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

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Oral History Interview

with

MILDRED JEFFREY

United Automobile Workers

by

Ruth Meyerowitz

Program on Women and Work

Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations

University of Michigan - Wayne State University

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MILDRED JEFFREY

Mildred Jeffrey was born in Allton, Iowa in 1911. Her family later moved to Minneapolis where her parents continued their work in the pharmacy business. Jeffrey did very well in school but was not exposed to political issues or the labor movement.

It was while studying at the University of Minnesota that Jeffrey became involved in the labor movement. As a member of the YWCA's student movement she helped recruit women to work in factories. She worked in Chicago's Baby Ruth Factory for a summer. Then, as President of the YWCA, Jeffrey met members of the Socialist Party which she joined. She became increasingly involved with political issues while she worked forty hours a week and attended school full-time. Jeffrey received a scholarship to the Department of Social Economy and Social Research at Bryn Mawr and became fully committed to the labor movement.

Upon graduation, Jeffrey went to work for the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, organizing "Baby Strikes" in an attempt to enforce child labor laws. She was then appointed Education Director of the Pennsylvania Board of Shirt Workers. She became a national organizer for Amalgamated Clothing Workers and in 1937 she organized for the Textile Workers in the South.

In 1940, Jeffrey became involved in the NAACP, civil rights issues, and civil liberties by working for the War Production Board in Washington, D.C. Then, Jeffrey went to work for the UAW as Director of the Women's Department. She later worked as Radio Director of the UAW's Department of Education, Director of Community Relations, and Director of the Consumer Department. Working closely with Walter Reuther, she helped organize the Committee Against Poverty.

In 1948, Jeffrey was elected Democratic precinct delegate and was on the district Executive Board. In 1955, she became Chairwoman of the platform committee of the Michigan Democratic Party and has been on committees at each convention. She served as a member of the Democratic National Committee from 1964 to 1972, and was elected to the Executive Committee twice. In 1974, Jeffrey ran in a statewide election for the Wayne State University Board of Governors and was elected.

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August 13, 1976

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INTERVIEWER: Introduce yourself and say your name and where you were born.

JEFFREY: All right. My name is Mildred Jeffrey and I was born in a very small town in Allton, Iowa; about 1,000 persons; largely a German community. When I was four, we moved to Cherokee, which is a big city of about 5,000 people about sixty miles from Sioux City.

INTERVIEWER: Can you give the date?

JEFFREY: Oh, when I was born? December 29, 1911. We moved to Minneapolis when I was a sophomore in high school, entered my sophomore year at Minneapolis.

INTERVIEWER: Do you remember your grandparents?

JEFFREY: On my father's side, yes. My grandmother, whose name was Bridgette McWilliams, had come over from Ireland when she was trying to escape from the poverty of that little country. She married a man who had eleven children, who obviously was much older than she, and that marriage had five children. My father was the youngest of those five and his father, Bridgette's husband, died when my father was nine months of age. So my grandmother had had to raise not all of those sixteen children, but many of them, and she did it on a farm and she was very tough. We were all very, very frightened of her and she was not exactly, at least as I recollect her, a very warm person. She died when I was only ten or eleven, so all of my impressions of her are from that age. I never knew my mother's father and mother.

INTERVIEWER: Did your mother ever talk about them?

JEFFREY: Oh, yes. Their family, it comes. . . My mother's maiden name was Ham. They had originally, many years ago, come from England, and they settled in....we don't know. My mother, at one point tried to get. . . became interested in her antecedents and did quite a little research. She was....when we were all grown up, and we know that they lived at some period, probably in the 1890's in western Pennsylvania, on a farm. They were farmers. Somewhere in the earlier part of the twentieth century, they settled in Kellerton, Iowa, and there was where my mother's father and mother had five children. They all lived in this rural community. Kellerton is south of Des Moines. One of my mother's sisters, with the exception of this one sister who was about eleven years older than my mother, and she got married. She married a bum, as it turned out, and was working in a drugstore in Des Moines. My mother wanted to be a school teacher, so she went to Des Moines and worked, got a job, apparently, in the same drugstore, for my aunt. Out of that experience she went to Cornell--not Cornell, Ithaca, but Cornell, Des Moines--and graduated in Pharmacy and that's where she met my father, because my father was also a pharmacist.

INTERVIEWER: So both your parents were professionals?

JEFFREY: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Did your mother continue to work after they were married?

JEFFREY: Well, I'm the oldest of seven children, so she always helped out in the store, but obviously, with that many children, she was rather busy. My father became an alcoholic, and so one of the reasons we moved to Minneapolis was because, by that time, we had, he had a drugstore in Cherokee, which. . .

INTERVIEWER: Which state is Cherokee in?

JEFFREY: Oh, in Iowa. I was born in Allton, and then we moved to Cherokee when I was four or five--four, I think--and that was because my father moved from the drugstore in . . . He was a young person coming up, and he and his brother had had the drugstore in Allton. His brother Pat was not a pharmacist, but they went into business. They were young. They went into business together in this drugstore in Allton, and then my father, who was, as they said, a charming fellow, a prince, Irish, Burt O'Connell McWilliams, started drinking a lot. In the meantime, he had purchased this store, his drugstore in Cherokee. In those days, Cherokee was the center of a very rich farming land--still very rich farming land, beautiful farming land. The drugstore was where all of the farmers came for all sorts of things, not only prescriptions for their families, but prescriptions for their cattle and hogs and what not. It has the potential for being a very successful store, but because of his drinking problem, it really became impossible, so my mother decided that we were going to move. In addition to that was the fact that she was

JEFFREY: having a lot of problems with my father, and she was determined that her children were going to have an education, and could with the exception, yes . . .

INTERVIEWER: Did your parents fight a lot, or . . . ?

JEFFREY: No. I don't remember their fighting. I just remember my father being stoned, and getting into fights with people, and getting burned at the drugstore. There was a big, two-plate gas burner where they heated water or they made chocolate syrup for the ice cream fountain and he would get....I remember one time, it was just terrible burns, and I was so young, I didn't, we didn't really, my brother and I, we were very close....the next in the family was my brother and we were always very, very close, and all I can remember is his [father] passing out on the floor behind a counter in the drugstore or it always seemed, at Christmas time, that....we didn't really realize what was wrong with him, at that time. We just knew there was something very wrong. It wasn't until we got to Minneapolis, where he....by this time, he had become much worse, and my mother, in the Minneapolis drugstore....my mother really ran that from the time they purchased it. They did not fight a lot and I can't remember his either, ever being very really cruel to my mother. He was a father who believed in discipline as far as children were concerned. He made us do many things which we didn't like, but in retrospect I don't think were....

INTERVIEWER: For example?

JEFFREY: Oh, eating vegetables, and stuff like that. You couldn't leave the table until you cleaned up your plate. I learned to like everything as a result of it. Rutabagas--I remember sitting at a table for hours until I finished my rutabagas.

INTERVIEWER: What were you starting to say when your mother was having problems? She was determined that her children would have an education?

JEFFREY: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: What happened from . . . ?

JEFFREY: Well, one has memories, and one of those is, in the living room, and she'd written for the catalogs of universities in the Midwest: Wisconsin, Minnesota, Notre Dame, St. Mary's, Iowa, Ames. These were....clearly she was thinking about moving to the Midwest. She never, I'm quite certain, to my recollection, ever envisioned moving to the east coast or the west coast. Her total environment had been in the Midwest, had been in Iowa, really, had always been in Iowa. She had never traveled, and these catalogs would be spread out and she would be....I remember, she thought about Notre Dame a great deal and that the girls

JEFFREY: would go to St. Mary's. I don't know what finally made up her mind, but I think to some extent it was my Aunt Plesie, who was this older sister of hers, living by that time in Minneapolis. She, my Aunt Plesie, was supporting two children, working in a department store in the yard goods, where she always got a.... had a very bad back, as a result of that, but she . . .

INTERVIEWER: Did she have to lift heavy things?

JEFFREY: Yes. The bolts. That's what gave her the bad back.

INTERVIEWER: What decade was this?

JEFFREY: Well, I graduated from high school in 1929, 1928, and of course Minneapolis had her sister and the University of Minnesota. I think it was those two things that made up my mother's mind. Now . . .

INTERVIEWER: Did your parents divorce at that time?

JEFFREY: No. My father was around and my mother would get him into Sacred Hearts sanitarium in Milwaukee, a good many times, and finally she had him committed and then he'd get out.

INTERVIEWER: Committed to a mental hospital?

JEFFREY: In Minnesota.

INTERVIEWER: To a mental hospital?

JEFFREY: Whatever. He was....I don't know what she got him committed for, but then he would get out of there and he'd be back home and then he would....by that time, we all knew what the problem was, and then he just disappeared.

INTERVIEWER: Did he ever treat the children harshly?

JEFFREY: No. Never, never; occasionally, but there wasn't a pattern of child abuse or wife abuse. It was just that he was totally irresponsible and my mother, therefore, supported all of us and worked very, very hard.

INTERVIEWER: Did she work as a pharmacist?

JEFFREY: Yes. She ran the store, this little drugstore in Minneapolis, 46th and Bryan.

INTERVIEWER: Do you remember your parents talking about their parents' values? Whether they believed in hard work or stuff that were like moral lessons to you?

JEFFREY: Well, my mother was--my idea, of course--a remarkable person and she was very kind and very gentle and clearly had transmitted

JEFFREY: to us certain values, certainly the value of education. The traditional ones, integrity and moral conduct, I suppose you would say. She was very open-minded about people, very free of prejudice.

INTERVIEWER: Did you go out with any blacks?

JEFFREY: Very few. In the church we went to there were two black families and one of the things I always remember is that my mother always ....we went to church with my mother. We always sat beside one of these black families and I didn't think anything much about it, but I remember very well, we would go in....I can remember just where it was. We always sat next to this black family, which was a mother and one or two children. That's who I recall seeing there, but we only saw them at church. Later on, when I was in high school, there were some black youngsters and then in college I'd get a lot of it, thought I didn't see interracial stuff. It was heavy, heavy, heavy, as it was called then.

I've never been able to figure out why people say, when did you you become interested in women or questions along those lines. I can absolutely cannot remember what influenced me, or when it happened, and have never been able to figure it out. I remember one time, when we were in Cherokee, from the drugstore up to our house, we always walked. It was a long hill, and this was when my father was with us; my mother, my father, my brother, and I and my father--I guess this would be my father--well, he did some good things. I have to recall, now. I haven't thought about this for a long time, but I remember he had my brother take my arm to help me up the hill. For some reason, I resented that. I don't know why. I always felt ashamed about, a bit, I guess, or sort of thinking I'd done the wrong thing, but I absolutely was angry. My brother wasn't going to assist me up that hill not a bit.

Oh, I was going to say, my father did some very nice things with us. He always, in this little town of Cherokee, but we went to all of the ball games, went to all of the football games. He always took me as well as my brother. When I speak about my brother and myself, it is because my younger sisters weren't old enough, at that point, to cut around to football games or baseball games. We'd go to the circus when it came to town, and we'd go early. I think he was a really good guy. He just had a weakness for alcohol.

INTERVIEWER: Were these the things that you liked to do? What sort of things did you like to do with your father?

JEFFREY: Oh, those are the things I like to do, of course.

INTERVIEWER: What about with your mother? What did you like to do with her?

JEFFREY: My poor mother worked so hard, there were very few things that we did together. That drugstore was open eighteen hours a day and I used to work in the drugstore a lot, as all of us did. As the years went on, and we had no car, and she...I'd say during the high school years, my mother loved young people and our house was always a place where the kids came. She would get home late, and I'd still be there and she would shoo everybody out, but she got along beautifully with young people. All my friends liked my mother. She was very curious, and I think, in retrospect, what she must have done was treat everybody as sort of peers. She was never talking down to the kids. She was always very interested in what they thought and what they were doing. With the drugstore....it was open seven days a week. It was open on every holiday: Thanksgiving, Christmas, every holiday.

INTERVIEWER: Who did the household work?

JEFFREY: We did. The kids did.

INTERVIEWER: Did a lot of it fall to you as the oldest?

JEFFREY: Oh, sure! Oh, we used to have systems, time study stuff on the walls. Everybody had their jobs. We'd set off alarm clocks and we would fight once in a while, of course, but....I did all of the cooking and all of the shopping. Our relatives from Iowa used to come up a lot and I'd get dinners. I couldn't do it now, but I'd get dinners for twenty people and think nothing of it. We just did it, and we were very poor. I remember one winter, where we lived on oatmeal and mush.

INTERVIEWER: Was mush corn meal?

JEFFREY: Yes. Oh, it's a great dish, and I still like it. We fixed the mush for supper, and it would bubble away. We have like porridge bowls, and then for breakfast you would put it in cake pans or you sliced it and fried it, fried mush. It's very good. We never got tired of it. We never felt sorry for ourselves. Once, we would have meat, if things were all right. I know my mother would try to get oranges whenever she could have enough money in the budget. If there was any money left over, she always wanted me to get oranges or some kind of fresh fruit and bananas. We had very little greens, as I recollect, except in the summertime, and then we had a garden. We canned a lot, too.

INTERVIEWER: What kind of work did your brother do in the house?

JEFFREY: My brother Kenneth?

INTERVIEWER: Yes.

JEFFREY: Oh, he had jobs just like everybody else.

INTERVIEWER: So the housework was pretty much shared?

JEFFREY: Yes. My youngest sister is eleven, so when I was seventeen, she was six, so she wasn't doing much. Six, eight, ten, twelve, fourteen. The ten, twelve, and fourteen year olds, you see, could do a lot of work. Now, my mother, however, also did all of the sewing for us, and she did all of the painting of the house. She really tried to keep the house up.

INTERVIEWER: In addition to working in the drugstore?

JEFFREY: Yes. I tell you, she was absolutely a remarkable woman, an absolutely remarkable woman. Always, I can never remember my mother getting angry. No, we could disappoint her. I don't remember, well....when we were in high school we were supposed to be home by nine-thirty and I recall in high school you have boyfriends or what not, and one of the....some of the basketball players on the school team also played basketball at a church, and we used to go, my brother and I did. By this time ....from the time we were in high school, we were both in the same grade together; that is, we went through high school together. He was two years younger, but he was very, very bright, extraordinarily bright kid. He wrote very well, and so on. He died when he was twenty-seven. Well, we were very, I mean, we did everything together. We were very active in school affairs and stuff, central. That was really one of the nicest things about my high school years. But my mother....we never had any problem. I can't remember any problems, discipline problems, or tensions, or hostilities with my mother. Of course, by this time, my father was really sort of totally out of the picture, except those times when he would come home and then that would always be kind of unpleasant. We may have been unfair to my father. I'm not saying we weren't; I'm just telling you how we felt about him.

INTERVIEWER: Let's talk about your mother a little bit more. Did she have any hopes for herself?

JEFFREY: No. I think her hopes were all for her children.

INTERVIEWER: And what did she want for them?

JEFFREY: I think that....I remember that so well when my brother died. It seemed to me that that was her greatest grief, because she ....I think that she instilled....I don't know. Well, let's put it this way: she made all of us feel that she had high expectations for us. No. I think that that was positive. Excuse me, you asked me a question.

INTERVIEWER: I guess what her expectations really were. What did you feel were her expectations for you and the other children were?

JEFFREY: First of all, get an education.

INTERVIEWER: Did that mean high school and college?

JEFFREY: It meant college, and to do whatever we wanted to do and make something out of our lives. That's all I can recall.

INTERVIEWER: What did the other two children in your family achieve in terms of their children?

JEFFREY: My five sisters--one is retired, so that leaves four. Two finished college and two did not.

INTERVIEWER: And what kind of work did they do?

JEFFREY: They all got married and none of them worked after they were married, until recent years. One of them is managing several book stores in Seattle. One is working for the city of Minneapolis and one is working part-time as a school secretary managing an office in a school.

~~INTERVIEWER~~: On, my youngest sister, isn't working at all. Her husband does very well and she is involved in community things. She is the sister I always stay with, because they have such a lovely home over the river. That's what happened as far as my sisters are concerned.

INTERVIEWER: Did your brother finish college?

JEFFREY: Yes, he finished school. Oh, my mother was also very--oh dear, my dear mother! My father was not interested in supporting these sort of things. Well she, in this town of Allton, Iowa, she got an organ, a very simple organ, and she would play the organ and we would all sing. Now, the idea was that this was to interest us in music. When we were still in Allton, we were very, very small. At this drugstore we had in Allton, my father had with his brother, they sold among other things phonographs, but my father was opposed to the family having a phonograph. Somehow or other, she finally persuaded my father that we could have a phonograph in our home. This was when I was about four and still in Allton. It was an old Edison with very thick records. Then, she apparently....the record collection in Iowa left a great--I mean Allton--left a great deal to be desired, so she took my brother and I to Lemars in the winter. We had to go on a train and I remember we had to stay in a hotel. It was very cold, except the room was so hot that none of us could sleep because the room was so hot. She bought records. I don't remember the store or anything else. These are things that I recall. She had taken two bags with her. She had put clothes in for us and she needed those bags to put the records in, so when we got ready to go home, we had to put on all of the clothes, like two sweaters, two shirts, two skirts, two or three pairs of hose, whatever.

