

ILMA REYNOLDS - (PENTTILÄ)  
FINNISH SOCIALIST HISTORY

E.K. And will you tell us your name?

I.R. Ilma Reynolds.

E.K. And where were you born?

I.R. In Santoy, Ohio, a little mining area.

E.K. In Santo?

I.R. Santoy

E.K. Ohio.

I.R. Yes.

E.K. S-A-N-T-O-Y?

I.R. Yes.

E.K. And that's in the coal mining district of Ohio?

I.R. Yes. Gloster, Ohio, Redtown

E.K. Yes. And then your parents came from Finland there.

I.R. Yes.

E.K. And then what?

I.R. Well from there, I think I must have been about a year and a half possibly. We traveled to Red Dodge, Montana which is a mining area and my mother worked in a restaurant there, my dad worked in the mines and I know that as early as that my father was involved in the, whatever union activity there was during that period in Montana.

E.K. Did they have a miner's union?

I.R. Yes, they did.

E.K. Do you think he was in the early I.W.W.?

I.R. I can't really remember if he was or not, but I would suspect that he was involved. I don't know actually. At that period I wasn't that conscious of what they belonged to, except that he was in the miner's union at that time. From there, did you want

E.K. Yes, go ahead.

I.R. Well from there we went to Pittsburgh, Massachusetts.

E.K. First to Indiana, you talked about

I.R. Oh, yes. Indiana. I forget now. I was much too small to remember much of that and from there, because my dad couldn't get work in Indiana, why, we traveled to Pittsburgh, Massachusetts. And my mother worked in the cotton mills there. There was no particular, I was old enough <sup>then</sup> to understand what, when they conversed. I was aware that they often talked about why there was no protection for the people in the cotton mills there and my dad could not get work and so she continued to work in the cotton mills. We stayed there about 2 years. Then we traveled to Baltimore, Maryland and my father tried to get work there. He did get odd jobs but my mother worked in a boarding house and from there we had to decide, they had to decide, they had to try to make a living somewhere. So we went to Pennsylvania and that was down not too far from Pittsburgh. We were in Coal Center Pennsylvania. Coal Center not Colan Center. Coal Center.

E.K. How do you spell it?

I.R. Like Coal. C-O-A-L. Center.

E.K. Oh, coal.

I.R. Yes. That was what it was exactly. And we lived in the miner's homes down there which were rows and rows of houses that were attached and with very few facilities and it was there that I began to be very much aware of what was happening because of the thinking processes of my parents. And from there, Well he was in a mining accident and in auto work for a period of time because of that. But then from there we traveled to, its a little difficult to remember exactly

E.K. Did your mother work during this period of time in Pennsylvania in Coal Center?

I.R. No. Because my dad was employed so she became involved in activities among the mining people there and I was too young to really be too much aware of it.

E.K. You don't remember if there was any I.W.W. there or just a coal miner

I.R. There was a, there was a lot of activity by the miners but I don't know under what

E.K. name

I.R. Name. I know they had their social group gave plays and

E.K. Was this Finnish miners?

I.R. Yes. It was a Finnish community. Almost entirely, at least in the area <sup>that</sup> we were in. Almost entirely Finnish. I know I went to school there and from there. Oh, yes I had it on the other one she worked in the Boarding House in Baltimore, Maryland.

E.K. Baltimore, Maryland, she worked in a Boarding House?

I.R. Because of my dad couldn't get work there.

E.K. Yes. Okay.

I.R. So am I on now?

E.K. Yes. It's running.

I.R. Well from there we traveled to Baltimore, Maryland and my dad still couldn't get work. Since there was no particular kind of work that he could get that he could handle. He was not trained for anything specific. And my mother worked in a Boarding House, a Finnish Boarding House and we were there only possible six or eight months. And then at the toss of a coin we decided we had better change our plans. And so my dad took a fifty-cent piece, tossed it, "Would we go back to Western Massachusetts or Pittsburgh or go back to Montana" So he flipped the coin and this is true, so we went back to Montana, and back to the coalmines. And from there, after a year and a half, on my fifteenth birthday I believe it was, we decided to come to Detroit, since it was an industrial city, we figured, or my dad figured, that he would get employment. So it was

E.K. Was he disenchanted with mining?

I.R. Oh, yes. Oh, yes. As a matter of fact part of the reason that he died so young was that he had been involved in mining. he undoubtedly had the dust from the mines and he had heart trouble, severe heart trouble. And so we came to Detroit and my dad did go to work as a carpenter and my mother did domestic work and I entered high school in Detroit and became involved with the Finnish group. We all became involved with the Finnish group at that time. And this was in 1925.

E.K. Which Finnish group?

I.R. The Finnish Hall

E.K. The 14th Street

I.R. Yes, the 14th Street Hall.

E.K. This was a Finnish Socialist Hall

I.R. Yes. It was. And we were very much impressed with what they were doing and what they had done since always throughout what we had been involved with. There was always such a shortage of funds to do the things that the people wanted to do. So we were very much impressed with what the Finnish people had done in Detroit and continued to be impressed. So

E.K. Tell us what you did at the hall?

I.R. Well, having the kind of mother and father that I did, I became very involved and my dad trained me at home to

E.K. To do what?

I.R. To become a speaker. And

E.K. How could he train you?

I.R. Well, he was pretty good himself and to speak at the Finnish Hall and he was pretty good

E.K. Was he a speaker out West?

I.R. Oh, yes. He spoke out there at miner's affairs.

E.K. So he was probably in Socialist organizations from the very beginning.

I.R. I think so because as far as I know, they have, throughout all the years that I was with them, became involved with whatever was going on.

E.K. Did he ever mention what kind of work he did in Finland?

I.R. No. I think it was mostly that these people had farms down there, it was a farming community. He worked with lumber a great deal.

E.K. And when he came to this country, he was an unskilled worker?

I.R. That's right. Unskilled definitely. Mining was the answer, you know. If he had gone up north, perhaps, of course, Montana is up north, but I know that in Wisconsin, Minnesota, places like that lumber was the big thing. But we did not go there.

E.K. And did your parents get married in Finland or here in this country?

I.R. They were married in this country

E.K. After he arrived, he arrived here single then.

I.R. Yes.

E.K. Do you know where he came from in Finland?

I.R. He came from, my mother came from Soine, Finland. Now I can't remember at this moment, where my father came from. But doubtless it will come to me eventually.

E.K. Well, what were we talking about just before that? When, oh we were talking about the Finnish Hall already. Now what kind of things did you do at the Finnish Hall in Detroit?

I.R. Oh, the usual, the usual things that young people get involved with. A little bit of basketball, plays and activities such as young people get into.

E.K. And your father all this time was training you to speak?

I.R. He felt that should

E.K. Speak how?

I.R. Well, on social conditions.

E.K. Yes. But what would you do with this

I.R. Well, he wanted me to travel and carry the news, so to speak or carry the

E.K. Were you expected to go on street corner and talk.

I.R. Well, I did it on many occasions.

E.K. And he urged you to

I.R. He urged me to, went with us

E.K. This is part of the work of the I.W.W. of course.

I.R. Yes, it is.

E.K. But a split had come with the Finns already then. But alot of these, you were considered much more conservative Finns, were still doing this. Did you speak in English or Finnish?

I.R. Both.

E.K. Both?

I.R. Yes.

E.K. Where did you go to school when you were in Detroit?

I.R. Northwestern High School on Cass.

E.K. Oh, you did. So you lived in the inner city here.

