THE 20th CENTURY TRADE UNION WOMAN: VEHICLE FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Oral History Interview

with

EVELYN DUBROW

International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union

by

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Program on Women and Work

Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations

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VITAE

EVELYN DUBROW

Evelyn Dubrow grew up in an atmosphere of political consciousness and involvement. Her father was a member of the Carpenter's Union and both of her parents belonged to the Socialist Party. She recalls the numerous political discussions in her New Jersey home, and attributes her own political and union involvement to the notions instilled in her when she was young.

After graduating from college, where she was a journalism major, Dubrow began working for the Textile Workers Organizing Committee, and eventually became the Education Director for the Textile Workers in New Jersey.

From 1947-1956 Dubrow was the Director of Organization for Americans for Democratic Action. Upon leaving this job she stayed in the reform area , working to develop political clubs in New York such as the Lexington Club and the West Side Democratic Club.

From the ADA, Dubrow joined the staff of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union as assistant political director. Her work for the political wing of the ILG sent her to Washington D.C. where she was an active lobbyist for issues like the Lantrum-Griffin Bill and minimum wage legislation. She has continued as the union's legislative representative in the nation's capitol.

Dubrow was recently appointed Vice-President of the ILG. She was a founding member of the National Consumer Federation and chairs the AFL-CIO committee on consumer legislation.

SPEECH BY EVELYN DUBROW
Summer School for Women Workers
University of Michigan

August 21, 1976

INTRO: In the history of this country, we've known that women have been in history, invisible in that history, and certainly, the role of women in building the trade union movement is a story that needs to be documented, that needs to be transcribed. Not only for the textbooks but so that all of us can derive the inspiration, the motivation, and indeed, the information from those stories that we so dearly need, to continue the kind of work that we're all doing on a day to day basis back in our unions and back in our community. And so, we're delighted that not only is Evie coming here today, to meet with us as part of this Summer School for Women Workers, but that we have started an interview, an in-depth interview with, with her, and we will be doing the same with Gloria Johnson, as one of approximately fifty interivews that we will be doing around the country.

We have learned that one of Evie's first jobs after graduation from college was editing on an Italian-American newspaper, and working as a reporter in Patterson, New Jersey, with The Morning Call. Since that time, Evie has worked with the AFL-CIO in the New Jersey labor movement. She has served as an education director of the Textile Workers in New Jersey, and is secretary for the Newspaper Guild, which is the union of journalists, that's, I guess I once belonged to that, too, I mean when I was working in Washington, D.C. And then as a representative of the ILGWU to civil rights and consumer groups. She's been a founding member of the National Consumers Federation, and chairs the AFL-CIO committee on consumer legislation. Among her many awards was an award that she won a few years ago when the Ladies Home Journal nominated her one of the seventy-five most important women in the United States. At any rate, we are delighted to welcome her here to the University of Michigan and to our third annual Summer School for Women Workers.

DUBROW: Thank you very much. Joyce hasn't changed much since I've seen her in Washington, still just as active and is keeping people busier than they know what to do with. And of course I'm delighted to see Hy again, an old friend, and I have come to Michigan to see Jackie Kienzle and Gloria Johnson. What they didn't mention in Michigan that I'm very proud of, is that I'm also founder of the National Coalition of Labor Union Women. And I hope that all of you will join.

[applause]

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DUBROW: When Joyce called and said that you all wanted to know what a labor lobbyist did, I had to think for a minute, because it's a long time ago since I thought about it. All of a week I've been back in my New York office working on politics, this week, because Congress is out of session. I wear two hats when Congress is in session, I'm a legislative director, and when Congress is out of session, I'm an executive secretary of the political department. But it isn't hard to wear those two hats, because my union has always believed that in order to be politically active you have to know pretty much what the people you're going to try to support or elect or defeat are up to. And one of the ways you find that out is what are they doing on legislation. But I can tell you right now, having come up from the ranks, that it's also very important to know what people in your city councils are doing, what your boards of education are doing, what your city commissioners are doing, what your state legislators are doing, as well as knowing what your congressman, congresswoman, senators and what the President of the United States is doing. Now a long time ago when the labor movement got started, much before any of us were born or alive, the founders of the AFL if you like, knew that it was important to elect, to elect your friends. In other words, reward your friends and punish your enemies. That was the philosophy that many of you read about, I'm sure, in labor history. But they soon came to a point where a very important decision had to be made. Now, the two decisions were fairly difficult to make. One of them could be, "Do we do anything about trying to get laws passed?" And the other is, "Do we just continue to say, we reward our friends and punish our enemies?" Well, the outcome pretty much was the decision that, that always reminds me of a story, and I think Gloria has heard this one. I'm not sure. That Congressman Jim [Ryan] of Texas tells, about the time that he was mayor of Medford, Texas. I think, population 2500 people. There was a police force of about seven. He was all of twenty-five years old when he became mayor, and he decided he wanted to know what the police knew about the laws. So he sent out a questionnaire. And one of questionnaires was: What are rabies and what can you do about them? And one of the policeman wrote back and said, "Rabies is Jewish Ministers and there ain't a damn thing you can do about them."

Well, there were some people in the labor movement who thought that was the attitude they ought to take. All politicians are crooks. They all take bribes. Politics is a gutter game. And what do we want to get bothered with? And there are still workers in unions, and you may have heard some of them say to you, if you go to collect a dollar or two for COPE or collect money for other things, they say to you, "What is the union doing in politics?" And it's an educational job we have to do. Because, unfortunately, in politician's language, the only thing that counts is votes. And unless our people are registered and they vote, they don't count in any of the

DUBROW: things that a politician, a legislator of any kind, thinks about. So that we have to start from scratch almost. And the very first thing that the leaders of the labor movement began to see, was there were lots of things we were winning in collective bargaining, because, as you recall, the Wagner Act in the early 1930's gave unions and members, people, the right to organize and bargain collectively with their employers if they had a majority of the workers who wanted to join a union of one kind or another. That gave them collective bargaining, but it didn't stem from the employers saying to the union members, we're going to sit down and bargain with you. It came because a law was made by a President and a Congress that felt that it was the right of every worker to be able to sit across the table from his or her employer and bargain collectively for working conditions and for wages and for lots of other things.

That was the first inkling in the minds of many people that, hey, we'd better do something about who we're going to elect, in order to get the kind of legislation we believe in. It didn't come down like manna from heaven, that we got unemployment insurance, that we got a first minimum wage law, that we got disability insurance, that we got workmen's compensation, that we got the eight hour day, that we got education for all children in this country and not just for an elite class. All of those things stem from legislation that somebody who got elected or appointed had something to do with. And so the labor leaders soon discovered that it was important to have a presence in Washington or in the state legislature or in the city council that would point out that as a labor person, the labor movement had interest in what kind of legislation was being passed. And there were years when we did a good job, and years when we did a bad job.

Now one of the years when we really got clobbered, was the year when we elected the Eightieth Congress which President Truman called the "Do-Nothing Congress." When they passed the Taft-Hartley Law, that took away a good deal of the rights that we got under the Wagner Act, because that Taft-Hartley Law said regardless of how many people in a plant or in a sub-division or in a store wanted to have a union shop, union shop was out-lawed. You could not have a union shop. And that meant that there were people who worked with you, who would not pay union dues, whom we called free-riders, but for whom you had to get the same kind of benefits as though they were in your union. And that came from 14-B of the Taft-Hartley Act. And ever since that was adopted by the Congress of the United States, the labor movement has been trying to have it repealed. It's a kind of ironic thing, that just before Senator Taft died, he admitted to some of us that if he'd have known what Taft-Hartley and 14-B had done, he'd have thought twice about suggesting that union shops should not be considered legal. Because he discovered that even though they had to have closed elections, under the National Labor Relations Board, 98% of the people

DUBROW: who voted, voted for union shops. And in 96% of the elections, union shop was very heavily favored. But we're still living with 14-B, both as a symbol and making it tougher for us to organize in some parts of the country where there are rights, state rights to work laws. Because strangely enough, the Taft-Hartley Act, while it said the federal government couldn't make it easier for people to organize and join a union, states would be permitted to set more restrictive laws. And that's where we got that incredible name of 'right-to-work' laws, that in the minds of some people, unfortunately, means, that they have a right to work. Which as you and I know, is a lot of malarky. Because I'd like to see you walk into an employer and say: "Hey, I want a job because there's a right to work law." He'd either look at you as though you were crazy or call the police and say take this person away. But slogans are slogans, and we're still making that fight.

But labor began to see that there were a good many things that it had to take an interest in. And so lobbysists began to appear, that first of all, bore the label of the AFL and CIO, and then when they joined together in 1955, the AFL-CIO. And then more and more international unions began to understand that there had to be somebody in Washington at any rate, that would represent the thinking and the beliefs not only of the AFL-CIO or the Auto Workers who, were then part of the AFL-CIO, or the Teamsters, but that they had to have somebody who also understood the makings of their own international unions, their concerns, who their members were, what they needed to have done for them. And so lobbying became an integral part of the trade union movement first, as I said, because unions began to discover that what they could win in fringe benefits or wages or working conditions from the employer, could be taken away by a law that would be passed, or a law that would be repealed depending who was in the Supreme Court of the United States. And they discovered another thing. Okay, if you want laws that are going to help you, then you have to be concerned with who is it you're going to have make those laws. So it became very evident that there was a very close relationship between political action and legislation, between knowing the records and the motion and motivation of the people who were asking for the support of the people who were allowed to vote. And it began to be a very complete picture. One of the things that we recognized in having to lobby for legislation, was to remember that the person on the hill could not accomplish the job if back home the members of the union were not supporting the lobbyists and the officers of the union to get this kind of legislation. And it became even clearer that one of the things we discovered in trying to get legislation passed that a lot of the members of the union, who are first class citizens in their union, are second class citizens as far as being Americans becasue they were neither registered or if they were registered, they didn't bother to vote. It has always amazed me

DUBROW: both as doing political action and legislation that ninety percent of the people who live in the silk stocking districts, anywhere over this country, register and they vote. But that only forty-nine percent, for the most part, of men and women who work hard for a living, and want to bring up their families decently, fail to register and even in the presidential year, only sixty percent of the people in this country vote. And it has always seemed to me in struggling for legislation, like registration by post card for instance, to make it easier for people to register, that I can not figure out how anybody who carries a union card and is a citizen in the United States does not recognize that the right to vote is the greatest right that you can have in a democracy. And we who came very close under the Nixon administration, to losing many of our democratic rights, more this year than ever have begun, have, have to begin to look and see where political action on one side and legislation on the other need to get together. We've been lobbying for postcard registration for a very simple reason. We think that one of the reasons that many workers in this country, whether they're organized or unorganized, don't bother to register because it's difficult for them. They may not have time to go down to their city hall or their borough hall or wherever they have to go. It may mean taking extra time off. And so we say alright to the legislatures of the United States, to the House and Senate. We think everybody ought to have the right to register and vote. As a matter of fact, my own feeling is we wouldn't have, oughtn't have to register. We ought to go down to the ballot box with a proper identity and be allowed to vote. And in the state of North Dakota they do that. So we said, okay, we'll try to get registration by mail. That meant that every person within a county would get a postcard, a double postcard with instruction. All you would have to do would be to put that in the mail box. It would be sent to the proper precinct or ward, whatever you happen to call it in your districts, and you would then be registered to vote.

Now, that seem simple enough? It's a democratic right? Well you'd be amazed at how many members of Congress in the House and Senate, but more than that, you'd be amazed how many presidents, like Nixon and Ford said, they don't want postcard registration. Now you and I ought to know why. Because the people who are going to be allowed to register by mail if they're not already registered are workers like you and me, in the plants and the shops and the offices, in the schools, wherever. And that they are more likely to be concerned with legislation that means something, not only as union members but as human beings and part of families. And in the minds of some people we elect to Congress, and in the minds of some people, we do or do not elect to be President of the United States, this would be trouble for them. We're going to get postcard registration through. We got it in the House last week, but it was a very, very tough fight. And we didn't win it by enough to over-ride a veto. And we'll get it in the Senate.

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DUBROW: But I would bet my bottom dollar that President Ford will veto that bill. Because he will recognize that more people concerned with his incredible record of vetoing some of the best legislation to help put us back to work, in terms of employment, in terms of housing, in terms of child care, in terms of cutting out taxes. He has vetoed, and he brags about it. If you listened to his speech the other night as he accepted the Republican nomination he said: "I have vetoed forty-five out of fifty-nine bills, and I have made, I have vetoed fifty-nine bills, and I have made forty-five of them stick." I wouldn't brag about that if I were President Ford, because when the word goes out that among the things he vetoed was two emergency public works bills, that would put people to work in this country. Instead of their having to go on unemployment, or if unemployment compensation was used up they'd have to go on welfare. I wouldn't brag about that. Labor was behind both of those bills and we were able to override one of the vetoes. He vetoed two day care bills. Because he said it would cost too much money. But let me tell you how much it would have cost compared to the money that has been spend, spent for nonsensical things. Under HEW, state-controlled and state-run day care centers for working parents must have certain health and safety codes. That's the rule. In order for states to be able to comply with those codes we ask for 240 million dollars out of a budget of billions. And when he vetoed that bill, despite the fact that a good many legislators from both sides of the aisle, he said it was going to cost too much. My interpretation of that was that Mr. Ford said to every working parent who had a pre-school child: "You find a way to get your child taken care of while you're working. You put him in a warehouse where they'll feed the kid potato chips or coke and put him in front of a television. Or you leave him with an elderly grandmother but I don't worry about it because that's going to cost too much and you go to work and you do your job." Well to me that's inhuman.

And the one thing I learned when I became a lobbyist to the labor movement, was that we believe that our members are not just human beings when they work in the shops or in the plants or the schools or the offices or the banks or wherever, that it is the concern of the trade union movement or should be, as to what happens with our members when they're on the job as well as when they're off the job. How are they doing in their families? Are their kids getting proper nutrition? Are they being given every chance to get a decent education? Do people live in decent housing? Is there transportation available so that they can get to and from their jobs? All the things that effect any individual union member should affect anybody in unions.

There aren't as many women lobbyists as I'd like to see out of the labor movement, but there are more. When I first came down to Washington there were two others. Esther Peterson of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers and Helen [Berthal] of the

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DUBROW: Communication Workers Union. And I was the third woman. Well we've got at least a dozen now. And there will be more. And some of them are representing not just unions where a predominant number of the members are women, but who are men also. Because trade union men have discovered that women can be very effective lobbyists if they have to. They've discovered that women will work as hard as men to get something through that they believe in.

And so this was a very important decision that was made, by my union, by the AFL-CIO, by other unions. How do we come about to decide what it is we're going to work on, when there are thousands of bills that are dropped in the hopper every single beginning of every single session and on from that time. Well, we do it in several ways. First of all, every two years the AFL-CIO has a convention. At that convention a series of resolutions are passed. Many of them which deal with legislation, or the principle of legislation. Then, every three months or four months, the AFL-CIO council, which is made up of presidents of many of the internationals, sit down and they go over those resolutions as it pertains to what's going on in Congress or in the agencies. And so we know there are a certain number of issues on which we're expected to work. But I happen to represent the International Ladies Garment Workers Union. So not only am I affected by the decisions that are made by the AFL-CIO convention and council meetings, but I'm affected by the resolutions that are passed by my own convention that's held every three years. Many of them are the same as the AFL-CIO. Some of them are slightly different. And, in between, when my general executive board meets, and there's legislation going on, I expect them to make some decisions for me. But the most important thing that a labor lobbyist has going for him or her are the members of the union. Because let's not kid ourselves, every one of you are lobbyists for the things you want your union to do, or those things will not be accomplished. I could work on that hill more than the fourteen, fifteen, sixteen or eighteen hours a day that's sometimes required, and I'm not doing it as a sacrifice. I can assure you, if I didn't like what I was doing, I wouldn't do it. I get a great deal of psychic income out of feeling that I'm doing something for the people who put me where I am. But let me tell you, that I cannot do my job for them or for you or for anybody else who believes in the great social issues that confront us to make us a better country, unless back home there is the kind of support that I get from my members of my union. When we have a minimum wage bill up, and Jackie Kienzie will remember this because she was a great worker in the 341 vanguard for minimum wage when it was much tougher than it is now. Somehow Congress has gotten used to the fact that there ought to be a minimum wage for workers in this country. But the only reason we ever got minimum wage is, and Jackie will tell you this, is because we had

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DUBROW: letters going to congressmen and members of the Senate. We had delegations coming. We had presidents of unions standing up and saying: "We don't need the minimum wage for our own union, because our people are getting more than that. But no worker should be allowed to work for a living without decent working conditions, without decent wages and working conditions. And a minimum wage is a must." And this wasn't done unselfishly on the part of my union, at least, because our union employers were paying a minimum wage much higher than the federal minimum which started out in 1938 at the great amount of twenty-five cents an hour, believe it or not. It's now up to two dollars and thirty cents an hour for people working in manufacturing and about two dollars for farm workers and hotel and restaurant workers, who still have to pay part of their tips to a minimum wage.