JEFFREY: We didn't stay that long, so that the bags were empty to put the phonograph records in and then she carted them home. I know that my father....I don't remember words....I just recall that my father resisted all of this notion; just thought, I guess, it was a lot of poppycock. I don't know, I just have the impression.

Then later on, she was in Minneapolis. No matter how poor we were, we had a piano and I had to take piano lessons. She got a banjo and my brother took banjo lessons. One of my sisters got a violin and she took violin lessons. The tragedy of it all was that we were totally untalented. Her ambition was to have a trio or a quartet or whatever. She started with the piano--that was me--and then these other instruments. We all took our lessons and she would have friends that....she'd make friends with so many people. I don't know how she ever arranged to pay for them, I mean our lessons. I'm not sure she ever did. Maybe, they just did it for free, or didn't charge very much. For a few years we did this, but I don't know whether she gave up or just what; we discontinued. I can play the piano a little bit. My brother was on the banjo; my sister Lois was on the violin. My sister Margie started on the saxophone, but it never worked. She loved Caruso, and she loved Galikurchi, and she loved selections from grand operas, like Thais, I remember. When we were ill, you know how you have these memories....meditation thing from Thais. I remember she always used to play this music for us when we were ill.

INTERVIEWER: How do you spell

JEFFREY: T-A-I-S. It's an opera. She never had the complete opera. It would be just selections. I suppose that was her idea of bringing culture into the family. She loved music. It's such a really painful question when you ask me what did I really do with my mother. We did so little with our mother. We would go downtown to shop; once in a while, we'd go to a movie. She would take a day off when business wasn't too bad. She had another pharmacist. Sometimes she had a part-time pharmacist, sometimes she had a full-time pharmacist, but sometimes both of them had to be there. There was a time when business was reasonably good at the store, but not during the Depression years. I don't know what her income was. Maybe, if it was $1,500 a year out of that store, it was probably pretty good. This is going back a bit, but this is in Allton, Iowa, where we lived until I was four, a little past four. My mother was interested in a Montessori method of teaching. She also worked....before I went to school, I can remember her with the cards for.... She believed in the phonetic method of learning to read which, fortunately, I was taught the same method when I went to school. She used to work with us a great deal. After she died, when we were going through her things, I found this whole file on Montessori and articles about it she had clipped and some, a sort of like pamphlet on

JEFFREY: the Montessori method, which I must say interested me a great deal because that was many years ago, and by this time the Montessori method had sort of come back into popular use. All of these things suggest that she had a great interest in doing what she could within her environment and her limitations to stimulate and excite and challenge her children. I expect some of my younger sisters always....I know they do....somehow or other, I had the best. It's funny, because....I'm sure they sort of felt that.

INTERVIEWER: Why do you think that?

JEFFREY: Because the two sisters that didn't finish school, they had.... I don't think they feel this way now, but I know; they expressed this, that they were not able to finish school and I was and that was because, well, I'm not sure what they thought. They simply thought that I had greater advantages. I worked my way through school and my mother really was never able, never really able to give me one cent of money to pay for my tuition, my books, everything, and so did my brother. In their perceptions, which I suspect is not unusual--I suspect it happens in families--in their perception, somehow or other I was advantaged. Now certainly not in the love that my mother gave me. I remember that the only time she got angry with me was when I said to her, asked her, "How--there are so many of us--how can you love us all equal?" She got very angry. I remember, she said, "When a thimble is full, when a cork jar or a gallon is full, it's full, and my love is full for each and every one of you." It's the only time I ever remember my mother getting exasperated or angry with me. Oh, she might get provoked and say, "Mildred, please don't do that," or "please don't say that!" I remember....particularly when you're in high school and you would go shopping and.... I was very difficult, or when she was trying to make a dress for me. I was hard to please. I think that is also kind of typical of high school kids. I can remember when my daughter was at that age. I'd make up my mind, going shopping, that it would take three days, but we're going everywhere and we're going to shop until Sharon finds what she wants.

INTERVIEWER: Was your mother able to take an interest in the community and politics?

JEFFREY: No. My mother voted for Norman Thomas in 1932, due to my influence, I think.

INTERVIEWER: Were you a socialist at the time?

JEFFREY: In 1932, yes. I don't know whether I was a socialist. I thought that I was. I'm not sure that I knew very much about it. She simply never, never had the time. She was very interested in current events and she read whenever she had a chance, but she would get....the only activities outside of the home and the drugstore....

INTERVIEWER: That's okay. You were describing how your mother voted for Norman Thomas in 1932.

JEFFREY: Yes, and also that she had lived a very circumscribed life. As I say, she read current publications, like Time, A New Public Occasion. As I suggested earlier, she was curious and open-minded, and was responsive to new ideas. The only activities, as I say, an occasional movie, once in a while the theater. Although I remember in high school going to the theater, and the way I went to the theater was to usher, because we didn't have any money to go to the theater. I remember my first symphony concert, which was after I was in the university, and how excited I was about it. It was a great night! I was in the university before I ever went to a symphony concert. Now earlier there hadn't been a Minneapolis symphony, but later there was and its performances were at the university. My mother never could go. She was too busy.

Later on in life, after we were all grown up, she became very interested, as I said earlier, in genealogy, and she traveled quite a little searching out historical material about her family. When I saw she traveled quite a little, it was like to New York or Detroit, sometimes to visit us, of course. When she came to Detroit, she always went to the Burton Library at Detroit Public Library, so it was very limited. She died very suddenly and it had been our plan--we were all putting money together--that she was going to go to England to see what she could find about her early, early ancestors. We were all very, very excited about that. She was, too. That would have been her first trip out of the country, except for an excursion she went on to Canada.

INTERVIEWER: When you were growing up, could you describe the house or apartment where you were born?

JEFFREY: Oh, I was born in a house which is still standing, I believe, in Allton, Iowa. It was a frame house. It was not very large. It had two stories, however. Early on, it had a pot-bellied stove which, before we left there, we had gotten a furnace. It originally had a pot-bellied stove; it had a range, and it had gas lights. In Cherokee, we lived in two different houses. When we first moved there it was on the other side of the railroad tracks, as it was called. Then later on--this was when my father was doing quite well in his business, moderately well--we moved to a really very nice home on the other side of the railroad tracks, up the hill, on Main Street. Remember, Cherokee was only five thousand people. In Minneapolis, and that house is still standing; I saw it at Christmas time. It was a frame house and we had a yard; we had an old barn for a garage. We never had a car, but we loved playing in that barn. Oh, it was great! It was three stories. There were two very small bedrooms on the third floor and three small, well, one large and two small on the second floor. We had a coal furnace there.

JEFFREY: which always went out and finally we got an oil furnace. The coal furnace was one of the banes of our existence.

INTERVIEWER: Do you remember when you got your oil furnace?

JEFFREY: It must have been in about 1927. That was something that my brother and I did not do, the coal furnace. We couldn't get the coalters out; we didn't feed it right, and sometimes on the coldest nights, the furnace would go out and my mother would have to come home after work and get it all straightened out, the coalters out, and so on. I remember at Christmas time we'd wait by our....Christmas was a great event. The Christmas tree was something we all decorated together, but in those very poor years, we would wait until Christmas Eve so we could get the tree at the lowest possible price and our budget was a maximum of one dollar for the Christmas tree. My brother and I always had such hassles in getting that tree up, because sometimes we didn't have a stand, or if we got a stand, it never lasted more than one year, and it was kind of a rickety one. What a job getting a Christmas tree up, but we'd get it up! We decorated it and we made a lot of our own decorations; paper loops and popcorn and various decorations, which we all kept for many years....and I used to use on our Christmas tree when our children were very young. The handmade ones and some that weren't handmade. We had some that came from my mother's family, or my Aunt Plesy would give us things at Christmas, little extra things.

INTERVIEWER: How did she spell her name?

JEFFREY: Aunt Plesy? P-L-E-S-Y.

INTERVIEWER: What about the ethnic group in Allton, and then in Cherokee?

JEFFREY: Allton was German, a very German community.

INTERVIEWER: Was it a working class community?

JEFFREY: No. Both Cherokee and Allton are typical of the small towns that develop in rural areas, rural towns. As I said, it was a rich.... During the Depression, the dairy farmers struck in Sioux City, Iowa. That was just revolutionary. Of course, at that time everybody was losing their farms.

INTERVIEWER: Was there a Farm Holiday Movement in Sioux City at the time?

JEFFREY: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: And that was to keep the farmers on their farms, and....

JEFFREY: Oh, well, they dumped their milk, the dairy farmers did and then when the farms were going up for sale, sheriff's sale, they

JEFFREY: had this game. Everybody would gather around and they would have an agreement. The bid wouldn't be more than five dollars, ten dollars, or twenty-five dollars. Then the farmers had been taken over, let us say, by insurance companies and when they had the sheriff's sale, the owner of the farm would get his farm back for practically nothing. It took the insurance companies a while to get around that strategy. Lots of farms came back to their original owners.

INTERVIEWER: Was it the banks, at the time, who owned the farms?

JEFFREY: The banks and the insurance companies, lots of insurance companies, even then.

INTERVIEWER: The dumping of the milk was to get the prices up?

JEFFREY: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Create the scarcity and get the prices up?

JEFFREY: Yes. My point is....so businesses developed, like drugstores and general stores, where you had all yard goods and clothing and all the things that you need to run a household, movie theaters. Cherokee was the county seat, and that's where they had to come in to register their deeds, the telephone company, all that sort of thing. One of the reasons that my mother was determined that we were going to move out of Cherokee was for this very reason, that there were no job opportunities and she knew if we were going to go to school, we were going to have to work. First of all, there wasn't a university near there, but secondly, she wanted to locate in a large city where she thought we would have job opportunities. As a matter of fact, the house we lived in in Minneapolis was on the same block as Minnesota Bell--had a big building at the end of our block. It wasn't their central office, but my mother always thought that's where the girls can get a job while they were going through school. We never did, but we did other things. We never worked there.

Also, another reason she wanted us to get out of Cherokee was that so many of the girls got knocked up. That was a concern of hers. There was just no future, and here she was with one son and six daughters, and that was another, I recall very well, motivation. So these were rural communities. Allton was almost all German. As a matter of fact, I recall at one time they taught them in the schools--the teaching was in German. That changed. That was before our time. I think it changed during World War I. Cherokee was five thousand people and it was sort of a replica of Allton, except it was a county seat. Cherokee also had a mental institution. Oh, that's another thing that my mother did; we took elocution lessons. I performed for the patients at the mental insitutiton, which I suppose was called the insane hospital. It was, I suppose a state institution.

JEFFREY: Oh, yes, and elocution lessons. [We] used to perform there, oh, and in church suppers. Now, my mother must have gone to those church suppers. This was in Cherokee she must have gone to church suppers. I remember that's the first time I had oysters, oyster stew in school.

INTERVIEWER: What about the Klan? You mentioned them. What kind of presence did they have?

JEFFREY: Oh, well, my father was a Catholic; my mother was raised as a Methodist but she converted to Catholicism when she married my father. As a matter of fact, he had at one time briefly studied to be a priest--not very long, but he had studied to be, about eleven months or something like that. She was a very good Catholic and religion was a mainstay in her life, totally was. In Cherokee, I was sent to the parochial school and I'm sure that's why we were very sensitive to the Klu Klux Klan. I recall being called names by the kids--cat-licker--and stones being thrown at us.

INTERVIEWER: The Klan was anti-Catholic?

JEFFREY: Yes, anti-Catholic. I's say there were a lot of Irish around there. I think they were a little bit of everything, but I remember Klu Klux Klan crosses being burned in people's yards. There was a county prosecutor--oh dear, I don't recall his name; it was Irish. I remember we used to go to trials, as a young girl. We were very....thought he was very terribly handsome. We used to go to trials to listen to him, his prosecution of defendants and it must have been involved with....I mean, that was an elected position. He was a Democrat, and of course I was really pretty Republican. Why he got elected as a Democrat, I haven't the faintest idea. My recollection is that the Klan was somehow also involved in elections. We would see it when we were having an election, since many of the Democrats were Irish. Yes, this was definitely against the Catholics. There was very few Jewish people left. I remember a doctor and so on.

INTERVIEWER: Was your family every duressed by the Klan directly?

JEFFREY: No. All I recall is being harassed by other kids, but no cross was ever burned in our yard. Stones weren't thrown at our house. They'd be thrown at us when they saw us coming home from school together.

INTERVIEWER: Was there any reason why your family was not touched?

JEFFREY: Oh, I don't think that my family was that active. I think that there was more active, prominent people in politics. The Klan used to be very political.

INTERVIEWER: So that those people who were running for office . . . ?

JEFFREY ....people were running for office. That's my recollection, my impression.

INTERVIEWER: What about when your mother moved to Minneapolis, when your family moved to Minneapolis? Did your mother buy the pharmacy in Minneapolis?

JEFFREY: She worked in a pharmacy for a while, It was known as Seven Corners, which was a pretty rough neighborhood. After she worked there for a while, then she located this store, and she bought the store, however you buy it, pay for it on a monthly basis.

INTERVIEWER: Like a mortgage?

JEFFREY: Yes, like a mortgage.

INTERVIEWER: When you were growing up, did you ever think that boys had an easier time?

JEFFREY: No, I don't think so. It goes back to this....I sort of guess somehow my mother ....I don't ever recall my mother conditioning me directly. In my environment, there just must have been this .... You're going to do things in this world. Not that she instilled any kind of driving ambition, because that she certainly didn't; or any sense of competition--she certainly didn't do that. I never felt....no.... Clearly in high school, as I said, I was very active. The president of our class was my boyfriend, Walter Dalbert. I didn't run for class president, but I gave some kind of speech at some contest I won. I never thought about running for class president. I ran for vice-president. Clearly, I'm sure, that I must of just thought, well, the boy runs for President, although I was president of another organization, which was called C.C.C., something like Courtesy, Cleanliness, and something or other. Isn't that a horrible name? I guess I don't really have any recollections of thinking that boys have an easier time or boys were better or you should take second place to boys.

INTERVIEWER: What did you daydream about becoming when you grew up?

JEFFREY: Oh, I wanted to be an actress. At one point, I wanted to be an attorney. Another time .... Oh, I really wanted to be an actress, and I tried out for a couple of student plays and didn't do very well.

INTERVIEWER: Did you have any movie stars who were your idols, models?

JEFFREY: What I remember mostly about movies is from the first time I ever went to movies in Cherokee. I always read from right to left

JEFFREY: looking for women's names: the producer, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera and all I'd ever see, and I still do it. I do it on TV , still do it in movies....the hairdresser, and the wardrobe mistress and the make-up. That's where you saw women's names. Now as far as stars are concerned, Gloria Swanson, Barbara Stanwyck--the usuals. Jeanette....A Star is Born....Jeanette whatever her name is.

INTERVIEWER: McDonald?

JEFFREY: No. Oh, Jeanette McDonald, yes! Jeanette, a very small one; that's probably why I liked her. She did A Star is Born the first time it was done, which I think Barbra Streisand is doing now again. Janet....I can't think of her name. We used to love Charlie Chaplin and Harold Lloyd, Buster Keaton. I remember enjoying the comedies particularly.

INTERVIEWER: Was religion important to you as a child?

JEFFREY: Religion, as a child, in a traditional way. Yes, I was a very good Catholic child up until the time I was a sophomore in high school.

INTERVIEWER: What happened then?

JEFFREY: Somewhere in my sophomore, junior years, I began to question religion. I still went to church because of my mother. I sort of began to stop when I was a senior. I kept going to church through high school. It was when I got to the university that I gradually stopped. My mother and I would discuss it, and she was very good about it. It hurt her, but she accepted the fact that religion no longer meant to me what it had earlier or what it meant to her. I think in part, a large part of it was that I got so turned off by the sermons. I don't recall having any great guilt feelings about it. I suspect in part because my mother was, as I say, she was hurt and I think she was disappointed, but she didn't try to argue with me or in any way make me feel that I was going to be dammed or that I was going to be, or that I would....as I say, I didn't have any guilt feelings about it at all. It was over quite a period of time.

INTERVIEWER: What about the sermons turned you off?

JEFFREY: Oh, they were so horrible! They were so moralistic and righteous without any content. Through the Y.W.C.A.; I was active in the Y.W.C.A., in the Girl Reserves. Then, when I was at the university, I was very active in the Y. I went to, whatever they were called, conferences in Lake Geneva. They would be about ten days. There, we would have people like Ronald Neibuhr, Kirby Page, Paul Harris, Tilepa Therlock, and all sorts of people, and A. Philip Randolph. That's really intellectually how I moved from being a Catholic. I would not say I moved from becoming a religious person, in those years, because of people like Ronald Neibuhr,

INTERVIEWER: We're going to talk about education for a bit. What did you think of school?