I.R. Yes. I also worked and went to school. That is I worked daytimes and I'd work

E.K. Now, where, tell us the places you lived when you were in Detroit. The types of housing you had.

I.R. Well, we lived in a house on Lincoln Avenue and we had the top floor. One big room with the little area that you could cook in and it was right off the corner of Grand River and on Lincoln Avenue. And I worked and went to school from that particular spot. And

E.K. How old were you then?

I.R. Well, 17.

E.K. So you didn't come to Detroit until you were in your late teens?

I.R. No. I was 15 when we came to Detroit.

E.K. And you started high school right away?

I.R. Yes. Well I was, yes, I entered Northwestern and interestingly enough then later when all the tapings were done, I got involved in that, you know. When they put it all on microfilm, I was at Northwestern and worked with the microfilm people to put all the school records in Detroit

E.K. Oh, this is later

I.R. Yes. When I went to work. I think I'm getting ahead of myself

E.K. So this is part of your work experience. Yes. Well, then you were in High School and you graduated from Cass Tech and then your parents lived in apartments, I take it.

I.R. We were still, no, no, by then, my dad and mother had gotten this piece of land out west, out Warren Avenue on Medital and they built a small home there and, but I stayed in the city with these people we had been living with and, because it was easier for me to go to work and to school from there.

E.K. Tell us about your work experience, where did you work?

I.R. Well, I, let's see what was my first. Well, my first job was a babysitting job because I was very young and it was hard to get work. And when I did get work I lied about my age to get the job. But I started working for the, Crowley's downtown at 17.

E.K. What did you do at Crowleys?

I.R. Well, I worked at the glove counter but I also did a little modeling for them because at that time I was a little petite and that's what they wanted. It wasn't much of a living but I survived on it.

E.K. Do you remember what your wages were?

I.R. Oh, dear, very low. Not like any model might get now.

E.K. Well, the office workers would be interested in this.

I.R. But my next job then was, I decided I couldn't survive on this kind of money and so I went to work for the Buyers, the Kresge Company.

E.K. The Kresge Company.

I.R. Yes.

E.K. In what capacity?

I.R. Well I did, I had gotten my training when I was in school, as a secretary person, so I got a job with the Kresge Company. I worked for a couple of buyers there, a Mr. Kudius and a Mr. Brown and worked there for 3 years. And then got married while I was working in this particular job.

E.K. Oh, so that's how you met your husband?

I.R. Yes. Now I met him?

E.K. Yes.

I.R. Well, as a matter of fact, at the factory gates. Literature.

E.K. Were you passing out literature?

I.R. Yes, passing out literature at the factory gates.

E.K. About what was this literature?

I.R. Oh, gee. I don't remember. Some kind of wages thing at that time and I really don't remember.

E.K. You don't remember who it was for?

I.R. No. Well, they were trying to form, I'd really <sup>would</sup> have to go back and read some of the paperwork I did at the time because my memory is hazy on what. I remember that the weather was bad and we were invariable freezing or too warm or whatever. But my dad was involved in that too. But my husband and I

E.K. And What factory would that have been at?

I.R. Well, I think, as I look back now I'm sure it was, let's see now. It was, what is now General Motors. One of the plants, I think it might have been Chrysler. It's very hard to remember

E.K. Chrysler is not General Motors, though.

I.R. Well, whatever. It was at an auto plant. And I don't even remember what the area was. I was mostly involved in the fact that I was young and I seemed to be doing alot of things that alot of other young people weren't doing and I felt that I needed to know more about why I was doing what I was doing. But still wanting to do it. So then I began to really study the situation

E.K. What was your husband doing at the time, he wasn't involved in the Finnish Socialists

I.R. No. He strictly was looking at girls.

E.K. Wasn't he doing anything

I.R. Yes. He was involved in the young groups. He was involved in a number of things, but I didn't know him that well at the time. Can we stop for a minute, I have to do a little thinking here.

E.K. We're considered Hall Socialism. I feel that this was our shelter and yet we provided the places for these people to meet with our halls and they were, no one was excluded. The Communist party met in our halls. Everyone met in our halls.

I.R. It was an open thing.

E.K. <sup>Yes</sup> And yet we were considered the <sup>conservative</sup> conservatives of the Socialist Movement. And it evolved into what's called <sup>the</sup> Detroit Finnish Educational Association which is on the State's Attorney General's list. I don't think it has been taken off. It's still considered a left-wing radical-bread movement.

I.R. Yes, I'm sure it is.

- E.K. But yet there is this argument among all these and <sup>then</sup> the I.W.W. is given more credit for organizing the UAW than we were. Because they went out on streets and spoke more than we did which is true. They were standing on the street corners. As you told me about this about Bud Reynolds. At that time was Bud Reynolds a member of the I.W.W.?
- I.R. I don't know, I really don't know. But he spoke a great deal, he was a speaker and was Jack's brother and I knew Jack and Ruth Reynolds, incidentally is involved in all of this too, Jack's sister. And I know that
- E.K. In these taping sessions you mean? Oral History?
- I.R. No.
- E.K. Or in all this other organization?
- I.R. In all this other, yes. So the whole, that is not all Jack's family - There's just these Bud and Jack and Chuck and Ruth were the ones involved from the Reynolds family.
- E.K. They must have been fantastic people. They went right out there. Why would they have done that. Were they raised in a Socialist family?
- I.R. No.
- E.K. See, you and I have a Socialist's background. I know you personally and I know
- I.R. We do
- E.K. Because your parallels mine. My father was a little younger than yours but we still had this background. But how would Jack <sup>find</sup> become involved with the I.W.W. I know he did because he told me he was in the I.W.W. Jack was your husband. And he was supposed to give me a taping session and we were very interested in it.
- Di: It's <sup>the</sup> the people who are willing to put it down, either in writings or in taping the way you're doing, then people remember those things and here you are making a memorial, in a way, for your husband, because then that's not going to get lost. It will be here <sup>as</sup> as long as
- I.R. Oh, I think he would, you know, he was into
- Di: <sup>As you</sup> People come to a point where they think their life meant something
- I.R. Well, I'm sure his did and so did mine
- Di: That, you know, and fighting for a good cause and so the people would live better whatever, it doesn't matter what the politics are. You know nobody
- I.R. I really haven't gone through some very strange experiences.
- Di: Yes. Well, nobody really cares about the politics, that's old-fashioned to worry about that.



- I.R. I wasn't worried about that. I was saying to her, my daughter is a school teacher and her husband 36 1/2 years and they were getting very poor wages, as you know, the city never really paid well. I worked for the city, for the Detroit Board of Education and I tried to start, tried to get the courts organized when I was at Northern High School but my
- Di: Well think about talking about it <sup>in</sup> this way. Why did it all go to waste? You know, so many people work hard on these causes and only the leaders ever get all the credit, they're the only ones that ever get a little mention somewhere. Let it be known that the workers have made these efforts in these things.
- I.R. They certainly have
- Di: And they may not have gotten famous for it and they never made the headlines but they did it and this is the thing
- I.R. It's important. Certainly, it's important
- Di: that we care about and that is what the rank-and-file, or the ordinary, or even the extraordinary one, anyway the people that never got the publicity were in their pitching all the time weren't they. Like Civil Rights workers.
- I.R. Oh, yes.
- Di: How many people carried around petitions and did things that they're
- I.R. Oh, yes
- Di: That barely made the headline. So what you're doing, I'm sure it must make you feel bad when you talk over the old days as it does anybody, you know
- I.R. I feel bad because I think that Jack would have really liked to do this. He would really
- E.K. We were all set to do it.
- I.R. And he has history as I said to her just awhile ago, he made the first black foreman for the city of Detroit.
- Di: Marvelous
- I.R. See that was, he was a superintendent
- Di: See, that's important, but see you're doing it for him, if you say that, why, that goes down
- I.R. It's true
- Di: And it might not be read by everybody, not everybody's going to look at these things, only a few, but even so, it goes down, and it stays down and it will part of the history of the, of Detroit and your husband's place and name will be there. And you're doing it for him and for yourself too, both of you should, it's a shame, the people whose stories are totally lost. But historians care about that too,
- I.R. Yes. I know that they're lost.

