were all much the same kind of people. This isn't quite true, because you were more likely to find that a research director of an AF of L union was the son of the president of the union. But this was no barrier to us, we cooperated very well. I, with my counterpart in the AF of L, who was first Glen Slaughter and then Margaret Scattergood, would prepare the agenda for the meetings in cooperation with the person assigned by the government agency. We took turns running the meetings and then we would go over the minutes, which were drafted by the government agency representative, and the final minutes would then be circulated.

In addition to those responsibilities, since I was the only, or almost the only, professional woman at that level in the CIO, I was responsible for activities involving women and children and the contacts with the appropriate people in the unions on women's problems. The other woman who was at my level in the CIO was Hollace Ransdell who worked in the Publicity Department. Stanley Ruttenberg, I should say, was a wonderful person to work for because he was very competent, believed in delegating as much as possible, and was very easy to clear with. He believed women should be

treated equally with men, which was actually part of CIO policy but not always carried out. And just generally it was a very good experience. We had a very fine though small group of people working there. We took turns writing unsigned articles for the monthly Economic Outlook. As I would tell my husband, there was never a dull moment.

In the contacts with the government agencies, we made a serious effort to improve the statistics and to make them more useful in collective bargaining and to introduce realism into the statistics because the people in the government who were working on things like series on wages or fringe benefits or whatever, wouldn't always know what the realities of the collective bargaining situations were. I think many of them really appreciated the contribution that the union people could make, and of course they wanted their statistics to be used. They may sometimes have resented the aggressiveness with which some of the research directors would push their point. During this period I don't think of any effort by the union people to promote statistics that were really open to question except for the effort during the war on the Consumers Price Index, but that's not too important now. That was not done by the CIO staff, but by Harold Ruttenberg for the Steel Workers. I can't help thinking that if a committee, such as ours was then, had been on the job as actively as our people were the BLS might have avoided the current error that they made on the CPI.

M. Then you were back with the CIO from 1942 ...

E. until the merger.

M. 1955. And you were stationed always here in Washington?

E. Yes. But during that period we would go to CIO conventions. We sat in on executive board meetings, which I should perhaps mention as a very valuable way of keeping in touch with policies and getting to know our unions well, which is a very important. This I missed later when the AF of L customs took over when we merged. In connection with my CIO assignment on Social Security, we initiated meetings with the directors of Social Security of the unions, similiar to those meetings with research directors. Again this was a very valuable activity because we would pool the experience that was being developed by the different unions on the problems that arose in connection with the health benefit programs which were being negotiated during this period. Again, we would present certain ideas to the departments, but mostly those Social Security

meetings dealt with legislative problems and problems of collective bargaining, rather than, as I recall it, with the government agencies which weren't so much involved as they were in the case of research.

M. Did your position during this period put you into contact with leaders in government and with other unions, say Walter Reuther and others? Did you have an opportunity to meet with them, to work with them or was this at a different level?

E. The Social Security Committee was made up of representatives of the different international unions. So I met Leonard Woodcock when he was a member of the Social Security Committee, as well as other union officials, like Abel. My contacts with the top officials of the CIO were scattered, I would say. When we were presenting Congressional testimony on subjects like unemployment insurance or social security, it was part of my job to contact the appropriate union officials. I remember there was one Congressional hearing where we testified on Unemployment Insurance, where, as I recall it, I was responsible for introducing the various officials of the CIO unions including Walter Reuther. Just before the Committee hearing, there'd be a certain amount of clearance. When Phil Murray was the president of the CIO, I worked with him on Guaranteed Annual Wages, which led to supplementary unemployment benefits. He was very interested in them. This was in the period before Stanley Ruttenberg had come back. Phil Murray served on a top-level joint labor-management defense outfit. He wanted them to make a study of Guaranteed Annual Wages. And so I for the CIO, Emerson Schmidt for the Chamber of Commerce, and representatives of the other top organizations - I think maybe the Farmers were in there too - were supposed to agree on a research director for this study. We had a heck of a time agreeing on a research director because obviously this was a key factor. Finally I remember - this is part of the unwritten history - the labor people met and, as I recall it, Boris Shishkin and I agreed that he would propose Murray Latimer and I would express some reservations about him so that Emerson Schmidt would not object. Latimer was appointed and they made the study and they got Alvin Hansen of Harvard to do part of it. Then the time came when they had to agree on a statement by this top committee in the preface. The draft preface was bad from our point of view. And so Phil Murray asked me to draw up an alternative. I did so and at the right moment he drew this out of his pocket at the committee meeting. I wasn't there of course. It was slightly modified and adopted. So you know these are nice little bits to remember.

When the merger came in '55 many of the files were stored as I told you already.

M. Yes

E. I had an assignment at that time from Arthur Goldberg to compare the policy statements of the AF of L and the CIO and draw up a table showing where there were similarities and where there were differences. This document too should be somewhere in there. It was very interesting. There were only four areas of real difference in the resolutions. One had to do with violence, and an anti-racketeering law. One of them or maybe two of them had to do with international trade and the importation of pottery or printed things. One of them had to do with equal pay legislation, because the AF of L was against federal legislation for equal pay for women and the CIO favored it. More on that in connection with women.

I was told I was to go into the Social Security Department. I protested to Stanley that I wanted to stay in the Research Department. He had already agreed, I guess, to my going into the Social Security Department. But I wanted to stay with the fields I'd been working in and the people I knew, and I liked working for Stanley. I liked Nelson Cruikshank too, head of the new social insurance department. But Social Security is often a pretty deadly subject, and although I'd been plunged in it enough to know quite a bit about it, it was not what I wanted to devote the rest of my life to. But I did not succeed in my protest, though I might have if I'd tried harder. I think Nelson felt strongly that he wanted everybody who might work on Social Security to be under him.

There were tremendous differences between the ways the AF of L and the CIO had operated. But I think that's another subject.

In the first months after merger there wasn't much for me to do in connection with the Social Security Department. We were in different buildings still. Oh I'd sometimes go over and use Nelson's office when he was out of town. So he asked me to work on family allowances. Then we moved into the same building and my special assignments were in the areas of Old, Survivors, and Disability Insurance, which then included health insurance, and public assistance or welfare, and at times I worked on Unemployment Insurance. Lee Bamberger worked also in the health fields. She came in a little later than I did. My files contain a great deal of material

on the Forand Bill and health benefits because that, beginning in '56, was one of my major areas of concentration. I continued to do some work on women, because I knew a lot about women, although this was not a major assignment.

An early assignment was to try to bridge over the difference between the AF of L and the CIO on equal pay. Nancy Pratt was an able girl working in the AF of L Research Department who was blanketed into the new one. So we worked on this together. And Nancy was sympathetic with the CIO position. We wrote the state federations to see what they thought and we found that the New York State Federation of Labor, from which Meany had come, was for equal pay legislation if it was enforced through a procedure like the NLRB's procedure rather than through an administrative one. So we went to Meany with this, and the position of the merged organization became in favor of equal pay legislation. After Nancy left, which was only about a year after the merger, Ann Draper came and took over the function of women in the Research Department. I cooperated very closely with Ann Draper and as I recall it, I turned over my files on Women to Ann, who is still with the AF of L-CIO, and I don't know for sure what's happened to those files of mine on women. (She doesn't have them.) (end of Tape 1, Side B)

(Tape 2, Side A)

M. This is a 3rd side of an interview with Katherine Pollak Ellickson, Sunday, December 15, 1974, at her home at 3420 McKinley Street. At first this is a continuation of an interview of the very general nature relating to Mrs. Ellickson's career in the labor movement. In sides one and two we've taken up her career to the merger of the AF of L-CIO in 1955 and her work with the Social Security and other departments at that time. This will be a continuation of the earlier tapes. This is part three and we've got it up to just about '56.

E. Well, actually I thought now instead of going into the details on my work in the Social Security Department, I would move on to when I left the AFL-CIO.

In the 1960 campaign for president, I got involved slightly in the Kennedy campaign. Esther Peterson, who was legislative representative of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, and perhaps of the Industrial Union Department, was very much involved in the campaign. She asked me if I'd write up something on why workers, particularly women workers, should vote for Kennedy. I wrote out a simple statement of this kind, which she liked. This kind of ingratiated me to her. We'd already collaborated many times in the preceding years. And then, I think it was in October, some people who were close to Jackie Kennedy asked me if I would help her with a press conference at which she would show some interest in important issues. So I sat on one side of her and Elizabeth Wickenden on the other side of her at a press conference while she was questioned. She didn't need to refer to us, needless to say, but it was a nice indication of interest in the campaign. Then when Kennedy was elected and Arthur Goldberg became Secretary of Labor, Esther Peterson became head of the Women's Bureau. One day I suggested to her that she might be interested in getting a Women's Commission appointed by the president or by somebody. Now the idea of a Women's Commission was not new in that through the years a group of us had supported the Celler bill, sponsored by the chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, that would have established a Women's Commission by legislation, to study various women's problems. This bill had been supported by various women's organizations, both because they thought it was a good positive step and because they were afraid that the Equal Rights Amendment would knock out protective laws for women workers as well as various practices that protected women in their family situations. We had met with these representatives of the women's organizations through various advisory committees to the Women's Bureau and the Children's Bureau. And we worked together on equal pay legislation, which had not gotten through. Esther immediately picked up the idea of a Women's Commission and told me to go over and see Evelyn Harrison who had a high position at the U.S. Civil Service Commission. And Evelyn was delighted with the idea. And so Esther asked me to develop this idea in cooperation with Evelyn Harrison and herself. And I got permission from Nelson Cruikshank to take partial leave as needed to work on plans for establishing what became the President's Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW). The story of how it was established and functioned, with Eleanor Roosevelt as chairman, will be told in separate document. I became its Executive Secretary of the Commission from '61 - '63. My files contain material not available elsewhere on how it was developed as well as

my set of official documents.