JEFFREY: I loved school!

INTERVIEWER: What subjects did you like?

JEFFREY: History, sociology, drama, economics, psychology. I totally enjoyed school. At the university, I worked forty hours and I also did a lot of extra-curricular activities. By the time I graduated, I think that I was probably more tired than I've ever been in my life. In the last year or so, I recall, got to be really kind of a drag and I just had to keep at it. I always wanted my youngsters to have a great time in high school and I used to say to them it's the last time they're going to be irresponsible. However, these days, you can't say that anymore, because your grades in high school affect you very strongly, whether or not you're going to get into college. In high school, I had absolutely tremendous teachers, just absolutely gorgeous teachers, great inspiration. I would say, I've been so lucky, just great influences.

INTERVIEWER: Do you remember teachers? Whom you liked particularly?

JEFFREY: Jarvis. This is high school. Annabel Thomas, Cal Jarvis; she was the principal, he was the assistant principal. Weston Mitchell, who was the football coach and also the advisor to a lot of student organizations. Mr. Brodie--I can't remember his first name. Oh, we always called him Mr. Brodie; he was a physics teacher. Rebecca Burt; she taught drama and English. Miss Hutchinson, who taught history. Abigail O'Leary; my brother and her were particularly tight. Abigail O'Leary is Abigail McCarthy's aunt. I don't know....Gene McCarthy's wife. In Public Places, Private Faces, Abigail McCarthy writes a great deal about her Aunt Abigail O'Leary. She was the advisor on The Crest, which was a literary magazine which my brother edited and wrote a great deal for. We were so fortunate, because....that's why I always said as far as my kids were concerned, I used to say all I would hope for was that they would have one teacher who would touch them. Then I changed that to two teachers, because obviously they needed one in grade school and they needed one in high school. I felt that way because teachers in high school, at least, had been....and it was in high school, it wasn't until I got in high school. I remember some of those nuns, but they never did that much for me. High school was just full of excitement and what not for me.

INTERVIEWER: Were your classmates from the same kind of ethnic and religious backgrounds?

JEFFREY: Well, let's see. In high school, you're talking about?

INTERVIEWER: Or in public school?

JEFFREY: Well, as I say, we were sophomores. In Cherokee, we went to a parochial school. We had lots of friends but they were more neighborhood friends than school friends--I mean, the kids that played around, mostly boys. They were boys in the neighborhood. The school wasn't too far from the neighborhood. It was really in high school that I had school friends. I had two very good girlfriends, Francis Rowe and Evelyn Blakeman. Now, in Minnesota, there should have been a lot of Scandinavians. I don't really know what Francis' and Evelyn's....They ... both of their fathers were workers. One worked in a flour mill and the other was a truck driver. Then, there were others...Sue Benton, and so on. The boys--I mentioned Walter Goldberg, obviously Scandinavian. I think he was Norwegian. The Martins they must have been Irish. In high school, it was very much a mix between girls and boys and men and women, and young women. I think that perhaps, in part, it was because my brother and I did everything together, so that when we had kids at the house in the evenings, sometimes it would be his friends, sometimes it would be my friends, but we were all friends. The high school we went to was sort of, pretty much I'd say, it was a large high school, three thousand students, pretty much kind of a working class or office kinds of people, because we knew West High was where the nice homes were. Then there was another high school where there were nice homes. It didn't bother us, but lots and lots of Olsons, Bruce Olson, for example. I remember Olsons, Nelson, Swansons, and Svensons. Well, it's highly populated, you know!

INTERVIEWER: What about teachers? Were they from the same kind of ethnic and social economic background?

JEFFREY: Now, that I called those names, I have no idea what they were. We were totally unconscious of it. In Minneapolis, there were Scandinavians, Germans, lots of German Lutherans, and Irish. Now, Biggie Munn went to North High School. Now, what was Biggie? Oh, you'd get some Slovac. Biggie Munn, what was he? Ukrainian, Slovac, something like that. They lived more in North Minneapolis, Hungarians. The only time we saw the kids from the other high schools was at football games.

INTERVIEWER: Were you ever involved in other kinds of schools, such as settlement houses, classes or union or worker education or Y.W.C.A.?

JEFFREY: At what period?

INTERVIEWER: While you were going to school.

JEFFREY: Well, in high school it was all within the high school, and as I have indicated, I was very active. I was in everything. I worked on the newspaper, on the annual. I was very, very involved in extra-curricular activities in high school. The only thing

JEFFREY: outside of high school that I was in was the, it was then called the Girl Reserves.

INTERVIEWER: Was that Girl Scouts?

JEFFREY: No, Girl Reserves. That's Y.W. It was then called Girl Reserves. Later it became Team something or other...Team Y.W., in later years. I just barely nudged into that, or got slightly involved in it. It was at the university that I became really active in the Y.W.C.A., in the student movement.

INTERVIEWER: You mentioned before that that you did a lot of interracial with the Y.W.C.A.

JEFFREY: That was at the university.

INTERVIEWER: Can you describe what your activities with the Y.W.C.A. were?

JEFFREY: I don't know why, I think that it was because of the secretary, Lois Wilby, from Y freshman year, that I got into the Y. We did all kinds of things on international affairs, on economic problems, on interracial problems, as well as having a high visibility on the campus. In other words, we were spokespersons on all of these kinds of issues, as well as university issues. The interracial committee....I ended up being the president of Y.W. As I say, it was a very viable student organization at that time. I remember, for example, we had Duke Ellington. We would bring people in like that. We had Duke Ellington, and he played for us. We had a fund raiser. I remember we had an interracial baby, too. Out of our interracial committee we got an interracial baby. The Y was heavy, heavy on interracial stuff. I developed some very wonderful friendships with, what we then called Negro women. I remember Ruby, when we'd go to Lake Geneva. I'd generally room with a black woman; I can't think of her name now. She was ahead of me at the university. She was doing graduate work. It isn't coming to me. I was particularly good friends with...some of the other names aren't coming to me either. We brought in many speakers, like Ronald Neibuhr, like....and these names won't mean anything to you.

INTERVIEWER: No, I know Brian Neibuhr.

JEFFREY: Pacifists, including the Fellowship of Reconciliation.

INTERVIEWER: Can you give the names of others-- sometimes I don't know them-- who researchers would know?

JEFFREY: Well, one name is Kirby Page, who was a very famous clergyman back in those days. A pacifist, Paul Harris, who was a pacifist. Turncoat, I was just thinking of him the other day. He, at that time, was with the Fellowship of Reconciliation and he later returned and went to work for H.U.A.C. Then we had just heard from

JEFFREY: him. Ted Shultz, who was the Y.M.C.A. secretary. At that time, the Farmer Labor Party of Minnesota was developing. People like Floyd Olson, who later--I'm not sure of my years right now--became governor. I guess he became governor while I was in school or shortly after I was through with school. There was a great deal of ferment. The Y.W.C.A., at that time, also had an industrial program and every summer we recruited women to go to work in Chicago, generally in factories. I went one summer and worked six weeks in the Baby Ruth factory. The purpose of this was to get experience as what life in a factory was like. I've never eaten a Baby Ruth since. They were so dirty! As I say, we did industry, economic, international stuff. That was peace, interracial as well as campus issues, freedom of speech issues, from time to time. We worked very closely with Y.M.C.A., believe it or not, because of this wonderful secretary. He was a regional secretary, very liberal, just as Lois Wilby was very liberal. That's how I got to meet members of the Socialist Party. That's right, it was largely through the Y.W. At least it got started that way, as I recollect it. As I've indicated, each summer there was these ten days at Lake Geneva. Those were really...I still think...stunning conferences. Oh, we would get A. Philip Randolph for the campus, too. We'd have sessions with them. The Y.W.C.A. had offices and rooms in the Women's Center. Ah, that's interesting. Here, we're fighting like hell for Women's Centers today, and it just occurred to me. Oh, yes, we had at Minnesota...there was a Minnesota Union, but we also had a lovely Shetland Hall that was for women's activities. I never made that connection until this moment! Of course, there was a Dean of Women in those days, and she had her office there. I think....oh, I'm not sure where student government was. In 1932, we had a mock convention, Republican/Democratic/Socialist and I was the floor leader for the Socialist Party, for Norman Thomas. We really did a lot of things and that all sort of came out, partly out of the Y.W.

INTERVIEWER: What initially attracted you to the Y program.

JEFFREY: That's what I'm not sure. My guess is that Lois Wilby, who was the secretary, sort of invited me into some programs and I'm sure it was the content and the point of view. I'm sure that it was the kind of program that the Y was doing that interested me.

INTERVIEWER: When you got interested in the Socialist Party, what attracted you then?

JEFFREY: Oh, out of all of these experiences I had. Meanwhile, I had various jobs. I worked in Munsingware; I waited tables; I plucked chicken feathers; I worked in offices, wherever I could get a job. At this time, there was a lot of ferment, as I said, with the Farmer Labor Party and the Teamsters [Union] were beginning to organize. It was the in thing, I suspect, for

JEFFREY: radical students at that time. Labor was. At least in my view, Labor was where I wanted to be. I think that it was sort of an accumulation of these experiences working in the factory in Chicago. In some point in time, and this was really through my economic classes....we had a really wonderful professor, Professor Touto, from England. Alvin Hansen was one of my professors--a great teacher, very dry. He used to invite us over to his house; wonderful, he and Mrs. Hansen. I got started reading the Webbs, and I became fascinated with Sidney and Beatrice Webb's writing about the industrial revolution in England. I remember I got really absorbed and that came out of one of these classes I had with this economics professor whose name was Professor Touto. He was kind of a crazy guy. He got me on to reading the Webbs. Basically, I have to say that he sometimes said at Y.W. meetings, "I'm a dead statistic, but you made me what I am." I think that the Y.W. had a profound influence on me and that I was really sort of a Christian Socialist. I would say that's really how I sort of met with the revolution.

INTERVIEWER: Do you remember what you thought socialism meant at the time?

JEFFREY: Oh, of course! Ownership by the people, for the people. Oh, yes, I was reading Karl Marx and stuff. As time went on, I met some very good friends and we had some very good times together. Like Eddie Levinson, who was the editor of the Socialist Call. At that time, he was editor of the....oh, he didn't call it the Call....whatever the socialist paper was, edited in Chicago.

INTERVIEWER: There was a Socialist Call, but that was New York.

JEFFREY: Yes, that was New York and Charlie Ogen was the editor of that, before doing World War I. I'm not sure what it was called, but it was a weekly and it was a socialist paper. Eddie Levinson was the editor of it in Chicago. People like Paul Porter. Oh, I thought that I knew all the answers to all the world's questions, absolutely.

INTERVIEWER: What sort of things did you do in the socialist movement?

JEFFREY: Well, while I was still at Minnesota--going to school, working forty hours a week, and being active on campus--I didn't have a lot of time. We just did things such as picketing in support of the building trades, because that could get a picture in the newspaper of students who were picketing for the strikers. I'm not sure that they appreciated it. We went to rallies occasionally, meetings. I wasn't old enough to vote.

INTERVIEWER: Were there any unemployment demonstrations?

JEFFREY: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Did you ever participate in any of the anti-eviction movements?

JEFFREY: Not when it was....I have to think, now, when these things came about. While I was in Minnesota, it was mostly on campus activities, such as when we did this mock convention. Obviously, that took a long time to develop. We had meetings and then some picketing. Those were sporadic activities. It wasn't a sustained involvement in anything off the campus.

INTERVIEWER: How long did you stay involved with the socialist movement?

JEFFREY: Well, from Minnesota I was very lucky. I got a scholarship in the Department of Social Economy and Social Research at Bryn Mawr. At that time, that department was heavy in practicum. It was named a Carolla Worshoffer Department and that was because Carolla Worshoffer came from a very well-to-do family. Her mother was in that Frances Perkins, Eleanor Roosevelt, Rose Schneiderman, Micki Simkovitch, Jenny Chiles...all these women who were pushing for interstate union leagues. They were concerned about the woman worker and the conditions under which women had to work in the foundry shops and what not in the New York area. Worshoffer had been in this and her daughter also was very interested in it. She was killed in an automobile accident and so her mother set up this school at Bryn Mawr. This isn't the summer school. This was only the graduate department. It is now social work, but in those days, social economy, social research. It was heavy on labor. We did practicums, which were working with the hoisery workers, for example, in Philadelphia.

INTERVIEWER: Was that to help the women to organize?

JEFFREY: Organize...we were on the picket line. We did housing surveys. We would go in for two days a week to do a practicum and then we would stay a night for meetings. We also went to Socialist Party meetings and Communist Party meetings. We did everything. Necktie workers strikes, while we were going to school. I was there two years.

INTERVIEWER: Do you remember the dates?

JEFFREY: I was there 1933 and 1934. Of course, by that time, I had made a lot of friends, who were either in the Socialist Party or in the labor movement. One summer, I spent...I met people in the Department of....oh, that's when Steve Roushinbush...we got to know him. There was Christenson, who worked in Harrisburg. They were great, wonderful people.

One summer, I remember, we had fifty dollars for six or eight weeks and we were investigators. We went around all over the anthracite region and in Philadelphia locating where home work was being done illegally on this and that--felling coats (hand felling), putting bobby pins on cardboards, packing those things. Women and children would be doing it at home for practically no earnings. In South Philadelphia, it was the Italian families.

JEFFREY: Then all through the anthracite region, we would go in. Yes, that was what we did that summer. We were sleuths. We were trying to get the goods and find out where they go them and what manufacturer was exploiting these people. By now, it was illegal under N.R.A. to have this kind of home work. From there I went to....When I got out of school, there weren't any jobs. By this time, Amalgamated Clothing Workers was doing an organizing drive in cotton garments, because the Depression was an exodus of cotton garments from New York City. They'd set up these plants in mining towns largely because they could get the wives and daughters of the miners who were unemployed. I went to Allentown [Pennsylvania] and that area and got jobs in shirt factories. By that time, I knew a lot of the Amalgamated people, so I'd get a job and try to get the names of people inside organizing, and generally get fired pretty fast. Then I'd go on to the next shop and work a few weeks, and get fired. Out of all of that, we had...they called them the "Baby Strikes". We organized strikes, Amalgamated did, and I was just there to help the children on the picket line.

INTERVIEWER: Why did they call them the "Baby Strikes?"

JEFFREY: Because it was....I remember one of the strikes that we won in Allentown, the Klein Shirt Company. When the contract was settled, two-thirds of the employees were young women who were under age, under the age of sixteen and had to go back to school. That's why they were called "Baby Strikes." They were exploiting. It was child labor.

INTERVIEWER: So it was also along with the Depression that the laws against child labor begin to be enforced?

JEFFREY: Through the union, really.

INTERVIEWER: It's very interesting. I recently read a very interesting article in Time Unlimited in New York City which showed that shortly after the Depression, girls begin to stay in high school longer. It didn't so much represent a change in attitudes toward education of women but the fact that the labor laws were being enforced and there were jobs opening up in the clerical sectors and so it just made economic sense for girls to stay in school. That's interesting.

JEFFREY: Out of all that, I was asked to go to work for the [ACWA] Pennsylvania Joint Board of Shirt Workers. That was the most impressive title I ever had. I was the Educational Director for the Pennsylvania Joint Board of Shirt Workers, Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, headquartered in Pottsville. It covered the state. My boss was Dave Monas, who was the Joint Board manager. He was a great person, very, very tolerant, liberal and open, very excitable. He'd come from Russia before the Revolution... no...I'm not sure.

JEFFREY: He really was a fascinating person. He went back to Russia, as did other members of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers assist in the Revolution. They would assist in trying to get factories put together because they'd come from this industry, clothing industry. Really, these people had come from, although he was doing cotton garments then. I remember one of them, a Greenfield, who always talked about how they had to teach people how to learn to use toilets. In any event, they went back to Russia, Soviet Union, to assist in the Revolution. The Amalgamated had lots of socialist thinking or socialism beliefs, philosophies, and so many of the early leaders of the Amalgamated, as did other segments of the labor movement in those days.

When I speak about his tolerance, being then an active member of the Socialist Party, I decided, of course, we'd have to organize the party in Pottsville. We used to have the meetings at 112 South Center Street, which was the office of the Shirt Workers Union. Dave Monas never said a work to me about it, never. Most bosses wouldn't permit that sort of thing because we were trying to establish a union. I don't say I was right at all, or that it was even good sense. I'm just saying that was part of my zeal. So, we would organize the Socialist Party in Pottsville and get those miners to join. We would meet and duplicate materials and he would never say a word.

INTERVIEWER: Did you get miners into the Socialist Party?