Di: They know that President didn't do it all or a Mayor

I.R. And now people can speak up and do these things

Di: That's right. Let's glory in it and do it. That's the only way you can make it right for all the people who worked for Civil Rights, Freedom of Speech in the first place. So you might as well use it. I don't think there is any way you can <sup>EVER</sup> state on your release that you don't want your name used if you wanted to.

I.R. That would not bother me at all.

Di: You can do that in real life, but I don't think that's a worry. I really don't

I.R. No. I, she knows I wouldn't, it doesn't bother me at all

Di: But the main thing is to tell about it and to, in that way you put

I.R. And my daughter, Carie, ~~to~~ get into the teachers union, she fought on the, out in Garden City and Farmington School.

Di: I don't want to rob you of your time and I want to hear it too. I was wondering while you're talking if I can run up and get you a cup of coffee are you ready

I.R. No. We had lunch together and I'm not eating very well these days. So

Di: Well, you should try to keep up your spirits and your health because this is a terrible thing that happens to everybody around the world

I.R. I try to console myself with all kinds of things and I have wonderful friends

Di: Yes.

E.K. I like you too.

I.R. That's good. I don't know what I'd do if I didn't have you around.

Di: Well think of what you're doing is doing something for the two of you. That, you know, you're kind of placing yourselves on a little place where it won't get lost. There's some of these things, you know, your kids won't talk about it much. And who will ever know about it. But you can put it in here and

E.K. Well, she's worried about how radical can you be, what if somebody got hold of this material and used it the wrong way. And I've tried to explain to her that they don't do this as this

I.R. I understand that now. It's just that my rate of thinking is limited right now.

Di: We have alot of Communist - we have Ganley's papers and his wife Ann.

I.R. Now that's something.

Di: And we have Nebby Sparks, who is a Communist in California. We have numbers of such collections. We just received a very interesting set of papers from

I.R. Well she's younger than I am.

E.K. I can't tell what you know. You're the one that knows what you know.

Di: No. Only you can tell

I.R. Well, I wasn't really involved in that particular area, you see. I met the people that went to Russia and I was active in the Finnish community in the Finnish Hall because my dad and mother were very outgoing and very bright people. And so everything that I learned and began to understand evolved from them. And then when the Finnish community decided I was bright enough to send to their school, their particular school, they decided to do that.

E.K. The Finnish Socialist school?

I.R. Yes. The Finnish Socialist School.

Di: What school was this?

I.R. This was a school in Conneaut, Ohio and

Di: I thought maybe it was Work Peoples College in Duluth, that's why I asked.

I.R. No. And then I was also sent, when I was very young, I was sent to Chicago to a school that was dominated by, not Finns, it was all peoples, you know

E.K. Working or Socialists

I.R. Yes and

Di: Did you know Fred Thomson there in Chicago. He was a Socialist. He was in the IWW

I.R. It's possible. possibly. I know that the teachers that we had there, were very involved people but at that time I was just had made 16. You know you are open to everything and these

Di: What did your parents, or community hope for you when they sent you away like that? They must have paid your way, your tuition as they did most of those schools.

I.R. They did, they did.

Di: What was the whole thing?

I.R. They wanted, they decided that I had the personality and the thinking ability and they thought that I could, would make a fine speaker, a representative of whatever group I might be sent on.

Di: I bet you did too.

I.R. Well, I don't remember too much about that. I, well Jack, when I married him, was the aggressive one in the family. I pretty well followed up with him then, you see, Everything was combined then. But we were never inactive. We were always doing something. And then when he became involved with the city, why, I then was involved with the schools. I was trying so hard to get the schools involved, you know, the clerks, the secretaries and so on. I was constantly in trouble

Di: What union were you in?

E.K. Yes, what union?

Di: AFSCME?

I.R. No. I was not

Di: I guess that was before the time of AFSCME probably.

I.R. Yes. Because I'd go around there and there was a English professor there and memory doesn't bring me back his name, and I did most of my, he let me use his electric typewriter because it was faster and easier for me and he came over and looked at some of the stuff I was doing and says, "It sounds a little radical to me." And I said, "Well, that's why I wanted to use your typewriter." So these are all things and I've tried to get, I've talked to teachers and I

E.K. Who were you recruiting for now, Ilma. Don't pull any punches.

I.R. I wanted to get them involved in a union to fight for wages and conditions for clerks, groups of

DI: Like retail, wholesale of the unions

I.R. Oh, anything. No, not the clerks

E.K. No, office workers.

I.R. Office workers. Yes I was trying to start an office worker union. That's what I was really trying to do. I got opposition on all sides. They're the most frightened people, at that time were. Now the teachers are now so outgoing and my daughter does the battling on the striking, you know, when they're striking and she worked hard in Garden City and even took her little son with her. That was all fine and good but I say that all of this meant so much to both Jack and myself that we could never really forget it or let it just go by. Anything we could get involved with, we would. It's like the elections.

DI: I suppose you had, sort of to speak, mute down your connections to the Communist party and the rest of them

I.R. Yes. Definitely, oh, yes.

Di: Because your feelings.

I.R. Oh, yes. I would have been kicked out of the schools, you see.

Di: Sure. The Taft-Hartley Law was fought over. Most of the workers at that time I would think

E.K. This was even before the Taft-Hartley Law

Di: Not to mention \_\_\_\_\_ before that

I.R. Oh, there was so much, so much that needed to be done and didn't get done. And because people are cautious, even alot of friends that I would try to get involved in things, well, we'd like to, you know, but we don't think we ought to.

Di: I think from the beginning of time that's been the answer.

I.R. I don't know. As I say, my thinking isn't too clear these days because I'm

- Di: Well, go back to the happier days and tell us more about when you were to trying to organize
- I.R. I think maybe she ought to hear about the amusing incident.
- E.K. I'd like to hear that business about Bud Reynolds on, I mean, it involved you more than him. She was working for Kresge at this time, in the office
- I.R. I was working for a couple of buyers in the Kresge company. That's when they had their offices, not in the building they have near the big one, and the
- E.K. The Book Building maybe or some place down on Washington Boulevard.
- I.R. I think so. It's right next to the hotel, near the hotel and the Columbus
- Di: I remember that.
- I.R. Yes. The statue of Columbus is right in the square there and everything. Well our offices overlooked that place. However, I worked there and I was, well I hadn't had my eighteenth birthday and I was working, I was going to school at Cass and so I went out to lunch. That day, that this happened, I went out to lunch. And I saw everybody gathered around on Woodward around the statue there on Woodward Avenue.
- E.K. Is it on Woodward or Washington Boulevard?
- I.R. Well, Washington Boulevard but on Woodward. It's Woodward Avenue there. And I saw Bud Reynolds speaking there and, of course, I knew him and had already become somewhat involved in the youth activity
- Di: Was he on a platform, was he on a soapbox?
- I.R. He was on the statue, he was right there
- Di: Right there on the statue
- I.R. And so I stopped to listen and, because Bud knew me, why he called me up into the area there and so I was in there, in and around that group pretty carefully, being watched, I realized this as soon as I got around there, <sup>that</sup> I was being watched. So because of the remarks I made and because of the remarks I made to people around me, I got picked up by the police
- Di: Wow.
- I.R. And when they broke it up, when the police broke it up, I don't recall it, Bud went to jail but I didn't. And the
- Di: Maybe you were too pretty, and they let you go
- I.R. Anyway the car was there, or whatever they call it, the police van, you know. And they already had a bunch of people in there, so they just picked me up and threw me in there. And I was supposed to go back to work, you see, and my, what was my boss going to say when I didn't show up at all? And it was after that I
- E.K. \_\_\_\_\_ such a small amount, what happened? They picked her up and actually threw her bodily in there.