I tried at the end of '61 to get leave from the AFL-CIO to work for the Commission, but Nelson Cruikshank wouldn't recommend it. He was very indignant at my wanting to leave on short notice. I thought he was being unreasonable since no action was imminent that others couldn't handle. So to avoid the difficult emotional situation, I resigned, reluctantly, from the AFL-CIO. I was really very upset at this severing my relationship after so many years with the CIO. But in fact, with the coming of the Kennedy Administration, the initiative on social security and other issues had to a considerable extent shifted from the labor movement to the White House.

The work and reports of the PCSW led to immediate improvements in executive actions and laws for women and were important influences on the advances made by the women's movement in the '60's.

My experiences with the PCSW were very educational for me, especially on the experiences of black women and on activities at the highest levels of power. While I too got a lift from the latter activities, I felt that much that glittered was dross, and that I had had enough of that.

As the Commission was winding up, Murray Weisz, Esther's deputy, suggested I work for the President's Committee on Equal Employment Opportunity, likewise in the Department of Labor. So I shifted over to its small staff, who were carrying huge responsibilities. An early special assignment was to develop a field manual explaining practices that should be followed in investigating practices and securing compliance with the Executive Orders under which we operated. I also followed relevant Congressional action. It was during this period that the Civil Rights Act of '64 was passed in which Title 7 protected employment opportunities.

As contract compliance officer I was responsible for being the liaison with three government agencies who had the task of making compliance reviews of government contractors. While my assignments varied, three of them were the Navy, and HEW, oh I forget what the other was. I'm sure there are

very valuable materials in the Archives that deal with these compliance reviews, if they're available. I think a tremendous educational job was accomplished in this period even though the Legal Department of the Department of Labor was afraid to push too hard on compliance because they weren't sure of their legal authority to enforce this type of executive order. They were afraid the courts, in other words, might stop them from doing as much as they were doing. Then when Title 7 had been passed I helped with suggestions on activities of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission established by that Title and for a while I worked at the EEOC helping them get started.

I decided I did not want to continue working full time. My husband had retired. And the people at the President's Committee on Equal Employment Opportunity didn't want me to continue on part-time, so I got leave for a while, hoping that they would work out some arrangements for part-time employment. I just didn't have the energy to do all I wanted and work full time. In the fall of '64 and into '65, I made some attempts at writing.

I was particularly interested in the possibilities of developing a popular account of the early years of the CIO that would give an idea of the liveliness of the CIO movement and the extent to which this was a real mass movement. I felt that things that had been written about that period had somehow not conveyed the real feeling of what went on. This applied to some of the books that had been written which tended to break down the period into Steel, Autos, Rubber and so on, but somehow the interrelationships had gotten lost. Some of these books were academic and didn't have the feel that was in a book like Eddie Levinson's Labor on the March, which I think very much conveyed the feeling, but which was not written from a very objective point of view. Not that I wanted mine to be too objective either. I really wanted to see if I could write something popular. But I found as I worked on this that I couldn't do it to my satisfaction. I consulted a friend who was in the publishing business and he agreed that I didn't really have the touch to get a broad readership. I didn't want to take on a collaborator because I wanted to control what was said and I didn't want it to be too jazzed up. I also found that writing was a lonely occupation, and I gave it up. But my drafts for that possible book are in the files. And some of the materials from the early CIO period have been shifted over to the '64 - '65 part of the collection.

M. In other words, they shouldn't be.

E. They really belong back in the early years. I also, slightly later, wrote something comparing the Civil Rights Movement with labor's upheaval. And I have that manuscript here and I don't think you have a copy of it. Then I worked as a part-time consultant for the Social Insurance Administration in the Research Department - the equivalent of what I had worked for way back in Social Security Board days - on problems of women and Social Security.

M. What years are we talking about now?

E. Now we're talking about '66 - '67.

I drafted an article with a proposal picking up an idea from the President's Commission, from one of its technical committees, that during marriage a couple should have an equal claim on the joint family fortunes that were developed during marriage. I picked up this idea and developed an idea that during marriage, - this was put forward as a tentative proposal because it's a very complex matter - the husband and wife might share their earnings records for Social Security purposes, so each would be credited with half of their own earnings and half of the other person's earnings. This would be a method of protecting the wife who presumably during this period if she isn't working is making it possible for her husband to work, and raise a family at the same time. That material is in the file.

Then after I decided to stop work entirely in '67 when I became 62, I explored various volunteer activities feeling that I wanted to make use of my skills and make some continuing contributions. My skills had been in working with organizations rather than in helping individuals and I felt this was a pattern that I probably wanted to continue. So in the intervening years I did some work with the National Consumers League. I made a presentation before the EEOC in regard to interpretation of Title 7, dealing with the importance of protective laws for women and hoping they would not be knocked out as a result of Title 7. I also developed some information on the use of foreign workers in household work and the way they are exploited. Then I served as employment chairman on the Board of the D.C. League of Women Voters from '68 - '69. I did some volunteer work in the Humphrey campaign of '68 collaborating with Bob Nathan. And currently I am still on the board of the National Consumers League. I'm not doing much

with it. I'm collaborating with Caroline Ware in a small way on some proposals for International Women's Year, on including the contribution of housewives in measures of national production, similar to the Gross National Product.

But for the most part I am enjoying life. I have found the River Road Unitarian Church a very congenial group and for them I prepared a sermon on "Working for Labor's Goals" which I think you already have. And I have a few other little things I have prepared for them. I've gotten interested in poetry - both studying it and even writing a little. And I enjoy seeing friends and have found that having retired from professional life I have much more time to devote to developing friendships. My husband died four years ago.

M. Do you still keep in contact with the labor movement?

E. I do to some extent. Some of my good friends are still active in the labor movement, and I see them from time to time. I don't keep in as close touch as I'd like to. I think it's harder for a woman, in a way. I can't call up one of my former male collaborators freely and say "will you have lunch with me?" I used to do this some in CIO days. In the AF of L period this was not done. The men tended ... This is part of my story I'll get to about women in the labor movement.

M. Right. Well that's good. I think we've covered it. I've seen so many ideas that I didn't even get from looking at the inventory of your records, of the areas that I think which really need to be covered, and which haven't been looked at with your perspective. The records may be there but this is where oral history has a contribution to make because they interpret records. They fill in gaps in records. And they give an impression, sort of an impressionistic overview of a problem that you don't get from endless numbers of records. In fact, I often think that there are too many records for one to see really what the important things were.

E. Yes.

M. This is particularly true when you get to big organizations, the government ...

E. Yes.

M. That propensity to write and put things down for the record that obscures really what was happening.

E. And a lot of what happened never gets down on paper and that's part of what I want to talk about.

M. Well, can we plan a time later. I'll just put this down while I've still got the recorder going so it will be clear to me that I thought we go into some depth on the impact of your early experiences in life; your family, the Ethical School in New York, your college experience. Did it change you? Did you come from a family, a liberal already? What impact did Vassar have upon you?

E. Well, I thought I'd covered some of that. You don't feel that ...

M. You did, but I didn't ask any questions as we went along so as ...

E. I see.

M. Not to break the continuity of what was a very important story that you gave us that we really need to round out the collection. But I still want to go into this and ask some questions. Just as I want to discuss in detail your views on Brookwood: the people there; the relationships of the people there; the students; your reactions to some of the students; your evaluation of them at the time; how you as a woman were viewed in this particular role that you played, I think is important; what was there about Brookwood that made it different from other labor schools. Were you able to evaluate as you saw people like, assuming you knew them then and they were through, the Reuther brothers, Roy and Victor, Sophie or Frank Winn, Nat Weinberg? These are just a few from the UAW.

E. I had left Brookwood before they came, actually.

M. You had. Well, there would be others there at your period though. To see what the impact that this had upon the workers. This would be just in the ...