But, these are the kinds of issues that were decided by the AFL-CIO and by my union and by your unions, and we have a job to do. Now how do we go about doing this job? Well, we do it in several ways. First of all, every Monday morning we meet to discuss what's going on on the hill, in the Senate or House side, in terms of the legislation we're concerned with. And when it's a Humphrey-Hawkins bill, which means unemployment has to be solved and that's the way to do it, with full employment and in case you think this is a new theory, let me tell you in 1946, when I was with the New Jersey CIO council and Harry Truman was President, we passed a full employment bill. But it was never implemented and the Humphrey-Hawkins bill is a way of implementing that bill that says very simply: encourage private industry to expand and give jobs to people. But when unemployment reaches above three or four percent, then the government has to be the employer of last resort. There are people in the government who don't like that. They think it's perfectly legitimate for eight or nine million people in this country to be unemployed. And let me in on, let you in on my secret: it ain't just ten million people are unemployed. When Mr. Ford stands up and says he has cut unemployment just as he has cut inflation, he doesn't tell you that forty per cent of the black youth in this country have no jobs, and if they get into trouble, it's because they have nothing to do and they're resentful and fighting. And that twenty-five percent of the white youth feel the same way because they're unemployed. And that people who are under-employed resent the fact that they are not getting decent wages. Or people who are off unemployment compensation roles, who have become too discouraged to look for a job, and have no job, that's why Humphrey-Hawkins is important to us.

How are we going to pass it is, I as a lobbyist tell you, we're not going to pass it unless there is a groundswell from the union members of this country to the people who represent them in the House and the Senate saying: we want the Humphrey-Hawkins bill passed. And we want it passed with a big

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DUBROW: enough vote so that if Ford vetoes it, we can override that veto. And let me tell you something, if you bother to do that, there'll be damn few Republicans who are looking for reelection who won't vote for the Humphrey-Hawkins bill, even if the President tells them not to, even if he twists arms. Because when they are running for reelection they only know two things: they've got to report back to the voters in their district. And if in their districts which are heavily industrial districts, districts where minorities live, and we've registered them and they vote, let me tell you, the most reactionary Democrat or Republican will think twice about not voting for the things that they hear from, from their constituents. The problem is that we have a tremendous amount of power in the lobbying game, in the trade union movement. Unlike some people, who when they heard I was going down to Washington to lobby, suggested that I was getting into the oldest profession in the world. It happens to be a very legitimate profession. All I'm doing is for my members, or for that matter for you, because I'm part of the AFL-CIO, and I'm not one of those lobbyists who said if the ILG doesn't have it in its constitution or its legislation I shouldn't help some other international lobbyist do it, because we work with each other.

I discovered very early in my lobbying days that it is a very good and important job to be done. Because as a representative government, it says in the constitution that the people have a right to petition their government which is a representative government. And therefore, I am representing my people as their representative petitioning the government. It stems from the constitution. The term "lobbying" comes from a simple reason. There used to be a time, long before we got to be an affluent country, where you had to grab the legislators actually in the lobby, and talk to them because they had no offices, and they weren't full time, and they would go back home all the time. So that's where the term lobbying comes from. There's nothing terrible about it. The trouble is, like people who think all politicians are crooks, some people think all lobbyist are prostitutes, male or female. But seriously, in ending, I'd like to say just a few things.

There are a whole list of issues on which those of us who represent the labor movement on the hill lobby: social issues of all kind, housing, education, civil rights, hand gun control, minimum wage, registration. Anything that you can think about that would affect somebody in your union, we are likely to be concerned with. We have priorities, of course. You have to have priorities. But there isn't anything that we don't think is important to make this a more alive, a more important, a richer democracy. I wanted to end on a little note of...., maybe a sermon almost. The thing that has concerned me more than anything in these last eight years that we have had a

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DUBROW: Republican administration, has been the fact that people have been sold the idea that the Congress of the United States is no good. It's making no effort for the people. That it is sex-ridden. That it goes off on junkets. That it does nothing for the people who elect them.

Well, I'm here to tell you that when I lobby I respect the office. I may not always respect the person holding the office. But let me tell you, the most sacred institution you and I have as members of the union, is the Congress of the United States. And if you allow anybody who is running for President to run them down because there happen to be six men who may have been sleeping with their secretaries, who could have said no if they wanted to. And I told that to somebody the other day. If they're going to condemn four hundred and thirty-five members of Congress, most of whom work hard every day at committees, in Washington, or the one hundred senators, because there are a few people who have conducted themselves badly, then I want all of us to look at our own community, and our own churches, and our own other organizations. Because if you're looking for scandal, scandal is wherever people exist. If there wasn't scandal, we'd all be angels and we'd belong in heaven and not on earth.

And what I am simply saying to you as a lobbyist, who in a sense represents you, and who every day when Congress is in session is up there trying to get some laws passed along with other people in the union movement. I can only say to you that the Congress of the United States is a magnificent institution. Who attends that magnificent institution depends on people like you and me and our fellow workers. And in the long run, if we don't like who represents us , we do have the ballot box if we use it. And so, I want to simply say to you, that lobbying is exciting and interesting and it's needed, but everyone of you are lobbyists. And so long as you do your job, lobbying your fellow workers, or your fellow citizens, that's how much better a job those of us who serve you in Washington can do for you. And if you don't do it back home, then we can't do it for you on the hill. Because the congressman says to me: "Evie, you may tell me that your people believe this, but I have not had one word from them, and here are a stack of letters from the people on the other side." I'm not only embarrassed and tongue-tied, but I'm upset, because I know those people who have written the letters against or for legislation, depending on what side we're on, are selfish-interest people. And that our people back home ought to learn that they ought also to write. And if they say to you: "Well, I don't know how to write good English." I say: "The hell with that," very honestly. If you can't write English, write it in Spanish, Yiddish, Chinese, Polish, Irish, anything because let me tell you something [applause], the Congress of the United States has a

DUBROW: branch called the Library of Congress and they have translators.

And let me tell you another thing, I got a vote from one of the most reactionary Republicans, who thank god is no longer there, because one vote out of four thousand five hundred is hardly any good. But he voted with us because he said: "I got a letter the other day on a piece of butcher paper about this bill." And he said: "I figured out that if that man that wrote to me, thought enough about this to feel that he didn't have any writing paper, and the only thing he had [on] was a piece of butcher paper, he thought it was important enought to write me about. I think it's important enough for me to think about voting for it." And I said to him, he doesn't come from Michigan, he comes from Illinois, he's no longer there, as I say, he was there last year. As he came out to me he said: "I voted for you." I said: "Well, one out of four thousand something's pretty good. And I do thank you." And I said: "I tell you what. If you come back, I'm going to buy my people lots of butcher paper to write to you if that's what it takes to get your vote."[applause]

So let me end now by saying, first of all, don't let anybody kid you about the Congress of the United States. It's a great institution. It's peopled by your representatives, whether they're good or bad, it depends on how many people you convice, and what you believe in. The second thing I want to say to you, is this is a great democracy we live in. But it won't be great unless every single person you can reach understands the need to register and vote. If it were only for the rich, those people who are not registered and don't vote would be the first people to belly-ache about voting is only for the rich. It's a freedom we have that we ought not to give up. And everyone of us ought to spend between now and the time registration ends in our districts, convincing our members and their families that they need to vote. That in this presidential year when you have a choice between Jimmy Carter and Fritz Mondale, and Jerry Ford and that in-fighter that goes for the jugular every time he wants to, Bob Dole, I'm saying there's not much choice for the labor movement unless we get out and we register and we vote out people for the Carter-Mondale ticket that will give us a president that will understand that when we ask for something in the labor movement, we're asking not for ourselves but for all the people in this country, and for many people all over the world. Thank you.

Oral History Interview

with

EVELYN DUBROW
International Ladies
Garment Workers Union

August 21, 1976

by Lydia Kleiner

INTERVIEWER: Checking whether our microphone is working today. Talking with Ms. Evelyn Dubrow who's here from Washington, D.C. for the Summer School for Women Workers. And essentially what we have been doing is talking to women who've been active in the labor movement, using the word activist really, to describe them, rather than all official leaders.

DUBROW: Yes. Right.

INTERVIEWER: ....People who have played an important role for a number of of years. And we're trying to cover, not just exactly what did they do, but what kinds of, what kinds of background they have, what kinds of things may have contributed to an interest in this work, and essentially, we have an outline, a set of questions tions covering family background, and union experience, work experience and those kinds of things. Maybe we can start with just going back and asking some questions about your . . .

DUBROW: Sure.

INTERVIEWER: . . .grandparents.

DUBROW: Heavens, grandparents.

INTERVIEWER: Right. All the way back. To start with, I noticed in some material that you have mentioned your father being important . . .

DUBROW: In my life.

INTERVIEWER: In your life, right. We'll go back before that. Do you remember your grandparents at all?

DUBROW: No. I don't because both of them were in Russia, and died before I was born. I was the baby of the family and came along quite late in my mother and father's lives, so that I don't ever remember, except in stories, my mother and father told stories about their own parents. The first that I can remember, just my mother and father.

INTERVIEWER: What type of things did they say about your . . .

DUBROW: Well, my mother's father was considered the learned man in Vitebsk. My mother and father both came from Vitebsk.

INTERVIEWER: How do you spell that?

DUBROW: V-I-T-E-B-S-K. Marc Chagall's family came from the same place. They (mother's parents) owned a small grocer store. Mother's own mother died when she was rather young, from typhus. There was a plague, or an epidemic or whatever you call it, and my grandfather remarried. And, so that, my mother from a small child had a step-mother. She had one brother, and one sister and one half-sister. My uncle, who was very well educated, was a scholar, and came to this country at about, I guess, the same time that my mother and father did, in the late 1890's, and became a rabbi, Hebrew teacher. But was always extremely good with us. He was able to do Latin and algebra and things like that. He was really great to have as a relative.

My father had an older brother, two older brothers, who came to the country, I guess, about the same time, all of them within, I would say, five or six years of each other. All of them very actively anti-czarist, and all of them actively in the socialist movement. My uncle in New Jersey and my father were particularly active. They were active in cooperative leagues. They were helpful in establishing the first cooperative bakery in Paterson, New Jersey.

INTERVIEWER: Oh, I know that.

DUBROW: My father was a carpenter, and then became a builder and a contractor. And, as I say, all his life was active in the Socialist Party in New Jersey, and was always a member of the Carpenters Union, so that anybody that he employed always had to be a union person. And had, you know, great respect for people like Scott Nearing and the trade union movement, I remember as a little child being taken to hear Gus Classens, and it always amused me as I grew older, that he and Norman Thomas only remembered me as a little girl, rather than as somebody who was grown up.

DUBROW: My sister was one of the youngest suffragettes in this country, and worked with Mrs. Belmont and Alice Paul towards the passage of the Nineteen Amendment. And was one of those who picketed the White House, went to jail, went on a hunger strike. So that it was not unusual for me to be interested, or the whole family as a matter of fact, to be interested in politics. My brother went to law school. Two of my sisters were nurses. One became a medical historian. The other was a head dietician of the big hospital on Welfare Island in New York. And so that, as I say, we, politics, social things, were always part of the family concerns.

INTERVIEWER: How many were in your family?

DUBROW: There were, there were five of us. And I was the baby of the family. I suspect I was not expected. My eldest sister had a good deal to do with my education and my interests and my development, because by the time I came along, mother wasn't too well. But even then, you know, the love of music and reading, things like that, were part of the normal procedure with the family and my father, who became quite deaf as I grew up, but he read all the time. He was a great scholar, and I remember that I always had a feeling that he heard more than we thought he did, that he managed to turn off a conversation when he wasn't interested in what people were saying.

So that the home life all, as I say, centered around a concern of what was happening in this country. And I can remember that my oldest sister's first vote was for Norman Thomas for President. My father had voted socialist from the time he could remember being a citizen and voting. But in 1932 along with a number of other people, decided to vote for Roosevelt, because he felt that Roosevelt had taken a good many of the issues and planks of the Socialist program and adopted them, and my father felt that it was terribly important to defeat the Republicans because it was the height of the Depression, as you will recall. You will, you're probably too young, too young to recall, but I remember because, you see, I was going to high school in the thirties, so that it meant a lot in terms of seeing the long lines of people on relief, people in front of soup kitchens. At that time I was doing some special work for the newspapers while I was going to high school. And I can remember so vividly doing a few interviews with workers whose gas and electricity had been cut off, and they were ironing by kerosene lamp. That kind of thing. And it left a great impression on me, so that my interest in the trade union movement wasn't unusual. However, when I went to college, I decided to major in journalism, and at that time it was a three-year course at NYU. It was not a four-year course. And when I got through, having done newspaper work all through college, I went to work for the police commissioner at home, doing some of his press work. I was, at the same time, editing an Italian-American weekly called

DUBROW: Il Citadino, The Citizen. It was put out by a printer, whom I always called the Johnny Five-by-Five, really, his name was Josepi Evangelista. We all called him Pop. And I can always remember clearly that I would do the English writing, then some of it would be translated into Italian. I did the whole thing, including the editorials which I adored doing because I took on all the politicians I didn't like and the daily newspaper. And every once in a while, the editors of the Herald News would write a nasty editorial referring to me as the "young editor of The Citizen," just to kind of put me in my place.

But all through that I was concerned. And when I took a job during vacations with Commissioner Roegner, I got very upset with, you know, the policemen breaking up picket lines. I can remember complaining to the Commissioner about it, and having him call in chief of the detectives and say: "Why are you bothering these poor little slipper workers when there are other things to be done?" I recall, too, we had a very good captain of police, William Buckley, who, if he wasn't a social democrat, came very close to being one. And we had long discussions. So that when the Textile Workers Organizing Committee came in to Paterson, New Jersey, in the late 1937, I was interested in what they were doing and in '38 was offered a job by Carl [Holderman], which coincided with my getting out of college. And so I took the job with him, first as, doing some organizing, and then going in to Paterson to be, act as kind of a secretary-organizer to Irving Abramson, who was the assistant regional director, and eventually taking over the educational and political program of the textile workers in New Jersey. As a result of that, I became interested in lobbying because it was a matter of going down to the New Jersey legislature. Anybody who lobbies nationally has a much easier job than lobbying a state legislature because at that time the legislators had no offices, and you literally had to get them in the lobbies if you wanted to talk with them. And being a female and at that time a young woman, and don't ask me how young because I won't tell you. Age and personal life, to me, is something I hold very privately, and I'll tell you sometime the reason for that. But anyway, it was a little tougher because the lobbyists for industry almost all were men. The AFL at that time may have had a lobbyist, he was also a man, and as I recall, I was the only woman lobbyist they had, and young to boot. So that I learned the hard way how you got hold of legislators and talked with them, and learned very quickly that you had to be polite to all of them, and the way you found out things was to cultivate the leadership whether they were Democrats or Republicans. Now at the same time we were doing that, we were also fighting Mayor Frank Haig in Jersey City who was the Democratic leader. And we were fighting him because of his complete anti-union position. He was very anti-CIO, and as you know, the Textile Workers was part of the CIO. So that we established, while I