I.R. They did. They picked me up and just tossed me in there. I landed on the laps of the people that were in the thing and now we got a bundle in here you know. It was really funny and I actually, my first reaction was, "Well I wanted adventure in my life, I'm getting it." So they took me to the police station along with whoever else was there

Di: Today you can sue them for police brutality

I.R. Yes. And they fingerprinted me and they, and then it was amazing in the room that I was in, they all were prostitutes. I didn't know it at the time. Everybody was being very sweet to me. I was a little toe-headed gal with a Dutch haircut and no makeup, wasn't using makeup and they decided I was much too - shouldn't be in there. These ladies, these very experienced ladies and

Di: All of them, evidently had a heart of gold

I.R. Yes, I would say that. Oh, yes. They really were lovely to me

Di: That's what Elizabeth Gurley Flynn wrote in her memoirs of a, when she was in prison and Kate Richards O'Hare was in prison for being a dessenter. These ladies had the same experience

I.R. Really, they were amazingly nice. Yes. Well, they couldn't understand why I was in there and I explained to them why I was in there and my, then Ruth Reynolds and Bud and all of them began to get worried, here I was in jail, you know. And, but they got me out of there, but not before I was fingerprinted

Di: How long were you there?

I.R. They let me out about, between 5 and 6 in the morning. So

Di: You had a real experience

I.R. That was an experience. The next day I went to work and my boss, "Well what happened to you? And I said, "Oh, I had a little trouble." He said, "Well what happened to you." And I said, " Well, I just had some personal problems that I couldn't get to work, back to work." He says, " Well, why didn't you call?" And he says, "You've got a lot of work here" Well, anyway

E.K. You never did tell him you were in jail.

I.R. No. I would lose my job, I knew that immediately and it was, I couldn't do that, I couldn't tell them that.

The average person, I would say, like I haven't told any of my friends that I, everybody that knew me, that knew I attended various things, many things happen, but that was a very unusual thing, in so far, I had a good job, paid pretty good money. He didn't pay, I was constantly in trouble there because I was always telling them that Sebastian Kresge was building a house, a home, for wayward girls, but when I went into the stores and talked to the girls, they were getting \$8 a week or \$5 on some things and then I worked for the, part of the job that I did for the first year was in the payroll department and all of those files, I discovered what they were paying down south and all around and they had stores in Europe and I got all this information and as I was typing I would get it all down, you see. And then I worked, Sebastian's second secretary, the first secretary, his first secretary was a male, his second one was whoever he could get from whatever office. If he didn't have a permanent, he was a hard

man to live with. Let me say that right off the bat. So I worked up in his office for a while. And he came out there and he said, "Well, when did you arrive with the Kresge Company?" I said, "About a year and a half ago." And I said, "You're short a secretary, so they sent me up here." And he says, "Well, how do you like it?" I said, "Well, I'd like it better if you'd pay your people more money. I've just discovered in the payroll department what you pay the girls down South and even here on Woodward Avenue

off the bat and a, so I worked up in his office for a while. And he came out there and he said, "Well, when did you arrive with the Kresge Company?" I said, "About a year and a half ago." And I said, "You're short a secretary, so they sent me up here." And he says, "Well, how do you like it?" I said, "Well, this is," I said, "Well, I'd like it better if you'd pay your people more money." I said, "I've just discovered in the payroll department, what you pay the girls down South and even here on Woodward Avenue,

what they're getting. He says, "Well, how did you manage to get so excited about that?" And I said, "Well, when I know everything I know about your company, now since I've been working here for about a year and a half, I just don't understand how you can do it?" Well the next morning I wasn't in Sebastian's office anymore. It was as simple as that.

E.K. But you did stay at the company, didn't you?

I.R. I stayed with the company, I went back. Then I was promoted, I don't know, I had a desk of my own then finally, and then I was promoted up to the buyers, and you know, I was just rolled around there.

Di: You were devoted to your work obviously, after your opinion

I.R. It was funny.

Di: They're not really upset are they?

I.R. I don't believe so. I've talked to the girls

Di: I know that they're not. Because my daughter is working this summer at Kresge's

I.R. And, you know, I've talked to the older employees at Kresge's, I do it very deliberately, I talk to them. What are you doing now? And I say, I worked for your boss years ago. "Oh, you didn't, did you?" They're impressed! They look at it entirely differently. "You worked for our boss?" You know

Di: Our wonderful boss

I.R. Yes. wonderful boss. There's a thing or two I could tell them about it

Di: I know. There's still doing that, I'm sure from what Becky has told me.

I.R. It's really amazing. But because of the training that I got from my mother and dad, I ~~instinctively~~ reacted the way I did and I don't look like a very brave woman, I assure you. But

Di: Yes. But there's a lot of pride you can have when you put your chin up and you assert your own

I.R. Oh, yes. I know that in Northern High School, when I was busily talking to the various people there, and I said it is about time you fought for some rights. I said, you're doing an awfully lot of work here. We worked very hard. It's a big school. And

E.K. Worked for what?

I.R. What do you mean?

E.K. When we put in so much work there

I.R. Well, often we stayed overtime, you know. We didn't get paid overtime. We were on strictly

E.K. This was after you were working for the Board of Education?



- I.R. Yes. And then I got a little involved with the Board of Education. She loved it because we, it's nice work, you see, you're off during the, during the summer you're off, unless you want to work. And then you have Christmas Vacation, Easter Vacation, all of these things were plusses.
- DI: Yes.
- I.R. ANd so I was very, and I liked the job because I like people
- E.K. Lilly is another one of our girlfriends
- I.R. Yes.
- E.K. In our group
- I.R. Yes. Very lovely person. This group has incidentally, this group has really been stayed together pretty well. We don't see each other alot but we've stayed together.
- E.K. Yes.
- Di: Good friends are your friends whether you see each other or not.
- I.R. I'm really enjoying this experience very much.
- Di: Well, tell us some more.
- I.R. I don't know
- DI: It would be interesting to hear more about your working. I don't know where you would start out but I'd like to hear about your different jobs and what you did.
- E.K. Yes, let's hear more about your work experiences. This is women's lib, you know, time and a, we did our share for women's lib as much as we could, didn't we.
- I.R. I think so. I, well, after I stopped working. I stopped working for the Board of Education because I had a heart attack, in school
- E.K. How many years ago?
- I.R. That was about, we've been on
- Di: Did you want to stop or did they make you?
- I.R. No, my husband decided, he didn't want, when we discovered what kind of heart condition it was
- E.K. But when you were raising Joyce you were home?
- I.R. No, not all the time.
- E.K. You were working all the time?
- I.R. No. I didn't go back to work until she was eleven years old.
- E.K. That's what I thought

I.R. That's when I started with the Board of Ed. And so when I had had

Di: Well, that gave you more time with him as it turned out

I.R. Yes. No it's a little hard to remember sometimes the things that happened. I know that when my father died, why, it was during the depression and we didn't have money to bury him. And polish family had a store near our home and for three days, well, my dad was layed out at the Finnish Hall. He died at the Finnish Hall as speaking. He was on his feet speaking at the Finnish Hall.