JEFFREY: Yes. Of course, this was 1935, and still lots of unemployment. We also worked with the Bootleg Miners. Really a fascinating organization. I don't know whether anybody has ever really written them up.

INTERVIEWER: I think so. Tell me about it and I'll tell you if I've seen anything.

JEFFREY: What they did--in a sense, it was an early version, kind of a strip mining. What they did was go in from the side of a hill to get at the coal. Sometimes, it was closed down mines that they would go into. They had a complete system of transportation. They organized a transportation system. They had regular pick-ups by trucks of their coal that they had bootlegged, and delivered to New York City, principally to New York, some to Philadelphia.

INTERVIEWER: By bootleg you would mean that the mine owners were not operating the mine?

JEFFREY: No.

INTERVIEWER: The miners went in themselves?

JEFFREY: Right!

INTERVIEWER: And took out the coal and developed their own little system?

JEFFREY: They took out the coal. Right!

INTERVIEWER: I read about it in a book called Strike by Jeremy Brecher.

JEFFREY: I haven't read it.

INTERVIEWER: I remember thinking that it was very interesting.

JEFFREY: It was just fascinating.

INTERVIEWER: Could they eke out their own livelihoods from this?

JEFFREY: Oh, yes! They were sort of set up on a cooperative basis. They didn't use co-op principles, but it was cooperative in the sense that they protected each other from the state police. They pooled their resources to get this trucking system set up. They'd get arrested from time to time. They would raise money for bail, attorney fees. They used to meet in our office, too. It was a good cover. We wouldn't say it was the bootleg miners. They also had many meetings out in their...they met regularly. They had an organization in the mining villages themselves. We were, as education director, we did many things, but one of them was organizing as well as working with the established locals. It was very important for us to work with the miners and have good relations with the miners, because they were, even if they weren't employed, they were the going institution. The miners, local unions, and the churches. We would always go to those mining villages, even larger towns like Shamokin. What's that great big edifice, the church. It's the Catholic church. So many of them were of South European ancestry, and they built these great big huge churches. The church and the miners, they were the institutions, plus the coal owners who, of course, did not live in these mining towns. It was very important for us to have good relations with the miners because we needed their support. We needed their support in speaking to their wives and their daughters about joining the union and/or supporting the union. Without their help, we couldn't have done nearly as much organizing as we did.

We got out newsletters and bulletins. We had classes. We used to take three hundred people to Harrisburg to lobby for child labor legislation, minimum wage legislation. We used to take one hundred and fifty people for the May Day Parade in New York City. I remember one year we had little caps; I suppose they probably made them in the plants. I don't recall. And little capelets, sort of...short little capes. I remember one year we stayed at the Taft Hotel. These people were making like forty cents an hour, except the pressers and the cutters. The pressers would make seventy-five cents an hour in those days and the cutters would make one dollar and a half or two dollars an hour. They were "the cream of the crop." Many plants didn't have cutters

JEFFREY: because they were just sewing plants, sewing and pressing. We would then march in the May Day Parade in New York City. When the socialists won in Redding, we took scads of people to march in their victory parade. Shirt workers, cotton garment workers. Oh, we just had such fun!

What I absolutely don't recall is how the hell we managed it with no money. I was making twenty-five dollars a week without expenses. I remember Bessie Hillman used to come to work with us. Bessie Hillman was an absolutely super, super, super person. I had this old Plymouth that I'd bought from a bootleg miner who was serving time. It was an old Plymouth, called it "Bronco." It was my first car. I paid one hundred and fifty bucks for it. I remember one day when Bessie was there we went over to Hazelton. Hazelton was very hard to organize. Bessie would go door-to-door with me. The way you organize was to go around knocking on people's doors and selling the union individually to people. The glass of the right hand door of my window was broken. A friend who was helping organize had slammed the door too hard and the glass was shattered. So there was no glass. Hazelton is in the mountains and coming home from Hazelton back to Pottsville it was very, very cold. I had an old raincoat in the car and Bessie Hillman put that raincoat on, curled up in the back seat of the car. I was certain I was going to get that window paid for by 15 Union Square, but I didn't. I thought that Bessie had suffered from the cold she would say, "Sidney, when are you going to get that window fixed for Millie?" So when I say we paid for our own expenses, which was living and supporting a car, the gas and the repairs and everything. I made twenty-five bucks a week. We were so proud...well, not proud...so excited to be working for the union that we almost were willing to pay for the privilege. That was our attitude. It really was! We weren't very good in demanding higher wages for employees of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers.

INTERVIEWER: What kind of other activities did you get into in the Socialist Party?

JEFFREY: Well, from that point on, I really became totally absorbed in the labor movement. After Pottsville, we were in, my husband and I, were in Cheboygan for a year where we got out...Cheboygan, Wisconsin after that strike there in which two people had been killed. For about a year, not quite, about nine months. It was a dismal, dismal, dismal scene. We got out a weekly labor paper. We had to finance that labor paper out of the advertising. Cheboygan is next to Kohler. Kohler is a little suburb. You've heard of Kohler?

INTERVIEWER: Yes. Where there was a 30-year strike.

JEFFREY: Yes, we were there 1935, 1936. In any event, we got married and we went out there and we lived in a one room apartment. Oh, it was a dismal scene.

INTERVIEWER: Did you meet through the labor movement or through the socialist thing? Do you want to say how that fits into the story?

JEFFREY: Yes. I met Newman....the first time I met him--of course he doesn't remember it--was a picnic of the Necktie Workers in Philadelphia who were on strike. The next time I saw him was--I remember very well--was an educational conference at the Y.W.C.A. sponsored by the unions in Philadelphia. It was a weekend educational conference. Then, sort of a socialist groups had what was called Soviet House--it was a co-op. It was in Kensington, in Philadelphia. Alice Hansen was the industrial secretary of the Y.W.C.A. in the Kensington Y.W. and lived there with her husband, Wes. Various and sundry other people like Philip Van Gelder who was by that time, was secretary/treasurer of the Shipyard Workers. Franz Daniel, Zilla Hawes, Mike Harris....The president of the Shipyard Workers was right around the corner, John Green. This was a distinctive working-class neighborhood in Kensington. We lived in a row house, three stories high, so it was a big house. There was a wonderful doughnut factory across the street and a bar. Lovely working-class area bars. I never really lived there, but I used to go in for weekends from Bryn Mawr and later from my Shirt Workers jobs. At that time there was the W.P.A. workers education project. They got five bucks a week. No, that's when they worked for the Socialist Party. Paul Porter...all right... was the executive of the Socialist Party. That's right! He got five bucks a week. Then the biggie jobs were W.P.A. workers education. I don't remember what they paid. But people had some income. Of course, Alice got a salary because she worked for the Y.W.C.A. She's the one who's been at Cornell. One of our last monographs is Working Mothers in Nine Nations. Are you familiar with that?

INTERVIEWER: No!

JEFFREY: Well, it's a very interesting book if you're interested in what women in European . . .

INTERVIEWER: Is this Alice Hansen?

JEFFREY: Excuse me! Sorry, sorry...Alice Cook. It's Alice Hansen Cook.

INTERVIEWER: Okay, I know the title.

JEFFREY: Franz Daniel was around there. I saw Franz at the convention. He was a delegate from Missouri. He was a great guy. One year--I was still at Bryn Mawr--there was a taxicab strike. They had a general strike for a while in Philadelphia. Crazy, absolutely crazy! The hosiery workers were not far from there and the hosiery workers in those days were a very, very exciting union, and kind of socialist in their orientation in the top leadership. Well, I believe Emil Rieve, their president, was a socialist, an old-time socialist. Socialist in philosophy. As time went on, FDR sort of took all of those people and swept them up in

JEFFREY: the New Deal. That's really what happened. After Pennsylvania Shirt Workers, then we went to Cheboygan, Wisconsin.

INTERVIEWER: You didn't finish telling how you met him, besides getting married.

JEFFREY: Oh, yes, he was staying at this Soviet House. One thing led to another. After a while, we got married. In 1936, just before we went to Cheboygan.

INTERVIEWER: Was it ever an issue as to whether or not to get married? Was there companionate relationships within the socialist movement at the time or among your friends where people lived together and chose not to marry?

JEFFREY: Oh, yes. There was lots of that! Most people didn't get married for a while, at least. I think at one time, Wes and Alice were the only people that were married in Soviet House. It was a great time! I remember Phil Van Gelder ran for the Socialist Party ticket for Secretary of Internal Affairs in Pennsylvania. In my spare time, because I was doing all of these other things, we'd go around in a truck and he used to play Ravel's "Bolero." Phil loved that piece. We had that...well, we were going around in this truck. In those days, it was street corner speaking. You went around in a truck and you had a soap-box, as it was called. You would stop and you had this very inadequate p.a. system, and you'd play the music and, as I say, he loved "The Bolero." You'd put your box out there and you'd get up and speak and you'd distribute your literature. It's really a nice custom. Of course, we do it in Union Square to this day. We went around the neighborhoods. That had been done for years in this country. It certainly was a tradition and all sorts of people did it, on the Left, anyway.

INTERVIEWER: Did you ever move into this cooperative house?

JEFFREY: No. I didn't ever really live there. Newman edited a labor paper for a while. He would be living there so I would come back for weekends, if I didn't have any meetings. It's only ninety-nine miles, or something like that, for the weekend. Sometimes I was in Harrisburg, and before I had the car I would take the train. I'd go back Monday morning at six a.m. I remember how grim that was. I never actually lived at Soviet House. I remember one time my dear mother came to visit us. I wanted her to see this place where I was living. Everybody put in, and so on. It was run on a co-op basis. Alice was the house mother because she's a very well organized person and she was older than all of the rest of us. She kept things running. In any event, there was a bed for my mother, but there wasn't a bed for me so I slept on the third floor bathroom on a bath mat. My mother never quite got over that! I wanted her to see and meet all of my friends. They were great people!

INTERVIEWER: Did you ever consider not marrying out of some kind of a principle?

JEFFREY: No. When we went to Cheboygan, we decided that we'd better get married because we were going into this town, a very German town, and a very proper town. That's why we really got married. We had a great deal in common. We were both committed to the labor movement. As I say, it sort of shifted from the socialism to a commitment to the labor movement. Now, that was to be our lives.

INTERVIEWER: Did you ever have an ideological break with the socialist movement?

JEFFREY: Yes. I would say between 1936 and 1940 I ceased being a member of the party. I think that it was 1937 or 1938 when I quit.

INTERVIEWER: Do you remember why?

JEFFREY: However, come to think of it, when I registered in 1940, when I was pregnant and we went to live with Alice--this same Alice Cook, then Alice Hansen, anyway; Alice and Wesley Cook--I remember registering as a socialist. So I registered in 1940 as a socialist but I was no longer a member of the party. The reason I remember it is they all thought that I was so foolish because I would never get a job if I registered as a socialist. I still thought of myself as a socialist, but I had ceased paying any party dues. Part of it was the war. I think that was a large part of it.

INTERVIEWER: World War II?

JEFFREY: Yes. Of course, World War II. Maybe it was 1938 when I...in some point in there...I don't recall precisely. I considered the official break as when I ceased being a party member. Clearly, now that I think about it, in 1940 I still perceived myself as a socialist. I certainly didn't perceive myself as a Democrat. In the meantime, however, for example, in 1940...oh, anyway, from 1937, 1938, 1939, I organized in the South and in the Middle West. The last year of that, however, was that we had decided that we didn't want to live separately forever and that we should have children.

INTERVIEWER: When you were organizing in the Midwest, you were already married?

JEFFREY: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: And you were living separately?

JEFFREY: Oh, yes.

INTERVIEWER: What were you doing?

JEFFREY: Well, I went wherever I was sent. In 1937, I came back to work for the Amalgamated as a national organizer and was sent to New Albany to organize.

INTERVIEWER: New Albany?

JEFFREY: Indiana, which is right across the river from Louisville. That was 1937. I'd just got started on that organization and met some people in New Albany, like Frank Voight who was a molder. Then there was the big flood. Newman had come in temporarily to help and so we had moved out of the hotel into a transient apartment because of the water. It just kept raining, raining, raining. I kept saying to everybody...the Amalgamated had an office there. Emma Sauer. I have to tell you about Emma. Her name was Emma Sauer, literally. When you'd go into the Amalgamated you'd see all of these pictures of the early days and conventions, or international union executive board photographs. There would be small pieces of adhesive tape on the glass covering some faces. I remember saying to Emma, "Why's that adhesive tape there?" People she didn't like, she'd block them out. That was Emma! Nobody was ever any better named than Emma Sauer. She ran the office. In any event, we had the big flood. We were marooned for eight days in this apartment house. We finally got out. It was my first plane ride from Louisville to Chicago.

In any event, I went back one day to pick up some of our things and I'll never forget when I walked in the office, Emma said, "Well, I didn't think that Frank Rosenblum would get anybody here this soon." I didn't know what she was talking about. It was a Saturday afternoon. Well, it turned out Louisville Textile--this was early 1937, the end of February--T.W.O.C., Textile Workers Organizing Committee had just been organized by the C.I.O. I had just read about it in the men's clothing journal. It's a trade journal and in those days you always read it because that's how you found out about runaway companies and what was happening in the industry. The afternoon shift at Louisville Textile had started a "sit down." So I went out to the mill. I had a car, got inside the mill, found out who the leader was. There was a guy there from the Department of Labor and he took me to the leader, who was an eighteen year old. I can't think of his name at the moment. I knew that they would catch up to me soon, so I knew that I had to work very, very fast. We got a box to stand on, a soap-box and said, "We are the C.I.O." The hardest thing about...they wanted to know whether I represented John L. Lewis. I had this credential in my purse. It was an Amalgamated Clothing Workers [card] and it had a great big gold seal on it. The Amalgamated had been outside of the A.F.L. but it had reaffiliated at some point just before 1935. This letterhead said somewhere on it, "affiliated with the A.F.L."--American Federation of Labor. Because it said that, I had the damndest time persuading these people that I represented John L. Lewis. That's all they wanted to know. Here these precious moments were fleeting; I knew I'd be run out soon. We'd get the union, we'd get union membership cards, et cetera. We'd have a meeting with the people on the first shift and we'd have it the next day so we could get support from the other members, their fellow workers, and other unions.

JEFFREY: It probably didn't take us long, as long as I thought it was, or even my memory of it is. I finally persuaded them--yes, I'm a legitimate representative and that we would be back in touch. Then the word came that they were looking for me, that the police were coming, so that I had to get out of there fast because I was the only one in Louisville. The only one. I had to get out! I scaled a fence and was on the street free and clear. Found a printer. We didn't have membership cards for Textile Workers Organizing Committee. Sidney Hillman had just organized it. I laid out a membership card for the Textile Workers Organizing Committee, C.I.O. I made sure that I put John L. Lewis on there. Jack Kroll from Cincinatti promised to come for a hastily called meeting for the textile workers from the first shift. The next day, Sunday, Jack Kroll--who was the closest Amalgamated person I could get--came in. We had a meeting. To make a long story short, we got the people outside organized. We started sending food in, inside. By the end of three weeks the sit downers were forced out. By that time we had enough organization of the people on the other shifts that we had a union.

INTERVIEWER: The afternoon shift was forced out of the plant?

JEFFREY: It was only the afternoon shift that sat down. It was a spontaneous thing. In 1937, there were all sorts of things like this that happened. The sit downs in auto. There were tremendous headlines in papers all over this country. So, it was a very spontaneous thing. It was John L. Lewis that was the leader. That's who they thought of. He had great charisma, and instilled confidence and courage. We got a contract. It was the first. It was Local #2, of the Textile Workers Union. The first one was Amsterdam Rug, which Sidney Hillman had negotiated. This was the first, from the workers contract in that was called a Textile Workers Organizing Committee. There had been SWOC, Steel Workers Organizing Committee. That was the C.I.O. set this up, because the old Textile Workers Union had been so discredited. They'd lost the 1934 general strike in the South. It was just a very poor union. They'd walk out after they'd get people out on strike. There was no assistance and whatnot. TWOC was to be the organizing committee out of which would come an international union of textile workers--a new one!

INTERVIEWER: Can we just go back to Cheboygan for a little bit? From what you said before, you and Newman were there putting out a labor paper. What kind of events did you cover there?

JEFFREY: We were . . .

INTERVIEWER: Cheboygan, Wisconsin.

JEFFREY: Cheboygan, Wisconsin, yes.

INTERVIEWER: That's 1935.

JEFFREY: 1936.

INTERVIEWER: 1936?

JEFFREY: 1936. The Progressive Party was a very strong party in 1936. Here we had this little weak, weekly labor paper which had to support itself from its advertising. We used to talk about our competitor which was the Cheboygan Press. It was owned by Charles Broughton who was a Democratic National Committee member. Of course, we considered him the enemy because naturally that paper supported Kohler. The paper was a labor news. There were a number of unions--the traditional union, building trades, and I think probably mostly building trades. But they were well organized for building trades in Cheboygan. The Central Labor Body News, the City Council and whatever. When Eleanor Roosevelt was in Milwaukee, I interviewed her. We wrote up a story about Eleanor Roosevelt. Whatever we could think of that would be witty. We never had any experience that would not be of interest to our readers, because if the readers didn't read it, we couldn't sell any advertising.