DURBOW: was still with the Textile Workers Union, a Laborist Non-Partisan League. Carl Holderman, who was regional director of the Textile Workers at that time, Irving Abramson and a number of other people, decided that, in order for the CIO to have an input, it was important to have some kind of a political arm. And there were some AF of L unions, like the Garment Workers Union, the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, which had been part of the CIO and then had withdrawn. But in New Jersey, we had a very, fairly good and solid relationship. So that my interest in politics and legislation started very early on. As a matter of fact, going back a little bit, I guess I ran the first sit-down strike in Passaic County. The Textile Workers Union was really the CIO union there. This was early on in the late thirties, early forties. The retail clerks, the wholesale, retail-wholesale department store employees which became CIO, had not yet been organized. The workers of Shulte United came to us and asked to be organized, and since most of them were young women, I was asked to do the organizing. I sat in with Carl Holderman. Well maybe this was the time the auto workers were having their sit-down strikes, you know, the whole wave of them. The Textile Workers were having them. He said: "Well maybe we ought to have a sit-down strike." And so we set it all up with the leaders of the groups, saying now, what we'll do is I'll come in and when I blow a whistle, somebody will go up to the second floor, the girls on the first floor will sit down, the girls on the second floor will sit down, and third floor, and everything will stop. And of course, the management became very upset. The chief of police who knew me from having been in the police department, during Commissioner Roegner's term of office, was very upset, came over, sent a couple of policemen to me and I refused to go with them. I said: "You know, I know something about false arrests." And these guys knew me. And they said: "Well damn it, the skipper would just like to see you." And I said: "If the skipper wants to see me, he can come see me here." Well, the police chief came, and said: "Look, if I let you picket, would you agree to have the girls come out," because they were worried about, you know, having them sleep over night. We were bringing food in. That kind of thing. I said: "Sure", so we closed down the place. We had a picket line. And I can remember on Saturday night, all the boyfriends of the girls came down to picket with them, and we had an accordian player. We practically stopped traffic. And we finally settled the strike. And about two days after the strike was settled, the head of Shulte United came down to ask me if I'd be personnel director for the firm. And I said, no thank you, that I was interested in organizing, and in the trade union movement. Well, after that, we got a whole slew of people wanting to be organized. A group of workers in the Armour Meat factory, whom I called sausage blowers, most of them, middle-aged Germans, many of them with walrus moustaches who wanted to be organized. And then we got the pencil workers who

DUBROW: wanted to be organized. As a matter of fact, I think the pencil workers stayed in the Textile Workers Union for many years, even after other internationals had been set up, or organizing committees had been set up by the CIO. And then we did the umbrella makers in Boonton, New Jersey. And a group in a spaghetti factory, whom I called "spaghetti benders." It was incredible the kind of demands for organization in thirty-nine and forty. And all this time, of course, I was also doing some of the political and educational work. Now one of the reasons I had this kind of experience, is that I had two men, my employers, who had great respect for women. One was Carl Holderman, the regional director, the other was Irving Abramson. Irving Abramson's wife had gone to college with me. She was ahead of me in college, but she came from the Bronx, I came from New Jersey, but we both had classes together. And as a matter of fact, when I saw her in Paterson shortly after I was transferred to Paterson to work with Irving Abramson, we met on the street. And I said: "Miriam, what are you doing here?" And she said: "Well, my husband is here, and I live here." And she said: "What are you doing here?" And I said; "Well, I'm working for the Textile Workers." "Oh," she said. "My husband told me he had somebody on his staff, but he didn't tell me your name." And, so, it turned out, you know, we knew each other, which made it very pleasant. But both of the men, really believed in women's rights, and were, therefore, not concerned because I was a woman and young. And they were willing to let me take on assigments that, perhaps, other men in the trade union movement might not have. I have no way of knowing, but all I know is that I had a very good experience with them. In, I guess it was 1942, Irving Abramson became president of the New Jersey CIO Council. I stayed on with Carl Holderman who was regional director for the Textile Workers, for about a year, when Irving Abramson offered me the job of coming to work with him, both as a secretary, but also to work with him with setting up what we called "The CIO War Relief Committee."

You'll remember we went into the war in 1941, and shortly thereafter Irving Abramson, who had a great imagination, (he was a lawyer--he got his job in the Textile Workers through Sidney Hillman, because he became interested in labor) set up the CIO War Relief Committee. We did it for New Jersey, originally. And President Murray of the CIO was so impressed that he asked Irving Abramson to become the national director of it, or at least the national chairman of it. So I was working with him on that, and was about to take over for New Jersey, when he decided that he'd rather have me stay as secretary, and then eventually become his assistant in the New Jersey CIO Council. And when that happened, we had the first special war production convention, that the labor movement had anywhere in the country. We decided that we needed to have a convention that would stir the workers up in terms of production, because there was a problem of worker absenteeism, there was a problem of making sure

DUBROW: that the health and safety of the workers was taken care of even during the war period. And I can remember that we had as our chief speaker, James Carey, who was then the secretary treasurer of the CIO. One amusing incident, you may or may not want to use and may want to cut it out, but I think it's very funny. When I called Jim Carey, he said: "I'll come," he said: "But I'll have to get out of here in a hurry." And I said, "Jim, we'll put you on very early, and then you can proceed to leave, and I'll see that you get into your car quickly so you can get away." Well, Jim made a very stirring speech. It was a good convention. There were slogans all over, you know, about winning the war and jobs that workers had. And of course, there were a lot of women members, because a lot of them were working in the plants, don't forget, New Jersey, as you know had automobile workers, rubber workers, textile workers, machinists, steel workers, and they were all part of the CIO, they were in the industrial unions that came into the CIO. When Jim Carey got through, I came downstairs with him and three little girls came over and said could they have his autograph. And he looked gratified and said: "Sure." And when he signed "James B. Carey" one little girl said: "Oh, I thought you were Frank Sinatra." Which, of course, amused me no end and for years afterward every time I'd see Jim Carey, you know, we'd laugh about it, and, and discuss it, and he used to tell it. He loved to tell stories.

But at any rate, we ran this and worked very hard on developing educational programs for all shifts of workers. I worked with management on that, seeing that we had bowling alleys and coffee shops open twenty-four hours a day. So, workers coming off a shift, wouldn't go directly home, maybe they'd stop and bowl or play pool or get a cup of coffee and a sandwich. And I can remember we particularly worked with Standard Oil of New Jersey, it had a lot of companies in and around Elisabeth, New Jersey. We set up, we used some of their facilities to set up these recreation and educational programs. And then we began to run classes for our people, you know, on politics, on the trade union movement, on the need for understanding your union, teaching them stewards courses. And I, who am a great believer in the pink pill method of educating, would, for our women, particularly, have classes in charm and needlepoint, or things. But even when we had those classes, we always spent ten or twenty minutes talking about the union itself, the union movement, the history of the Women's Trade Union League, and the need for political action. So that we never let an opportunity, in a sense, go by without discussing some of the issues that were important. As assistant to the president of the New Jersey CIO Council, we had a pretty big staff. We had some charming organizers and very active people, a good secretary. But I got very mad, at one time, because I found that instead of spending time on what I should be doing, I was stuffing envelopes and licking stamps and what have you. And I wrote a very sassy note to the President

DUBROW: of the Council saying that if I was being paid to lick stamps and stuff envelopes, then I was being overpaid. And, unless something could be done about it, so that we could have more money, and more staff, I could spend more time doing the things for which I presumably was hired, that I would feel that I ought to offer my resignation. Well, since he was a friend as well as the employer, he called me in and we had a discussion, and I said, "Let's have a special convention and let's get them to agree to put more money into our treasury so we can do some of these things." And I can remember I spent a month preparing it by going to union meetings and talking about the need for doing more than we were doing in the Council on political education or legislative things. We had no problem, and I can remember very vividly that on December 6 in 1941, we were in Camden, New Jersey, at a New Jersey CIO Council convention. Michael Quill, who was then in New York and very active, was to be a guest speaker. I had just gotten through talking to a group of workers from Trenton who wanted to be organized. Well, we got news about the attack on Pearl Harbor, and I remember the excitement of the convention, you know, everybody, really passing resolutions supporting the president and all these other things. So that, talking about time, you see, from 1941 until the end of the war, we were very much involved in trying to do the CIO war relief, which meant that what we were doing was raising money from workers to send to countries who needed the money for their workers or for the poor or whatever. And it was interesting because you had a feeling that the workers knew their responsibilities as Americans. They were just as patriotic as the soldiers. A number of our young workers, of course, were drafted and went to war and were replaced by women workers who did a fine job. Many of them had families at the same time as they were working. And it was a very exciting time in the early days of the CIO Labors Non-Partisan League. John L. Lewis decided that there ought to be a political arm, so he agreed we'd have a Labors Non-Partisan League. And that was just CIO. It wasn't functioning the way our New Jersey Labors Non-Partisan League, because we did have some AF of L Unions in with us. But nationally, of course, the Labors Non-Partisan League was CIO's political arm. And, I can remember vividly, you know, the conventions I went to were CIO, the one where John L. Lewis resigned because Roosevelt was reelected, and he, he was disturbed with Roosevelt. He was mad at him. He didn't want to endorse him and said that he would resign as president of the CIO if Roosevelt was reelected. And I remember the great speech of John L. Lewis's but the even greater speech of Sidney Hillman, in terms of supporting Roosevelt.

There were an awful lot of women who were beginning to be active then in the trade union movement, in the CIO at any rate.

INTERVIEWER: In what areas?

DUBROW: Well, many of them were organizers. A number of them were doing educational work. People like Esther Peterson of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, which was part of the CIO. That's when I first knew Esther Peterson. Later on, of course, the Communication Workers came into the CIO, and they didn't come in until quite late. Joseph Bierne, who was organizer of the Telephone Workers had an independent union, in New Jersey. That's really where it stems from. And I remember we worked very hard to try to get them to join CIO. I remember meeting with the New Jersey telephone operators who were mostly women. And particularly when they had their first strike, the maintenance had their strike of the telephone company, and this was even before they came into the CIO. And I remember training our clerical staff on how to drive the telephone company crazy by dialing as many calls as you could make: you see they had no operators because the operators went out on strike. That kind of thing. And that was a union with lots of women in it. So you could see that in the CIO the opportunity for women seemed to be much better than in the AF of L except for, perhaps, the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, which was still AF of L. But because it had such a great number of women members, it was more likely to be concerned with what women did, and put women in places of power, and, the history of the ILG and women and what they had to do, is, is a very great part of the history of the union itself. How the shirt-waist women started the union with their first strike in 1913, the Triangle fire of 1911 which brought Frances Perkins and Mrs. Roosevelt and Frieda Miller interested in the trade union movement. It was Frances Perkins who, visiting somebody in Washington Square, heard the sirens and came down and saw the bodies of the women hurtling down to the sidewalk to get out of the burning building, the Triangle Fire. Well, women members of the ILG became very, very active, very concerned, very demanding, so that their share of the history was very great, too. This was before my time and before I was in the trade unions, before I was born, as a matter of fact. But you learned about that as you were, even in the CIO, you learned about labor history. John Addleman who was in the Textile Workers, who was educational director with Larry Rogin of the Textile Workers, so that I learned a good deal from them the history of the trade union movement, and some of the women who were active in it and so forth. It was an exciting time.

INTERVIEWER: Did you meet many of them? The women who were active? You mentioned two of the men who offered . . .

DUBROW: Yes, well, yes I did, I met quite a lot of them. As a matter of fact, through the Women's Trade Union League, people like Rose Schneidermann, and people like Frieda Miller, people like Jane Smith, Hilda Smith of the Bryn Mawr Summer School, and then the Hudson Shore Summer School. I met a lot of them through Wellesley Institute on whose board I sat, and I used to have institutes

DUBROW: every summer. A certain segment of the people who came, came from the labor movement, so you got to know them, an awful lot of them, whom I met through various kinds of experiences.

INTERVIEWER: Were you impressed by or influenced by any of them?

DUBROW: Oh, yes! I think, there's no question. Rose Schneidermann, who was, incidentally, Abe Greene's* sister.

INTERVIEWER: Rose Schneidermann was Abe Greene's sister?

DUBROW: Yes. Is Abe still alive?

INTERVIEWER: I think he passed away.

DUBROW: I think he did, too.

INTERVIEWER: Yes.

DUBROW: Yes. Rose was one of them. Frieda Miller, Esther Peterson, Gerel Rubien, who was president, the last president of the Women's Trade Union League. They had organized that in New York, and I knew about it, even though most of my work during those days was in New Jersey. But we had a kind of comraderie, all of the women in the trade union movement. In the American Newspaper Guild which I helped to organize in New Jersey, and I was secretary of it while I was in the council, had women members and they became good friends. It was an interesting time, as a matter of fact, because you met rank and file leaders whom you helped develop, some of whom became organizers, some of them became educational directors. You learned an awful lot from people like Fania Cohen, who was educational director of the ILG. I knew her long before I ever came into the ILG. Angela Bambacci, who was a vice-president of the ILG, but had started out as a young fiery leader on the picket line. There were so many of them that had some kind of contribution to make. You got excited about knowing them. And their contribution was very important to me. It made me have faith in the trade union movement, because, after all, I came in not as a worker in a shop. I came in more as a technician. I came in with a basic interest in the trade union movement because of my own family background and their belief in the trade unions. But without the kind of inspiration that these people gave me, I don't know whether I would have continued or not, whether I would have thought that I ought to go and get a job that paid better. For instance, for a number of years, when we first started with the Textile Workers, we were paid "Scotch Weeks", we were paid every other week. And I used to tease Emil Rieve, the president of the Textile Workers in later years, saying, "You still owe me an awful lot of money." You know, that kind of thing.

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*Abe Greene was an editor at the Paterson News, a boxing commissioner, and a longterm Paterson resident.

INTERVIEWER: I would like, as long as you're on this topic, could you tell a little bit of what your impressions were of the Trade Union League.

DUBROW: The Women's Trade Union League?

INTERVIEWER: Yes.

DUBROW: I thought the Women's Trade Union League was a very fine organization because it was made up of a number of women who had good educational backgrounds. They were not necessarily from the trade union movement, although in its membership were members of the trade unions. Most of them, as I say, had done some educational work with the unions, or had been doing work in the industrial departments in New York, for instance, when Al Smith was governor, they did a good deal in arranging scholarships for young women workers, working with the Bryn Mawr Summer School, working with the Wisconsin School for Workers, working with Brookwood College and places like that. I think they contributed a great deal because they were able, also, to bring the kind of respectability to the trade union movement at a time when a lot of people thought of the trade union movement made up of communists, anarchists, socialists. So they acted, in a sense, as a catalyst between some of the higher income employer class and the trade union movement. It was an awfully good place for women who were concerned with social work to get a lot of background. The Women's Trade Union League, probably had a good deal to do with a number of the protective laws that were passed for women and children, women and minors in the country. It was one of the reasons that the AF of L and the CIO both had some questions about things like the Equal Rights Amendment. Now, the unions had been very active in getting the vote for women, as a matter of fact we have some marvelous pictures in the ILG showing women participating in the parades for the suffragettes. And it was an organization that I think really made its mark in history by being concerned with what happened to women workers and how they had to handle both their jobs and taking care of their homes and their children, encouraging them to take classes in English and in history and in labor history. And I think they really had a good deal to do with setting up a good many of the conferences and schools for workers that we now have. Now, when I was still in the CIO I sat on the first board to set up the Industrial Labor and Management, Industrial Labor Relations School at Rutgers. Sitting with the president of Rutgers and with a number of the professors representing the CIO while, Lewis Herman represented the AF of L, insisting that as a state, we ought to have that kind of a school. I worked with Douglas Brown, and Richard Lester, who were at Princeton doing industrial labor relations. I worked with John Dunlop, and Fred Harrison, who just recently died. Frank Allister and Frank McCullough, in Chicago were interested in industrial and labor schools.

DUBROW: And I met all of them because I was acting as educational director of the New Jersey CIO. And they were, in one way or another, working to develop interest, the interest of workers in education, developing their concern with cultural things.

INTERVIEWER: What about the contention that the Women's Trade Union League really had more middle class values, that it was trying to bestow on the recipients of the scholarships, on the working class women themselves?

DUBROW: Well I think it had middle class values, but their theory, I think, was just because a woman worked in a shop or in a plant or in a restaurant, or in a store didn't mean that she should not have open to her the vistas that the well-educated woman had, the college woman, or the high school graduate, and so forth. And so, there may have been some who thought they were being "lady bountiful", but not many of them, not the ones that I knew. They had great respect for women workers, and they felt that they had a right in society, and the thing to do was to stimulate them to do something to get other women in the working place to be concerned and to fight for a quality. And they were among the earliest ones calling for equal pay for equal work. They were among the earliest ones calling for day-care centers. So that my feeling was that while not many of them came actually from any trade union background originally, they were very concerned with what was happening with the trade union movement.

INTERVIEWER: You mentioned that there was a comradarie among the women who were involved. Could you tell us a little of that?