DI: What was he speaking about?

I.R. Labor conditions, I don't remember. I was at home and he died there and then we couldn't bury him and so this, these Polish people who had this little store and who had become friends with us, came over and handed my mother and me \$200 to bury my dad.

Di: Isn't that wonderful!

I.R. And then when Jack was working for the city, we were getting script and out of all that, we took care of the \$200

E.K. You were married to Jack already when your father died?

I.R. Yes.

E.K. When did you marry Jack? What year?

I.R. We were married on Valentines's Day, 1929.

DI: How did you meet him?

I.R. Through the various

Di: You were both speakers, weren't you?

I.R. Yes. Well, he wasn't a speaker, he was just very active in the radical groups, you see

Di: Was he a strong and interesting Communist back then in the forties?

I.R. Yes, he was.

DI: \_\_\_\_\_

I.R. He didn't call himself a Communist.

DI: It was pretty new back then

I.R. Well, yes. It was YCL, you know. Young Communist League and I was through the Finnish group involved in it and so, then I met the whole entire Reynolds clan which was all of 10 kids.

DI: Wow.

I.R. And they're all very aggressive. Now there are only 3 sisters left and 1 boy and Jack's family from Holland, the grandmother and grandfather, now that's a history. Had 15 children. So you know, I got it, this little

lone chick got into quite a family.

E.K. Yes, you only had 1 child and your parents only had 1 child.

I.R. I lost my first baby.

E.K. Your parents only had 1 child?

I.R. That's right. Mother was never able to carry through on her, I guess that's partly why maybe I wasn't. But however I got into that family and they are very outspoken and very, very bright and battled beautifully like Irishmen do, you know, then with the Dutch determination, the mother is Holland-Dutch and the father was English-Irish

Di: You got a little stubbornness from every direction, that's what you need too.

I.R. It was really something too, that you go back in time and think. I think everybody, everybody that I've ever met has a history that if it were read or looked at, or listened to, would be amazingly interesting.

Di: Yes. I always thought if we knew each other, we would love each other more.

I.R. You couldn't help it. Because surely, surely as involved as I get sometimes in my discussions with the various religious groups that come to my door, and they say, "Oh, well, you know, you are a Liberous. Or you can see the both sides of a situation. Which doesn't mean a thing to me, you know. And, but I get involved. Yes, I say

Di: You an old arguer from way back and can't help yourself, what would

I.R. No. I think Mr. Jay, C. Jay maybe couldn't understand a female that could win a debate

Di: You can't argue with a Jehovah's Witness in my opinion

E.K. You know the man we had yesterday, C. Jay, she and C. Jay were debators. I mean they would talk, both were trained to be a speaker and she would

I.R. He'll never admit it. We debated, you know, and for him to have me win the debate was very, I hope he doesn't hear it, because he didn't really get so resentful about it, but he was a little upset about, let's say that, and she knows him well enough to know that he's not an easy man to know.

Di: Well especially men from that generation still have alot of

E.K. Hangups

Di: Hangups on women and they were brought up to be <sup>such</sup> chauvinists. They don't even know they are.

I.R. And still, in spite of all that, to this day, we're very good friends.

DI: Good, You have to overlook some of these things.

I.R. I have to overlook a chauvinist and he has to overlook a woman-libber.

Di: That's right.

I.R. You know, I have to say this. That much as I have been a backslider, you know, because of health primarily, and

Di: Backslider from what?

I.R. From every activity that I've been involved in and before and at the Loon Lake, the children's programs for several years, she knows that, I, Jack and I ran them. We made the costumes, we wrote the scripts, we did all that and knocked our

Di: Instead of calling yourself a backslider why don't you figure you earned your vacation

I.R. Whatever. It was a wonderful time

Di: I'm sure you did

END TAPE 1, SIDE 1

I.R. And he always called me Ilmay, and I hated it. I hated it. I wanted my own name. So I told him one day, I said, I'm putting this out

E.K. For what?

I.R. I said to him, I said, "Why don't you say my name properly?" I said, "If I can say your name properly, then you should be able to say my name properly."

Di: His name was Bob.

I.R. No. He was Jack.

Di: Oh, he was Jack, oh I see.

I.R. Yes. So, you know, what can you do. I said, "Of course I could do like your sister does - just call you Jack, Jackus." But not the broad. He said, "Don't do that." I said, "Well, alright don't you call me Ilmay because that is not my name." I said, "I want my own name, Ilmey" And it's simple and so he'd say, "Well, let's just leave it. I'll call you Honey and that will be enough." So that's what he was stuck with, you see, and, but through the years

Di: That's nice.

I.R. I would get names. Naomi. My bosses called me Naomi. Well, I had a nice biblical name.

Di: Well I automatically answered to Diane, Dione, Dion, everything so

I.R. Yes.

I.R. Then we had nice Italian out at the lake, you know, Conley

E.K. Yes.

I.R. He called me "Yummy", can you imagine that? It stymied me. I

E.K. And this was after she was matured already.

I.R. Yes, I mean. How can you, you know, and I said, "Look", I said, "That's terrible." I said, "Don't you do that." And then they'd come and I've been called "Limey"

Di: Now Fred Thompson's wife is Finnish, I think. Her name is Ino.

E.K. Oh.

Di: Is that a Finnish name? \_\_\_\_\_

I.R. Yes, I know

Di: Well, I know she gets called alot of things, too. Because I know this is something that you. But it's Heidi, it's

E.K. I know

I.R. And on the papers from the, Jack's pension bureau, they have my name in there as Aimi. And so I had to put a little thing on there that, you know, noticed that when these papers go through, in order for me to get death benefit and whatnot, the name has to be right, you know.

Di: Sure it does.

I.R. And so, But that was a new one on me, Aimi. That one I hadn't heard. But the rest

E.K. I have the same problem with, my name gets all mangled, too. That's alright.

I.R. How about "Luly"

E.K. There's alot of. We've talked about names with C. Jay yesterday. He had very good theories about it.

I.R. What did he have to say about that? Names, or shouldn't you

E.K. I can't remember now. He said how ridiculous the names that we're naming the children today. Things like Bridget, Bridget was what he remembered. He thought that was ridiculous. The other names met something. Even John and Douglas and things like that, they mean something. With Kevin and all these odd names, you can't tell nationalities

I.R. That's true.

E.K. You can't tell nationalities anymore, especially by the first name.

I.R. No. Now I named, rather when my baby was born, when Joyce was born, I, she, my husband named her, he went, there was a carnival. I very nearly died, and very nearly lost her, you see it was that kind of <sup>A</sup>situation and a, so he went, he was going past a carnival and he stopped and he got a little red banner, you know, one of those little tri-cornered banners, red with gold letters and he named, had Joyce Ilmi Reynolds on there. And he came to the hospital and I had just told the man who was asking me what my baby's name was going to be. Well, I think I'd like it to be Nancy, just Nancy Reynolds. And I don't know why I thought Nancy was such a, I really didn't like Nancy especially but it seemed like a good name, you know, Nancy Reynolds. Simple like mine.

E.K. Let's talk about this early history now. You have no, especially the Reynolds. Now we've talked about you.