E. You mean this would be relevant to what the Reuthers got into later, you mean, even though they're...

M. Maybe, but maybe there would be other people too. I just mentioned the Reuthers because I happen to know that...

E. The impact of Brookwood on the students, you mean?

M. On the students. Did Brookwood have any relationship to Commonwealth College, for example, and the Highlander School and other attempts? I think I'd like to get into the CIO in a great deal more depth than we have and the personalities involved. I think we should, with your perspective and particularly looking back now, on the role of the left wing groups, the communists, the other splinter groups perhaps. What contributions they made. I wonder whether there isn't some more attention we could give to the CIO and its merger, in a little more depth.

E. What do you mean by that?

M. Well, what were the reactions for example of the staff to the proposed merger. Was there a consultation on the part of the leadership and the professional staff members? Or were you just told that there would be a merger and you would have jobs but you couldn't determine where they would be. I'm not sure in some of these areas. There may be nothing.

E. I understand.

M. But these are questions that come to my mind. And then the whole overview of women in the labor movement. Is the labor movement basically, in the local union level for example, in the general international union are they chauvinistic like other organizational units within our society? Why in most unions, even though a liberal one like the UAW, is there only tokenism as far as the women's movement is concerned? Only recently they've put in, and that's by edict from above, that a woman be a member of the Board, because they couldn't get it past a vote of the delegates. Now these are some of the things that our researchers are asking. These are some of the things that I think maybe you can throw some light on. Some you can prepare for, some, I, typical ones you'd want to, that you're used to doing where you do research, those where you'd just have to think and give a reaction to them. Rather than the toughtful type of study that you're used to doing in preparing a booklet or a position paper. (End Tape 2, Side A)

(Begin Tape 3, Side A)

M. Made on Wednesday, December 19th, at the home of Katherine Pollak Ellickson in Washington, D.C. This will be a second in a series of interviews relating to Mrs. Ellickson's career in the labor movement.

M. Well, let's perhaps go back to an earlier period in your life and just have you, if you will, respond to the question of what factors or what forces in your life led you to an involvement in liberal causes? What things do you remember about childhood? Experiences that were evident there? What impact did college life have upon you? Was there a spirit of the times at Vassar, when you were a student of the Ethical Culture School in New York? Just to mention a few that were discussed in the earlier interview.

E. Well, it's often hard to pinpoint just what factors get one to do what one does. As I guess I indicated earlier, I felt that going into the labor movement would be a way of helping to improve conditions and change society, and I did this quite deliberately. I first had made the decision at the end of my sophomore year to study economics for this purpose. The decision to go into the labor movement came somewhat later, but not very much later. I think that one fact that might be mentioned in this connection is that I came from a professional family. I was definitely not a member of the working class. I mentioned my great-grandfather who'd been a revolutionary in '48, which didn't make him a member of the working class either since it primarily wasn't a working class revolution. My family were all Jewish, although they weren't going to a synagogue. I think as I look back that this had some influence. I think the feeling that I got from hearing the Bible read and from the Ethical Culture School, which was predominantly Jewish, was that one had a certain responsibility for doing something about the conditions under which other people lived. My mother was somewhat interested in the Women's Trade Union League and the National Consumers League. My father was quite conservative, I'm told. He was a corporation lawyer in one of the big Wall Street firms.

His death undoubtedly affected me a great deal because this contributed to my not really being in a satisfactory social group, and my mother did not know how to handle well the emotional problems that came up. As far as my psychological slant went, I would say that I never really felt part of a comfortable social group in New York City. My mother had lost her status situation. We were not hard up because my father had carried very heavy life

insurance. I didn't go to school 'til the 5th grade because my mother taught us herself. She had been a teacher. I was shy and timid and I didn't feel really loved and accepted, for whatever reasons. I matured late, which made it harder for me to keep up with my school friends and their social activities. In my family the emphasis was very much on the intellectual and on accomplishments, and I was good at the intellectual and not particualrly at ease or good at the social things. Since my mother was quite a magnetic, strong and dominating personality, it meant that both I and my sister reacted against this. And so I had a fairly strong reaction against both authority and the intellectual. I think that my father's death accentuated whatever guilt feelings and hostilities I had already accumulated because this often happens with children. They feel guilty about a father's death and hostile at his leaving them. I was just eleven when he died. I also had cousins who came of a very wealthy family and I think that this kind of disillusioned me about the virtues of great wealth. The Ethical Culture School very much emphasized this feeling of social responsibility. I don't think there were any teachers there who particularly influenced me, more than the general tone of the school.

In college, I to some extent followed in my sister's footsteps. She was a year and a half older than I. And she was already active in the League for Industrial Democracy. And one of the professors there, Winifred Smith was a socialist and had some very good students. I to some extent got into this same group that my sister was already in. That made it easier for me to adjust to this group. I mentioned Anita Marburg Lerner who taught me labor problems. Mabel Newcomer was a very effective economics professor, who was not particularly radical herself but she also was not conservative. And then I had an excellent history teacher freshman year, Eloise Ellery, with whom I later took a course in the French Revolution, who was very effective in helping one to become interested in past experience in social change.

At college, for the first time, I felt accepted in a group. I became very active in student activities. I became chairman of the Student Curriculum Committee for two years, as a junior and a senior. I developed confidence. I did well in my studies. And so when I left college I was already very much interested in labor matters and in social change. And as I mentioned already we had a debate with Brookwood, exchanging visits while I was there.

M. You mentioned earlier that this was Vassar ...

E. Yes.

M. What were the other students like? What was the tone of the student body? This would have been in the 1920's, you told me.

E. Yes. This was from '22 - '26.

M. '22 to '26.

E. Well, there was a great range in the student body. But the group that I was in had similar interests to mine because I chose people who had similar interests. One of my close friends in college later was down in West Virginia working with children, following the strike. (Agnes Sailer) And my college roommate, while she hasn't done exactly the same kind of thing, has similar interests in social change (Elinor Goldmark Black). And some of the older students had similar interests although they didn't go into the labor movement. But we were a small group, a very intellectual group, who were not typical of the majority of the Vassar students although we got along well with many of them. There was a very active political association at Vassar which was one of the four big ones. The president of Vassar was actively interested in encouraging exploration by the students, and encouraged me and the Student Curriculum Committee. Is that what you want about ...

M. Yes.

E. ... college. Does that give it to you.

M. And you left Vassar in 1926? Was that the year that you graduated?

E. Yes, in 1926. I also had examples of women in the family being in professional activity, because my mother's sister was a doctor, and a very close, first cousin of my father's was an editor of the Saturday Review of Literature (Amy Loveman). I didn't have to break new ground to become a woman professional. I always assumed that a woman could do anything she wanted in the way of professional activity.

When I left college and started teaching at the Ethical Culture High School, teaching part-time history to 8th and 9th graders, I did not enjoy it very much and don't think I did it very well. I was not very well prepared in some of the history I was teaching. Then when I started tutoring at the New York Women's Trade Union League, I found that there the students wanted to learn and I didn't have the problem of having wiggly kids in front of me who were not interested in learning. And I also liked the fact that when teaching workers, I found I was learning too, because they had experiences which they talked about. Then in the summer of 1927 I went as a tutor to the Bryn Mawr Summer School for Women Workers in Industry, and went back in '28 and '29. A very unusual group of people were there. Hilda Smith as head set a very good tone. Theresa Wolfson was a teacher. The tutors were quite a remarkable group: Mildred McAfee became head of the WAVES; Ida Merriam became head of the research setup of the Social Insurance Administration; Helen Muchnic, who was one of my close college friends, became a professor of Russian literature at Smith. Altogether it was a very pleasant experience with these people. And we kept learning from the students.

M. Who were the students? Tell me something about the students: the student body, the profile, where they came from and how they got involved in both of these schools.

E. Well, the 100 students at the Bryn Mawr Summer School were of two distinct types. Some of them came from the needle trades, mostly with Russian-Jewish, radical background. They were socialists and communists. Then we also had a fair number of students who came through the Industrial Department of the YWCA which was scattered through the south and the middlewest. And Y girls came who had never run into radicals before, who had never belonged to a union, who didn't know anything about unions really. And it was very interesting to see the interactions. Some of these people had had high school education, particularly the American born workers. But the foreign born workers, in many cases, had had very little chance for education. In the Jewish tradition knowledge is very important so they wanted to learn, although they were handicapped in reading.

M. Had most of them already been in the world of work or ...

E. Oh, all the students. You had to be a worker to be a student. And the materials on this you have must be fairly substantial.

M. Yes.

E. Then as a tutor I became aware, as I think I said already, that the students couldn't read the kind of assignments that were being given them. Since my New York teaching was only part-time, I volunteered to try to write materials for them, and I wrote some. I went into that already.