DUBROW: Well, I think that they ran a lot of programs not just for teaching the women members of the League, but they went to the theater together, they went to the concerts together, they had a lot of social programs going on. They were among the earliest to consider the fact that black workers were equal with white workers. They had a very good record on race relations, as did, I think, the CIO, better than the AF of L at the time. The CIO, from the very beginning had a feeling for civil rights, because so many of the workers, the industrial workers came from all kinds of groups, and, as the Spanish-surnamed groups came in, they became interested in developing programs for them through the Women's Trade Union League. So that I think it was a way that a lot of different groups within the trade union movement got to know and like each other at these social affairs. Now, true it was based in New York, for the most part. It was not really a national organization, although there were groups like them in some places like Chicago and Detroit and L.A. and San Francisco. But they really weren't the same, they weren't as active as the New York Women's Trade Union League was. I think that for the most part, many of them continued to have an in-

DUBROW: terest in the labor movement even when they left the Women's Trade Union League. And it didn't, as I recall, disband, I bet, until about fifteen years ago. It was still functioning. Gerel Rubien, who's a good friend of mine, was the last president of it. She was also educational director for Local 62 of the ILG. She was a Barnard graduate. Wrote, became interested through, I guess, Freda Miller and Rose Schneidermann, people like that in the Trade Union League. And she had an ability to attract people and really did a remarkably fine job. And as I recall, they had a meeting only a number of years ago on how they were going, what they were going to do with the treasury they still had, and I think they finally decided to do a scholarship. And I don't know in whose memory it was named. Could have been Rose Schneidermann's memory, because she died just prior to their disbanding. I don't recall exactly.

But I really had a feeling that these women contributed a great deal toward developing women trade unionists and making them understand they had a place in society.

INTERVIEWER: You mentioned that they inspired you to stay on in union work. Was there any one in particular, or was there anything in particular about what they were doing that made you want to . . .

DUBROW: Well, it wasn't so much anyone in particular as the kind of work they were doing, interest in political activity, and educational work. As a matter of fact, when I decided that I had spent a number of years in New Jersey with the CIO and that I needed to have some other experience, and Jim Loeb, who was then starting the Americans for Democratic Action, and I'd known him from the Union for Democratic Action because we were both interested in the loyalist cause in Spain. As matter of fact, I was chairman of the Committee for Loyalist Spain. Both in college and then when I got out, I continued my interest in that fight. Jim decided that there needed to be a kind of a transition group of people who would be, in a sense, geared almost as social democrats to understanding the need for political activity, by people of all groups, intellectuals, trade union people, and so forth. When he decided to try to organize Americans for Democratic Action with a base of people who'd been in the Union for Democratic Action, he asked me to come to Washington to be director of organization. I decided that was a good opportunity to get out of, of the immediate trade union movement for a while, and then come back to the labor movement. Well, I stayed with ADA until '56, I came in as Director of Organization in '47 when people like Mrs. Roosevelt were on the board, David Dubinsky of the ILG. These were all founders. I was one of the founders. Joe Row, James Wexsler, Paul Porter, you name them. The New Deal Democrats were all. Frank McCullough, Frank McAllister. Educators who came in, you know, by droves, to help organize Americans for Democratic Action. And

DUBROW: I had started prior before going to Washington, when we decided to go ahead on it, and set up the New Jersey ADA and Carl Holderman and Irving Abramson were in that group and you had people like Chief Justice Hughes of New Jersey became a member of it. Charles Howell who later became a congressman, was then an assemblyman. We had a very good crew, from all over the country who were just fascinated with the idea of starting an organization that would be liberal in its approach, that would, could be bi-partisan. In other words, you didn't have to be a Democrat. If you were a liberal Republican it was great to have you in there. There was always a close connection with the trade union movement, so that I never lost that interest in it. And in 1948 I came back to New Jersey to coordinate the labor campaign for Charles Howell who was running for congress in Mercer County, and to help develop a program for Archibald Alexander who was then running for the senate in New Jersey. I went on the UAW staff from ADA, and after that campaign was over, and I remember getting up at five o'clock in the morning to go and cast my vote in New York, because I, my home was in New York City. My mother was there. She had moved out of her house and into New York City.

INTERVIEWER: I'd like to go back a little bit first. I want to ask you a few more things about your father. And your mother, especially, you didn't mention your mother at all. Was she working outside the home?

DUBROW: Oh, no. She was always, as far as I can remember home almost all the time. And, while she was very interested in all of the things that we were concerned with, my mother was not an activist in that sense. Also, very early on she began to lose her sight, cataracts and things like that, so that reading became difficult for her. My father used to read to her quite a lot. And she was always, as I say, interested in politics. She loved Franklin Delano Roosevelt. The only picture she had in her room when she moved to New York from New Jersey, after my father's death, was a big picture of President Roosevelt. And I can remember that, I was on my way to Camden to make a speech for the Shipyard Workers Union when the word came while we were in the car, that Roosevelt had died. And when I called mother from Camden, and she, it was hard for her to believe. Her words to me were: "They <u>say</u> that President Roosevelt has died." It was hard for her to believe it. And she was the kind of person now, at this age, at this time she must have been, oh seventy-nine, when Roosevelt came into New York in the pouring rain, she went over to Eighth Street to watch him. And I came home that weekend, and she was telling me about it, and I said: "Mother, for heaven sake why'd you stand in the rain?" She said: "If he could ride in the rain, I could stand in the rain to see him." So we were politically, a family concerned with what

DUBROW: was going on. And I don't think it was unusual. I think immigrants who came to this country were much more enamoured of the freedom, particularly if you came out of czarist Russia.

INTERVIEWER: How old were your parents when they came?

DUBROW: Well, I would assume that my father was, maybe 19 or 20, my mother a little younger. My oldest sister who was born in Russia, but learned to walk on the ship, and they got married quite early, so I would say it was probably in their twenties, at the most. It's a very funny thing, they just had no idea of really what their birthdays were. They could tell pretty much by the calendar about when they were born, but they never had specific dates of birth.

INTERVIEWER: Right. My parents either.

DUBROW: One of those things that happens, I think, with a lot of people who come from abroad. That's not unusual. My birth wasn't recorded by our family doctor. I wasn't born in Passaic. I was born in Garfield, New Jersey, which was just adjacent to Passiac, and it was a very little town in those days. The doctor who delivered me didn't think it was important, I take it, to record my birth. It was a terrible time trying to find out. And luckily my sister, who was so much older than I, was able to give me an affidavit to the effect of the date they knew. She couldn't tell the hour or anything like that. It was tough.

INTERVIEWER: Did your parents agree politically?

DUBROW: Oh, yes. Yes, there was complete agreement in our whole family. We never really had any arguments in terms of what side we were on. It was a question we would argue on people. Which were the best people. I can remember as a tiny girl the LaFollette campaign. And, it isn't very clear in my mind, but I remember the excitement about it all, and my father in later years describing to me the fight between the right wing and the left wing of the socialists who didn't think we ought to support LaFollette, and who felt that they ought to stay right down the Socialist Party lines, and not make any agreement with the progressives of Wisconsin. But my father thought LaFollette was a very great man. And it's very funny how your lives get tangled up. One of my sister's best friends in the suffragist movement, Joy Young, was Rachel LaFollette's sister. She had married young Bob LaFollette. So I got to know them in that way as I grew older, since my sister, as I say, in a sense, was a surrogate mother for me, took me to the theatre, took me to concerts. And when I went to N.Y.U. she lived close to school and I stayed with her, that kind of things I got to know her friends a good deal, and many of them were liberal democrats.

INTERVIEWER: About how many years older was she?

DUBROW: Twenty-two. So that it made, you know, a big difference in that sense.

INTERVIEWER: That's substantial. Do you ever remember thinking about your parents' lives, and wanting to live a life like theirs, or not live a life like theirs?

DUBROW: Not really. I, well I thought a lot about it, you know. I was always fascinated with the kind of stories they would tell about their lives in Russia. I was always fascinated with one of my mother's relatives. I can't remember exactly whether it was a great....a second cousin or a third cousin who was made a baron by the czar because he'd help build the trans-Siberian Railroad, and so there was a kind of feeling of pride in that sense. And I can always remember that they spoke longingly of Russia in terms of the homeland, but of course, the czarist regime was apparently anathema to them. And, of course, they were pro-Karensky and anti-Lenin, and anti-Stalin. And yet, during the Stalin-Nazi pact, my mother was shocked, you know, that anybody from Russia would make that pact. And when Russia went into the war on our side, my mother was very prophetic. She said that the Nazis will never be able to take an inch of Russian soil. There was that great love of the land, and a dislike of the government. It was interesting. I find that's true of a good many of the Russian immigrants that I have met, as a matter of fact. But, we did a lot of things together because I was the baby of the family. So they took me places. And on the other hand, as I grew up, I was very independent, luckily, because before me, my sisters and brother had made the break from the family, so it wasn't unusual for me to be away. And there never was a question of freedom or anything like that.

INTERVIEWER: Did your father have any particular ambitions for you?

DUBROW: He was very pleased when I went into the labor movement. That to him was a great source of satisfaction. And I think it was true of my mother, too, and the rest of the family, depending upon, you know, how they felt. They were all liberal. They all believed in the labor movement. They all believed in the CIO. I had no problem in that respect of being an outcast, or anything like that. There was great sympathy and always interest in it.

INTERVIEWER: There was only one boy in the family.

DUBROW: My brother. He's a lawyer.

INTERVIEWER: Was he privileged in any particular way, in terms of housework that he had to do?

DUBROW: I think he did very little of it. I know, my father who had the genius of being able to do anything, he had a green thumb, so he loved to garden. He could do anything in the house like, you know, mechanical work and he was a good cook, liked to cook when my mother let him in the kitchen. And he got used to it because my mother was quite sick while I was growing up. You know, she'd have times of illness prior to the time I was born, she was quite sick. So, my father, I think, cooked for the family anyhow. And I can remember one time when mother was quite sick and my one sister who was home at the time was sick. My father kind of took care of me and then I went to spend a week-end with some friends of the family and I remember he came to visit me and brought me candy so I wouldn't be homesick. That kind of thing. He was a very sweet, good-natured, not-envious person. And, as a matter of fact, as I grew older, I admired that trait in him. My mother was a good deal more ambitious for all of us. My father never felt that he had to have what the next person had, as long as he could make a living and take care of the family, and help educate us. That was his great interest. He was a very mild, sweet, gentle-mannered person who rarely even raised his voice. I can never remember his spanking me. My mother rarely ever spanked me, but if I was being spanked it was my mother who did it, not my father.

INTERVIEWER: What did your mother want you to be, or the rest of you?

DUBROW: I don't think my mother had any great feeling about professions. I think she wanted us to be well educated. And she, I think, would like to have seen me have, get married and have lots of children. But she wasn't unhappy about it, and she was very pleased with the fact that I was interested in the same sort of things that she and my father cared about. So when she had time, you know in those days, the struggle, the Depression hit us very badly. And, it was a real struggle to just keep body and soul together. It was very lucky that my sisters, who were out and doing well, were able to help contribute, I think, to keep the family going during those bad years. So, as I say, I don't know that my mother had any special ambition for me. She just had great respect for education, and culture and music, loved to dance, had a very lovely, lovely voice. So she sang, beautifully. And I think that basically was her concern, to take care of the house, take care of the children; that she saw as her job in life.

INTERVIEWER: Do you remember what you wanted to be when you grew up?

DUBROW: Well, there were different kinds of ambitions. I wanted very much to be a great writer, which I never turned out to be. I worked one summer in a factory, in Passaic, the U.S. Rubber Company. The job was gotten by a friend of my sister's who was secretary to the head man there, because I thought I'd write the great American novel about the problem of working women. And I lasted, I think, about a month . . .

INTERVIEWER: Working women?

DUBROW: Yes. It was a pretty dull job. I, as I recall it was sifting tiny little rubber stoppers or something. And I remember singing at the job, because we sang a lot in my family. All of us would hum or sing. To this day I still will go down the street humming or singing. Any my friends will say to me, you sing all the time. You know, it's just one of those things. I don't know whether it connotes happiness or unhappiness, it's just one of those things. Well, I got bawled out by the foreman for singing, because the older women who were working with me were singing with me. And that wasn't the right thing, you did in the factories, you see. So I lasted about a month at that job.

INTERVIEWER: That was your first job?

DUBROW: That was my first summer job. You know, it was very funny. Now, if a kid doesn't work during the summer, in some way or another, it's considered strange, because most kids go out, whether they come from rich families or poor. You go out and get a job. Well, when I was growing up, you see, there was a social stigma to kids who had to go out and work in the summers. Now my sister, my oldest sister, worked at the five-and-dime to add, you know, to money that she needed. The others got various kinds of summer jobs, not really the day-to-day kind of job. It was looked on as being bad for children to work during summer vacation. So that until I began to do a little work for the paper on Saturdays and Sundays, Fridays and Saturdays would work at a little sweater shop, to earn some money, because, as I say, those Depression years were not easy on us. It just wasn't considered the thing you did, somehow or another. And I think my mother always felt very strange about having a child who was still going to school working. My brother had a paper route. All the kids did, you know. That was normal for a young boy to do. He'd get up at five o'clock in the morning, and go out, and you know, it's all hazy in my mind because some of it's stories I heard from the family. Some I remember myself, somewhat. But I do know that that was one of the things that he did. And he did work his way through college, through law school. He, I think, got a job with a mobile library where he took books around to offices and things like that. He clerked with a very nice lawyer, Harry Walker. As I say, the whole attitude is much better these days about working than they were when we were growing up. It has no social stigma anymore.

INTERVIEWER: Right.

DUBROW: And even kids, I know, boys and girls who have gone to college, drop-out and do something else. Nobody thinks that's wrong. When I was growing up, to drop out of school or college, why, it was a stigma to the family. They were disgraced when that kind of thing happened.

INTERVIEWER: Had everyone in your family gone to college?

DUBROW: No. My eldest sister did. One sister....My oldest sister went to college. The sister after her shocked the family when she decided to become a nurse. So she went to nursing school and became a medical historian. The other sister started at college, and gave up, and went back to nursing school, and then became a dietician. It isn't that they couldn't have gone to college, if they wanted to, but even in those days, as my mother and father used to say, they didn't think nursing was something that a girl who came from a good family should go to. Strange kind of attitudes they had. Now, to have a doctor in the family was great, but the thought of sending, going to become a nurse, was a very strange thing at that time. And I can remember the discussions that my mother and father had about the fact that my sister had decided to become a nurse. Now they were very proud of her after she got through nursing school. She was a fine nurse, and did very well in helping to train interns. And she was genuinely concerned, always, about every member of the family, when we were ill, things like that. It was what she wanted to do and what she enjoyed doing.

INTERVIEWER: What did you think of school when you were a child?

DUBROW: Well, I enjoyed, I loved elementary school. Luckily enough I lived fairly close to both the elementary school I went to and the high school, weren't too far away.

INTERVIEWER: Did you have any favorite subjects or favorite teachers?

DUBROW: Yes. Geography and history were my favorite subjects, in school, I enjoyed Latin, if I could do free verse; I was bored with the basics of Latin, but I loved Virgil and Homer very much. That last year of Latin I loved, because it was a kind of a freedom that you got from being able to read Greek and Roman mythology, and I can remember we were asked to write poetry of certain passages, you know, translating them. That I liked best. I enjoyed French. I hated math, all through school. Absolutely hated it, and I think it never came clear to me that math could be taught as a matter of logic. A matter of logic, rather than just an example of how many apples and how many oranges, and so forth. I think they're much smarter the way they teach math these days. And algebra was terrible but my uncle Harry, who had great mathematical sense, would help with that.

INTERVIEWER: Did he live with you?

DUBROW: No. He had a perfectly beautiful wife, who died at a very early age, leaving my cousin, who followed my footsteps in journalism. We were very close, born at almost the same time.

INTERVIEWER: Girl cousin?

DUBROW: Boy cousin. And, Uncle Harry spent a lot of time with us. And I'd go down and visit him if I had a tough algebra lesson. He was always much more, well I would say, friendly and concerned with me than he was with his own son. He was very strict with his own son, but I kind of was spoiled, you know, the baby of the family. I think at the same time my cousin resented the fact that I got much more out of his father than he did. But his father was a great disciplinarian with him.

INTERVIEWER: Did you have any favorite teachers . . .

DUBROW: Oh, indeed I did. I had two in high school that I still remember with great affection. One was Elaine Manly who taught English Grammar, and would give me fine marks in creativity and original thinking, but would practically flunk me in sentence structure. And she made a very cogent remark about saying: "If you don't know what the rules are, then you won't know how to break them." So I really learned sentence structure from her. And the other was Ruth Thomas who was also an English teacher, but also coached the dramatics class in school and I got to know her very well. I was in school plays in little parts. I remember when we did the play for the senior class, she decided that I would be the critic because I had a pretty good ear for seeing things. And I even got on the program that way, worked, on the stage managing, things like that.

But we went to the theatre a lot, Ruth Thomas and I, even after I got through with high school, while I was going to college but coming in because it was easy enough to commute, and stay a few days in New York, and come back. We saw each other for quite a lot of time after I got through high school. I don't know whatever happened to her. Because once I got involved in the labor movmement, it took almost all of my time and . . .

INTERVIEWER: What was she like?