I.R. I can't involve the Reynolds' too much. You must remember that they are

E.K. But Bud's name was in the paper. This has already been published and he's Italian

I.R. Oh, well Bud, yes. And Bud's wife was very involved in Berkeley. She's a

Di: I mean, what you're telling about isn't a bad thing.

I.R. No, no. Of course not. I'm fully aware of that.

Di: It will be something they'd be proud of some day, if they aren't now.

I.R. But now as far as Bud's wife, she's still <sup>is</sup> recording and her records are selling and she writes children's songs and she has been very, very, is well known and Bud, we were trying to get Bud to write a book, you see, because he was so involved. And but he followed her life more carefully than he did his own.

E.K. And you don't know why these four members of that family would have become so active in the labor movement and I know, for a fact, Bud was in the I.W.W.

I.R. Yes, Bud was. Well, Ruth was in the Y.C.L., of course, and Chuck, I don't think Chuck's been too involved. He's always been sort of in the background. Unless I'm wrong. You'd have to talk to him, Chuck maybe.

E.K. Well, we know that Jack dropped his memberships and all

I.R. a long time ago

E.K. A long time ago, yes. Most of us were involved in the thirties and then after World War II we had our own lives and we

I.R. But I was thinking. We had to live them the best we could, just to survive.

Di: The Smith act, this Taft-Hartley act drove people to that and I think that was the idea of it.

I.R. Of course it was

Di: But let's hope that we'll eventually get

- I.R. Maybe change it, yes. Maybe this all will help.
- E.K. Well, with Jack, too, I know, I was disillusioned and so was Jack, I mean, we had our own reasons for leaving, oh even Communism, but Socialism still becomes dear to us, the idea of Socialism.
- Di: The pact between Hitler and Russia was one thing that disabused a lot of people and the organization of
- I.R. And then they didn't realize, they didn't really accept the final solution of what was between Germany and Russia, you see. This was, became something ~~that~~ they didn't know about or didn't want to know about and it was there but in the wrong way.
- Di: And then there were purges in Russia that upset people and a number
- I.R. It certainly did
- Di: of reasons for people to least drop that wing of it, I'm sure. Tell more about that, how people felt. That would be interesting. For people who don't know about that to
- I.R. Well, I don't. ~~Well~~ Well, at the time, in the '29 and '30 when all these Finnish people wanted to go to Russia, they went for industry, they went to help with industry mostly.
- I.R. That's right. Except the Russians didn't like to do it there. They thought they were smarter and would do it there way, because Mr. Johnson wrote back to Isaac Santay, you know, and I don't suppose Amy would mind me saying these things.
- E.K. No. I have asked Amy to come but she lives so far and everything. She just kept putting it off and I didn't have any more time because we've had enough people.
- IR Yes. Well any Isaac did get letters from Johnson in Russia. We got a couple, but they disappeared long ago in the process of moving and a, we weren't aware, that they were, would have been valuable letters, you see. I don't know why we couldn't have been more farsighted, but, however, this group is still there and a good part, a good portion of them are still living, doing what they can and I know that ART probably could tell you quite a bit about the situation there if he will, I don't know. I can't involve them because I don't know how they feel about it.
- E.K. Well, this is something that we'll have to get from them later.
- I.R. And there are many others
- E.K. If I live long enough to get all through this. It takes years to collect this history
- I.R. There are many people and remember Erickson, Arthur Jacobson was a teacher at Wayne here and when MacCarthy was doing his dirty work, you know,
- Di: Arvid was here.
- I.R. Yes. Arvid was involved, yes.

- I.R. Arthur Jacobson. I met him, I had a long talk with him at one of the restaurants here on Woodward Avenue. He came and he met me and it was during the Martin MacCarthy thing and then Jack came in too, and we had a long talks about MacCarthy and how it was affecting Arvid's life. NOW is Arvid still living?
- E.K. I don't know. I haven't seen him in a long time. I shoud ask. I don't think my mother can remember either. My mother used to keep me posted on everybody but now
- I.R. Well, see Arvid was older than any of us, you know, he was already a teacher at Wayne and maybe 10 years older. I don't know. I don't remember how old Arvid was. And, but he was a good friend and we talked. So I know that my mother sang in the Finnish chorus at the lake, you know. She had a beautiful voice. But alot of the Finnish women did.
- E.K. We were always able to keep our lake. But I think, of course, we had our right and left out at the lake too. And finally the left wingers were actually driven from the lake because they were so afraid of this Communist involvement
- I.R. Or the Negroes, or the black people coming down there.
- E.K. Yes.
- I.R. Who was the black woman that used to come down there, she was
- E.K. And acted in plays?
- I.R. No. She was married to a white man. She came out to the lake and they almost, she was quite, at that time, <sup>already</sup> quite old
- E.K. Was this in the '50's? or earlier"
- I.R. It was earlier. <sup>now</sup> No. It was in the '50's because
- E.K. See we had a Rose Elemerk who was born in Finland, she was a Finnish Negro and my mother has her book by the way and we wondered whether you wanted it in here. She was born in Finland and she was an <sup>wonderful</sup> actress on the stage
- I.R. Well, this was not the same person.
- E.K. Not the same person
- I.R. No. This was not, I'm sure. Well, if she, I don't recall it, she was a you know, mac a
- E.K. Yes. The ones that whose parents got left in the Soviet Union. These parents of the e people, there, well Mac himself is not Finnish, but the girl,
- I.R. Helen
- E.K. Helen, <sup>and</sup> evidently his parents are there too from another country, or something.
- I.R. Yes, something like that.



E.K. They, in Poland probably, they took Finland

I.R. But we were the young pioneers, he and I

E.K. Henry Mac, Oh, no not Henry Mac.

I.R. Oh, Who are you talking about?

E.K. This Mac out at the lake?

I.R. Henry Mac?

E.K. Yes, sure. This Henry Mac.

I.R. McClouskey.

E.K. McClouskey, yes. Now we have another Henry Mac who was involved in the I.W.W. Socialist, Finnish Socialist Movement and the Communist Party through many long years and he is originally from Pennsylvania. So when I say Henry Mac, then I was thinking, well maybe, because he was oh, a good five years older than I am, which would be almost your age, you know. You're six years older, I think. And, so anyway he, he was quite a fabulous organizer. He traveled all over and he was single, but this Henry Mac you're talking about their parents went to Finland, I mean to Soviet Union.

I.R. Yes. They did.

E.K. In this time when all these people left, these children came back that was it prior, yes, just prior to World War II

I.R. Right.

E.K. They wanted to come back. They refused to stay in the Soviet Union so their parents let them come back. But they were of the age, the majority, they were at least 18 already. And they came back and the three of them lived together.

I.R. They're not that much younger than we are, you know, you especially.

E.K. No. They're my age.

I.R. They're in their '50's.

E.K. And they came back and yet they were involved with the Finnish Hall and the Finnish Socialist Movement.

I.R. But they never accepted, they never became involved in speaking, they didn't approve of Jack and myself, They didn't approve of a lot of people there and they objected very much when any of us married other nationalities. For instance when I married Jack and here, they, the, and even the older Finns there thought it was pretty terrible that I married out of the clan, so to speak, and then to speak there was Mike and Bell who

*and then, of course*

Di: Do they still feel that way?