Then in 1928-1929 my teaching was through and I decided to do graduate work at Columbia. I found Columbia to be too much like a factory and less interesting in its courses than Vassar, except for an excellent seminar I had with Evelyn Burns, who came from Britain. As part of her seminar, I studied the workers' education movement in Britain, both the WEA and the National Council of Labor Colleges. Altogether in that seminar I got more understanding of the labor movement in England and in this country. During this period I attended some of the Workers' Education Conferences at Brookwood, which were held each year at Washington's Birthday. The proceedings of these are either in my materials or in somebody's materials. These show the great range of subjects that were talked about and the concern about trying to improve the labor movement. I was impressed by the quality of the Brookwood faculty, by the friendliness there. And I wanted to get away from New York City. I'd been living at home and I felt this didn't work out well. I didn't really have any independent social life that I really enjoyed. So it seemed to be a good idea to go to Brookwood and develop my interests there. Brookwood occupied a unique place. I think you want me to explain this.

M. Yes, I would like you to.

E. I was there from the fall of '29 until June of '32 - three years. Now at that time Brookwood was already running into some problems. I won't go into the whole earlier history, but the AF of L had become very down on it. And this story I'm sure has been told. So that by the time I got there I think the quality of the student body had gone down. The faculty was still at a very high level. But a number of the AF of L craft unions had condemned it, as had Matthew Woll. The student body when I was there varied greatly from quite - well, there were a few college graduates actually, like Griselda Kuhlman. There were some workers, like the ones who came from Marion, North

Carolina who literally could barely read, and I tutored them. Then everything in between. We had some workers from Germany, the Niepolds, who'd been in the Social Democratic movement there. I think it was a year after I got there or maybe during the first year that Brookwood decided not to take any more students that they knew were communists. Earlier they had taken students of any political type and felt this was part of their function. But as the faculty minutes will show, they had found, increasingly, that the communists who came as students had apparently gotten Party approval for their coming and that they came to teach, not to learn, and Brookwood's facilities were being wasted on them.

M. How were the faculty recruited? How did you happen to join the faculty? Did you apply? Did they come to you? Did you know there was a place there?

E. Well this gets into a sensitive area

M. All right.

E. ... which I can tell you and I, this I'll probably repress. I had money and I wanted to go to Brookwood. I never told anybody this. But I said I would pay my expenses there in effect. That I would give them an amount equivalent to the salary they would pay me. So I don't know really what I should do with this piece of information. Whether this is something that I now should not be sensitive about. It may be of interest from a historical point of view. Because I'm sure the fact that I had a certain amount of money inherited when I became 21, you see this was left me by my father's will, meant that I was much freer to do things than many people would have been.

M. I think it shows a commitment though to what you wanted to do then and I don't think at this point that sensitive, that you should be concerned at least. But we can see later just how to handle this.

E. O.K. And going on, they knew me because I had written these other materials and I'd been at Brookwood Conferences, so I'd shown I could do appropriate writing, and they were interested because everybody knew that there was a shortage of materials. My assignment was to write materials, but also to help in other ways. What teaching I did was either tutoring these very handicapped Marion people or helping teach a few classes which were using the text book I was preparing. And I sat in on courses as I wished:

Tom Tippett's courses, because he was teaching from this book; Dave Saposs' because I wanted to learn what he was teaching; and a few of Muste's. And then there were many meetings of the whole student body where labor problems were discussed. So it was a wonderful education for me. Now as far as the faculty goes - do you want me to describe some of the faculty?

M. Yes, I would ...

E. Well, before I go into the faculty people let me say this. To understand Brookwood's role you have to view it in the background of the labor movement in the '20's, and the decline it was going through as the result of the anti-labor drive after World War I, the very anti-union attitudes of employers, the whole paternalistic approach which is described in J.B.S. Hardman's American Labor Dynamics. The pamphlet that I wrote for Brookwood "Our Labor Movement Today" is a picture from Brookwood's point of view of the state of the labor movement and where it fitted in. Brookwood overlapped to some extent with some of the progressives in the unions and in the Socialist Party. Dave Saposs taught some at the Rand School in New York which was a socialist school in New York. Some of the people from there came up to the Brookwood conferences. J.B.S. Hardman was the editor of the Advance, the Amalgamated's paper and he would come up, and so on. So it wasn't a clear cut separate group but it was less labelled than the Socialist Party. And it did in its early years have the objective of not being sectarian, of wanting to bring together people of various groups. Oh and then another thing was that when Brookwood was connected with these strikes and organizing efforts, Norman Thomas and the Emergency Committee for Strikers' Relief were a big resource. By the time I got there in '29, as I said, there had been some changes. But it was still a center for ideas and hope in spite of the very bad economic situation and the continued decline of the labor movement.

The students in some cases played quite important roles in various unions, like Alfred Hoffman who was an organizer for the Textile Workers in Elizabethton and Marion; Julius Hochman who became a vice president of the ILGWU, and others. But if students came there without much ability or background, I don't think that they were transformed. I mean people tended to take advantage of Brookwood's opportunity, as is usually the case, in proportion to their readiness to absorb it, their abilities, their potential, and their interest. The students to a considerable extent, held themselves separate from the faculty and the staff. So that there was a lot of good feeling among them but the students had a certain consciousness of themselves as students.

I and Cara Cook lived in the dormitory with the women students and Polly Colby who was single lived in the main house where the dining room was. In the dining room, single members of the staff and faculty ate with the students. There was no distinction. The married members of the faculty had their own houses and usually ate at home. I think you asked earlier what the students thought of me. This I don't quite know. But I imagine they might have thought I was a rather strange addition to the labor movement. But I was not very different from Cara Cook who was the secretary to A.J. Muste. And we, in the dormitory, we all helped clean the dormitory and there was a bathroom on each floor so that we mingled on an equal basis in the dormitory. And we didn't act uppity. And of course by that time I'd gotten to know enough students so that I could talk their language and have respect for them.

M. Were there any of the students that you recognized then as potential leaders? Those that showed great promise at that level in their career. What were the ages of the students who came? And how do you recall, how were they chosen?

E. Well, we did not have a great many more applicants that we could take, actually. And this was true of the Summer Schools too, for reasons that are not altogether clear. At Brookwood there had been a two-year residence course but I think during my first year they decided to cut it to one year or maybe this was the year before I came. And students either had to pay a certain amount or their unions had to pay. Or in the case of these people from Marion, North Carolina, I don't think they bothered to charge them. I'm not sure about that. But with the Depression, of course, it became very difficult to pay and the unions were cutting down on their support of Brookwood. In answer to your question, I don't know what an analysis of the activities of the students would show, you see, because you'd have to go back through quite a few years. I'm sure many of them played an important role in local unions. One of the really able ones, Larry Hogan out of Marion, North Carolina, was killed in an auto accident. He was a Brookwood product who learned a tremendous amount there. My own feeling is that the really big contribution of Brookwood was not through the students but through the faculty and the influence they had on a certain number of students but also on the broader group of people who came to these Workers' Education Conferences or who learned as the result of the lectures, the writings, the focus that Brookwood gave to the labor movement at that point.

Now as to the faculty, Muste, the head, was a very able man. He'd been a minister. He was quite intellectual. He was a crusading prophet in some ways, deeply committed, and I'm sure had a lot of influence on many of the people who came under his influence. Tom Tippett had come out of the Illinois coal fields, originally a member of the United Mine Workers. And the Illinois District of the Mine Workers had been one of the centers of progressivism in the United Mine Workers. He was a very magnetic, committed person, very emotional, not as much of an intellectual though able, very dramatic. Both he and Muste had a sense of humor. And Tom was very good at giving the feel of what was going on in the textile mills or the coal mines. He too influenced many people. Dave Saposs was a quite different type, just as much committed, but the Jewish scholar and wise man, in the good sense. He had been a brewery worker himself earlier, had put himself through the University of Wisconsin as a court reporter, and then had helped Commons with his history. He had a wonderful memory, and liked to help young people. He was not a charismatic teacher, in fact he was rather dull in his method of presentation and his writing. But he knew more about the labor movement than anybody I ran into in those years or since, and had a good knowledge of practical politics so that his influence was extensive though of a different type. Later on in the various activities he took part in, as head of the Division of Economic Research of the National Labor Relations Board and other things that he did, he influenced a great many young people who themselves became active research directors of unions and so on. Clint Golden, who was the business manager the first year I was at Brookwood, came out of the Machinists' Union. He'd lost his job in the shop workers strike of '22. He was blunt, wise, a man of action, who enjoyed life. He had a lot of good practical background in the labor movement. I think the spirit of Clint is conveyed in one of the books about steel, I think maybe by R.R.R. Brooks, who tells about his going into Aliquippa. Mark Starr, who later became education director of the ILG, came out of the British National Council of Labor College's movement, and had a broad background.

All the faculty were really committed. They were there because they believed in it. Nobody went into this because it was a good way to make money. So I don't think you could match that group of labor people in any other spot at that time, any university, any other place where you had such a coming together of a variety of labor experience. Closest might be the Rand School, but that tended to be more limited - pretty much the Jewish,

socialist, labor movement.

Oh, I was starting to talk about what they thought of me. I left out a point. After lunch everyday anybody who wanted to play volleyball, men and women together, on the volleyball court. And at least my last year there I was in charge of seeing that the volleyball court was kept in repair and so on, and I'm sure this was another link because I was a reasonably good volleyball player as was Cara Cook. And this was a heck of a lot of fun.