DUBROW: Well, she was little and dark haired with a very, very excellent command of the language to begin with, but also very sharp. A quick wit, and sometimes could be very nasty to people whom she thought were not paying attention or were stupid or something like that. But she had tremendous influence on my life in terms of developing an interest in reading. We read a lot in my family anyway, but it was the kind of reading that was sort of haphazard. I read whatever books we had in the house, and we had a lot of them. I once read a book of my brother's on torts. I was sitting home one Saturday night, the dog and I were the only two. And I couldn't find anything I wanted to read, and I pulled it out. And I'm not sure I knew what I was reading, but it was interesting just the same.

DUBROW INTERVIEW

INTERVIEWER: What kind of influence in reading did Ruth bring?

DUBROW: Well, the classics were very important with her. And I enjoyed reading those. My sister had the same affect on me. Both of them were good teachers. And both of them understood young people, and so that it was a kind of a continuation of my older sister, who was by that time away and Ruth Thomas kind of sitting in as a, a substitute for her. But she got me interested in plays. Now Elaine Manly got me interested in books like all the Dickens' things, that sort of thing. Ruth Thomas got me interested in reading plays. Because that was basically her great love. I think if she were doing anything today, she would have been a dramatic coach. She would have been a sort of a Margaret Webster-type person. And she was unusual for a one town, one-high-school town, which is what we had in Passaic, as you know.

INTERVIEWER: Was there any book that you remember particularly affecting you strongly, or any author?

DUBROW: I'm just trying to think. Oh, well, I read all of them, you know, I read, I not only read Horatio Alger and all the Merriwell stories. But I think, in all probability, I felt closer to people like Charles Dickens who made a great impression on me as a child. And I reread them every once in a while. Some of the less known books of his like, you know, Hard Times, fascinated me always.

INTERVIEWER: Is it the social inequity, or . . .

DUBROW: I think it basically was that. I think that was ingrained in me very early in life, a resentment of people being abused. I remember how upset my father was with the 1926 textile strike when they were using hoses on the strikers in the woolen mills, and the black list. And I think from that time on, my consciousness of recognizing that people ought to have a right to speak for themselves and join unions, so that any book that dealt with inequities would be appealing to me. I read an awful lot of different things. I was one of the first to read James Joyce, Ullysses. I was then very young and just in college. And we had a lovely professor of English literature. His name was Herbert Gorman. He was a critic for the New York Times. And I remember discussing Ullysses with him. He knew James Joyce. And it was fascinating to talk with him, because he saw Ullysses in ways that I might not see it, or normal person reading it. Joyce's love for colors, and the fact that he was becoming blind, or was blind, his great imagination. It was the first stream-of-consciousness piece of literature that I remember reading. And, so I was the kind of person who was a catholic reader, if I may say. I read, oh, lots of things. I loved things like The Secret Garden, as a child. I read all the Marjory May books, you know,

DUBROW: and Nancy Drew. All of them came somewhere in my life. But on the other hand, I also read alot of Tolstoy, and a lot of Dostoyevsky, because of the Russian background.

INTERVIEWER: Did you ever read Beverly Gray?

DUBROW: No. Now who was Beverly Gray?

INTERVIEWER: Beverly Gray was a journalist. A young woman who went to a women's college and became a reporter and then went to the Orient, traveled abroad....they're in the twenties . . .

DUBROW: Are they?

INTERVIEWER: They're in the twenties, and I inherited them from an older cousin and I was influenced by them. I always ask people if anyone else was. She's a very good role model.

DUBROW: No. I never remember it . . .

INTERVIEWER: . . .very independent young woman, who had problems with her boyfriend not, not agreeing with her career. So she dropped him.

DUBROW: . . .don't remember that at all, isn't that funny.

INTERVIEWER: Now, you were talking alot about your parent's socialist background. How did you move from that? Or do you consider having . . .

DUBROW: Well, I'm still a social-democrat. At one time in the early days of the labor movement, I played around a little bit with the United Front, which the communists were pushing. My father was very anti-communist. But I decided that I ought to find out why they functioned and how they functioned. And I must say, for a while there they had me bamboozled as they did a lot of people, because they had all the pat answers to the problems.

INTERVIEWER: Around when was that?

DUBROW: Well, that was in the, in the middle '30's while I was going to college. I learned pretty quickly, though. That, that philosophy was not my breed of cat.

INTERVIEWER: What in particular disturbed you?

DUBROW: Well, what disturbed me first of all were the purges that were going on in Russia. The explanation didn't quite sit with me. What disturbed me more than anything was that when the Second World War came along, they were opposed to it at first. I remember a number of them who were wearing a button saying "The Yanks are not coming." And then they couldn't explain the Nazi-

DUBROW: Stalin pact to me at all. I couldn't understand their acceptance of the Nazi-Stalin pact. The Trotskyites who were another branch of the communists were much more honest about it. They said it didn't make any difference who you made a pact with, there had to be world revolution and this was one of the ways of doing it and you took whatever allies you could to cause world revolution. The traditional communists in this country didn't take that. They were trying to continue the United Front. Then, of course, as soon as Hitler attacked Russia, they had buttons onasaying "Open a second front." Well, you see, that was a dishonest philosophy to me. I couldn't do that kind of a turnover. And basically, I don't ever think I was communist material, frankly. It was just that a number of my friends were flirting with it, were active, some of them, in it. And I think I was interested. It was a curiousity with me, politically, more than anything else. So that, I don't think it hurt one bit. I think it clarified, for me, the difference between communism, socialism, the democrats, the republicans. I was able to distinguish fairly early, then, in my career in the labor movement, of why I would veer toward the Democratic Party. And I was in the anti-Hague wing of the Democratic Party.

INTERVIEWER: Could you describe . . .

DUBROW: Well, coming from Passaic County, you would know about the Duffys. Judge Duffy and his sons, and I was in their camp, because we were fighting the dictatorship of Hague in New Jersey. And even before I could vote, now this mind you, before you were allowed to vote at 18, you had to be 21. But from the time I was 16, I was very active politically. I couldn't vote, but I could give out leaflets, could do other things. Well I joined the Democratic ranks of the party in Passaic County which was, as I say, fighting Frank Hague who was then considered the big boss of New Jersey and was, as a matter of fact. It was long before I got to know that Hague was the kind of guy whose philosophy was, if you can't beat 'em join 'em. Once the CIO came into New Jersey and he knew it was there to stay, he was extremely cordial and friendly and helpful and helping organizing drives. But until that time, he was death on the trade union movement. So that I had the good fortune to be able to fight politically against Democratic machines, and at the same time work in a labor movement that was concerned with getting people organized and eventually becoming interested in developing their political sense, and making them understand that politics and being part of the union was all kind of one package. That was part of political and trade union life. So that I learned a good deal about politics and fighting the Hague machine.

INTERVIEWER: What exactly were you doing? You mentioned . . .

DUBROW: Well, we, we had anti-Hague candidates we were supporting for County, for the Assembly, the Senate in New Jersey, for Governor. We were, you know, not supporting the Hague candidate until the primaries were over, that kind of thing. And that's when I learned how important primaries were. That the place you had your best chance to get your licks in for candidates you wanted nominated was in the primaries, because once the primaries were over, you took the candidates who were elected or you left them, but you didn't have much choice after that. Then you had a, sometimes a tweedle dee-tweedle dum choice, between the Republicans and the Democrats. So I learned early that you had to really get your two cents in while the nominating process was going on. I learned another valuable lesson, and that was that while Frank Hague was very concerned with his own fiefdom, and keeping the party of New Jersey in his hands, he was perfectly willing to have a person like Mary Norton be elected to Congress. She was one of the early congresswomen, who was very pro-labor, who used to scare the pants off the more conservative Democrats and the Republicans because she was on the Labor Committee, believed in the Fair Employment Practices Act. And at that time "calendar Wednesday" was a way that, if a committee was considering a bill and came out with a bill on the, I think it was the fourth Wednesday of the month, they would call the role on committees. And if a bill had not come through the rules committee, the chairman of the committee could bring up a bill if the committee agreed on it. And they were always concerned that Mary Norton was going to put a fair employment practices act on the floor through calendar Wednesday. I got to know her very well. She was an extremely brilliant person. And as I say, early on this was, Mary Norton was in Congress in the early '40's and '50's. You know, I can't remember when her last election was. But she was really a pioneer in terms of the New Deal. She worked very closely on all of the New Deal legislation that President Roosevelt proposed. And as I say, long before anybody else, she was talking about the fact that you don't discriminate in employment. Now, you see, in that sense, Frank Hague did what exactly what I felt Tammany Hall did in New York. Carmine DeSapio who had the same kind of reputation that Hague did when I was in ADA and came back to be New York State director. Carmine DeSapio didn't care about how liberal a congressman or congresswoman was, that was alright. But he wanted his own hands on all of the local and county and precinct organizations. And I can remember as director of ADA, going with a group of people to talk with Carmine DeSapio about candidates we wanted nominated in some of the districts. He always was very cordial about that. He didn't have any problem in that respect. But if you started to go after him as the New York Tammany leader, then you had a fight on your hands.

INTERVIEWER: You were starting to say that Mary Norton, you'll check on some material.

DUBROW: Yes, I'll check on the dates.

INTERVIEWER: She was in civil rights . . .

DUBROW: Well, she was on the Education and Labor Committee. And in her sub-committee, Fair Employment Practices was one of the bills she was interested in. Kept plugging for all of the time. Congress has changed considerably since her day in many ways. Difference in the way the committees are set up. All the other things that now go on.

INTERVIEWER: Just going back a little bit to your early education before college. Were your classmates, what ethnic groups were they?

DUBROW: We had all kinds, because since we were the only high school in town, we had the Poles, who lived across the tracks. We happened to live very close to the high school on Albion Street. It was just up the block a way. As a matter of fact, I can remember that whenever they were having a play in school, if they needed some extra furniture, they'd come to our house and take it because it was so convenient. It was close by. You know, like lamps and cushions and things like that. All kinds. We had a basketball-football team that had Poles on it, blacks on it. It really was a mixed-up crew. And those people came from rich families, came to the high school, as well as those who were less affluent. There was much more anti-semitism in the school, than there was anti-black because there weren't that many blacks coming to high school. But there was a distinct kind of class distinction. I knew a lot of people. I was very friendly with them, but socially groups stick together. We had a group of young men and young women who kind of were a clique and every Saturday night we'd have a party at somebody else's house. Our parents always knew where we were, that kind of thing. And we were interested in a lot of things together, you know. But it was not a mixture with the other groups. In other words, it was much more likely to be completely Jewish, rather than a cross-section. And yet, coming to our house were people many of them, because they were friends of the family, not Jewish. There were gentiles, there were blacks, there were Indians who would come in, who were traveling. Socialists, you know, would come in, come and visit with us, that kind of thing. So there was never a feeling of discrimination in my family as such. But there was it in high school. Yes. And we all felt it.

INTERVIEWER: You knew that then . . .

DUBROW: Oh yes. Oh sure. Oh you could....Well, you, you knew that in class very often I would help some of the football players with

DUBROW: their Latin or some of their other things. But I didn't go out with football players in high school.

INTERVIEWER: Was it more the ethnic division, or was it more class?

DUBROW: No, it was more an ethnic division. Even the children of rich Jews were not really accepted by the gentile groups. Except they were friendly enough, but there was no socializing in that sense.

INTERVIEWER: Right. Right. Was it a large enough community to have a difference between the rich Jews and not-rich Jews?

DUBROW: Yes, some. Yes there was. I went with both groups. I had friends among the girls particularly, who were daughters of fairly rich merchants or rich employers and then I went with those whose fathers were socialist, middle-income like we were. It was a mixture in that sense. Yet, one of the richest Jewish families in our town lived next door to us. Not me, because I wasn't born at the time. When the families came over they came from the same area. And this man got to be really very rich. But I went with his son, the youngest son, who was nearer my age. We went together a lot. He came from a very affluent family. But they never forgot our family, because we had been very close neighbors.

INTERVIEWER: Were there many Protestants?

DUBROW: Oh, yes. It was a Protestant town, basically. Lot of Catholics, but they were the Polish Catholics, the Irish Catholics. Many of them, as I say, who lived across the tracks, their families worked in the woolen mills or the rubber mills, things like that.

INTERVIEWER: I had to leave Paterson before I realized most of America wasn't Italian Catholic or Jewish, and a little Polish.

DUBROW: Well I was always conscious of the Protestant students. It's a funny thing that Buel Gallagher, who later became head of Talladega College in Georgia, which was a Negro college at the time, and then became chancellor of New York University. I don't know where Buel is now. He was minister of the St. John's Congregational Church, basically a socialist. I went to all kinds of churches. I went to a small synagogue with my uncle on Friday night, but on Sundays I would go to Catholic church with my best friend who lived next door. Or I would go to St. John's with a Protestant friend. But this was, as I grew up, in high school, rather than in elementary school. Well, we lived in neighborhoods that were mixed. We lived in neighborhoods where there were very few Jewish families. As a matter of fact, one place where

DUBROW: we lived, we were the only Jewish family. I remember as a child, you know, neighbors got on very well, they really didn't worry about what you were, as much as they do now. I didn't feel conscious of the difference, until I got to high school when recognizing I was Jewish, I had a good many gentile friends. They were girls. They were not boys. And they, on social occasions went off on their own, and we went off on our own.

INTERVIEWER: Was it clear then that it was more concern about people not marrying outside . . .

DUBROW: I think so. I think there was that great feeling of not marrying outside the faith.

INTERVIEWER: Was religion important to you at all?

DUBROW: Not really, except that I liked celebrating the holidays. I celebrated all the holidays, not just the Jewish holidays, you know. Christmas was important, too. I . . .

INTERVIEWER: Did your family celebrate?

DUBROW: Well, they did for me. I always got Christmas presents. Things like that. And it was not so much a religious holiday as it was the holiday spirit. And I can remember that my uncle would preside over sedars on Passover. Not that my father was very religious, nor my mother. My brother was one of the very few Jewish boys who refused to be bar mitzvahed.

INTERVIEWER: Oh really.

DUBROW: Didn't like it. Didn't want it. Wasn't forced to do it, you know. And my uncle, for being a rabbi and everything, was strangely a very, very broad-minded person who recognized early on the difference between the mythology in the Bible and what the effect was on people. You know, it wasn't so much a belief in what the Bible said, as the fact that it set up principles and philosophies which people believed in. And so, early on I could distinguish between the theory that Moses came down from the mountain with the Ten Commandments, as opposed to the fact that as a leader of his people, he had to find something to change them from what they were doing and this was one of the ways he did it. Neither you nor I have proof that God came down and struck the ten commandments. But the ten commandments were good, and as my uncle used to say, it didn't make any difference where they came from. He said Moses would have been the best advertising executive they had cause he knew how to get people behind him on things. So it didn't make any difference whether I believe that God struck the ten commandments or somebody. They're still good commandments to live by. And my uncle was really very

DUBROW: broad-minded in that sense. As a matter of fact, he and some of his friends were so disdainful of the temples and synagogues, that they started their own which my cousin Irving and I called the [Schmectabak] synagogue because a lot of the men used snuff instead of cigarettes. And Friday nights when Irving and I would be taken by my uncle, I was always mad that women had to sit in the balcony, you know, that kind of thing. But after the services I was a child then, we'd go downstairs and we'd have honey cake. He was very tiny. I think he had a hunch on his back, I wasn't sure. But he had merry brown eyes and very good coloring and a tiny little pointed beard. And as I recall, his name was Dworken and he was one of my uncle's best friends. And they, there were a number of them, they'd sit and have pickled herring and rye bread and all these goodies, and this was Christmas Eve. And the family was bringing in presents for me, you see they believed enough in that. I'd hang up my stocking. And uncle Harry had taken Irving and me to synagogue, we were down there, and the steam pipes began to bang. And one of them said: "What's that?" And I remember Mr. Dworkin saying, "Santa Claus. It's Christmas Eve." And it will always remain in my memory because, you know, I can see him as such a merry little guy. Just loved him, you know.

So...., I have mixed feelings about religion. And I'm not concerned with organized religion, and yet I respect anybody's right to believing in it. There are precepts to each of them that I believe in, and some concepts I think are dreadful, whether they're in the Judeo-Christian or whether they're Buddhist, or, or whatever they happen to be. I think that the whole theory of a vengeful God bothers me, you see. And that's why I tend more toward Christ as a prophet, not so much a godhead, but because his philosophy is much closer to my pacifistic ideas as opposed to an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. And I've always had that kind of conflict in myself that I understood what the Judeo philosophy was, that they do not feel the messiah is here, that the day of the messiah is coming, you know. It's like the religious Jews who always used to say, "Next year in Jerusalem." You see, and Israel to them was a real dream, and a great desire. Now my family weren't Zionists, but they had great belief in Israel as a homeland for the Jews. They were, I think, basically not Zionist but very concerned with what was happening. Of course for the Jews in Russia when they came over, and of course then with Nazi Germany this, this to them was a terrible thing.