INTERVIEWER: Were there strikes? Why did you pick Cheboygan for that paper?

JEFFREY: The reason was that Paul Porter had organized a few years earlier Konosha Labor News, which is still a very successful weekly labor paper. It's a community labor paper. When the Kohler Strike started in 1934, it was a bitter, bitter strike in which two people were killed. Maude MacCreary, who was an old time AFL-CIO woman in Wisconsin, I guess, had done some press work and went to Cheboygan and started in conjunction with the strike the Cheboygan Labor News. It was a counterpart to Kenosha Labor News, and Paul Porter had helped her get that set up. Paul was a very good writer and a very good business person. In those days, of course, Kenosha was a really thriving union town, very thriving. Paul was a very good friend of ours. Maude MacCreary became ill. Before she left that paper, however, she changed the name of it--after the strike was lost--from the Cheboygan Labor News to the Cheboygan Times. I think that further, when the name was changed, that's when the decision had been made that it had to be self-supporting. While the strike was on, the state AFL-CIO had helped subsidize it because it was a mechanism through which they could communicate with the strikers and supporters of the strike. In brief, what it was was a labor newspaper plus a community newspaper. The community news being written, hopefully, from the viewpoint of labor; that is, if you were reporting what was going on in the city council, or the county commission, these were the issues that were of concern, in our judgement, to the working-class people and the union people, and to the unions. We had labor press services, so we would use national stories that came from the Federated Press and other labor press services.

INTERVIEWER: What kind of circulation did you get?

JEFFREY: We had two kinds of circulation. One was individual subscription and the other was unions would purchase a block of subscriptions. That was another one of our jobs, subscriptions for all their members or at least x number of their members, their activity people.

INTERVIEWER: Okay, then in 1937 you go back to organize for the Amalgamated?

JEFFREY: Yes, because Cheboygan....I'd never been so long in a place that was death. There was a pall over that whole community. I don't mean it to sound that way. The big labor event wasn't Labor Day. It was the observance of the murder of these two people. You went to the graves and had a big meeting. It was a memorial to them, which was very appropriate, but it was a pall. There was just no way, at least in our view. It would take years to recover from that strike. There was nothing in that town. I, for one, didn't want to stay there, so we left. Then they did get another editor, but in a year or so that paper folded. It just wasn't economically viable at that time. Subsequently, the UAW went in. Over a period of eleven years, UAW got a union contract at Kohler.

INTERVIEWER: In 1937, you're organizing for the Textile Workers Organizing Committee. What are you doing after that?

JEFFREY: In 1937...let's see, we were there in 1936. Ah, 1937! In Indiana.

INTERVIEWER: In New Albany?

JEFFREY: No. We also did Oberman Pants all over Indiana. That didn't last long because every time we went in, we got run out. We even got La Follette Committee investigators to come in.

INTERVIEWER: How did you get run out?

JEFFREY: Washington, Indiana. You'd go in--they'd know immediately. I had a young woman, Odie, from South Bend's Wilson Shirt. She'd come right from the plant. Sometimes we'd get people like this. I remember going into the hotel in Washington. She took trash and put it all around our bags so that we would know when we came back to the room whether somebody had rifled our stuff. Sure enough, they had. In Washington this is just typical. They let the plant out. All the workers, plus the sheriff, plus I don't know how many other townspeople and yelled, "Get out of town." This would happen almost the minute that you got into a town. They somehow or other always knew. This Odie worked with me in several of these towns--Columbus, Seymour, New Bedford, and other ones, and it happened to us. That was very short lived. The Amalgamated wanted to organize under one plan. We had two investigators from the La Follette Committee with us at some point. Then they'd run them out, too. I mean, they'd just say,

JEFFREY: "Go! Go, or you're going to get into trouble." It wasn't as bad as Mississippi but almost so. Well, in part it was. Here they had all of the workers saying, "We don't want you." They let the plant out. I remember this was a big plant, three hundred people in Washington.

In Amalgamated, who was important were the managers or the board members. Rosenblum from Chicago, Kroll from Cincinatti, and of course, Petofsky. Jack Petofsky from the very early days had been, back in those baby strikes, Jack was the person who had been put in charge of Cotton Garments. The Amalgamated up until that time had never much fooled around with Cotton Garments. I guess whatever Cotton Garments there was in New York City that stayed, they could have organized, but there was such an exodus. They decided they had to have a national campaign. That was at a time when the Amalgamated was very broke. Around about this time--I'm not sure of the period right now--in the Depression at some point, they all slashed their salaries fifty percent. Amalgamated never had high salaries, but they cut fifty percent--Sidney Hellman and all their board members--because they said we have to organize. In other words, they didn't give up when they saw this happening to their industry.

INTERVIEWER: No, you and Newman are working together in Indiana? To organize? How successful was your organizing there?

JEFFREY: Well, after Textiles, after Louisville Textiles, I'm not sure of the chronology here. Oh, I know what I did! After we won the contract, I stayed around to get the local organized. Opened up an office, got a bookkeeping system set up, got some classes started. That was some time in 1937. Maybe we did Oberman in 1938. In 1939, I was sent to New Orleans. I was in New Orleans for over a year.

INTERVIEWER: What were you doing in New Orleans?

JEFFREY: I was the C.I.O. organizer for Textiles. I was sent there to hold Lone Cotton Mill. I arrived a week after the union had won a labor board election. Following the election, fifty-four people were fired, all the union leaders. My job was to keep them together. It was to organize Haskell Company, which was men's summer clothing. Godchaux's which also was summer clothing, and any other little old thing that the Amalgamated thought should be organized. You have to understand that when you work for the Amalgamated--headquartered at 15 Union Square, New York City--their perception of the United States was the New Yorker's map of the United States. Have you ever seen that map of the United States from the New Yorker's viewpoint? Well, here's the United States and here's New York. Now here's all of the rest of the United States.

So, you'd get these telegrams from Dorothy Bellanca, Jack Petofsky or somebody, or a telephone call, "Proceed to...." You'd get a

JEFFREY: message--go here, go there. We organizers. When I say "we," we were a good many of us. We were going to organize the South. We were all young people and we had our own sort of fellowship, sistership, both men and women. We were all kind of nutty.

For some reason I got sent to La Follette, Tennessee. A strike was already on there. You worked in the strike there for a while. That was in a mining area, too. A lot of the women were wives of guards and miners. The miners were really tough there. One day I received a telegram from Dorothy Bellanca: "Proceed to West Point, Mississippi." So I proceeded to West Point, Mississippi. Greenfield Shirt Company, a runaway from Lebanon, Pennsylvania. I helped organize it when I was educational director [at the ACWA Pennsylvania Joint Board]. So I proceeded to West Point, Mississippi, and registered in a hotel. I mean, you had to sometimes use your judgement, impose your judgement on the Amalgamated sitting in New York City. I knew that if I visited one worker's home, that worker was going to be fired. This was John Rankin's home town. John Rankin was a congress member who gave the...he was a supporter of Hitler in the early days.

It was the typical scheme of the South in those days. Beautiful plant, tax free, low water utility rates. You put the plant down there, and then you get all of these young women from the countryside and you violate the minimum wage. You'd pay them eight dollars a week. You get all this young labor.

INTERVIEWER: Were there any men in the plant?

JEFFREY: It would be cutters. Only men were cutters, some of them from the shipping department, but in shipping, not packing. Packing was generally women. Sewing, women; pressers, women. The only place there were men were cutters and in the shipping room. I tried to find a few friends, which was something you always did in organizing. Frequently you got bogged down in very small towns. You looked for a priest or clergyman. If the town was large enough, if there was a Y.W. you'd always go to the Y.W. because if there was an Industrial Department there....You looked for some liberal or some libertarian. In West Point, I didn't expect to find very much, but I found an Episcopalian minister and I found an attorney who belonged to the ACLU secretly. That's all! I had one name from the Amalgamated--that was the foreman of the plant. I met with him secretly and I got from him a list of all the workers and their addresses.

INTERVIEWER: Wasn't it unusual for a foreman to help organize?

JEFFREY: The reason he did this, giving me the list, was he never knew when he might have to go back to New York City and he could never get a job in New York City if the union blacklisted him in those days. New York was very well organized. I suppose it still is.

JEFFREY: Chicago...Chicago is so sad, because the clothing industry has just gone down so.

In any event, one night when I came back to the hotel....Oh, I have to tell you about the general store. If the wages went up, these young women were going to spend all of the new money in West Point. There was a general store there, just what your imagination would think of as a general store in the deep South. It had a great big dock where they brought the bales of cotton. That's where they were weighed and sold. I've never been back to West Point. I must go back and look at the store. Everything was big and scary to me at that time. Great big general store! That's where everybody came. It was the only store in town. There may have been a drugstore, but the general store had everything, whether it was china or light bulbs or farm equipment or whatever. That's typical of Plains, Georgia. They had a big general store, too! To this day. The owner--his name I do not recall--was also what you think of, in my imagination, as a plantation owner. He had lovely white hair, a youthful face and a goatee, white goatee, very much a gentleman. He let me go through my spiel about how if the wages going up to fourteen dollars a week, where would the girls spend their money? They would spend it in West Point, right there in his store, et cetera, et cetera. When I had finished he said, "Young lady, where do you come from?" Wanted to fall through the floor. Well, I tried to think very fast. I'd been in Alabama, I'd been in Georgia, but I knew that he had recognized my accent. There was just no way I could say that I was from Alabama or Georgia, so I said Kentucky. I had organized in Kentucky and I thought I might get away with it. I knew something about Kentucky. He said, "Young lady, do you know in the war between the states the eleventh district furnished more soldiers than any other district in the war between the states for the North?" Well, I was done, I was done anyway. He had given his answer.

In any event, that night I came into the hotel. I went up to the desk and I said, "Are there any messages?" As if there had been anyone foolish enough to send me a message. Here, just like that, there was four men who surrounded me. They had been following me every place I went in West Point. That's why I was right about not going to any worker's homes. In any event, I reported to New York, and I told them. I sent in the names of the workers. They could send them The Advance [ACWA paper]. It was absolutely absurd to think that we could organize there.

So they [ACWA National Office] sent me; they told me to proceed to Crystal Springs and from there to Meridian. In Crystal Springs, Mississippi, see, I left a chunk of my heart in Mississippi and then later I left a chunk of my heart there in the civil rights movement. In Crystal Springs, I was there all by myself; the vigilantes came after me with black whips. I was driving along the road and they'd stop the car and make me get out and they'd

JEFFREY: have these whips which they'd just--they didn't hit my body, just around my feet. "Get out! Don't ever come back to this place again."

INTERVIEWER: Did you ever really try to organize in Crystal Springs?

JEFFREY: Oh, I'd been in Crystal Springs. They knew! I don't know how they had the intelligence, but they did. Just like in the civil rights movement.

INTERVIEWER: How long were you there?

JEFFREY: Oh, in Crystal Springs? I had come in, I had come in. I wasn't even staying there. I had stayed some place else and come in in the morning, driven around the plant, had lunch. What you try to do is find a place, a lunch place near the plant where people may eat, the ones that make better money. That would include cutters. You always knew that for information around the plant, the cutters would know more than anybody else--where the orders were coming from, where the orders were being shipped. I don't know how really important it was, but we always had to case the plant--where the orders were coming from, et cetera. How large the orders were, what was work like, and so on. I didn't say who I was, I'd just get into the conversation. I do think that any southern town, any small town, but certainly in a southern town, they spot you very fast, very fast.

I remember I had decided that I'm not even sure that it's worth staying here. I was driving around a bit more and that's when they stopped me. In Meridian it was almost the same. They didn't use the whips. They just got sort of a posse and told me to move on. "Damn Yankee, get out, stay out!" Their sheriff would do this.

INTERVIEWER: So what year was that?

JEFFREY: 1938. Anyway, I know in 1939 I was sent to New Orleans where every single time you handed out literature you were thrown in jail. I was the only one there for the C.I.O. New Orleans has docks. They had terrible warfare going on there within the union. They'd use these big hooks and pull people's eyes out. It was also very left wing.

INTERVIEWER: In the textile workers?

JEFFREY: No, no. Maritime, longshore. There was both maritime and longshore workers there. They were C.I.O. The AFL was very strong in Louisiana, but they were very anti-C.I.O. You couldn't get any help out of the AFL. Richard Leske was governor, Massion was mayor. In the Amalgamated and C.I.O. we had National Surety if you were thrown in jail. That was a bonding company and you could get out. When you're in town and you don't know anybody,

JEFFREY: it's hard to get out of jail. This was a bonding company and you'd show them--you'd carry around some papers so you could get out. In New Orleans they wouldn't accept it. So I got others to hand out the literature because somebody had to get them out of jail and you had to find a property owner. It was the only way you could get them out of jail--to get a property owner. Then you'd have a trial and generally nothing happened; it was just harassment. This was just for handing out literature. That's how we all felt. A flat case.

INTERVIEWER: Were there other people in New Orleans working with you?

JEFFREY: Later on Nick Marsella from Indianapolis came down. He was a clothing worker. I was there for a year. Nick was in and out. He was sent there because I didn't know the clothing industry. When you're organizing cotton garments, anybody can bluff their way through that with cutters and whatnot. In clothing, when you're organizing you've got to be able to talk to a sleeve setter, a collar setter, because that's very skilled work. To persuade those people to join the union, they got to know it's somebody that knows their skill, their trade, so to speak. So Nick came down. He was a great Italian, and he got hooked on gambling. In gas stations, department stores, there were slot machines. Then in Jefferson Casino, a great big place; everybody used to go out there at night. After we'd get through visiting people and whatnot. Nick got hooked on gambling and they had to finally take him out of there. He'd never been away from home. He's such a sweet guy and we're still very good friends. He was spending his paycheck every week before it arrived. He was always in debt. It's very hard organizing because so many people drink too much, because there's only a certain amount of things you can do. So much of it is at night. You get up early. You write a mimeograph leaflet, hand it out. In the daytime, you'd try to cultivate friends, like I tried to work with the blacks in Louisville. I made some very good friends at Tulane University. There's only a certain amount. So there's always these periods of time and it's so frustrating because we have so few successes.

The only success in New Orleans was the laundry workers. The laundry workers, they wanted to organize; they wanted to be in the C.I.O. And you'd tell them there wasn't anything you could do. This was after there had been a yellow cab strike in which they put all the leaders and held them in jail incommunicado. That was when I took a lot of members. I had a lot of members signed up from the plants. I took all the files and left the city, because we had a little office, and I thought they'd probably raid the office and take all our files. New Orleans was a rough city. It was workers that wanted to organize for the laundry workers. I'll never know how we got by with this. Each week five hundred, six hundred [persons]--they were all black. Best officers, best secretaries, best treasurer. People wanted a union. Frank Roseblum--I had to get permission to sign

JEFFREY: them up in the Amalgamated from Rosenblum. He came down; he used to come down every once in a while. He gave permission. There was an understanding. We would tell them there wasn't anything; we could absolutely make them no promises. With the laundry workers, there's nothing much you can do to help them. That was one of the greatest experiences of my life. I'd be the only white person in that room, and nothing ever happened. In those days, the police went around with all their notches with all the niggers they had killed in their belts. That was the way it was in New Orleans. It was a very cruel, violent city. All I can tell you is that Franz Daniel was the only one in New Orleans during the war. But I left in 1939. I said to Amalgamated that I'm not going to stay there any longer. Newman and I want to be together.

INTERVIEWER: Did you and Newman live together then?

JEFFREY: No, no, not until we got to Baltimore. In 1943, Franz was there in New Orleans. Newman was southern director for the Amalgamated whose office was in Atlanta. He'd come down and see me in New Orleans. We'd stay up all night and have a great time, go to the morning call for coffee. The Navy was out in the Bay, and they had their laundry done in the city and these laundry worker--imagine that, from 1939 to 1943 they kept their organization together. I don't think that the Amalgamated had done much except say occasionally, "Don't strike!" Because of the pressure--war time and everything else--they didn't want a strike. Those workers got organized; they got their union. I don't know what it's like today, but for a good number of years it was a good union.

What I used to do was to go to Baton Rouge on Sundays. By this time there was several guys--mostly textile workers and clothing workers--who were....one of them subsequently lost his job. In any event, he did lose his job while we were there. We would go to Baton Rouge and visit Huey Long's grave.

INTERVIEWER: Were these black people?