M. You mention Cara Cook. Just as an aside, is she still living in Maine? Bridgeton, Maine?

E. So far as I know, she is. I think she married Cal Bellaver, who was another coal miner from Illinois. He became an organizer for the Textile Workers Union. I don't know what's happened to Cal. He was down in West Virginia helping organize miners there when I was down there.

M. She was in Maine a year ago, or two years ago.

E. I haven't seen her for years. So far as I know she's still there.

M. At this period were any of the Reuther brothers, Victor or Roy, or their wives, several of whom attended Brookwood, would they have crossed paths at that period?

E. I don't recall, I think I remember Roy Reuther coming to visit once. But they were not in the student body at that time. Larry Rogin says that I helped him get started in workers' education because when I became active with the Militant Socialists in New York and met him and still kept in touch with Brookwood, I knew that after the split came at Brookwood that there was an opening for a librarian and Larry's wife Ethel got the job as librarian. Larry went to Brookwood at that point.

Now it may be of interest to talk a little about Brookwood's split. I think I mentioned this before. I felt strongly that further splintering of the labor movement was a mistake. And Muste and Tippett and Cara Cook moved in that direction and they had to leave Brookwood because the majority felt otherwise. For young people who want to go into the labor movement, I

think it's terribly important to realize that you need broad support; that splinter groups keep splintering, or have in the past kept splintering; and that considerable experience shows that they defeat themselves by so much infighting with other groups that are not very different, rather than paying attention to the great majority of the workers or other people they are trying to reach. Another lesson I learned from that period was that it is a good idea to keep ideas alive in periods when you can't make much actual progress, but that substantial social progress comes when the conditions are right. The mass movement and the success of the CIO certainly demonstrated this. And I think some historians - I felt this even when I read Arthur Schlesinger's books about the New Deal - don't sufficiently stress the mass movements which made possible the changes that took place. It's easy for historians to talk about personalities and not give equal emphasis to this other factor.

M. Was there evidences of the split when you were there? Between ...

E. Yes. Muste started trying to make the Conference for Progressive Labor Action into a political party, similar to the Trotskyites or the Lovestonites or the Communists. Before that it had been a broad, encompassing group. I was against this change and fought it in the New York Chapter of the CPLA. Perhaps that was after I'd left Brookwood. I think that Muste was driven to this in part by the Depression and the frustrations at Brookwood, which was losing some of the endowment it had gotten and union gifts. I guess this always tends to happen though when things are going badly: more infighting than in normal times.

M. Were the issues of industrial unionism brought up at all in Brookwood at the time?

E. The position of Brookwood for industrial unionism was very clear and this is in the literature I am talking about. The criticisms of the craft and the limited approach of the AF of L were clear, and David Saposs was talking about labor culture. He wrote a number of books in this period. After the merger had taken place, Morris - what was his first name, the historian ...

M. James Morris.

E. I guess it was James Morris, came to me as to some others with his first draft of his book about Brookwood, which has now been published. But this first draft amazed me because he implied that Brookwood had brought about the CIO, because like the CIO, Brookwood believed in industrial unionism. Well actually, while various people from Brookwood played a role in the CIO and it was certainly an important factor in my own education, you know the movement was so much bigger than anything Brookwood could have promoted. This was pretty ridiculous.

M. That would have been James Morris, now at Cornell. You mentioned Cara Cook and other women there. Were there any problems in terms of recruitment of the faculty or the students? Were they progressive as far as the involvement of women in the movement?

E. I think it was assumed that women had an equal place to play in the labor movement. This was not a problem. And we had Negro students and one or two Latin American students from Central America. No, this was part of the basic beliefs and nobody questioned it.

M. We're almost at the end of this tape. Would you like to sum up anything you have in retrospect about Brookwood and the impact it may have had on your own career or would you like now to turn to the transition to the CIO?

E. Well, I'm sure in my own case that it gave me better understanding of the whole labor movement and the various problems of workers themselves.

M. You left Brookwood

E. The end of '32.

M. End of '32. What were the reasons that prompted you to ...

E. Well I felt I had enough of it. It was very isolated for me actually, 60 miles from New York, and I felt I wanted more social contacts. Being in New York working with the Militant Socialists, I felt I was with people with whom I could have a more satisfactory social life. And that I was equally useful there. Brookwood was going through this very difficult period anyhow.

M. Then all the time that you were with Brookwood, in fact from the time you left Vassar, you were still associated and involved in the socialist movement and groups in New York City?

E. No. I was not associated with the socialist groups in New York City until, I guess it was '31, when I joined them.

M. I see.

E. And when I was teaching in New York, it was not socialists I was working with. It was the Workers Education Movement, which was not particularly socialist: the Women's Trade Union League and the Bryn Mawr Summer School. Rose Schneidermann, I guess, may have been a socialist. But I don't know that she belonged to the party.

M. Well, certainly the League for Industrial Democracy that you were associated with in college ...

E. But I did not keep up that connection particularly.

M. I see.

E. I'd see them occasionally but ...

M. All right. Why don't I at this point turn this tape over.

(End Tape 3, Side A)

(Begin Tape 3, Side B)

M. Continuation of an interview with Mrs. Ellickson. At this point Mrs. Ellickson would you like to explain how you became involved in the CIO and devote some attention to the formation of that organization and your association with it.

E. Well, in my first interview I gave a little of what happened in the meantime, which included the fact that I'd gotten married and spent a year in New York, a year in Chicago, and a year in North Dakota. And I mentioned my being hired by Brophy to work at the CIO as he was opening the office.

M. By this time you'd returned to Washington?

E. Yes. I worked very closely with Brophy and I thought it might be interesting to talk about him a little.

M. Yes. I'd like that.

E. Brophy in his book A Miner's Life talks about his early life and background. He was very deeply committed to the labor movement. And he was a devout but radical Catholic. His early story and what he says about the CIO is inadequate as a picture of what really went on in the CIO. John obviously didn't feel he wanted to go into a full, frank discussion in the book. As I recall it, his taped interview in the oral history collection at Columbia is much more satisfactory than his book. Although he'd had very little formal education since he went into the mines very early in Britain, he was a great reader, and had a good grasp of the whole union movement. Tempermentally in some ways he was a philosopher as well as a man of action - perhaps more of a philosopher. He was very good at grasping the essentials of union situations, and was well-steeped in the various political aspects of the labor movement. He was good at formulating what needed to be done. When he made up his mind to something, he stuck to that. He had been through great hardships during the Depression as well as in his youth. And he knew when he came to work for the CIO that he was dependent on John L. Lewis and he knew very well Lewis's autocratic approach to things. He obviously felt that he couldn't buck Lewis but had to go along with him to some extent even when he felt this wasn't quite right. Brophy liked to talk and would come into my office and talk at length. And I sometimes would get impatient because I felt there was work of mine to be done. (laughter) He was very good at evaluating John L. Lewis and would talk to me quite frankly about Lewis's good qualities as well as his limitations. Brophy, like Lewis, hired people he could trust. I had been recommended to him and he knew my background enough. So his first secretary was his niece and the next secretary hired was his wife's niece. When he hired Len DeCaux I think he felt that Len would do what Brophy needed and that Len knew the labor movement, although I think Brophy knew that Len was somewhat close to the communists.

As the staff expanded, which was not really, as far as my part of the work went, until '37, I, like Brophy, hired with Brophy's approval, people that I felt knew the labor movement and could be trusted and had real commitment to the labor movement. These people are still around, if anybody wants to interview them, like Hannah Copperman now married, and Nancy Elliot Karro. The staff in the headquarters expanded very slowly. It was a small, devoted staff. After Len DeCaux there was, in the Legal Department, Tony Smith and Joe Korner, also living in Washington. We got a lot of help from the UMW people in making all the office arrangements and in publicity. Lewis very much controlled the publicity himself.

If you want my comments on Lewis, I felt all along that he was a wonderful actor, that he had a trememdous sense of publicity, that he was very ambitious. It became obvious increasingly that he could not, did not want to cooperate on an equal basis with his colleagues who were heads of other unions. He just wasn't that type of personality. And although I knew the history of what he'd done in the Mine Workers from Brophy and Powers Hapgood and from my earlier experiences at Brookwood, I, at the time, was very symapthetic with his dramatic efforts to attack the AF of L and to dramatize what the CIO was trying to do. Looking back now, I feel that he unnecessarily embittered the fight with the AF of L. And certainly the way he ridiculed Green at the '36 Mine Workers Convention was not the act of a man who was really thinking of getting along with the AF of L people. I don't know how one evaluates the extent to which a less aggressive and dramatic approach would have been successful in arousing support and getting publicity without making the fight with the other unions quite so intense. Of course the AF of L itself had become very hidebound and the craft unions in many cases had a job monopoly attitude which made them completely unsympathetic to efforts to organize the less skilled workers.