INTERVIEWER: Was Yiddish spoken in your home?

DUBROW: Yes, my mother and father spoke it. But as I grew up, they spoke more English. So I understand it, but I don't speak it very well, and I know some of the idiomatic Yiddish. They spoke Russian also, but I never learned that because I came along too late.

INTERVIEWER: Did they speak English with accents?

DUBROW: Yes. But not as noticable an accent as lots of Jews did. My mother and father both had a kind of mixture of a Yiddish and Russian accent.

INTERVIEWER: Do you remember being concerned about that?

DUBROW: For a little while when I was a little girl. But I got over that fairly quickly, I think. First of all, an awful lot of people who came to visit respected my mother and father. And because the rest of the family, you know, growing up and....I'm sure there must have been times I may have been ashamed that my mother and father weren't born in this country, but it wasn't a big thing with me. Could have been, I suppose, if I were the first born. I don't know how my oldest sister felt about it, or the others. But our house was always open to all kinds of people and we always had friends who were not part of our own background and to this day, my sisters have friends they write letters to....I'm a terrible correspondent. I'd rather pick up the telephone and call my friends, not because I don't like to write letters, but I can't write short letters and I don't have time to write long ones. But to this day we have friends that my sisters still remember from the time they went to school, or to nursing school. And there are people who still will call me when I'm in New York and say how is so-and-so and so-and-so. Particularly people who were suffragettes with my sister Mary who will call and ask how she is and are very distressed now that she's not well, that kind of thing. And I suppose it bothered me that my mother and father had an accent.

INTERVIEWER: It's just that sometimes children of immigrants have to be more American than the rest, or feel some kind of pressure to be more patriotic, or at least I did, and, I was an immigrant myself. But I'm wondering if you felt any need . . .

DUBROW: I didn't feel that kind of compulsion. I think the only time I was distressed is when my mother and father might come to school and they were different than other parents, you see, in that respect. But I guess I was insulated because I did have my own group that we went around with. Strangely enough, none of them were very politically inclined. Many of them did not come from the socialist background I did. They came from more ordinary backgrounds. Some of them did, some of them didn't. It was more a social thing in holding together because ethnically we had the same interest. But I don't recall our ever getting excited about a political campaign, as a group, and yet in my family we were always discussing politics. It was a funny kind of business. I can't quite understand it, in a sense that I was going with girls that whose families, many of them were merchants, or they were some kind of tradesman of one kind or another. Some of them

DUBROW: were builders as my father was. But I don't think we ever really got the way kids do today, gave out leaflets and things. It was really when I first got into college, that I began to be conscious, doing things actively. And very funny, my very best friend in college was the daughter of a Wall Street stockbroker. And I remember we wore great big Norman Thomas buttons. Even though the family was for Roosevelt, you know, like just out of sheer rebellion, I think, more than anything.

INTERVIEWER: How did you get involved then, in college?

DUBROW: Well, first of all, as I say, I was interested in the Spanish Loyalist cause. Secondly, one of the things that my small flirtation with the communists ingrained in me a need to be concerned with foreign policy as well as domestic issues. And don't forget, those were the days of the WPA and the NYA and an awful lot of people were working for the government, a lot of the artists and the writers and so forth. And I became very interested in all of that, as I said, because basically we talked politics at home a lot. So that it wasn't very hard for me to be concerned politically, and of course . . .

INTERVIEWER: So, you found friends, or you joined groups?

DUBROW: We had friends and I joined groups. And I, as I say, became interested in the Democratic Party. All of the things that, kind of got mixed up, but still geared me toward a political career, in that sense, of being concerned with politics.

INTERVIEWER: Had you ever had ambitions to run for office or . . .

DUBROW: Not really. Never.

INTERVIEWER: Really?

DUBROW: I've always been interested in helping to run campaigns for candidates. I've always been interested in, perhaps, writing speeches for them when I had time to do it. I was always interested in making speeches for them and doing house-to-house canvassing.

INTERVIEWER: Why not that final step?

DUBROW: Well, I suspect it was because I was more of a free spirit at the time. I really didn't want to have to get into the channel of holding political office. I don't know why, really. People have always asked me, and I've never had a real answer for it. I've always respected people who run for office, think you need to have people who run for office. You have to encourage good people to run for office. But somehow or another, I never really wanted to do it myself.

INTERVIEWER: Well, do you think part of it is the whole issue of having one's whole life scrutinized, having to be in the public eye?

DUBROW: Could be. It could be. It could be that I had enough things in my background of being less orthodox than most people as I grew up that might have made a difference. Nothing dishonest, but, you know, the flirtation with the communists, the kind of free style that I enjoyed at college. All of those things. I think I didn't feel I wanted to have to talk about it, if I ran for office. That may have been in the back of my mind. But really, I never had that ambition. I've always wanted to encourage other people to get involved in running.

INTERVIEWER: Let's go toward your work experience. You started mentioning your first job, where you were working that summer . . .

DUBROW: Yeah. Uh-hmm. I did a number of things to earn money to go to college, although the family helped. But by this time there was really no money to put me through college. My sisters were all very generous with helping. But as I say, I worked on the Paterson Morning Call as a kind of stringer. I edited the Italian-American weekly Il Citadino, which required a couple of days a week, but I could arrange my courses, because it was much easier to do that, and you go on a train and came home and covered things. I worked weekends in New York for a year or so in a corset-lingerie shop, friends of my brother-in-law who was then a doctor in WestChester County. I did all kinds of things to earn a little extra money.

INTERVIEWER: But none of these you considered real career . . .

DUBROW: No! Oh, no! No, no. My career basically, was going to be doing journalism. And, I was bound and determined that I would do that. And the funny part of it is, after getting through school I just never went back to it, excepting as it, you know, affected the job I had to do, for awhile there I edited the CIO council newspaper, wrote leaflets. I wrote reports for our annual convention in New Jersey. I did all of those things. Writing was required, but I never went back to straight newspaper work.

INTERVIEWER: Did you ever have any assumptions that if you did marry that you would give up your career, or did you ever thing about that aspect?

DUBROW: No, not really, because, as a very young college student, I had a bad experience with a very brief marriage, which set me off for a long time, and it never dawned on me to give up anything I was going to do if I decided to get married again. But I think early on I didn't feel that this was the most important thing for me to do. I could be a person and I enjoyed relationships with men, but I didn't feel it was absolutely necessary.

DUBROW: And while I love children and I'm very fond of many of my nieces and nephews and my great-nieces and great-nephews, I never felt that necessity. As I say, I was a very impressionable young college student and I think it was one of the reasons I veered off the whole business of a domestic career. And I don't think I'd have worked very well at it, I'm just not that kind of person. There's some of us who are domestically inclined and some of us who aren't. And I think it's a matter of choice. And I think the one good thing is that I've lived to see that this kind of choice is possible for women as well as men.

INTERVIEWER: Was it considered extraordinary?

DUBROW: Well, I think it disturbed my mother considerably. I don't think it disturbed my father nearly as much. And I don't think it bothered my family, my sisters or brother one way or the other. We're a pretty free-wheeling family in that respect. And we didn't feel obligated to say that you had to be married in order to be a normal person, that you could enjoy life and enjoy people and this was one of those things. And of course, my mother and father knew a lot of people who lived together who weren't married who were anarchistic in that respect. It wasn't considered a sin or, if you weren't legally married. It didn't make that much difference to them. And I'm sure that as I grew up, there were a lot of scandals around. I can only remember, you know, very vaguely, people talking about so-and-so running away with so-and-so. I remember the terrible scandal with the choirmaster who ran away with a girl who was married and played the organ, so that was a big, big scandal when I was a kid. This kind of thing, of course, the story of the Catholic priest who supposedly murdered his housekeeper who was really his mistress, and that was a big scandal. You know, that kind of thing. So when people talk to me about sex scandal now, I say, what do you think is any different than it used to be. It may have been covered up a lot more, but believe me, from the days of Warren Harding, certainly, in terms of presidents, and if you read the history of presidents, you know darn well that many of them played around. Didn't make much difference in terms of whether they were a good or a bad president, and you found very few politicians who were as devoted to each other as the Trumans were for instance.

INTERVIEWER: Did your older sister remain single? The one who was the suffragist?

DUBROW: Yes. She did. I don't know, I have no idea what kinds of liasons she may have had, because I was too little. But she was a very free spirit. The others were married. And, as I say, it's a funny thing but that never really meant much in my life.

DUBROW: I was far enough away from them to be very independent, and to run my life the way I did, and my parents very early learned not to question me about things I didn't want to be questioned on.

INTERVIEWER: That's convenient.

DUBROW: Very. Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Did you ever, as you were working, think about how your life might have been different if you were a man?

DUBROW: No, not if I were a man, but different if I had married some of the people I was very close to. I think it might have, I don't know where it would have gone, very frankly. No, I really, I never wanted to be a man. I never felt that that was preferable to being a woman. I like being a woman. I like clothes, I like the kind of things that women could do that men didn't use to do. Now, you know, men are wearing all the great colors which is what they really always wanted to do but didn't have guts enough to do it. No, I've always been pleased with being a woman. I've always liked talking with men and going out with them, this kind of thing. I never really felt, well if I were a man, this would have happened to me, cause as I say, I've been very fortunate. There are very few women, I think, who have the kind of work background that I have, to indicate that I've really had very little discrimination against me as a woman. And that is simply because of the men I worked with. Now I probably would have been very upset and left if I thought I was being discriminated against because of that.

INTERVIEWER: Do you serve in that kind of mentor role now, or have you, toward women that you've been able to bring on the staff, or work with?

DUBROW: Yes. Yes. I do, and I'm always very interested in helping young women get settled, if they can, in jobs they're looking for. I always have a stack of resumes. I get a lot of calls from college students coming out who want to talk with me about opportunities for working in the government, or working on the hill, or getting into political life, and that kind of thing. And I've always encouraged them when I could. I think it's terribly important.

INTERVIEWER: Let's talk a little about lobbying itself and some of the people you've worked with. Dubinsky had a reputation as being a very hard man to work for.

DUBROW: You know, isn't that funny, he wasn't at all with me. As a matter of fact, I knew him when I was director of ADA from the time I was director of organization in ADA. And I always admired him, because he was able to go to the heart of a question. I

DUBROW: always remember that at one of the early board meetings of the National ADA, Mrs. Roosevelt was on it, Paul Porter was on it, Leon Henderson. It was really a top drawer political board and they were discussing the Turkish-Greek situation, Truman, what our allies, the British and the French were doing. Didn't please us, that kind....Real criticism. And I remember after two hours, Dubinsky got up and he said: "I've only one question. You got better allies?" And from that day on, this was a guy that I had great respect for, because he cut right through the whole debate. You know, who did you have better than the British or the French? He was asking this question. So I got to know him in ADA, and liked him very much. And when I decided that after I had had enough of being in a liberal organization that was transition, and I was very active in helping to develop the reform clubs in New York, the Lexington Club, the West Side Democratic Club, the club up in the Bronx, and in Harlem. All stemmed from ADA, when I was the state director. Because my real feeling came back to the fact that unless you were in an integral part of a party, where you had something to say about the nominating process, you really weren't using your full power as a citizen. And so to me ADA was always a transition organization. You brought people into ADA because their philosophies and their concerns about issues were the same. But you taught them practical politics by having them go out and register people or campaign for a candidate or endorse candidates, look at their records. All of these things, to me, were in a sense, the first step toward becoming active in a party. Fritz Mondale, when I was national director of ADA, was chairman of the Students for Democratic Action. That's how far back I know him. Hubert Humphrey, who was then mayor of Minneapolis was a good friend of mine. Practically any politician you know in New York today, some of the judges who are sitting judges in New York, were active in ADA when I was the director of it. A number of them became congressmen, who started out in ADA and SDA, the student group. So that, it was kind of a normal thing for me to be concerned. When I decided I'd had enough of ADA, Gus Tyler, who was very active, who was also a founder of ADA, was then the political director of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, and when he learned that I was looking for a job, asked if I'd like to work for the ILG as assistant political director. And I said I'd be very pleased to. Dubinsky interviewed me and then Louis Stulberg who was then secretary-treasurer, but later became president interviewed me. And Dubinsky was very cordial, thought I'd be an asset to the organization. Stulberg wanted to know if I wanted to do organizing, and I said no, I thought my organizing days were over. And I got the job and Dubinsky, he may have been a very tough guy to deal with, and he was, when he had a position, it was hard to convince him that he was wrong. He could yell and he could scream, but he always heard you out and it never was because you were a woman that he put you down. I

DUBROW: heard him put men down a lot more than he put me down. And I had every opportunity to participate, of course I give Gus Tyler a lot of credit. In my estimation, Gus has not really been given the kind of credit that he should have. He's a tremendous teacher. There are a lot of people who are out in the trade union movement elsewhere whose mentor was Gus. He is a top intellectual. He writes very well, and really encourages young people. He became head of our training institute shortly after I joined the ILG. You know we, the ILG had this training institute for students in college or kids who were in the industry to come and spend a year being trained--six months in the national office, six months in the field. Their expenses were paid and when they were working in the field they were paid a salary. And they were guaranteed a job after the year was up, either an organizer or a business agent, or an educational director.

INTERVIEWER: When was this . . .

DUBROW: When I came in they started, Arthur Elder who was at the University of Michigan originally was the first director of the school and Jack Sessions who's now with the AFL-CIO education department was his assistant. And they must have started that in the 40's or early 50's. I don't remember. But when I came in to the ILG in '56, Elder had just died, and it was a question of who would direct the school. I hadn't been on the staff six weeks when Gus came down from meeting with Dubinsky and said: "I've just been given an additional job of directing the institute." And I said to Dubinsky, "Well then, we have to have someone who would administer the political department." Now Dubinsky was a funny guy, he couldn't always remember names, and he had a lovely secretary Hannah Haskal who was just as good to me as she could have been. Gus's secretary's name was Toni, he always called her the girl with the boy's name, when he wanted to see her for some reason. For about six months he couldn't remember my name, he would always refer to me as, get Her, or where is She, and Hannah always knew who he meant. And six months after he knew my name, I was really flattered because he didn't know the names of many people on the staff. He'd just know, knew who they were. Well, David Wells, still assistant political director, is younger than I, was on the staff but Dubinsky decided that since Gus would have to do the training institute and kind of supervise the political department, that I would do the administration. Gus said: "Well you ought to give her a title." And I'm always amused by this story. And Dubinsky said: "Call her the 'girl in charge of the politcal department'." Gus said: "You can't give her that kind of a title." And Dubinsky said: "Why not, she's a girl and she's going to be in charge of the political department." So Gus said: "No, let's make her executive secretary." But I always thought, you know, that kind of marvelous, down-to-earth feeling that Dubinsky had, and I, had a great time with him. I'd come in

DUBROW: with a suggested program and he'd tear it apart. But he never said, you couldn't talk to me about it. And he notoriously did not like to pay good salaries, because he always had the feeling that people who worked in the ILG staff should not be getting that much more money than the workers. And he himself was one of the lowest paid international presidents because of that. You know, there are some presidents getting 50-, 75-, $100,000. He never did. I think if he got 30,000 dollars a year, that was a lot of money. You know, that as a result of that, people always talked about the fact that wages in the ILG were not as good as they were in other international unions. And we trained an awful lot of poeple who are now parts of other unions, but they got their training in the ILG. And a lot of the new guys coming up who are now on the board were students in our training institute.

INTERVIEWER: Does that training institute still go on?