- I.R. No, not so much anymore. They've pretty well accepted it now. But I know this one time that several people that should have known better, someone had brought, well, as a matter of fact, it was someone you know very well, too. Brought a couple of couples out there and one of them was black. And they weren't allowed to go to the, to the shore, to the South Nine, and all that.
- Di: What is it that the Finnish people who were so eager and for the most part for democratic institutions felt that way about black people?
- I.R. I don't know. Because
- Di: Even radicals seem to have. I've noticed this more than once.
- I.R. It was really surprising because already then Jack and I were, we had no feeling about that at all. I mean, we were very much involved with black people, both of us, and so I really don't know. And when my daughter was dating a Jewish fellow, why they were going to try to ban him from the beach but there were a few of the old friends there like Coskey that, you know, Gus
- E.K. Yes.
- I.R. Who told them off pretty well. So
- Di: Are there still people who are worried about blacks?
- E.K. Oh, yes.
- I.R. Oh, yes. It's controlled now by an entirely different group. They are not a liberal thinking group. They are very conservative. That is, they're conservative in their thinking and they would no more think of voting for Udall or someone like that. They would vote for Ford, undoubtedly.
- Di: Or Reagan even.
- I.R. Or Reagan possibly Reagan and of course, my car is a dead give away
- Di: God help us all if there are too many of those
- I.R. Riegle and Udall and I sent to the AAA man when he came, when I was stranded, I said, "You'll recognize the car because there's Riegle and Udall on the back."
- E.K. We, do you suppose, remember when their Paradise organized in that little league right near us and it was an all-black league supposedly, they had purchased that property
- I.R. I remember that they had purchased, but I don't know very much about it
- E.K. Well, they used to go there and we were always, I mean, Now I'm saying we because I must have it too, but they used to drive back and forth along our road and everything and it wasn't too far from us. Oh, a matter of maybe of 2 miles or something
- I.R. Yes, I recall something

- E.K. We could hear their music through the woods. But they just barely gotten started and how they got kicked out of there I don't know. I don't know the history of that
- I.R. I don't know either. Although we at least, Jack and I, felt very strongly about it, and I just wonder, I wonder if Bud
- E.K. Strongly for them, you mean.
- I.R. Yes. Strongly for them, yes. But I don't remember, now this is the kind of history that I am unable to get. Because Bud is gone.
- E.K. Yes. I don't know
- I.R. And now Barney Mass, in California, maybe could give you some information
- E.K. They had a nice little, they had no buildings yet, I think they used to have open campfires and things.
- Di: That's sad. Because there are so many restrictions
- E.K. I know.
- Di: as you know, up north, there are, I suppose there are less now than there were. But there always had been in Michigan barriers to blacks in vacationlands.
- I.R. Oh, yes, oh, yes.
- Di: And it makes you wonder
- I.R. Yes. Well, I don't think there's been a black person in the Finnish Lake yet, or has there. I don't know.
- E.K. Oh, yes. We used to bring them with the YCL over there, all the time
- I.R. Did you?
- E.K. Oh, yes. You know I don't, it was right at the beginning of World War II when they started telling me not to bring these people from the YCL. Now that did not, that did not mean the blacks.
- I.R. Just the YCL
- E.K. Just the YCL and I said, "How can I do that," because they knew I was in the YCL. This was just prior to World War II. They didn't want them around.
- Di: They were worried about having Communists there?
- E.K. Yes. They were beginning to be worried. The title wasn't as cunning as much. Remember he was already a lawyer of something.
- I.R. Yes. He was, didn't want to be too involved, but I always laugh when I think of Jack saying to some of them out there that a, you've already been contaminated by Jews and Irish and various others, you know, so why don't you go all the way and

- E.K. SAid to who?
- I.R. To some of them out at the lake there, you know. They sent in, they called us, trying to get us involved in their particular activity and they didn't know what kind of wall they were going to hit. And they really hit it.
- E.K. Well, I don't know. Of course, I have this big ethnic thing too. I would like to be Finnish because I am Finnish you see and I want to maybe its maybe because we fought so hard for our own identity when we were younger you know. We were Finnish Socialists, you see.
- I.R. But you see the church groups were left out. The Finnish Church Groups were pretty well left out.
- E.K. Left out of where?
- I.R. Left out of getting together and trying to get their opinions.
- E.K. At the lake you mean?
- I.R. Yes. They, I don't recall, I think religious Finns coming out there, any Lutheran Finns coming out there,
- E.K. They didn't want to?
- I.R. No.
- Di: Why?
- E.K. Because we were Socialists. They didn't want to get involved with us
- I.R. Yes. Anything radical they would not accept, you see. What was that place that alot of them went to, do you remember at all?
- E.K. There's Kalababa Park
- I.R. Yes. Something. Yes. Well for that matter now the cultural society that's active here at the International House
- Di: Well now that you've tell me that at the camp they have a more conservative group generally running
- I.R. They do
- Di: The things, then do you have more religious people coming in?
- I.R. That's what I don't know. I don't, I suppose
- E.K. Yes. Alot of them go to church. Alot of them <sup>belong</sup> to these churches around here.
- I.R. Do they? ~~See~~ See, I don't know,

- E.K. Because, my husband, you know, belonged to that one out there on Lahser Road when we first started, and we used to see some of these already then.
- I.R. Oh. See I'd forgotten about that
- E.K. See what happened Ilmi, with Finnish Summer Camp. We used to have only the Finnish Socialists of Detroit. Then when these big invasions of people from up north came, they used to come to our open-nights when we'd have maybe, especially the mid-summer festival, yes, in June. We'd have thousands, nearest weekend of June 25th is the mid-summer festival
- Di: Then it's more interesting that the Socialists would be so up-tight about blacks or Jews considering how many Jews, especially are Socialists.
- I.R. They were up-tight. They were. Very much so.
- Di: But they're all
- E.K. But they came to our hall all the time. They even had meetings
- I.R. Yes. But not out to the lake. They were not acceptable at the lake. That's the
- E.K. Well then, I understood them to tell me that they had to pay their own way. I never had money out there, you know, I had to work my way all the time.
- I.R. Yes.
- E.K. I had to work in a restaurant. My parents could have cared less
- I.R. Yes. We all did
- E.K. whether I ate or not. I guess I would run out of money and then here I'd be out there, you know. It depends
- Di: It's probably generational don't you think because when you read the very words of people who lived in the generation before ours, see I'm in my 50's too, okay, those people don't sound as liberal as we would be at all. They
- I.R. No.
- Di: ¶ I mean, it's wrong to put a
- I.R. Well, of course now, we've been conditioned to the second World War and Vietnam
- Di: Yes, right.

E.K. Anything

I.R. Well I object to the way that senior citizens are being handled

E.K. At the lake, no, or in the city? I object to them in the way they are being handled in the city itself but this is supposed to come from them this

I.R. There was, there were two young Finnish men and I don't remember their names now but Virgil Conley probably would know who they were. They were blond, young, well, there not so young, they're in their late '50's, undoubtedly, that wanted to **start** a sort of a senior housing setup for seniors, Finnish, Retired Finnish people that wasn't a religious thing and they came to me to talk about it and in urges and at a party and they thought they and myself and whoever else wanted to, we should start a senior citizens thing for the Finnish people and, I don't know for what reason we didn't go ahead with this, something or another happened at that time and there was some talk about it

E.K. But they had this plan in the Finnish Center for a long, long time but this

I.R. But nothing has been with it. Nothing's been done with it. So there still a lot of people that I think would be interested if they would every get involved. Myself included

E.K. Yes, myself included too. I wish they'd have some low-income housing

I.R. Because I have to sell my house and Lord knows it's hard to sell a house and I have a nice house that was our retirement's home

DI: Why do you sell it right away. They always say that you shouldn't under

I.R. No. I'm not going to accept

Di: Like to pronounce two consonants in a row. I thought that was very interesting because it gave an insight on the few times I've heard accents. You could tell that accent

I.R. Well, actually, I have friends who have not used the Finnish language a great deal ~~and~~ in the way I have and they have an accent and I don't and often I wish I did because I like accents, I pick them up ~~f~~ very fast too. Oh, I'm sorry

E.K. Will you read that? I haven't had the rest of them signed this release yet.