JEFFREY: No, these were white people. In the Lane Cotton Mill there were some blacks. You'd get two or three dozen oysters, big oysters in New Orleans. Those we'd eat in the car, driving up to Baton Rouge. I hated Huey Long. When I went to New Orleans I wasn't there twenty-four hours when I learned that you never said anything against Huey Long. Huey Long had built bridges to get across the bayou and the rivers; he had done something with mortgages so people could buy homes, and he had made free textbooks available in all of the schools. Huey Long was for the workers, for the Cajuns, for the people. Huey Long was a God. His memory was held in deep reverence and they worshipped him. You just never said a word against Huey Long. I remember sitting up all night just waiting for him to die, so you can see how I felt about Huey Long, the dictator. But not the workers in

JEFFREY: Louisiana. They loved him, and for these reasons. The Kingfish.

INTERVIEWER: Can you talk a little bit about what kind of personal relationship you had with people while you were traveling on the road and organizing in those years?

JEFFREY: Well, by and large very good and deep friendships developed with various people. I suppose you could put them in different categories. One that was your fellow organizers who were going through the same kind of crap that you were. Oh, I loved it, but it was hard work and discouraging and frustrating. Every once in a while we would go to Monteagle, Tennessee. When I say "we," it could be different people. Two of my dearest friends were Franz and Zilla Hawes. We had known them for a good number of years. Franz--for several years he was C.I.O. director in South Carolina. He had sort of given his life to the South. He's an ordained clergyman from Union Theological Seminary in New York. And Zilla was from Massachusetts. He had a cabin that he built back on school property. We'd go there sometimes on the weekend when we could. When we were all together. The names of some of the other people escape me. Hilda Cobb--she was a big, stout woman, a great person. She ended up in Baltimore. I don't know what's happened to her. Mary Ann McHaffee organized with us on the eastern shore of Maryland. I still hear from her. So there was all those people. You didn't like everybody, of course. I mean, you didn't become personal friends. But it was a comradely relationship, I would say, with almost everybody. Then we'd have the level of the Petofskys and the Rosenblums and the Krolls; Dorothy Bellanca, Sam Levine, Charlie Weinstein in Philadelphia. These were all biggies in the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, or Emil Rieve in the Textile Workers, or George Baldanzi, or John Edelman. There was a certain esprit de corps, an elan. This was our life's dedication. We believed in the labor movement and we were treated very, very well, had beautiful relations. By and large, they were all very bright people, and very respectful of one's views. When Frank Rosenblum came to New Orleans, we would talk for hours late at night along the docks discussing everything under the sun. And Jack Kroll, who is a very different kind of person--very warm, humane--and Gladys Dickason who was the Research Director and whose special responsibility was cotton garments. You never knew when you'd have to get into some negotiations. So you had to keep up with rates and stuff like that. Or you knew you could Gladys and get it. J. B. S. Hardman, the editor of The Advance, who was an intellectual leader. Wonderful, wonderful Charlie Ervin who earlier was the editor of the Socialist Call. He had come from a very wealthy textile family in Philadelphia and turned into a socialist. Charlie was thirty or forty years older at least, than we were. He had helped to write the Mexican constitution of 1910. He was a wonderful storyteller and a writer -- not the world's greatest, but a writer. People like this and all kinds of other people. I'm talking about people in labor and the socialist movement.

JEFFREY: Then, of course, lots of people in the community that we were in, who we were very good friends with. I remember Tim Flannery from Minersville. He helped us so much that we said we'd take him to dinner and we'll take you to the Mecho Allen, which was the hotel in Pottsville. Have anything you want, anything. He was a young man. He ordered a huge platter of mashed potatoes. That's what he wanted. It was the big treat. Unbelievable, but that's what he wanted.

INTERVIEWER: A giant order of mashed potatoes?

JEFFREY: Yes, yes.

INTERVIEWER: What kind of marriage relationship did you have during those years you were traveling and working apart?

JEFFREY: Oh, very fine! Our problems came later. Sharon was born in Philadelphia. In Baltimore in 1939, we were organizing BVD. We lost an election by eleven votes.

INTERVIEWER: While you were on the road and living separately how did you work out?

JEFFREY: We just tried to see each other whenever we could. Well, that's why I say, I finally decided....In New Orleans, I very seldom saw Newman in that year--very occasionally.

INTERVIEWER: Did you ever think of it as a hardship that you were separated?

JEFFREY: I never thought of it as a hardship! It was just part of the life we had chosen to lead, to live.

INTERVIEWER: Did you see it as a sacrifice?

JEFFREY: No, I never saw anything as a sacrifice. That was a decision. Nobody imposed that! So I didn't think of that as a sacrifice. But, as I say, we decided, I just told the Amalgamated that I was going to quit. They said to come to Baltimore because Newman was in Baltimore; to come to Baltimore--big job there. So that's what I did.

INTERVIEWER: Big job?

JEFFREY: Organizing. We had BVD, which was an enormous plant there, and other plants. We lost--oh, it was a heartbreaker; oh, such a heartbreaker! In any event, I won't go into that. The first four months I was pregnant.

INTERVIEWER: Tell me about BVD.

JEFFREY: Oh, it was such a big plant and we'd worked so hard on it. And when you lose by eleven votes out of, there must have been nine

JEFFREY: hundred people, I think. This doesn't seem big in autos but in cotton garments that was huge. We made so many good friends. There were lots and lots of Polish people in that plant. The way you build a union, of course, is to find people that are going to join, then get them to be organizers inside the plant, and go around with you visiting other workers at night. We thought we had it. There were some eleven black pressers, as I recollect it. I remember we got Clarence Mitchell to help in the campaign and all sorts of things like that.

INTERVIEWER: Were the pressers the only blacks in the plant?

JEFFREY: Outside of some maintenance people, yes. Because Amalgamated was always an industrial union. Kaylon Pajamas we struck. For the first four months, it was the healthiest thing that could have possibly have happened to me. For the first four months that I was pregnant with Sharon in 1940, January, February, March, April--for five months; part of May--I was on a picket line every morning from six thirty to eight thirty. The only thing I can tell you is then we'd go over to the strike hall where we'd have coffee and doughnuts. We had jelly doughnuts. I have not eaten a jelly doughnut since then!

We lost that strike. Well, we got a settlement but an awful one. Kaylon Pajamas. Then, Newman went to work for Charlie Weinstein for Labor's Nonpartisan League in the 1940's election in August.

INTERVIEWER: Who is Charlie Weinstein?

JEFFREY: He was the Joint Board Manager of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers in Philadelphia. That was a huge organization at that time in South Philly. Those were where Italian women members of the Amalgamated had taken off their gold rings and sent them to Mussolini after Roosevelt made his "stab-in-the-back speech," as they called it.

INTERVIEWER: I don't understand. Why did they send their rings to Mussolini?

JEFFREY: They were loyal Italians. I only mentioned that because it was the 1940 election for Roosevelt there was such hostility towards Roosevelt. He had made this stab-in-the-back speech out at Stevenson College in Missouri. I suppose it was Roosevelt getting us ready to go into war. And he had attacked Mussolini. So it was called a "stab-in-the-back speech" by the Italians. Then, we went to live with our friends who had a place in Cheyney, outside of Philadelphia; an old farm house. So I left the Amalgamated, applied for unemployment compensation and did volunteer work.

Sharon was born early, November third. So I didn't get to vote because she came most unexpectedly. She wasn't supposed to be

JEFFREY: born until the end of November. I lost my vote because she was born on election day and I hadn't applied for an absentee ballot. I tore that hospital up, but there was no way I could get an absentee ballot. So that takes us up to 1940. Oh, you're still back on relations. In any event, we came to the end of the line, so to speak, on separate living if we were going to have a family.

INTERVIEWER: And then you both lived together?

JEFFREY: We lived in the Cook's house because we were very poor. Newman was getting forty bucks a week. It was lovely there. As I've indicated, the Cooks were very good friends of ours. Then after that, I got sort of a half-assed job in Washington for what preceded ADA, Union of Democratic Americans. That really didn't pan out. Newman got a job as Labor Director for the Office of Civilian Defense. Then I got a job in the War Production Board. We moved to Falls Church, a suburb of Washington.

INTERVIEWER: Okay, so now you're working for War Production Board in Washington?

JEFFREY: Yes. I was extraordinarily fortunate. I had a friend who in the NYA Program had trained young women to be domestics.

INTERVIEWER: What's NYA?

JEFFREY: National Youth Administration. In Shippensburg, Pennsylvania. In any event, she got me in touch with a young woman whose name was Julia. I can't think of her last name right now. Because I had a young child--I think Sharon was nine months when we moved to Washington--so I had to have, I thought, a live-in. So Julia came and she lived with us. That's how I was able to go to work. She was very good. She had been trained and she was very, very good. These days it really--you start looking for child care, it's very difficult. First of all, it's very expensive, and it wasn't then. Not that I made that much money, but between the two of us. Newman had a good job. Mine didn't pay very much because it was related to my past earning under Civil Service. My past earnings had been like forty bucks a week, so I think I got twenty-five hundred. That's all those damn Civil Service people would give me. I was so furious.

The Board was playing discrimination, because men would come in--they had a lot of labor people going to work for the War Production Board--men would come in and, of course, they came from some of the AFL unions. They had been making fairly good money. They would get what everybody else was getting. I always felt I was just plain discriminated against. There was another woman, Doris Tullar. Both of us really got shafted on salary. However, it was a job. I knew we wanted another child and it was the War. Newman was very restless. He volunteered and he

JEFFREY: was rejected. He wanted to go to work in an aircraft, in a UAW plant.

INTERVIEWER: Did he want to organize the UAW?

JEFFREY: Well, what people were doing then was going to work in auto plants. Brendon Sexton had come out and gone to work in the bomber plant. We had a lot of friends who were going to work in....Part of it was also that if you were in a plant, you were contributing to the war effort. That was part of it. By this time, everybody was very much caught up in the war effort. The war against Hitler. It was very serious. Part of it was to work--if you weren't in the army--was to work in a plant. It was also to get UAW membership. I wouldn't even say that was even a hidden agenda. It was clearly stated as part of the agenda.

INTERVIEWER: Why is it that you wanted to switch to UAW? Was it because you could do war work?

JEFFREY: Oh, by that time I'm sure everybody was caught up in the UAW. Roy Reuther lived with us in Falls Church. He worked for the War Production Board, too. We worked in the same office together, Roy and myself. I had gotten to know Walter. Victor I didn't know too well, but Walter quite well. Those were the days. The circle of friends included Jimmy Weschler who is now with the Post, and Jim Carey, all sorts of . . .

INTERVIEWER: Is this the Jim Carey who became the leader of the I.U.E.?

JEFFREY: Yes. They lived in Falls Church, too, he and his wife. We all had young kids. We did a lot of socializing.

INTERVIEWER: Were you also socialists?

JEFFREY: No, didn't do any of that. We did ADA. Well, while there was and ADA and Mrs. Roosevelt and people like that. So we were all very friendly with the ADA crew--Leon Keyserling, Mary Keyserling, Leon Henderson. There was OPA. There was lots of really exciting people in Washington at that time. Tony Smith who was with the C.I.O., other people in the C.I.O., too; some of their names don't come to mind quickly. We had a lot of friends in the labor movement. Wait a minute now. Yes, yes. Tom Amlie, UDA. Americans for Democratic Action wasn't organized in 1949. We left there at the end of 1943.

INTERVIEWER: So UDA was Union . . . ?

JEFFREY: No, it was Union for a Democratic America. It was a predecessor of ADA. In those days, the cleavage between the CP and the non-CPers; for example, in the C.I.O., in the headquarters was very sharp, it was very sharp. There were a lot of CP followers,

JEFFREY: at least; that was so....like Len De Caux, John Abt and so on. The antis--the Careys and the Jimmy Weschlers and the Tony Smiths, and people like that. Well, this was also at the time in the UAW where there were very sharp, as you know, political battles between George Addes and Walter Reuther, Frankenstein--not that Frankenstein was ever a CPer--or R. J. Thomas. But it was the political issue inside the UAW. I suppose we thought of ourselves as Reutherites. I remember attending a lot of meetings with Walter. He was a frequent speaker at meetings in Washington.

INTERVIEWER: What did you think of Walter at the time? Because a number of people that I've interviewed do get their first social/political ideas from listening to Walter Reuther speak. He kind of expressed this or crystalizes their visions for them. They found him compatible with a lot of feelings they had been developing over the years.

JEFFREY: Yes. Well, I expect for us it wasn't so. I mean, I love--I worked for Walter for many, many years and I love him and I think he was great. But I don't think he was.... aving gone through or been through the socialist movement. In the early days of C.I.O.--maybe it was just because of my age--he didn't open things up. I remember hearing Norman Thomas in the auditorium of the University of Minnesota and that was opening up, unfolding, terribly exciting. I didn't have those feelings about Walter when I first heard him speak. I just thought he was good. I like him. I was impressed with him. What I'm trying to say is that because of my age, I had been through some of this, whereas sombody who was younger, five, ten years younger....I always used to say this to Walter. As a matter of fact, he would say, "I don't want to speak in Detroit again," or "I don't want to speak here again." I always used to say, "Walter, there will be people in that audience who have never heard you speak." Of course, that was always true. Certainly in later years when people heard Walter speak for the first time, it was a tremendous experience.

If you want to be in the labor movement you ought to get into the UAW. At least that's the best union. I did not plan a career or plan ahead, as far as myself, I was concerned. My commitment was to the labor movement and to a socialist society.

INTERVIEWER: You started to talk about the War Production Board. Can you tell me about your work on the War Production Board?

JEFFREY: Yes, I must say I considered this an interim job, between babies. It was fun! I didn't get that excited about the job. Andy Biemiller was the director of the Labor Morale section. Sidney Hillman was the director of the War Production Board, and we worked under him in the labor hall of WPB. Franklin Roosevelt appointed Sidney way up there at the top and they were close associates in the war effort. There were panels in all of the major industries--for example, ship builders, airdraft, auto,

JEFFREY: steel, etcetera. Now, in each one of these, there would be industry people and labor people and they were supposed to be equals. To produce the implements, to produce raw material, the concept was that you had to have industry and have worker cooperation to build war material. If the President said the free world needed production, and by jimminey, management had to learn to get along with their workers. In our department--press and public relations--we did speech writing, planned and directed labor conferences. The idea was to give workers motivation so they should know that what they were working on was a significant, important part of the total war effort. I remember, for example, on December 7, the Pearl Harbor Day, we were at Harvard at a big WPB labor conference of five hundred labor people. They were all trade unionists. They'd come from unions in the war industries. There were speakers telling about what was going on in the war: production, transportation, and stuff. We had workshops: steward training, collective bargaining, too, in these workshops. Our job was to set these up. We'd go up ahead of time and get the local people involved in finding the leadership for the workshops. You'd always have for the big sessions some national speakers come in. That's sort of what we did around the country. I remember we had one in Chapel Hill at the University of North Carolina in the South. These were regional. Now, this was started before we were actually in the war. As I said, Pearl Harbor Day, we were in Boston. This was my sort of, so to speak, nine-to-five job. They didn't pay that much. It was a nice job to have between babies.

INTERVIEWER: Was it the only nine-to-five job you had?

JEFFREY: That was the only one I ever had. But I didn't feel guilty about it. It was very nice. You see, Bal was born May 3, 1943, and I worked up until three weeks before he was born.

INTERVIEWER: Bal?

JEFFREY: That's my son, Balfour. I became pregnant some time in 1942, so it was really the middle of the war. You talk about hardships and whatnot. Really, we didn't suffer at all. We had gas rationing. We had coupons for food and meat. But it certainly was a comfortable life, I would say, and very pleasant even though our country was at war and men were losing their lives. As I indicated, we had some great people around, so that our social life was totally delightful. We had lots of people over at the house on weekends and we had a victory garden. People would come and spend the weekend with us, or we would go to a friend's home. We didn't go out; there was gas rationing. We didn't go to the theater, and only a few meetings. It was a very nice interlude. It's something to speak about that period when we were in this gigantic world war. It wasn't that we weren't concerned about it: we were! But it wasn't a very exciting job. I met a lot of good friends, and as I say, Roy Reuther lived with us, and we became

JEFFREY: extraordinary good friends with Roy. He was wonderful, very youthful; he was a superb human being. He was not married at that time. He used to call Fania regularly. She was in Cleveland, the woman he subsequently married.

I remember the first time Sharon at age two years went to church to protest the death sentence of a black man in Virginia. I can't think of his name. I remember there was a big rally at the church. It'll come in a minute.

INTERVIEWER: You were talking about the causes you were involved in.

JEFFREY: Oh, yes. NAACP, civil rights, civil liberties. The lynchings were very bad in those days. We would go to meetings and do voluntary things. But not a great deal.

INTERVIEWER: What got you out of Washington?

JEFFREY: Newman got a job at Ford Motor in the aircraft plant.

INTERVIEWER: At Willow Run?