DUBROW: No. It's a different kind now. Now we do six-weeks and we bring people in who are already on the staff who need some additional training, or who are active rank-and-file members and come in. We gave that up a couple of years ago when, well, we didn't get as many applications. You know, for awhile there students were turned off by the trade union movement because up until that time, they were very enthusiastic about coming in. And as I say, today, I can name vice-presidents, at least three vice-presidents who were in the training institute. One of them who came out of the first class I ever taught in '66. We've just had a big change again, and kids that I taught political action to, and legislation in the training institute who are now either managers of locals or become district supervisors. All of them very bright, very good, consciencious kids who I used to ream out , you know, if they tried to be smart-alecky in class, that kind, and we were very close and good friends, because I have great respect for brainpower and their ability and so forth. But, as I say, Dubinsky was a tough guy. But I admired him for his toughness, and, let me tell you, he had more imagination than any other fifty labor leaders I ever knew. After all, we were the first union to have vacations with pay. We were the first union to establish a health center. We were the first union to have retirement. We were the first union to have severance pay. And we're a low pay industry, so it wasn't an easy thing to do. But he was always thinking of things that could be done for the members and the retirees. We have a retirees service department of which he is the voluntary head. When he decided to retire, he became president emeritus. He set up this organization for them. He's the first one to have what we call a "friendly visitors' project", where retirees who were able would go and see retirees who were physically handicapped, to see if they could be helpful. And our retireees get paid the minimum wage, so it doesn't effect their pensions, or their social security. And this all

DUBROW: came out of discussion with Dubinsky. He'd always call up and say come up and talk. Well, then in 1958, we were having a problem on minimum wage. And also on Landum Griffin and they sent me down to Washington because I'd had some Washington experience as director of ADA in Washington and before that with the New Jersey CIO council, I would do lobbying with members of Congress and the Senators in New Jersey. Lead delegates down. Go to the legislative meetings of the CIO, as assistant to the president of the New Jersey CIO council. I knew a good many people in the Washington group. And there again it was Gus's idea who went to Dubinsky, and I said, I think we ought to have somebody representing the ILG in Washington. And he called me in and said we have a new job. And at first I thought he was getting out of the political department and I said, no soap. He said, no, no we want you in Washington. Well, I was single. My mother was still alive. But my sisters were still in the East. I had been in Washington during ADA days so that I knew, as I say, a good many people there. I knew most of the AFL-CIO people because many of them in 1955 went with the AFL as a combined group. So I wasn't exactly a stranger. Andy Bremiller, head of the AFL-CIO legislative department had been legislative director of ADA when I was director of organization. So we knew each other from those days, you see. And a lot of the ADA people were still in Washington that I knew who had been in the Roosevelt-Truman administration, so that it wasn't a new thing for me. And I went down there, originally I went down only for a couple days a week. And I lived at the Congressional Hotel, which was right across the street from the House office building. And they had the kind of suites where you had a bedroom, sitting room, a dinette and a full kitchen, bathroom and dressing room, so it was like an apartment. And I'd go down a couple days a week, and then spend a couple days in New York. And the only thing that bugged me about Dubinsky was if I was in Washington he wanted me in New York. If I was in New York, why wasn't I in Washington?

But we did get our extension through on Landrum-Griffin which permits us to picket our jobs or contractors. A secondary boycott doesn't affect us in terms of, of picketting. And that's what the building trades wanted, picketting, you see. This was one of the first things we were able to accomplish, when I was down there. And I got to know a lot of the congressman, senators, and began to spend more and more time in Washington, you see. But it was Dubinsky, Gus's and Dubinsky's idea of putting me down there.

INTERVIEWER: How was that? In the beginning, you talked very loosely about getting to know the senators, and getting to know the people.... What was that like, meeting those kinds of people?

DUBROW: Well, first of all, as I say, I knew a good many of the New York

DUBROW: congressmen, and senators. I knew Governor Lehman very well because he'd been active in ADA. I knew him when he was governor. I knew him when he was active in ADA. And we were very good friends. So he was down there, and I had no problem getting into his office. I knew Javits well because when Javits was a congressman he was a member of ADA and we supported him for Congress. I knew a good many of the New Jersey ones because I had worked when Clifford Case first ran for Congress. I interviewed him with our political committee for the New Jersey council and we endorsed him. He was one of the few Republicans that we endorsed.

I knew Frank Thompson because he had run Charlie Howell's campaign for Congress. Frank was then an assemblyman, a friend. I knew Pete Williams from the time that he had been active and was a congressman from New Jersey. I knew Pete Rodino because I was in his first campaign against Fred Hartley in 1946. So I didn't come in as a complete stranger. But I also did a very studied job of going in and introducing myself to every single congressman and their staffs. I would do it religiously. Also because I was working on Landrum-Griffin and on repeal of, the Kennedy-Ives bill which was the companion bill to Landrum-Griffin, and since I was working closely with people like Wayne Morse, Jack Kennedy and the labor committee in the Senate, I got to know a lot of them. They got to know me, but as I say, I made a studied effort to go in and introduce myself to the members.

INTERVIEWER: You just made an appointment, or walked into their offices?

DUBROW: Very often I would just walk in and hand my card to the receptionist and say: "I'm Evelyn Dubrow representing the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, and I just wanted you to know that I'm here and that I hope to get to meet the Congressman and talk with him." And I'd meet the legislative assistants and the administrative assistants. I always got to know the receptionist and the secretaries, because staffs are very important. And I spent a lot of time doing that. So that, because I decided early on that the way you influence legislation was by getting to know all the people, not just those who were basically for the legislation, that you had to convince those on the other side, if you could. And, of course, I got immeasurable help from Andy Bremiller who was director of legislation in Washington, and his staff who I knew very well. Esther Peterson was then working for the Amalgamated of CWA, Helen Bertholot. I got an awful lot of help from people like that. I picked up things. But basically it was getting known. And even now, after each election I make it my business to go in and introduce myself to the new members of Congress. Some I know ahead of time because we supported them. They've come down to see me in Washington. But even if I don't know them, and even

DUBROW: they're the most conservative guys in the world, I will go and see them because every once in a while they'll throw me a vote. And as I say, I love to tease them, you know. They'll go by me in the House and I'll say, "How about voting with me this time?"

It's very funny, Earl Langrebe who we defeated in congress from Indiana, was probably one of the most conservative members of congress, came by one day and I said, "Congressman Langrebe, why don't you go in and give me a vote. They're trying to knock the AFL-CIO out of the right to be politically active among its own members." And he said, "Well, maybe I will." So he went and came out a few minutes later. He said,"Evie, I was all ready to vote for you, but you were so far ahead, I decided to vote on principles. So I voted against you." And that kind of thing. And the only reason he talked to me, is because I talked to him. I always respected the office. And no matter what I thought about the Birchites or anybody else, I recognized very early in the game, that you had to be courteous, you had to be respectful, that you couldn't afford to lose your temper with them. You might hate their guts. You might be very critical of them to the people when you went and made a speech, you took their records, and you said this is so. You could tell stories about them, but you never did it in Washington, because it would get back to them and that would shut the door to you. And a lobbyist that is successful is the lobbyist that finds the doors are open to them.

INTERVIEWER: Did you learn that the hard way?

DUBROW: Not really. Not really. That was basically what I believed in, and as I say, the reason I learned it was because I had lobbied in the New Jersey legislature and as director of ADA in New York, I had lobbied the New York State legislature, when ADA was very suspect with the Republicans, the conservative Republicans. And even with many of the Democrats who thought that we were way up here in our philosophy, and that we weren't down-to-earth politicians and that we were looking for pie in the sky, that kind of thing. So when you learn how to lobby on the state level, it is not hard to lobby on a national level, because you use the same principles of talking to everybody. You talk to all newspaper men. You level with them. You don't try to lie your way out of a situation. You don't try to make a situation exaggerate on stuff, because it doesn't work. And you get to know the other lobbyists. I know all the industry lobbyists who, many times, are opposed to us, and I will kid them about it. But it's always in a friendly manner. It's never being impolite or disrespectful.

INTERVIEWER: What was the first issue you worked on?

DUBROW: Landrum-Griffin.

INTERVIEWER: That was the first?

DUBROW: And minimum wage. We were trying to get minimum wage from a dollar to a dollar twenty-five cents. And that's a big thing in our union or in any low wage industry, as a matter of fact.

INTERVIEWER: Would you talk a little about the minimum wage campaign? Was that an interesting one?

DUBROW: Yes it was. It was when I first met Joyce Kornbluh and Jackie Kienzle, Esther Peterson, Arthur Goldberg, who was then council for the Steelworkers. See I'd known Arthur, I knew his secretary very well. All these people that I knew in Washington from olden days, you ran into in whatever their jobs were. We set up, the AFL-CIO set up a special committee on minimum wage with Arthur as the chairman of it and Andy Biemiller as kind of the executive director. And it was a committee made up of the heads of all the unions where minimum wage meant a big thing, like the Amalgamated, the ILG, the Meatcutters, the UAW at that time, a lot of the other groups. And we did everything in coordination with each other.

Now, we were the operating committee. The presidents were on an advisory level. We were the ones who were actually doing the work. Now the decision was to try to get a $1.25 minimum for manufacturing wages, to add coverage, to add farm workers to coverage, to add retail workers in retail establishments to coverage, to cover students, a whole broad coverage, when we first came in. And that meant that we were meeting weekly. The AFL-CIO were meeting weekly. We were bringing in delegations from states so that I would have some ILG people. In other words, whatever states we thought were important to bring in order to have them lobby their congressman, we'd bring them in for at least an overnight trip and we'd have a briefing session the night before at dinner where one of us acted as chairman and introduced the others and we discussed what strategy would be. We divided up the responsibility of who saw who, so that we could cover Congress very broadly.

Trying to get minimum wage through was always a two-year fight. And you remember in 1960 when Kennedy was nominated, we were so sure that the minute that he got back into the Senate as the nominee we would get minimum wage through and we didn't. We didn't get it through until 1961. Even though we were so sure that we would get it through in '60 with a candidate who was a Senator at that time. And then of course Landrum-Griffin which was a lot harder because that was a specific, an exemption for integrated industries like ours, like the Clothing Workers, like the miners,

DUBROW: like the building trades. Well, I spent a good deal of time on that. Brought down our vice-president to meet with members of the Senate and congressmen, so forth. And I'll never forget one interesting meeting. Fred Semms who is vice-president and regional director for our central states region, which includes Arkansas. I had set up an appointment with Senator McClellan because my theory was, you saw everybody. And Fred came down and we had a meeting. All my vice-presidents were down. Dubinsky came down to make the pitch and left. The vice-presidents, we assigned them to go. In some cases I made appointments that I could go with them, in the difficult cases. Where the vice-president already knew the Senator or the Congressman, it wasn't necessary for me to do that, but I made all the appointments, and went in with McClellan with Semms who said to me earlier: "We're wasting our time." I said: "Look, Fred. Maybe we are, but he ought to be conscious of the fact that we have this problem."

Well, we came in. We talked to McClellan. McClellan said: "I'm on your side on this. I don't want to send the garment workers back to being a sweatshop industry." And Fred, you know, looked as if he'd nearly drop his teeth, because McClellan then, was even more conservative than he is now. So you can imagine how conservative he was. And I said: "Fred that's exactly what I mean. Every issue is different. McClellan will oppose us on minimum wage, but he'll support us on our Landrum-Griffin exemption. Fullbright will support us on minimum wage but he will oppose us on Landrum-Griffin. You, you just never know, what the situation is going to be." Wayne Morris, who was one of our best friends, was mad at us, because I was looking for a specific exemption for our industry. And he felt it ought to go for all industries. And I said: "Senator Morris, if you can get it for other industries, fine. But my immediate concern, is to take us out of that secondary boycott."

INTERVIEWER: Were there any particular battles that you remember most vividly as difficult or interesting?

DUBROW: Oh! Well, sure, our whole fight to attempt to repeal 14B.

INTERVIEWER: Could you explain 14B for the record?

DUBROW: Well, 14B is the section of Taft-Hartley that was passed in '46 over Truman's veto, which said that union shop would be considered illegal. Closed shop was out altogether. Closed shop being that you had to be a member of the union before you get a job. Hiring halls, that kind of thing, where you had to be in the union.... Union shop, was, of course, becoming a member of a union after a trial period and it depended on the international union as to what the trial period would be, some were thirty days, some sixty days. But at least once you passed the trial period you automatically had to join the union or you would lose your job. That

DUBROW: was outlawed by Taft-Hartley, which was a bill that was kind of a leveling or an addition to the Wagner Act which weakened the collective bargaining rights of the union. The Taft-Hartley 14B when it first started said that all elections for union recognition had to be secret to begin with and run by the National Labor Relations Board. Secondly, that even if a majority of workers wanted a union shop, if a state passed what was called a "right to work law", union shop would be outlawed in those states. Because what it said was, states may pass more restrictive legislation, but they could not change any restrictions that were in Taft-Hartley. In other words, a state could not say, we want to have a closed shop law, where we agree that unions have a right to a closed shop. They could be more restrictive but not less restrictive. So immediately, a number of the states, particularly in the South, passed right-to-work laws, which made organizing that much harder, because it meant that even if 98% of the people in the shop wanted a union shop, they could not have it. It meant that people who did not want to join the union did not have to join the union and pay dues. But at the same time, when a contract was being negotiated, they would be covered as the work force. So that they would get all of the benefits that the union got for its own members. More than that, it meant that they had to have their grievances taken care of by the union representative, even though they weren't members of the union. Now that weakened the union in a shop, because union members would say: "Why am I paying dues for these free-riders to get all the benefits that I'm getting." So it's been more than just a symbol. It's been really a problem, particularly in an industry like ours where we're trying to organize in the South, and in states where there are right-to-work laws.

That was a big fight. We passed repeal of it by a very, very small margin in the House, and lost it in the Senate, when Kennedy was president. I think if we had passed it in the Senate, Kennedy would have passed, would have signed the repealer. But we lost it. And I remember it was one of the very few times that Meany appeared in the balcony, in the gallery of the House of Representatives while that vote was going on.

Now, the other interesting fight, was the way Landrum-Griffin came about. Originally, it came out of the Education Committee as a bill that was, that came out fairly friendly to us, not, not a terribly restrictive bill. Bob Griffin, who was then a member of the Education and Labor Committee was the author of, of the Griffin part of the bill. Congressman Landrum of Georgia was the Landrum of it. That was the first bill I ever saw that was legislated on the floor before going to committee. There was a bill that came out that was, had Carl Elliot, who was then a congressman from Alabama, which would demand that unions had to disclose certain of the things that they were doing, which we did not oppose. But Jack Shelly, who was, later became mayor of San Francisco, who was a congressman from California, was introducing

DUBROW: a bill that we wanted that would have knocked out any disclosure. That was our great mistake. You see, if we had gone and supported the Elliot Bill, we never would have had Landrum-Griffin. What happened was because this was a congress which was not friendly to labor, not nearly as friendly as the present congresses have been. Both Landrum and Griffin were absolutely able to write the legislation right on the floor and get it passed. Now at the time that that was being done on the House side, Senator Ives of New York and Senator Kennedy of Massachusettes, were working on a similar labor relations bill, but with not as many restrictive features as Landrum-Griffin had. And we lost the Kennedy-Ives by, I think, something like one vote. And Landrum-Griffin was adopted by both the Senate and the House. That was my first experience with seeing the mistake we made as part of the labor movement in not getting behind the less restrictive Elliot Bill. But we were purists. We wanted Shelly's bill to pass. And since we split our forces, we lost out all the way. Well, once Landrum-Griffin was passed in the House, then we had to begin to move in the Senate, at least to get our exemption to 802, 803 I guess it was, and that's how my job really began. This was in '58, '59. So that was an interesting experience. It was interesting to make the first fight on minimum wage.

When we lost the bill, we were looking for Kitchen and Ayres (both congressman are no longer there, we defeated Ayres in Akron, Ohio with Hon Seiberling, and Kitchen, I think retired) But that was the one time when Roman Pachinsky, who was then congressman from Chicago, called me up at night and said, "Do you realize that the Kitchen-Avres Bill takes out 20 million people from minimum wage?" And I said, "Pooch, it can't be." He said "Oh, yes." So I called Andy Biemiller, and we went up to see him and he was a newspaper man. He read the bill very carefully, and sure, strangely enough that's exactly what happened. It wasn't done on purpose. It was, and, they worked it out the next day and changed it. But there we were with a bill that had been so poorly drawn that it had taken out people from minimum wage, rather than add people, cover them. So that Kitchen-Ayres we lost our fight for minimum wage. And, I say, it wasn't until Kennedy became president that we were able to get it through both the House and the Senate. And, of course, when Lyndon Johnson came in in '66 we got another minimum wage bill.

INTERVIEWER: Jumping a little bit to the broader political picture, there is a general assumption that everything that goes on on the Hill or in all of Washington is run by men, and some people have said all women are doing is filling up coffee cups, or stuffing envelopes. Could you talk to that?

DUBROW: Well, I think that's a very wrong and erroneous impression that people get. First of all, I think a lot of men wouldn't be elected to office if it weren't for the active work that women have done.

DUBROW: Certainly as far as trade union women. I know that, while the Jimmy Higgins work is done a lot by women, by Jimmy Higgins I mean the stuffing envelopes, there is nothing wrong with that. Believe me I've done my share of it, and so have men done that. But I think that women have a great input into political activity. They've done house-to-house canvassing. They've made speeches. They've written letters. They've been involved on all levels. And think to suggest that the only job women have had in political campaigns is stuffing envelopes and making coffee, is really a lot of malarky in my estimation. Women have the right to be as active politically as they want to be. The problem has been, in many ways, that women have not organized themselves well enough. But a union like mine, which is 80% women, 80% of our political activity is done by our women.