In the CIO office after we'd opened up shop we were very eager to get publicity and gradually broke into the press, and delegations started coming to visit us. Brophy would meet these delegations and I often was there taking minutes. I was impressed by the very able way in which Brophy would talk to these delegations. He knew their language. He was sympathetic with them. He'd get to the point. He would encourage them, indicate that they would get support, but in cases where this might take time, he'd make that clear too. He would typically indicate to them their responsibility, that the CIO couldn't do it all: they would have to make the decisions and do what they could. I think he was very effective in that way.

M. Where were you located, incidentally?

E. We started off in the Rust Building, 15th and K Streets. And we had expanded and moved to a building on K street and then later moved up to Connecticut and L. The real expansion of staff didn't come until the spring of '37.

E. But in your first location you were almost around the corner from the Mine Workers?

E. Yes. They were in the Tower Building.

M. As I recall, in your work with the CIO you've indicated and your papers show that you attended a number of meetings in which you were responsible for keeping minutes of the activities and what went on in the meetings.

E. Yes. The CIO would have its official meetings. It was the Committee for Industrial Organization, of course. And when the presidents of the unions came together, Brophy and I would be there. We would prepare a report which was submitted by Brophy to the meeting. I would take notes at the meetings and Brophy would then send out the official minutes, which I had written up from the notes.

M. To the historian looking at this period then and readding your notes, or reading say the minutes, for example, how would they compare with the actual transactions? How close were they? What was your style of minute taking?

E. Well, my style of minute taking was the best I could do not knowing any stenography. I learned to abbreviate and they didn't talk very fast, Lewis particularly was a very slow speaker. I tried to get down as much as I could of the conversation. However, there were certain things that never got into the minutes, and this is part of the unwritten history. I remember saying to my husband several times during this period: "The real history never will be written," because so much went on that never got down on paper and probably wouldn't be repeated. Now just what all these things were I don't recall. But I can recall two of them. After Lewis resigned from the AF of L Executive Council, and I may have put this in my notes, but I remember clearly David Dubinsky's coming in and saying "John, if you'd told me you were going to resign I might have resigned too." Which Ithought was interesting, not so much

as an indication of what Dubinsky would have done but of the way Lewis went ahead and didn't bother to tell his colleague on the Executive Council that he was about to resign. Then another thing I remember and this must have been at a meeting in Pittsburgh, but I'm not sure, when Lewis announced that he had admitted, had given charters to some additional international unions. And one of these was obviously in conflict with the AF of L: the Industrial Union of Marine and Shipbuilding Workers, Johnny Green's outfit. And as he said this I was watching Sidney Hillman and Hillman laughed in a way that to me indicated this was all news to him, that Lewis was thus flaunting the jurisdiction of the important craft unions in the AF of L, because of course the Shipyard Workers in the AF of L included the prominent metal trade unions like the Machinists and Plumbers.

M. When you took minutes of meetings, what were the steps that were taken as far as the final version? Were they edited by Mr. Brophy and Lewis or did they come out as written? Were you able to predict and anticipate what they wanted published?

E. Yes. And these were not published they were sent to the Presidents, the Committee members.

I was pretty well able to anticipate. I think there may have been one time when Brophy had me change them but normally the typed copies of minutes which are in my own files are what were sent out. Now I guess I don't have the official version of these. But I think they're the equivalents. And they were developed from my hand-written notes, which are also in the files, along with my typed copies of them, which are slightly longer than the minutes.

M. I see.

E. Another very important meeting on which I took notes was the meeting where Lewis laid down the law to the Amalgamated Association of Iron Steel and Tin Workers, which I mentioned before.

M. What associations did you have with Lewis in terms of working with Brophy in the CIO? Did he come there frequently? Was he personable when he was off stage?

E. Well, he didn't come around the CIO much. If conferences were needed people went over and saw him at the Mine Workers. I had some dealings with

him directly but not very many. I sometimes sat in on a press conference or something. My dealings were usually through Brophy. And perhaps I should put this in here, which I was going to put in my women in the labor movement part. The Mine Workers' officers, Lewis, Murray and Kennedy, had male secretaries. They did not have women secretaries. When Phil Murray set up the Steel Workers Organizing Committee, Clint Golden told me that he had to persuade Phil Murray to hire women secretaries for Clint and others. That the tradition was so strong that you didn't have women. Naturally the Coal Miners Union didn't have women in it, and I think that these mine union men were not used to dealing with women who were responsible, professional people. This just was not part of their pattern. When Lewis hired people for the CIO office in '37, they were partly friends of his daughter Katherine from Alexandria. One of them became my secretary in 1937. She was a society girl who knew nothing about the labor movement. She was quite intelligent. She could take stenography. But it was a completely different approach than Brophy and I had followed of getting people who knew and believed in the labor movement. The change was reflected in a whole series of girls that were hired in '37. And then there was an extraordinary business of somebody called a Miss Bendelari, who was hired to head the Charter Department in mid-'37. This was at the stage where we were issuing charters and after the whole system had been set up. She is described in a book by Elizabeth Hawes called Fashion is Spinach as having been an adventuress in Paris some years earlier. But she had gotten herself close to Mrs. Lewis and Katherine Lewis and was appointed to this position. She knew nothing and couldn't operate, but just was smart at using other people. And Lewis tolerated this kind of thing, but yet got rid of the people who knew about the labor movement that Brophy had hired, as I explained in my earlier tape.

However, that while interesting, is not nearly as important as Lewis's bringing in Lee Pressman. It was in the spring of '37 that Lewis deliberately set about setting up the kind of staff that he could control. Maybe I mentioned that he put in his brother-in-law Bell as the top person in the office, I think with the title of Treasurer. A man from the Mine Workers called Walter Smethurst, who was a nice person but not a very strong person, was put in charge of the other office operations. Pressman has of course admitted that he had belonged to the Communist Party at one time, in the Department of Agriculture. And there's no reason to think that he dropped that membership or connection until considerably later because in '48 he left the CIO finally to work for Wallace when this was Communist party line. You won-

dered before, I believe, why I thought Lewis knew that he was turning things over to the communists. One thing I know from my own experience was that when he was going to form the Agricultural Workers Union and there was going to be a meeting under the leadership of Donald Henderson, who became the president, I talked to Gardner Jackson, who was fairly close to Lewis and very interested in agricultural workers, and I told Gardner that I was very concerned about this, that I knew Donald Henderson from the Teachers Union in New York and I knew he was a communist party member, and it seemed that this was a great mistake. Gardner said he talked to Lewis about this. But Lewis went right ahead with his plans. Other people have told me that in the same way they protested to Lewis that he was giving power to Communists. So he was not ignorant of it. And my own interpretation is that with his ambitions, Lewis from the very beginning visualized that there would probably be a new federation. After he'd been successful in autos and steel, he felt that he could move ahead to really set up a new federation. He wanted to be sure he could control it. He felt he could control the communists because they would be dependent upon him. He wanted to have as many different unions in name with some membership and the communists would be prepared to set up these separate unions. And Lee Pressman had already become very useful. Lee was a very able man. I did not have many dealings with him directly but Phil Murray too leaned very heavily on Lee, when both Phil became CIO president, and in the Steel Workers. Lee had many contacts. He had the advantage of all these, of all the communists' contacts which may have included Edwin Smith on the Labor Board, and included to some extent some people who were working for the LaFollette Committee. These people may not have been communists but they were not as anti-communist as I was. And Lewis may have also felt that with the communists in the unions he could be sure of not having compromises reached with the AF of L unions.

Now my own strong anti-communist feeling grew out of the fact that I had seen in New York and in the southern textile situations and in others how damaging the Communist line was. And of course until about 1936 the international line of the communists was for dual unionism. To them the socialists were the greatest "social facists", the greatest enemies of the working class. I was in Russia in 1932 after I left Brookwood, and had first visited the socialists in Vienna, and then was in Russia long enough to see the complete control that the communists had over the psychology of the people. I realized then that the Russian workers would attack the socialists in Vienna thinking they were the greatest enemy of the working class, if they had been asked to

do this, because the control was so great. I felt that the communist attitude in Germany had helped make the Nazi victory possible, as I think is now generally accepted, because they had worked with Hindenburg in the 1932 election there.

M. Was Pressman's activities well known when he was hired? Or were there merely suspicions of the identification?

E. Well, my knowledge of this came to considerable extent through Dave Saposs who had pretty good contacts on this. Dave was more violently anti-communist than I was and he had been ousted at the Labor Board by a combination of communist and reactionary attacks. So he had reasons for personal bitterness on it. It was, it certainly should have been, possible for Lewis to know all this. As I say people went to him with it. And Clint Golden was aware of this. I think great damage was done to the CIO by this policy. It's true that some of the communists made quite a contribution in organizing. I think that this could be said of Wyndham Mortimer. And what was that young chap in Flint?