JEFFREY: No. At Rouge. They had an enormous aircraft plant in the Rouge plant. Eighty thousand people worked there then he got that job some time in 1943. He came out to Detroit and worked here for a while. Through some pull, some friends. We got a place to live in the Herman Gardens housing project. It was a new housing project and it was mainly war houses. In November Bal was already six months, and Sharon was two and a half. My mother had not seen Bal, so I took both youngsters home to Minneapolis and stayed there for a while. It was while I was there in Minneapolis that I got the letter from Victor Reuther offering me the position of director of the Women's Department for the UAW. I knew Victor very little. I was very excited. I could say I knew Walter very well, and I knew Roy, as I said, very, very well. He was an intimate friend. Victor offered me this job as director of the [UAW] Women's Department. In the letter he said, "and we will work out the child care arrangements so you won't have to worry about that." So I came to Detroit. Newman had gone on ahead. Our furniture had been moved. The house was all settled in this housing project. The housing project was filled with friends, like the Brendan Sextons, Clayton Fountains, McCuskas, the Tumon Union people, UAW people, as well as lots of southerners who'd come to work in the auto plants. Lots and lots and lots of southerners--all white.

INTERVIEWER: You mentioned that Brendan Sexton had come out to work in the UAW, too. What was his background before that?

JEFFREY: Well, it was very similar to our own. We'd come out of that period in which a lot of young people got excited with the Socialist Party or some party: Communist Party, Socialist

JEFFREY: Party, Socialist Party, some radical group. That is what led people into the labor movement. Or out of their own work experiences which, in my case, came out in a sense union-minded because of the places I had worked. As I said, in Minneapolis, the Teamsters early got started organizing long before CIO, so I was exposed to labor. Brendan had worked for the Steel Workers. In the early days, we were CIO. A lot of non-union people could get jobs. I mean, you didn't have to be a union member to go to work for the CIO. Anyway, we moved. Brendan was in....we knew Brendan in Philadelphia. I can't remember precisely when I first met Brendan. In any event, he had been on the staff of the Steel Workers in Philadelphia area and in Baltimore area.

INTERVIEWER: Okay! Now to go back to the house.

JEFFREY: Yes. He came to work in Willow Run. He became president, eventually, of UAW Local 50. In any event, I finally went down to see Victor. I took Newman with me as I wanted him in on the job interview. Because he had to agree to it. We talked to Victor and Victor laid out what the job was. So I started making a child care plan. Our little house in Herman Gardens was not large enough for anyone to live in, so that meant that I started trying out people who would have to come on the bus. I tried out several. They didn't get there on time. I just wasn't going to go through waiting every morning to see whether somebody was going to show up. There was a party at Victor's one night. I remember it was a Tuesday night. I said, "Victor, you've been so patient, but I think that you'd better look for somebody else." The next morning, a woman walked in who lived in Herman Gardens. I tried her out for two weeks and she did okay. So it was just a coincidence and good luck. Because of that circumstance, I went to work for the UAW.

INTERVIEWER: Were there any Lanham Act nurseries at that time that you could have . . . ?

JEFFREY: There may have been some in Detroit but not at Herman Gardens. There was a woman by the name of Caroline Burlingame who was the Director of Child Care in Wayne County, a war time agency that they'd set up. So Victor sent me....this was before I even tried out some of these women that I'd found in newspaper ads or perhaps I advertised. I went down to see Caroline and subsequently we became good friends. But the plan was foster care and I wasn't going to leave my children with a foster mother. Certainly not all week! The plan was that you'd put your children in foster care for five days. You'd deliver them Monday morning and pick them up Friday. I was outraged! I wasn't going to leave my children. I wasn't going to! That child care plan was totally unacceptable to me!

JEFFREY: All I can say is when I went to see Carolyn Burlingame, she did not suggest a nursery school. I remember it was foster care. I never explored nursery school. And Bal was very young, anyway, for nursery school because he was eight, nine months, that's all. In those days, we'd put Sharon in nursery school at the age of two and a half, because that was the way I was brought up--that nursery school was good for the intellectual, social and psychological development of the child. It really wasn't part of custodial care for Sharon because in Falls Church we had a live-in housekeeper, Julia. My reading, training, and whatever had been that nursery school was a very valuable experience for the young child. Certainly, I'm not opposed to nursery school care but I didn't see it as really a satisfactory arrangement because I also knew that we're going to have night meetings and weekend meetings and very irregular schedules.

INTERVIEWER: When you were offered the job as head of the Women's Department, did you have any ideas about what you'd like to do in that position?

JEFFREY: Yes. One of the first things I did was to study the politics of the UAW on equal pay, seniority lists, and other issues of concern to women. The policies of the UAW were always very good. Getting them implemented was another story. We worked on that. We worked on in-plant problems. We worked on out-of-plant problems. We had to work on at least two levels. One was at the leadership of the union and the second was with the women in the plant, because unless they became concerned and worked at it....

INTERVIEWER: You mean the UAW local leadership, too.

JEFFREY: Yes, right! So we went to lots of meetings. We had lots of conferences. One of the first things I organized was a national women's conference in 1944 at the Book Cadillac Hotel. We had blacks there, registered and served meals. We were supposed to have Mrs. Roosevelt and that's why I always held a grudge against Franklin, Jr.

INTERVIEWER: Why?

JEFFREY: Because he married Fay Emerson very suddenly, and that kept Mrs. Roosevelt from coming to our conference. I remember my favorite speech was "Sweep the dust under the rug." You know that line. If you're going to work, take care of your family, and come to union meetings, you have to forget about your old standards on household cleanliness and stuff. I hope I did it fairly well without antagonizing people. That was the whole part of the thing of getting women active.

INTERVIEWER: Do you remember the other parts of your pitch to women to encourage them to be active?

JEFFREY: Well, we always tried to deal with what their problem were in the local union or in the plant in which they were working. Sometimes that would include in-plant problems and grievances. What we were trying to do in that respect was to try to encourage, to inform and educate, and to encourage them to use the processes that were available. It was incredible during the war time. So many people, both men and women, who had never worked in a plant before. They came in such great numbers. They were totally unfamiliar with unionism, what resources were available within the union, within their contracts for remedying any problems they had. Actually, there wasn't even very much for many men, too. But we mostly concentrated on women. We also started, at that time, the union counseling program which was for both men and women. I spent a great deal of time on union counseling. We got that it established in a number of local unions. We had summer school training, institutes.

INTERVIEWER: What was the counseling program?

JEFFREY: It's now called community services. It grew and grew and grew. It's embedded now in the community services program of AFL-CIO. Union counselors were to deal with workers' problems outside of the plant. That included day care, transporation, credit, et cetera. We dealt with the problems. In the meantime, we were trying to do something about the cause of the problem--providing facilities, child care, for example. Wayne County Child Care Committee. My goodness, Victor had me on the executive committee of what's now called United Foundations. In any event, it was all of the big money people. I just got plummeted into so much! Inside the union and outside the union. What I'm trying to say is we tried to deal with the problems inside and outside. A large part of that--which I still believe in--is that if workers, consumers, women, aren't willing to deal with their own problems, wherever they are, they're never going to get very far, and they are really not going to have....they've got to learn to do it themselves.

INTERVIEWER: Sometimes, reading the archival records which are very sketchy, I get the impression a lot of the UAW's staff's activities and leadership's activities are directed a lot more towards the worker in the community so that, for example, in the case of women's problems, more effort might go into counseling and human services than would go into processing grievances or methods of processing grievances of women workers. Is that an accurate impression?

JEFFREY: No, I would say it was spotty. Wherever you could find women who would work inside the plant and inside the union, they became union leaders. We would encourage them to run for office. They would have a hell of a time and they probably wouldn't get elected or they probably wouldn't get on the slate. In those days, there were internal divisions. There was a Reuther slate and

JEFFREY: a Thomas slate in many of the plants or they had different names for them. We've encouraged women to politic, to get on whatever slate they could. R. J. Thomas was the president of the War Policy Division, under which the [UAW] Women's Department was. He was the director of that. Victor was the assistant director. There were differences between Victor and R. J. Thomas, but I was a Reutherite and got labeled as being a Reutherite early in the game because that's where my loyalties were. They were to Walter and, therefore, to Victor. There was always a fight going on--an internal political fight.

In any event, back to your question. There were hundreds of women who worked very hard inside the plant. We went to Anderson, Indiana, where there was this sixteen cents an hour differential between male and female rates for the same job. No matter how hard you tried you couldn't get those women to raise their voices about it because in Anderson, Indiana, working in Delco Remy was the best job in town. They were perfectly happy getting sixteen cents an hour less than a man. And I'm sure that the corporation threatened that if you get equal pay rates, then we'll put men on the job. You know those arguments they always used. But I spent a lot of time in those years in trying to get Anderson, Indiana women mad. That would be true in other plants, too. I did a lot of work in Toledo. They had excellent women in Toledo. We were active in Toledo. Local 12 was amalgamated so there were lots of smaller plants where it was easier. You take the Rouge plant. It was just so hard to women, although we had women who got their heads bloodied, figuratively speaking. I'm saying they had a hell of a time! It was really, really rough getting equal rights! On some things they sure did learn how to process grievances. They didn't often get elected committee women.

INTERVIEWER: Some women I've interviewed have been elected committee women.

JEFFREY: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: It's interesting that some of the women I interviewed got opportunities for leadership during the war that they never would have had at other times. When men were drafted women could finish their terms. It was somehow easier to get elected after they'd already held these posts.

INTERVIEWER: During the war.

JEFFREY: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Well, in locals like the Willow Run bomber plant--that's where Olga Madar comes from...Grace Blackett. She's got a different name now. Grace Blackett.

INTERVIEWER: What happened to her? Because I read an article about her being on the staff and then being laid off after the war--

JEFFREY: Grace?--right after the war. We all worked very closely together. One of the things we did was....The UAW men had gone to Camp Atterbury in Indiana. The workers from the plant would go and see the end product, which would help. Absenteeism was a great problem, great problem during the war, and goofing off was a great problem. Ford Motor at that time was on cost-plus contracts. They really didn't care that much whether production was good or not because it was cost-plus. Lots of other contracts were cost-plus. So the men went to Atterbury. So we all decided, that was Grace and Olga Madar, that the women would have a trip. The union had to approve it. They did. We had the idea and there was no problem. It was approved. We took one hundred and fifty women by train to Fort Knox. We rode in the tanks. And we crawled on the training fields. We also....the men had a group that went to England and to France. Well, we wanted to do the same. UAW didn't sponsor, but the C.I.O. did. We secured approval from the State Department and the Army. We only got four women and they only went to England, but we had four women come back--four British women come back. All it really was was saying we want equality. It seems like not such great ideas, but at the time, it was symbolically important that we have the same opportunity as the men in the union. In any event, that's when I first got to know Grace. She still is....I see her every once in a while...a fireball. She surely was then. She was an "agitator." Full of ideas. She still is a very creative person. Her father had been a founding member of the Packard local, Local 190. So she'd been brought up in a very strong union family. She got on the staff in UAW Region 4. I'm not sure just how Grace made that. We were always advocating more women on the staff, not very successfully. Anyway, Grace got on the staff. There was a board meeting right in Minneapolis shortly after the war ended. Grace, as I just said, was a fighter. She got into an argument with Jack Livingston, who was then a vice-president, and she slapped him. At this same board meeting Eddie Levenson had his attack. It was a brain tumor that resulted in his death. It slipped my memory, the sequence of events. But it was some time after that that Grace was laid off.

INTERVIEWER: Did she get back on the staff afterwards?

JEFFREY: She was still on the staff, I'm sure, at that Minneapolis board meeting. She was on the Region 4 staff, which meant that it was the regional director that had that decision, not Walter Reuther. Grace was pretty good at antagonizing people because she was threatening. She was laid off in the bomber plant. She never went back to the bomber plant, I'm sure, and she had seniority there. Of course, it went into Kaiser-Fraser then. What did she do next? She got married. She traveled with her husband. He was a musician. I used to hear from her at three o'clock in the morning and she'd want me to wire money to her.

INTERVIEWER: Does she work for the UAW today?

JEFFREY: No, she's a teacher. I can't remember the name of the community. She always has projects going--taking her students to the United Nations, and Washington. She's also on a state-wide organization to do with peace. She's also on the executive committee of the Oakland County Democratic Committee. She's a good teacher.

INTERVIEWER: But she left the UAW at some time after that?

JEFFREY: Well, she never came back. I'm sure she never asked for her job back, or never exercised her seniority at the plant. Local 50 became Local 142 when there was a merger with Kaiser/Fraser. 142 had been the Fraser end of that merger. I could be wrong, but sometimes you lose touch, at least for a period of time. I'm quite certain that she never exercised her seniority. She could have....

INTERVIEWER: That's interesting, because the clippings that I've read portrayed her as some kind of firebrand who lead a revolt of women, and then she disappears from the history and never....

JEFFREY: Yes, she was a firebrand. She was really great. But as I say, she did create hostilities from the men. That wasn't hard to do.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. We'll come back to talking about the [UAW] Women's Department. You were talking about the counseling and community service programs that you got involved in as director of the women's department.

JEFFREY: Yes. Union counseling really became a project of the [UAW] War Policy Division. I got involved in it. It wasn't strictly a woman's thing.

INTERVIEWER: Why did the union get involved in this, because from what I understand, management--at least in the larger plants--was required to have some kind of counseling programs for Union workers under the contracts.

JEFFREY: Yes. We didn't think that that was worth a shit! Josephine Gomon did that in the Rouge plant and Josephine was a famous person here. No, excuse me--the Bomber Plant.

INTERVIEWER: Willow Run?

JEFFREY: Yes. For the most part, these were crappy programs. They never reached the women. Never did.

INTERVIEWER: Sounded like a lot of it centered around counseling, around clothes and instructions were about women not wearing bright colors or tight fitting clothes.

JEFFREY: Well, you've read that famous case of the woman in the red slacks.

INTERVIEWER: I've never read about that!

JEFFREY: The Ford Motor Umpire case. Well, there was lots of controversy about slacks, lots of controversy about what women were doing to the morals of the men and that sort of thing. I must say, it was very hard to get women to come to union meetings or conferences or whatnot, because they were working long hours. Many times they had many miles to travel. People lived twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, sixty, seventy, eighty miles from where they worked because housing was very difficult to get near a big plant. Of course, through the Lanham Act we did have quite a little child care, but not out at the Willow Run Plant. In the city here, yes.

INTERVIEWER: Did women use the child care? Some of the things that I read indicated that women workers weren't that interested. I mean, they didn't use the facilities even though they expressed an interest in them.

JEFFREY: Well, I think that both statements are true. Some factory workers used them and many did not because the arrangement, which is still prevalent today, and which to some extent was easier then, but not necessarily, because if you came up here from the South, you didn't have any relatives. Of course, many women, they didn't have relatives or the extended family was more ordinary than it is today. You know, grandma living at home, or an older sibling, or a relative, in the relative's home. Of course, quite a few churches had set up day care centers. We had in Detroit at least twelve or thirteen centers that were financed by United Community Services. They were voluntary, non-profit. I am sure that fewer women workers used day care centers than some other arrangement, casual, or--you had latch key children then too--than they did formal child care programs. Part of that was, even if there was a great extension of these, they were still totally inadequate to meet the needs of people. I don't think that there's any question that a rather small percentage of the working women used them, but they did use them.

INTERVIEWER: Did you continue to fight for child care through the years? Could you tell us a bit about that?

JEFFREY: Well, yes and no! I have to explain that when I left the [UAW] Women's Department, I sort of totally left it because first of all, it was a principle with me. I shouldn't be around. But secondly, I had learned, at least, that Caroline Davis perceived me as a threat, and I just sort of didn't do any women's things.

INTERVIEWER: What do you mean, it was a principle with you?

JEFFREY: Well, I think that if you leave a job, you shouldn't be hovering around and somebody else takes that position. If you leave, you leave! I left because I took a leave of absence to stay home with my kids for a while. It turned out it didn't last very long. There was another reason for it. Newman was getting a job on the international union staff and at that time, it was an absolute rule, that two persons from the same family could not be on the payroll. So, I was just going to resign. It was Jack Conway who said, "Millie, don't resign; take a leave of absence." That was another lucky thing. Jack was then an administrative assistant to Walter [Reuther] and he said, "Don't resign; just take a leave of absence, 'cause I think maybe this is going to change." And then....there was also a C.I.O. rule. Oh, that was a hard, hard C.I.O. rule!

INTERVIEWER: Was it ever a personal question between you and Newman whether you should resign?

JEFFREY: No, I had been working for the International and he had worked in the plant. He got a job with Michigan AFL-CIO. I simply felt it was just fair that he have this opportunity since I had enjoyed it. As I say, I never planned anything. I wasn't that upset about it. I don't remember having any great travail about it. I think this goes back to my early days. I had just assumed that I would always work. But when I made that decision, I don't remember having any great unhappiness about it.