And believe me they work hard. They man telephone banks, or woman telephone banks, which ever way you want to use it. They have, as I say, gone out and made speeches. They've registered people, they've done all kinds of political work. And they can do as much as they want to. There's nothing to stop women from being politically active, if they want to be. And men are smart enough to know that they can be very helpful to them. After all, there are now more women voters than there are men, I think. I think it's something like 51% women as opposed to 49% men. I have had members of congress tell me that one woman is worth six men when they want to be politically active. First of all, because no job is too little to do, and no job is too great to do, if a woman wants to do it. And even the most male-chauvinists have learned that.

INTERVIEWER: What about the credit, though?

DUBROW: Oh, I think a lot of them give women credit for the job, for their elections. I can't tell you how many members of congress have said to me, "Evie, if it weren't for your women in your union, I would never be here today, because they're the ones who did the job. They were the ones who went out. They were the ones who took me through the shop and talked about my campaign. They were the ones who were willing to give out leaflets. They were the ones who would go to meetings and things like that." There may not be enough credit being given, but credit is being given. And I think more and more that's happening. And that's because women are beginning to be more and more conscious of the fact that they have to be politically interested if they want things to be done for themselves and their families.

INTERVIEWER: D understand that you were instrumental in some way in turning George Meany around on ERA.

DUBROW: I don't know that I necessarily turned him around. I have great respect and admiration for George Meany. I think he's been a

DUBROW: tremendous asset to the labor movement. He's blunt. He's honest. He's truthful. If he has questions he asks them. You can talk with him. And I think I began talking with him about ERA when it began to look as though we were going to lose our laws on protection of women and minors as being discriminatory in that we had to do something about extending them. And that, for the first time, people who were for ERA were not just on the level of the business and professional women. A good many trade union members began to be interested in having the principle of the equal opportunity enunciated in the constitution. Now he was always for equal pay for equal work. He was always concerned with what happened with women workers. He had to. His wife was a member of our union before they were married. He knew Dubinsky from his days as head of the AFL in New York, when he was lobbying the state legislature.

The picture of George Meany was completely wrong as far as I was concerned, with the rights of women. He was simply enunciating what the principle of the trade union movement as a whole. Gloria Johnson can tell you this. Myra Wolfgang, who, unfortunately died, was one of those who fought against it because it was going to be harmful to her union. That kind of thing. And we had a group of women, the National Council of Jewish Women, there was the National Council of Negro Women. There were a whole bunch of them that were opposed to ERA, not because they didn't believe in equality, but because they thought it was a class piece of legislation, and it wasn't until the EEOC, until we got sex put in Title VII of the Civil Rights Act. And that by sheer accident, because Howard Smith was then chairman of the Rules Committee, came from Virginia, moved to include sex because he thought that would kill the Civil Rights Bill. Instead, it helped pass it. Once it was in the legislation, once it was signed, Meany, who believed in following the law even when he doesn't like some of the laws, recognized that equality was going to have to be recognized in the constitution, and when I talked with him about it and some of the others, and when he was asked whether, well we would go along, kind of, of gingerly and reluctantly, he said, "No, we're going to fight for it. If it's the feeling that it ought to be in the constitutuion, we're really going to have a part in that, because . . .

INTERVIEWER: Did it take a lot of talking on your part?

DUBROW: No! Not really. Not really. He understood. Very well. And, as I say, he's always been somebody who has been easy for me to talk with, because he's been very respectful of what he thinks women trade union leaders can do. He's never been a problem in that respect. There have been male-chauvinists underneath him maybe, but certainly not George Meany.

INTERVIEWER: Who have been the hardest people for you to get to?

DUBROW: In trade union movement....I haven't really had much trouble, because in my union they wouldn't dare be against women. After all, with a big women's membership they were against ERA, so were our members, because they wanted those protective laws continued, they wanted them extended to men. This was the difference. But I don't know what other unions, I would think the building trades, although I've had no problem. I haven't taken it up with them. But I would have thought that the building trades were the most difficult, because, they've been very reluctant to bring women in as apprentices. That's now over the dam, because they are working, they are apprentices. They are being accepted in, in all of the unions now. Some of them more reluctantly than others, but, I'm not one to criticize, because I think the problem has been that they were mostly male-dominated unions. They didn't have any women carpenters, women laborers, or women operating engineers. And so, naturally, they were the toughest to convince that their roles ought to be open to women who wanted to have a chance at the job. Normal kind of thing. And the wives of these members were not necessarily interested in having women get jobs in, in, in the building trade. Made a big difference. Once the women's movement got a start, once the people began to talk in terms of labor women as being equal members of the unions and things like that, I think it turned people around.

INTERVIEWER: Were you interested in the women's movement from the start?

DUBROW: Not really in women's lib, because there again I felt it was an elitist organization. It was started by women who were not working in the garment plants, or were not working as retail clerks, were not working in meat packing plants and things like that. Mostly they were professional women. And my feeling was that, while their theories were right, their principles were all right, I thought that they were paying a lot of attention to a lot of nonsensical things like not being allowed to drink in a man's grill, or eat in a man's grill, or be part of McSorley's, go to McSorley's in New York, or burning bras, or all of the gimmicks that I thought were inconsequential, and nonsensical, and, which made me think that men would think we were being frivilous. I agreed with their position on saying there should be equal pay for equal work, that there should be equal opportunity for jobs and promotions, that women were certainly equal to men in terms of their mental ability and in many cases their physical ability. And there ought to be no barriers in that respect. But I was doing that a long time ago. I was making that fight long before women's lib got started. And I also objected to what I thought was trying to divide men from women in the sense that I thought there ought to be equality. And my own feeling was, if you set

DUBROW: women against men there could be difficulty there because men would say, "Why should we give in to women when they're trying to do things against us?" My feeling was for better understanding between men and women. And one of the reasons I'd been unhappy in some ways with the Women's Political Caucus, not because I don't think it's a good organization, but I don't want an organization that's going to be for women candidates just because they're women. I want them to be concerned with good candidates regardless of sex. If the woman is better than the man candidate then I think the men ought to support the women, the woman as well as the man. But on the other hand, I want it the other way around. And I have seen incidents where Woman's Political Caucus has been for women just because they're women. Well I can't see that. I think the Republican women in the National Republican Convention. I think they must be having a tough time in terms of the business on the constitutional amendment for abortion, which I think must disturb them if they really believe in, in equality and the right of the woman to make decisions as well as men. And really, I see very few Republican women candidates that I would support, not because they're women, but because I think their philosophy and their principles are different than mine. So I question the women's movement in that respect. But I certainly encourage them to grow. I certainly encourage the setting up of a Coalition of Labor Union Women who could work within their own unions to get equal treatment, to get opportunities, to become leaders in their union.

INTERVIEWER: Did you support them from the start? [CLUW--Coalition of Labor Union Women]

DUBROW: Oh, yes! Yes. That I did support from the start.

INTERVIEWER: Has there been any negative reactions from male trade unionists?

DUBROW: Well, I think that a lot of them have questioned whether there ought to be that kind of an organization. But most of them have accepted it. Most recognize that they have, women have a right to expect to go up the ladder the way men do. I think that a lot of organizations that are predominantly run by women members, certainly my own union, for instance, is a matter of developing new leadership among women, and I think that's growing in all of the unions. And I think that the Coalition of Labor Union Women, who met with George Meany, were pleasantly surprised about his concern and his interest and his encouragement of the Union, of the movement. I think that a lot of them thought he was not interested and unconcerned, and I knew that wasn't true.

And now I know that I talked with people who worked with him like Tom Donaghue, about developing leadership among women, and about making the civil rights department include a woman who would head up that part of the movement, and Cynthia McCann, I think

DUBROW: came in because George Meany recognized that that was part of the civil rights movement. So as I say, I never had any question in my mind, that George Meany understood what we were trying to do. On the other hand, I worry about the Coalition of Labor Union Women because there are some who, whether politically or because they're young or whatever, want miracles to be accomplished overnight. And CLUW could be destroyed on the rocks of that kind of thing. Because I think we have to be concerned with the broad principles of women in the trade union movement. And I don't think it is our job to get involved in the fight between men and women in internationals. I don't think that was why CLUW was set up. I think CLUW was set up as an educational and political organization, to educate the men as well as women in the trade union movement. I'm not going to get involved in an international but my own, and I don't think CLUW should do that. And I think a lot of the younger members, who think that that's CLUW's job, are wrong about it. I think we have to do a job internally in our own internationals. And we have to strengthen women's position in the union movement, but we also have to do an educational job among unorganized women workers. I think one of the biggest jobs CLUW can do is to help organize the unorganized women.

INTERVIEWER: That was a battle, though, that was fought.

DUBROW: That's right. And I felt very strongly that unless CLUW recognized that we would very soon not be an organization. And I worry about some of the gimmicks and tricks that some of the younger members of CLUW tried to pull on the national executive board. And it isn't because I don't want to encourage the young ones, I do.

INTERVIEWER: What kinds of gimmicks?

DUBROW: Well, I think for instance, trying to get CLUW to get involved in that big Springfield meeting for ERA. I thought it was wrong. I thought we would be resented in Illinois. I thought that the way it was brought up was incorrect. It came out through the back door of CLUW. My feeling was that it was more important for every member of CLUW to work within their own states to keep ERA, if it was ratified, and to make sure there was no move to rescind. To help, maybe, through money, to help ERA in states where it is not yet ratified. But my own feeling was that there were a great many problems that CLUW had to meet that were more important than trying to get involved in bringing people in from other areas in a state group. I think it was more important to say, "We'll put our money in to bring women from Illinois down to Springfield, if they haven't got the money." That would be the fundraising end of it. Giving them literature. Helping with advice. But I really didn't think our job was to be in that movement there, in a state like Illinois. And I don't think it helped, frankly.

INTERVIEWER: What would you like to see the future of CLUW?

DUBROW: Well, I would like CLUW, first of all, eventually to be recognized as part of the AFL-CIO. It has not yet been. It is considered a friendly organization, but it has not been included in the consideration of AFL-CIO. I would like CLUW to develop leadership among women so that they can be heads of their organizations. You know it's easy to say a woman ought to be. But unless they can show that they are equally knowledgeable not that they haven't got the ability and the mental capacity, they have that. In some places they're better than men, but they have to prove it. And I don't think they, they ought to be on top councils just because they're women. I object to that. I don't think men ought to be on top councils just because they happen to have a political organization but don't have something to give to the head of the organization with which they are connected. So that I think the Coalition of Labor Union Women, first, have to bring up the level of understanding of women, of the trade union movement. Two, they have to make their own members politically conscious, which is a great big job. Three, they have to make their women members understand why they ought to come to union meetings, why they ought to be interested in the unions, why they ought to do the things that their local unions are not now doing.

Believe me, that's one of the biggest jobs, because getting people to union meetings is one of the toughest jobs we have. Bringing men or women, but more men go to union meetings than women do. And if I hear of any complaint, it's how do we get our union, women union members to come to union meetings. Well, that's a job for CLUW to do. It's an educational job. It isn't the big dramatic, kind of job we wanted done. It hasn't got all of the great charisma that a job of getting somebody, a woman elected to political office. But believe me, it's one of the most important jobs there is to do, is to make the lowest rank and file understand what the union movement is, and how important it is for them to participate. That, basically, is the first thing I think CLUW has to do.

Secondly, as I say, they have to make the rank and file politically active. Get them to understand, first they must register themselves and get other people to register. That they must look at the candidates' records before they decide how they're going to vote for them.

Thirdly, I think they have to do a big job in helping organize the unorganized women in this country, that's what's going to make the women's movement important in the trade union movement. You bring numbers in, you get on a picket line, and you make them understand that being part of an organized labor movement is im-

DUBROW: portant. By god, that's where your power will come from. And that's what I say to the younger members. Don't expect miracles, and don't think that because CLUW passes resolutions, per se, that's going to make them important. The way you're going to do it is show your accomplishments. How much are you willing as a young person, to go out and try to help other women get organized. How much are you willing to spend of your time, rather than thinking of how you'll pass meaningless resolutions by CLUW, is rather to work on a legislative front. How many people have you gotten to write letters to your congressman. I'm co-chairman of the legislative committee with Lois Felder of the Retail Clerks, and we have a whole legislative program. But I have yet to see a lot of the people writing to their congressman. I bet if I were to take a poll, a secret poll of how many members of the national executive board of CLUW have written to their congressmen, I bet at least 50% have never sat down to put pen to paper to do that kind of thing, or to get other people to do it, or to give out registration forms in their plants, or to go and do some of the work for political candidates.

So, as I say, CLUW has a very big job to do, and therefore, it ought not to get involved in great big fights that aren't going to produce results. I worry when some of the members of the minorities groups get up and make impassioned pleas and, and criticisms of the trade union movement, as discriminating and expecting CLUW to do the job. And I resent that, because I have, all my life, fought against discrimination, and for integration, and I'll stack my reputation up against a lot of other people. But I'm not going to go and blacken the name of the trade union movement, or criticize the trade union movement, if I can use that term, to a public that already is anti-union. I don't think that's our job to do that. Our job, I think, is say, "Yeah, there're lots of weaknesses in the trade union movement, but it's still the best movement in the country, in terms of democratic procedures." And it's the thing we have to do to coalesce our forces with the trade union movement so that the public will understand that we're not trying to undermine, or undercut the trade union movement. And I think that's one of the big jobs that CLUW has to do. We have to be kind of a catalyst. We have to be, say what are the best things of the trade union movement, while fighting within our own unions to do more for women. And I don't think that's being done, enough.

INTERVIEWER: This seems to be a question of dual loyality: loyalty to the women's movement and loyality to the trade union movement.

DUBROW: That's right. And my first loyalty has to be to the trade union movement. But I don't think I, I don't think it has to be contradictory. I think I can be for helping <u>all</u> women to become more involved in whatever their professions are. I think it's

DUBROW: incumbent upon me to encourage them to be more active. But I don't think it means that I have to be unfaithful to the basic principles of the trade union movement. And if somebody wants to stir up their own international, good luck to them. Go ahead and do it, but don't expect me to get involved in your fights, cause I don't, that's not my job. I think my job is to get more involved in my own union. And to get more women involved, and to get them to be active, and to get the men representatives and officers to be more conscious of the work that women can do. And there's a big job to do right in the ILGWU without my getting involved in other unions, you see.

INTERVIEWER: What kinds of things are you doing on that front?

DUBROW: Well, I think the new president of my union is very conscious of the fact that women are important to the trade union movement. He happens to be married to a very fine woman who is very conscious of women's rights. And, so I'm sure he gets it at his home, at home, as well as getting it from me and other women. I think he recognizes our need for training and developing new leadership among women. And I think in the next number of years that we'll have more women in our top board. But they're not going to get there just because they're women. They're going to get there because they can prove themselves as well as men. And they're beginning to move, and as I say, one out of every four staff members in our union happen to be women. We have women educational directors. We have women organizers--they make the best organizers in the world as a matter of fact--and the men will be the first to tell you that. We have women business agents. We have women managers of locals. We have women who are heads of their district councils, and they will automatically come up into the top eschelon of the union. And that's where they ought to be, but as I say, not because they're women, but because they belong there, because they have something to give, because they can prove their ability to be on the top.

And it's not easy in a union like ours, because we're a low wage industry. Our employers work on low profits, they are very hard and difficult negotiators. But we are bringing more and more women in as members of their shop committees to negotiate. They're beginning to learn the lesson. They learn about the need for making a fight on piece-rates. They have to know more about the contract, the grievances, how you proceed in all of those things. That's going on all the time in my union. And I think with the kind of president we presently have, he encourages that.

I don't have any problem talking with him about my particular work. He recognized that I needed an assistant in Washington, I now have an office of our own in Washington. Before then I worked either out of my own apartment or out of the AFL-CIO. He

DUBROW: understands our need for being part of coalitions as Dubinsky did and as Stulberg did. And more and more we're doing that. More and more we bring delegations in to Washington to talk to their congressmen. We're encouraging more and more conferences in our states and in the districts and so forth. And, I think all of that is good. And I think all of that is important. And as a woman I'm delighted to see it happen in the ILG. I think it's happening in the Amalgamated--and Textile Workers now that they've merged. I think more and more you'll see women taking an active part in their unions as well as in, in outside activities. But I never want us to lose the main purpose of the trade union movement and that's to organize the unorganized workers. That's basically what we're in business for and we ought to use every single weapon and instrument we can for that purpose.

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