M. Bob Travis.

E. Bob Travis, yes.

M. Speaking of the Flint Sit-down Strike, were you involved in any way or familiar with the events that ...

E. Well, I stayed in Washington, while Lewis and Brophy and Len DeCaux were in Detroit. So I was the top person in the CIO office at that point, our staff was so small. And when the news of the settlement with G.M. came over, this was terribly exciting to us. And I had to get out the Union News Service the next day. Len told me how to get it out. I'd never pasted up dummy before. And we were operating with so small of staff that when Len was gone, why one pitched in and did these things. We were carrying on a certain amount of other publicity and so on in the Washington office, but the strike was being handled out of Detroit at that point. I had been getting out some pamphlets and leaflets and so on but my job was really in the Washington office rather than helping with these field situations. I did help some with the early activities of the Steel Workers. I went to Pittsburgh and gave some advice to one of the people in the Research Department on a study they wanted to make. And I wrote

the first leaflet that the Steel Workers Organizing Committee published. I conferred sometimes with Harold Ruttenberg and would help him at the Washington end when he wanted information, or that kind of thing.

M. What was the period again that you were with the CIO in Washington?

E. I was with them from November 15, '35 'til the end of December '37 when I was laid off. And then I was rehired December 15, '42.

M. '42.

E. Now I have some more notes here. If want them.

M. Fine.

E. Oh, here's some more about the commies, while I'm on the subject. After I went back to the CIO we were on Jackson Place, and my office was on the third floor between the elevator and Lee Pressman's office. My desk had its back to the window - I mean I had my back to the window, and I could watch through the door as people went back and forth to Lee Pressman's office. And I would see all these alleged communists going back and forth to Lee Pressman's office. Like Nat Witt of the Labor Board and Charlie Kramer who was working with Senator Pepper from Florida, and others. And so what I saw confirmed my feeling that, although I wasn't sure all these people were communists, they certainly had rather constant contacts with Lee. And Clint Golden, when he was trying to get Phil Murray in the early 40's to get rid of Lee because Clint was strongly anti-communist, told me on one occasion that the FBI had listened in on caucuses that the communists would hold during CIO conventions. And Clint said he had told this to Phil Murray and told him the evidence was strong that Pressman was cooperating with these people. And as I recall it Phil Murray told Clint he had asked Lee Pressman if he was a communist and Lee said no, and Phil Murray believed him at that point.

M. At this time Lee Pressman was general ...

E. General Counsel. He became General Counsel of the CIO in the spring of '37, and continued until he resigned in '48. So it was quite a long period.

Now I don't want to over emphasize the communist part because of course the really important thing that was going on was the tremendous expansion of

the CIO as the Auto Workers and Steel Workers were successful, and then came the tremendous sweep of demands for help from the CIO, which Eddie Levinson describes very well in his book, Labor on the March. We were swamped with letters asking for help. I think anybody who wants to catch the spirit of what was really going on in this gathering momentum of a mass movement can get it from Eddie Levinson's book. Also I think its worth reading the Union News Service, the weekly clipsheet that Len DeCaux got out, because in that you get the interactions between events in different industries. Also I suppose I should throw in the pamphlets and leaflets that I was writing (laughter) and that the CIO was publishing, but the Union News Service especially. I looked at it more recently. Most of it is in my collection. In fact I may have given you a complete set plus a partial set. I had both.

M. I think you did.

E. Yes. In these you get the things that were happening at the same time. They went to every local we could reach. I at one point very early, - this must have been even in '35 - went into the AF of L building and asked them for their printed lists of locals. And they gave it to me. These were the lists of directly affiliated locals of the AF of L. We then mailed this clipsheet to all these unions which were the germinating industrial unions that the AF of L hadn't quite known how to handle in many cases. And so the CIO story kept spreading through the country? that the Gas and Coke Workers were doing this, the Auto Workers were doing this, the Rubber Workers were doing this, Lewis had made this speech, more unions had joined the CIO. And you had a mounting interaction all through the country.

When the Steel Workers and Auto Workers were successful, as I said, then we had a tremendous avalanche of requests. When I say we I mean, of course, the CIO. Many of the letters that came in asking for help came through the Mine Workers. They were addressed to John L. Lewis, President of the Mine Workers, Washington, D.C., and went to the Mine Workers office and then would be sent over to us. Katheryn Lewis insisted that every one of these letters had to be answered over John L. Lewis's signature at the Mine Workers before they came over to us. We would get them in great batches, typically about four weeks after they'd been sent, and it nearly drove us wild to have such delay. Here were these appeals from workers, who were risking their necks by asking for union help or in desperate need of advice, and their letters would just sit in the Mine Workers' office for days. I went to Brophy about this. But Brophy didn't feel he could interfere with the

way the Mine Workers were running it, and so far as I know he may never have made a protest. Lewis probably never knew this, but Katheryn surely must have and she was Lewis's assistant at the Mine Workers.

We worked out a system by which our very small staff could answer with form letters. I would mark on each incoming letter which form letter should go in answer, and then somebody'd send them out. Of course the demand for organizers was much greater than the demand for written answers. At that point the Mine Workers gave a lot of help and the organizing staff of the CIO was gradually built up.

As far as issuing charters went, I would make recommendations to Brophy who would pass them on the Charlie Howard, the CIO Secretary, about getting out the charters. And typically, I think, we didn't bother to wait for Charlie Howard if it was a clear cut case where we could charter. But I clearly remember once when he came into the office and we'd had a request for an industrial union charter from a printing outfit in New England somewhere, I think it was Connecticut. We weren't sure what Charlie Howard would say about this, as head of the Typographical Union, but he said go ahead. He really believed in this too.

And we built up mailing lists. We got help from the Cornelius Printing Company, which had printed the Mine Workers' stuff for years and handled their mailing lists. A very nice Mr. Workman would come in and give us advice about how to handle all this, and we worked up a system with all the necessary forms, the charters themselves, the seals that the unions had to use and mailing lists. Cornelius handled a lot of the mailing lists, the actual mailing.

The influence of the Mine Workers was very strong when the questions came as to what kind of advice to send out to these unions about their constitutions, and about how to run meetings. I took the old United Mine Worker constitution for local unions, which went back I think to 1890, although it might have been modified since. I modified this slightly to meet the new situation and the pledge that we sent out to the local unions in the model was the old United Mine Worker's pledge, which was a very progressive pledge actually in terms of no discrimination, and everybody being brothers and pledging to help each other and so on. Eddie Levinson ends his book with it I think.

M. Yes. That's right. You've mentioned Katheryn Lewis on a number of occasions. Did you have any, very many personal dealings with her? What sort of a

person was she?

E. Virtually none. She was a very unfortunate person. She was very, very abnormally fat, quite short, I would say not more than five feet tall, if that. But she must have weighed over 200 pounds, well over. It must have been some glandular thing. I think Lewis was very fond of her. I did not have personal contacts with her.

M. Did you have any contacts with the son?

E. No. I never saw his son.

M. There was a great deal, as you know, of hostility between the son ...

E. Well, I'm not surprised.

M. ... and his father.

E. Yes. No, I didn't know that.

M. In fact shortly after John L. Lewis's death his son immediately took all the belongings from the home in Alexandria and put them up for auction in Milwaukee and was very bitter toward his father. In fact took delight in selling off things that he knew his father cherished. This also included some of John L. Lewis's early letters and correspondence with Harding. And Lewis had aspirations to become vice-presidential candidate on the Republican ticket in the '20's, and was sounded out by Harding, Coolidge and those people. And the correspondence relating to this was in the collection that his son, John I believe, or at least the son put up for auction, about four years ago.

E. Oh?

M. So this part of Lewis's life which showed his political aspiration ...

E. Yes.

M. ... came out.

E. This just fits in with what developed later when he wanted to be vice-presidential candidate under Roosevelt and his tremendous ambition you see. This makes me feel again that this whole move of building up this big federa-

tion was to give him the stature whereby he could achieve these ambitions.

M. Lewis's attitude and certainly his hostility toward Roosevelt must have had an impact on the staff of the CIO.

E. Well, I had been laid off at the end of '37, you see, and didn't go back until '42. So I was not there at the time because that took place I think in '38 or '39. But from what I heard, this was true and everybody was supposed to follow the Lewis line when he decided to come out for Wilkie.

On my objections to communists, perhaps I should add a couple more points that are in my notes. At Brookwood I had forced myself to read the Daily Worker, which seemed to me often to falsify things. The black and white attitude of many of these communists I felt was not one that would get them very far. Particularly I felt, that the Communist International line just wasn't adapted to U.S. conditions. The International dictated to the party and the party followed the line they set. The dual unionism policy they had followed was very bad. Now another point that's interesting is that in the spring of '36, it was clear that the Communist line had shifted because we had delegations come into us from industrial unions that had been chartered by the AF of L asking us now to help them. They wanted to break away from the AF of L. And this was when the International's line had shifted. The communist unions in this country were now going to the CIO rather than the AF of L. I'm sure this can be traced down. I don't know how much this is in the history books but it was clear from where we were. I don't mean to say that the communists were in control of all these industrial unions at that point, because they weren't. But there were maybe a few spirits who were under communist influence, in the Woodworkers and in some of the others, I can't name them all now.