Di: Did you find those blanks that I brought in?

I.R. I don't really know that much about it

E.K. She and I were talking about it and you used to go to Stock 54 didn't you?

- I.R. No.
- E.K. Didn't you ever go?
- I.R. No. I have never been there.
- E.K. Really?
- I.R. That's true.
- E.K. We feel that we've contributed as much to the UAW. Our group has, they called us the "Yellow Socialists" and all this and that, as the I.W.<sup>W</sup>. did.
- I.R. Of course, you know right off the bat that I'm not a Socialist
- E.K. You aren't
- I.R. In the true reality of being a Socialist.
- E.K. What were you when you were speaking, when your dad taught you?
- I.R. Well, I was not a Socialist. I am not a tea-drinker. You see there was a Socialist
- E.K. But the Finnish Socialism is different from regular Socialism
- I.R. I understand, but I always was at odds with it. I didn't think it was the right term. It was the wrong term for my way of thinking and so I never
- E.K. What would you term yourself? What did you call yourself?
- I.R. I was a rebel.
- E.K. She wasn't even a Communist by the time I got in there. She was getting inactive already.
- I.R. Yes. I was a rebel and I still am. And I don't know what kind of a rebel I am, but I rebel against anything, any ~~kind~~ ~~kind~~ injustice
- E.K. You were raised in the same Finnish Socialist ~~XXXXXXXX~~ History
- I.R. That is true, I don't deny that. But my dad objected to the name Socialist and Jack would not accept it and Jack's thinking along those lines
- E.K. But he didn't accept Communism either really, after
- I.R. No, after he got older
- E.K. No, after. He didn't accept. We argued about that. I, we argued about that quite a lot and all the leaders, the various leaders in that had to learn how to talk with and be with and the ~~various conferences~~ various conferences that we attended and all that. We didn't agree on a great many things in connection with the radical movement.

Di: I think in hearing in what you have to say about Cells, Elvera and I were laughing yesterday because she said she had never heard of a "CELL" and it was never called that.

E.K. Remember when I Led Three Lives came out, that book, and that man in there used to call meetings, little meetings of the Communist groups

Di: "Cells"

E.K. He'd call them "cells" and I'd laugh

I.R. I never have heard of that

Di: That's what she told me. Now see I didn't know and I was very interesting to me.

I.R. No. I've never heard

Di: They'd talk about it, you know, in those Hu-Ac meetings or in, been paying lots of

IR. That was a complete suprise to me

Di: And they kept dated, invariably were talking about "Cell" and they in their questions would ask people about "Cells" and people would say, Huh?

IR Yes, that's true, that's true

Di: That, that was news to me because I had never heard of this before

IR No.

EK I thought it was ridiculous and I attended many, many Communist meetings

IR Yes. So did I.

EK And I'd never heard the word "Cell" used and the minute I read that, I knew the man was a complete hoax

IR Fallacy. Really a complete Fallacy. In a city as large as Detroit I have never in my past experience heard it.

EK Well, I've been in meetings in Cleveland, Chicago and New York

IR Yes, even New York City, yes we were in involved

EK And I was

Di: Why do you suppose that they would say stuff like that, who



I.R. Who is, who would be authorized to say those things. IT can't have been a Communist

Di: You know, this all came up at the Hiss trial and so much of that seems now to be very

E.K. Yes. But what is a "Cell?"

I.R. It may have come from, yes, I'm sure it's not at all

E.K. I wish I would have got up on my hind feet and said it a long time ago but, see I never was any place where I could explain myself.

Di: I had never heard that until she told me, that's so interesting to me. Because any of us who only look at it from the outside have, you know, over and over that comes up in Huc-Ac and all of those grillings that people get very much agitated

I.R. That's true, that's true . Did you belong to a "Cell"? Did you

Di: In Rosenberg, Kisell, they mentioned cells, Did you have a cell maid?

I.R. Oh, yes. I think of the Rosenberg, I think of Sacco-Vancetti

E.K. This isn't even Americana, really

I.R. I don't think so.

E.K. I mean this wasn't our style

Di: This is \_\_\_\_\_ mean, that's a \_\_\_\_\_ cell, that's all we know of it

I.R. It really makes no sense to us whatsoever and I know that when Sigmund Vancetti how we fought to save their lives.

E.K. There's something you were more involved in than I was because that happened just before I became of age or of an age to be active. I know that I have here

Di: I've worked on many collections. They have large piles on the Sacco-Vancetti defense.

I.R. That was a terrible thing.

Di: I have, time after time after time, we have, you know, the records of people who

I.R. Yes, and my daughter

E.K. And the thousands of people that we've interviewed in these meetings

Di: And they weren't all Communists. They were people of any kind of

I.R. Yes. Certainly they weren't all Communists. They were just involved because they felt that it was not, that it was so unreal, it didn't make sense.

Di: The same with the Rosenbergs

I.R. Yes.

Di: And only now is it coming out

I.R. With their children, yes, with their boys

Di: Did you read that E. L. Doctoral novel?

I.R. No. I haven't had a chance to read that

Di: That's very good.

I.R. E. L. what?

Di: Doctoral.

I.R. Yes, put it down, maybe we can get it from the library

Di: That was such a good book. I can't remember

I.R. There are so many books that I want to read but I can't

E.K. And I'm also out of touch up north

Di: Well you want that book. It's a wonderful, shocking book.

E.K. Have you read Man and His Gods?

I.R. And what's it called? E. How do you spell it?

Di: E. L.

I.R. Well, you know, I, well speaking of the religious groups that come, young minister from the, you just mentioned who comes to the door

Di: Yes. Jehovah Witnesses?

I.R. Jehovah Witnesses. So we got pretty, it was a young minister you see, for this group, he had heard about this controversial female on Berol and who was getting a little, you know, trouble and so he got curious enough so he came to the house. My husband said he wasn't interested, so he went in the bedroom. He was discusted with him and so I got involved and we got to talking about the Mark Twain's Letters From Heaven

Di: Yes. I've read those.

I.R. And then I said, Have you ever read Man and His Gods and he says, What do you mean, what is that. So I go and get the book, you know, and I said, Well if you read this it will straighten your mind out alot and I've been also, He hadn't

Di: That's true.

I.R. read Mark Twain, you know how Mark Twain and history is a loveable, old darling and know one gives him that many brains and actually he was

Di: Oh, yes.

I.R. A very, very brainy man.

Di: His wife was so shocked in all this I here. You know, he had to keep

I.R. Yes. Truly. And so here's the books, these books are in, on my library there and he said, well, he said, "You shouldn't really read books like that." He said, "There not that, you don't get a true concept of what the world is and what the people ~~are~~ really are. And I said, "Well I would put my life on either one of these books and not on the literature that you bring to me

Di: He was \_\_\_\_\_ afraid of you

E.K. Can we get out of the building by 5?

Di: ~~x~~ No. And also Dr. Mason wanted to use the tape recorder so

E.K. I wonder. Yes I don't want him to

I.R. This has been a pleasure talking to you again and getting acquainted with you

Di: Oh it was nice that you came down.

E.K. Listen, this is for that James \_\_\_\_\_. Well, I wanted to ask her if she was ever harassed by the, by any of the MacCarthy people?

I.R. Who me? NO.

E.K. They never bothered. Okay, that's it