The United Radio and Allied Trades had a meeting, in the spring of '36, and I think my notes on that are in the files. This was a very interesting session. The locals decided to go ahead together looking towards a national union. Again this had some commie elements in it, including Julius Empspak.

I first saw Jim Carey in early January '36. He came into the office. He was then about 21 years or 23 years old, very young, full of energy, quite cocky. He was on his way to the AF of L Executive Council meeting. He was going to ask for a charter for an international union and he expected to be turned down. I guess he was referred to me or maybe Brophy wasn't in the office.

Jim wanted help in going over his plan of approaching the AF of L Executive Council. I think he knew perfectly well he wasn't going to get it. Carey of course later made some serious mistakes particularly in so far as he may have been involved in the final election which was reversed. But he deserved a lot of credit, I think, for what he did in the CIO in those years and after I went back in '42, in trying to fight the communists. He'd had his own experience with them in the U.E. where he'd been eased out. I think he'd been a socialist all along. I think Dave Saposs told me that Carey was back in '33. I don't mean a Socialist Party member but I mean that he was no conservative. But Jim was determined to do what he could within his power to prevent the communists from taking over too much of the CIO. I would see Jim at convention times as well as in the office. He was a very good friend of Emil Rieve, and we'd get together, the three of us, occasionally at the conventions. But there was one specific incident that might be mentioned which I'm sure is nowhere in the history books. Somewhere along in the '40's during World War II, a man called Bragman was brought in who was supposed to become the Research Director of the CIO. And this may have been between the times that Ray Walsh was head of the Department and that Eby became head. Bragman came from the Railroad Retirement Board and I gathered from what Dave Saposs told me that he was one of a communist-sympathizing group there. Of course I didn't at all like the idea of his coming in to head up the Research Department. Bragman made some serious error which I now can't recall but it was something like charging up some expense that he shouldn't have charged on an expense account, and I went to Carey about it. (End of Tape 3, Side B)

(Begin Tape 4, Side A)

M. This is a continuation of a recording relating to James Carey. Mrs. Ellickson, you were mentioning the incident relating to the new Research Director Charles Bragman was it or ...

E. I forget his first name ... Jim Carey fired him. And our department, the Research Department end of the department, was one of the very few where the communists did not succeed in getting any real foothold. When I say the communists I don't mean necessarily Communist Party members but people who might be called fellow travellers.

M. How long a period then did you work with James Carey?

E. Well, I knew Jim on and off, from then on. And he had a friendly feeling towards me. Now Jim had his limitations. But I think his cockiness and his

drive were what enabled him to organize the Philco Plant when he was 21. I tend to forgive somebody when his weaknesses were at one point his strengths: his self-assurance had determination to go ahead. Not that I excuse what went on later, but I'm sympathetic with him.

M. How did he get along with John L. Lewis?

E. Well, for a while they got on quite well apparently, because it was Lewis who made Jim Carey the Secretary instead of Brophy. And Brophy had apparently expected to become the Secretary. Was that in '38? I think that ...

M. Yes.

E. ... Yes. I think that's right. Now I think I should go a little more into what happened when I was laid off at the end of '37. This was part of the move of Lewis to get control of the office. And of course I don't really know how much of this was the result of Pressman, how much the result of Bendelari, and what she was saying about anybody she couldn't control. And some of us who were against Bendelari had started forming a union local of the United Office and Professional Workers, which was the only appropriate local even though we knew it was under communist influence. Of course Bendelari didn't like union activity. Lewis undoubtedly felt that Brophy was a man whom he knew he couldn't always control. Brophy performed a very useful function because he provided for Lewis in the early years of the CIO the background, the respectability, the ability, that Lewis needed. But when Lewis wanted to go ahead with his own ambitions, perhaps becoming vice-presidential candidate, he must have known Brophy well enough to know Brophy would not want to be a tool in that kind of thing. And Pressman was of course anti-Brophy because Pressman knew that Brophy was no friend of the communists. Getting rid of Brophy's staff was a good way to hit at Brophy. He was not made Secretary but became head of the Industrial Union Council Department. And Tony Smith, who had been one of the early CIO lawyers, was shifted from legal work into the Industrial Union Council Department. Now Brophy was going to talk to Lewis about my being fired. He hadn't even been told I was being fired beforehand. He was in Pittsburgh when I informed me by phone. But Brophy, so far as I know, never did talk to Lewis. I think he felt that he still had a function he could perform for the labor movement, that he couldn't buck Lewis, and that nothing would be gained, and that he would just go along. And only today did it occur to me that it was all the easier for whoever was fighting me and Brophy, to get rid of me because I was a woman. If this appeal had come to Lewis - well, what's a woman, more or less in the ...

M. Were there any specific incidents that you can recall that led to Lewis's feelings on either ...

E. About me or Brophy?

M. Either one.

E. Not about me. There's another angle too. Not that what happened to me is important in the total picture to anybody else. Actually as far as I was concerned this, which to me was a horrible tragedy at the time, actually proved fruitful because it was then I decided to have my children, and I'm very glad I had my children (laughter). And I did get back to the CIO later. But what was I going to say, I've lost my train of thought.

M. About the incidents that might have led up to ...

E. Oh, well it obviously violated all my seniority rights, if any were recognized, because I was one of the first two employees and I'd done everything under the sun in the CIO, issuing charters, writing pamphlets, and so on. But also, all these other people who had come in under Brophy, who knew the labor movement and were really committed to it, were let go. And the women who came out of the social background of Katheryn Lewis were kept on because they technically were in the Charter Department. And they knew nothing about the labor movement. You'd say "Amalgamated" to them and they didn't know what that meant. They were nice people, don't misunderstand me, but they ...

M. They had no commitment to the labor movement ...

E. ... no commitment ...

M. ... no background ...

E. Yes. Now I might give a few comments on what I think the results of letting the communists get so much control were because Irving Bernstein asked me what I thought. He came to see me while he was writing his second book. He expressed some doubt as to whether Lewis's playing with the communists in the way he did had damaged the CIO. I said to him, and I still believe it, that this did considerable damage and I'd just like to mention the ways in which I think it did damage. From the larger point of view it tended to create

unnecessary bitterness between the CIO and the AF of L. It was another obstacle. It gave an excuse to the AF of L people who wanted to fight the CIO to say that those are communists in the CIO and we don't want to work with the communists, we know what damage they've done to the labor movement. It also gave the CIO a black eye with people not in the union movement, because it was obvious there were communists there. It forced out or tended to force out people like Clint Golden from the union movement. This was true at many points, not just me and Clint, but many others. And in Clint's case I think Dave McDonald probably teamed up or was part of the picture that forced Clint out, although Clint had been one of the first people to whom Phil Murray turned. He'd been Phil Murray's right-hand man in Pittsburgh from the beginning of the Steel Workers organizing campaign, even before when he was the regional director of the National Labor Relations Board in the area. And the communists got entrenched, not just in some of the international unions, but in the Industrial Union Councils in the various cities and states. And this split labor politically. I don't know how you evaluate this, but it was certainly true. Too much energy was put, as a result, into the fighting between the organizations in the CIO and the AF of L. So from my point of view I think that whatever positive contribution the communists made in certain specific situations, that the total effect of Lewis's taking them in and giving so many unions into their control was damaging and that they could have been used without being given that much authority. Now I guess that may be the end of that part.

(131) (End of Tape 4, Side A)

Page	Names used in interview (listed only 1st time used)
2	Walter Reuther
	James Carey
	Ted Silvey
	Jean Hansen (CIO)
	Sidney Fine
3	Stanley Ruttenberg
	Al Zack (CIO)
4	Mr. Wurf (AFSCME)
	Mr. Zander (AFSCME)
	Allen Kistler (CIO)
5	Nelson Cruikshank
7	Mrs. Miles
	Michael Heilprin
	Gustav Pollak
	Celia Heilprin
	Louis Heilprin
8	Inez Cohen
	Morris Samuel
	Herbert Samuel
	Dr. Frances Cohen
	Anita Marburg Lerner
	Andy Biemiller
	Hannah Biemiller
	Robert Oppenheimer
9	Hilda Smith
10	Clint Golden
	Tom Tippett
11	Dave Saposs
	Polly Colby
	Eula McGowan
12	John Brophy
	Arnold Miller
	Edmund Wilson
	A. J. Muste
13	Louis Waldman
	Emil Rieve
	Clarence Senior
14	Chet Ellickson
	Maynard Kreuger
15	John L. Lewis
	Big Bill Hutcheson
16	Bernice Welch
	Len DeCaux
	Milt Murray
	Herman Kahn
17	Al Lowenthal
	Dave Selden
	Dave Compton
18	Tighe
	Lee Pressman
	Mr. Bell
19	Tony Smith
20	Margaret Katherine (Mrs. Dickerman)

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