INTERVIEWER: But it wasn't even something that you questioned whether you should resign?

JEFFREY: Today, I would question it, I'm sure. We would have had many long discussions, which probably we should have, but we didn't. I just--I just really felt....

INTERVIEWER: I was just curious.

JEFFREY: Oh, it was a good question, good question. But anyway, going back to your child care thing. After the war--oh, I was still around, yes. We fought very hard in the city of Detroit and some other places to keep the Lanham Act nurseries. We had big demonstrations; big--lots of people at Board of Education meetings. The Board of Education in Detroit and some other places took the Lanham Act day care, child care centers over. We had some that were twenty-four hours--night care, too. Somewhere women could leave their children, as they can in China, for the whole week, young children. The Board of Education operated them for two years. The steam was going out of the demand from the consumer standpoint. They were also becoming very costly. There weren't federal monies. So then the Welfare Department took them over. The usage just went down, down, down. They had started to go down when the Board of Education took them over in the second year, then the Welfare Department. I'll never forget the day when I found out that it was costing $24.75 per child per week.

JEFFREY: The Welfare Department was saying we can't afford it. Here are all the figures on the usage. I don't recall now how many years Welfare Department operated them. Some of them were closed down because of the drop in usage. In most, I'm sure, three years and they were gone. All we were left with were the centers supported by United Community Services.

A few years ago, just a few years ago--well, when Sandy Levin was in the [Michigan] State Senate; this was '76; he ran for Governor in '70 so maybe around '69--I remember at a Democratic Women's Conference I was talking to Sandy about child care. He said, "Well, I need some help in writing a bill. I remember calling Dorothy Haener in the [UAW] Women's Department to get some help on this. They didn't have much material for state legislation. There had been a tremendous movement here for child care. But it....I think it was because the usage went down. Now, in more recent years, for example, in auto plants and with Title VII, more women and more women are going to work. There has been, at least in this city and all over the country, a great increase since we don't have public or voluntary day care centers, there's been a great increase in proprietary [child care centers.] As a matter of fact, one figure I read recently of only one million plus slots. I hate that word, but that's what they use. I always use "spaces." But in government publications, they say "slots" that we have for children under six. Half of them are proprietary, which really bothers me a great deal. That's why I hope that we pass the Mondale Bill or something like that, that public monies will not be used to subsidize proprietary centers because we....for one thing, you've seen what's happened in nursing homes when they're operated by profit makers.

Mildred Jeffrey Interview--Part II

INTERVIEWER: This is the second part of an interview with Mildred Jeffrey. What I wanted to do was ask you about what you thought of the factionalism in the UAW at the time you went through it.

JEFFREY: My antecedents and my associations in the UAW resulted in my being very much a part of the Reuther caucus. That's where I was. That's what I was active in. So I have to make it clear that I was a Reuther partisan. Now, I was a Reuther partisan, from my viewpoint, because I thought Walter was good for the UAW. He was progressive; he was creative; he was dynamic. He was a strong leader. He stood for all the kinds of things that I thought I believed in. I was devoted and in my mind, this was based on integrity and commitment. It's kind of hard to recall those days. It was certainly very intense and we worked very hard. Walter always said the best politics is to do a good job. So we worked very hard in whatever programs we were assigned to. My job at that time was women. So, as I've said earlier, I did union counseling, helped get the first C.I.O. summer school

JEFFREY: in Hastings, Michigan. The men worked very hard with Victor and Joe Kowalski in getting the FDR/CIO Camp, which I'm sure many thought was a device to persuade UAW members to the Reuther viewpoint. In a sense, I think that was true, but it was based on doing a job. In this instance, for setting up an educational, a summer educational program. There's no question that the leadership of that school, which included Joe Kowalski who was the educational director for Michigan C.I.O., was very Reuther oriented as far as the internal politics of the UAW was concerned. We would do what we could to help in local union elections, of delegates to conventions particularly in 1946, 1947.

INTERVIEWER: What kinds of things did you do to help out in securing the delegates?

JEFFREY: Well, we'd do little things like raising money for the caucus slates, helping distribute the caucus slates. Generally the Reuther slate, in those days, was the Blue Slate, which meant it was on white paper and blue ink. Not always, but in many locals that was the colors for the Reuther slate. I suppose most of all it was getting to know people, encouraging them, sometimes meeting with them, in a sense, helping identify persons who were potential, encouraging them to become active in the local and active in the Reuther caucus. We would meet them in whatever activities we were involved in. The guys who were on the staff as international reps servicing local unions, of course, had much greater opportunity to do that. We sort of came in from the sides. In situations where it was comfortable to talk with people. Let me make it clear we did this to all in the belief that we were doing--and I still think that's true--that what Reuther stood for was progress for the UAW and would strengthen the union and the role of the union in the community and the nation.

INTERVIEWER: How did you perceive the role of the communists in the union at the time?

JEFFREY: We perceived the role of the communists as being double-dealers, unscrupulous, not committed to principle. I remember in the 1946 Convention, Walter had very few Negro delegates supporting him. The Negroes, as we said then, were largely for R. J. Thomas and George Addes as being the two top officers.

INTERVIEWER: Why was that?

JEFFREY: When you say that the CP [Communist Party], of course, the number of persons who were members of the CP were very limited. But they were very active and they had been--as was the party position--very active in civil rights. I think their program was successful at that particular time, 1946, in attracting, persuading, getting the loyalty of a good number of Negroes in the UAW. In big locals like Local 600 where there were then a lot of

JEFFREY: blacks, where, let's say, the "opposition" was strong. I remember thinking, saying, "Thank God the commies are raising civil rights issues," because it created a tension and a competition which was very good for the Reuther caucus, in the whole area of civil rights.

INTERVIEWER: During the war, I've read about reference to implement the executive orders which said the Negroes had to be hired in the war plants, and I've also heard about the union picketing, particularly at Ford to get them to hire black workers. I was wondering if the communists had any particular role in this in pushing the union to take action on this? Do you know anything about it?

JEFFREY: One way of responding to that questions would be to point out that George Crockett was on R. J. Thomas' staff in the [UAW] War Policy Division. That's where I first got to know George. When I came to work for the War Policy Division, I'm sure George was on the staff, but I'm foggy about it. When Walter became President, there was a separation. George left the UAW. I'm not sure whether he was fired or not. It seems to me he was. George Crockett was certainly labeled. I'm not saying that George was a member of the CP group, but he was in, let us say, the Thomas Addes alignment. As you know, now he's now a Recorder's Court judge, and a very good friend of mine, as is his wife. I supported him when he ran for City Council, even though UAW didn't. I got in a lot of trouble, too.

INTERVIEWER: For not supporting him?

JEFFREY: For supporting him.

INTERVIEWER: You did?

JEFFREY: I did.

INTERVIEWER: Well, what role do you think Crockett played?

JEFFREY: Well, my point is that you had somebody who was a very able person like George Crockett and there were a number of others whose names don't come quickly to my mind, who were in the Thomas Addes group and who gave a lot of leadership and militancy in the struggle for equal rights. One of the blacks at the 1946 convention, that was Bill Kennedy was with Walter. Another was Jimmy Watts from Local 600. He is now the director of the Department of Environmental Maintenance in the city of Detroit. There was a man by the name of Mr. Kennedy, I can't think of his first name. He was also with Walter in Local 735, as I recollect. You could almost count the blacks on one hand. Also, in the centers like Cleveland....I'll have to look up my records, but my recollection is there would be blacks from Cleveland. The director there was Paul Miley who was also with the Thomas Addes grouping.

JEFFREY: I thought so at the time, but I certainly do now, that those... I think the thrust that came from those who were in the CP and infiltrated in the internal fight had many positive things. One of them was the sharpening of the focusing on the issue of civil rights, equal opportunity, whatever you want to call it. It was at that 1946 Convention the Fair Practices and Anti-discrimination Department was created as a per capita unit. This was an indication of the UAW's commitment to fair practices. Sort of a testament. Education is a per capita department. Recreation is a per capita department.

INTERVIEWER: What does per capita mean?

JEFFREY: Per capita means that there is written into the [UAW] constitution a fixed amount--like one cent, two cents--of each member's dues that goes per month to education and recreation from the very beginning of the union. In 1946, the Fair Practices Department was added. It is, in a sense, a delicate thing. We want to be sure that these departments are funded because we think this program or that program was so essential to the union. Have you ever read the UAW Constitution?

INTERVIEWER: No.

JEFFREY: Oh, you should read the preamble written in the 1935 days. It's a beautiful statement. It is a beautiful statement of commitment to education, organization, among other things, as well as the saving of all mankind and all womankind.

INTERVIEWER: You mentioned that the communists in the union were seen as double-dealing. Where did that come from?

JEFFREY: Well, this of course goes back to my own political background. An example of this is June 22, 1941. That was the day that Hitler invaded Russia. Up until that time, the Daily Worker, the Party--the CP--had been against a no-strike pledge. When Hitler invaded Russia, overnight, on the same day, they totally switched their position and they were for a no-strike pledge. Now, that's an illustration of their subservience to the U.S.S.R. A basic question was, "to what, to whom is their loyalty?" Now it appeared clearly their loyalty was to the [Communist] Party and Russia rather than to the union or the labor movement.

INTERVIEWER: Well, what about the way they functioned on day-to-day trade union issues? Did you hear that much talk about that or were you able to observe what kind of role the Party members played on those kinds of issues?

JEFFREY: The problem is there were so few that were identified as "Party members." I say that because there were a lot of fellow travelers. You take somebody like Paul Silver. Paul was always opposition. Or Doug Fraser was opposition, oh, into the early 1950's. He

JEFFREY: ran against Gus Scholle for Michigan C.I.O. President. These were militant kinds of persons, to the left of center. They weren't members of the Communist Party and nobody thought, nobody said they were. At a local union level, when you got to the election of delegates, it really wasn't whether it was CP or not; it was whether they were for R. J. Thomas or for Walter Reuther. I am certain that for many, many, many delegates, the question of CP never entered into consideration. It wasn't a real part of decision-making, because the locals are scattered all over the country. The CP didn't have any leadership in many, many of those locals. Many people would not agree with this, but I think if anybody went over the role, the list of delegates for [19]46 and [19]47. I wasn't at the 1945 and 1944 UAW Conventions. I've once read the proceedings. I think it was a question of who was going to provide the best leadership for the union. A lot of it was internal politics. In centers like Detroit....no, I'm sure that charges were always made that R. J. was influenced by the CP. Nobody ever said that R. J. Thomas was a communist. They wouldn't even say that George Addes was a communist; rather that they were subservient to or influenced by....this goes back to this point I made a couple of minutes ago. The basic question was, where's your loyalty. Is your first commitment to the UAW and to the labor movement, or do you have another loyalty that becomes more compelling or supersedes your union decision-making.

INTERVIEWER: Well, I was mainly interested in your impressions of the period.

JEFFREY: They were very exciting. We also, had our little fights or small power contests. After I was put on the staff then the education department put on Elizabeth Hawes who authored Fashion is Spinach.

INTERVIEWER: I'm just reading two of her books.

JEFFREY: The education department was controlled by R. J. Thomas. R. J. appointed the education director who was Jack Zeller who was then and still is one of the nicest human beings you could find anywhere. Jack looks as if he's thirty-nine. He is very, very active in the Retirees Movement. He's President of the Local 7 Retiree Chapter. That's the local he comes from. Jack was easily influenced, let us say.

INTERVIEWER: Well, what was the significance of Elizabeth Hawes' appointment?

JEFFREY: Well, that was part of the competition. It went on in blacks. It was going on in women. We never tried to compete with Elizabeth Hawes.

INTERVIEWER: Can you tell me a little bit about her?

JEFFREY: My last vivid memory of her....she didn't stay around too long. My last memory of her is in 1948 when Henry Wallace was running on the Progressive Party ticket and there was a big rally at

JEFFREY: Olympia, where we used to have big rallies--holds seventeen thousand people. I can see Elizabeth Hawes on the platform. She did not dress like auto workers. I mean, that was one thing that would distinguish her, I would say. If I saw her now or saw some pictures, I don't know what I would think. She looked kind of raunchy. That's my recollection.

We organized many women's conferences to encourage women to participate in the union and to develop leadership. I remember one time I was very criticized by some men because they said, "The trouble with Millie is that she doesn't wear lipstick." That was very good for me, because it made me very sensitive that I must--if I'm going to go out and do things with UAW women--I must as much as possible look like them so that isn't a diversionary thing that will sidetrack what we're trying to do. I remember particularly going to Toledo for a region 2B conference. There were a lot of women in Toledo. I'd get a new hat, gloves, and I'd get a new purse so that I looked very proper. The basis of that was to be really respectful of those women, because when they came to a conference, it was a big thing. They were out of the plant. They would dress up and they would put their best clothes on. So I wouldn't be respectful of them if I didn't do the same sort of thing and try to look my very best. I really felt there was a value there that I must look at. In any event, back to Elizabeth. What did they call her? They didn't call her Elizabeth. In any event, she wrote articles and they sent her around to speak. History will have to be the judge, but my feeling, at the time, is that she did not make a great impression or did not significantly add to the strength of the Thomas/Addes faction.

INTERVIEWER: Was she a communist at this time?

JEFFREY: I don't know! I haven't any idea.

INTERVIEWER: Was she genuinely interested in working people and working-class women?

JEFFREY: I don't know. This may have sounded to her like a very exciting, fascinating thing to do.

INTERVIEWER: Well, in her books, the ones I've just read--Why Women Cry or Wenches with Wrenches, which is a description of working in an aircraft factory; it sounded like an aircraft factory she was describing, like it might have been Willow Run. The other one, Hurry Up, Please, It's Time.

JEFFREY: I haven't read that.

INTERVIEWER: Incorporated into the books is a discussion of how socialism would provide a more rational economy, and child care would benefit both men and women. So, I was curious.

JEFFREY: For some reason, I always think of Elizabeth Hawes as a Betty Friedan kind of person. There's no rationality, particularly. I really didn't know her that well. Our paths didn't cross that often. She wasn't here very long.

INTERVIEWER: Last time we were talking, we were talking about the program of the [UAW] Women's Department during the war. You mentioned the counseling was a really important thing. You also talked about the struggle for child care and your work on different community committees. What were some of the other main activities of the Women's Department?

JEFFREY: Well, as I suggested earlier, a principle one was what happened to women in the plants. That, I would say, we probably were not terribly successful. The UAW and its constitution, the UAW and all its policies. Going back to those periods were beautiful. I mean, there was no question from a policy standpoint we were for equal rights for women. The implementation of that left much to be desired. Also, I think during that war period, it was just so hard to get your hands on anything. The best we could do, as I said earlier, was to work with the women, to try to get them activized and militant, very demanding in their own local unions, and as they did that to be supportive of them. Basically, that still has to be done--to be supportive of them with local union officers, regional directors, and the international. In the UAW, regional directors are very powerful. You don't go into a region without the permission or upon the request of the regional director. In those days, the region I got into the most trouble with was Region 2B, which was Dick Gosser's.

INTERVIEWER: Which region, which area is that?

JEFFREY: That's Toledo in northern Ohio. Gosser was a founder of the UAW and a very strong Reuther supporter. He became a [UAW] vice-president, and also participated in some questionable practices. He served a term in prison, later on, many years later. He was a very strong Reuther supporter. There was no question that he was a very able person. He was a leader in the Toledo area; was thought of as Mr. God. He worked in the community with education, with management on health, child care, labor-management problems. I remember his complaining to Walter that Millie had jumped over the fence. But he never stopped me. We had some of our best regional conferences and some of our most active women in his region. That was the heart of it.

The blow, the disaster, was when the war was over and they started the cutbacks in the plants. That was the disaster. They just hassled the women out! Local unions did not protect women.

INTERVIEWER: What was the way they hassled women out?

JEFFREY: They'd hassle women out by putting them on the broom, as it was called.

INTERVIEWER: Janitorial work?

JEFFREY: Janitorial. They'd hassle them by putting them on night shift or afternoon shift, midnight shift, or just putting them on one job after another. Say, do this, and then in the same day, move them to two or three different jobs, giving them very hard jobs instead of being decent about it and saying, you haven't done this job before and you can have a break-in period. It's also true that a lot of women wanted to leave; a lot of it was voluntary because their husbands or husbands-to-be were coming back from the service. They had saved war bonds that they'd put away to buy a home or if they had a home, to buy a refrigerator or bedroom suites. That was the sad thing about the 1945-1946 strike at General Motors. We saw all those war bonds going out the window in the 142-day strike. That's really what happened, because there was no strike relief and they used up their savings.

INTERVIEWER: Did women play a particular role in the 1945-1946 strike?

JEFFREY: Where--I'm thinking of Flint.

INTERVIEWER: Well, maybe you could tell me what happened in Flint.

JEFFREY: The women played an important part. The auxiliaries did not do nearly as much, I believe--and these are my observations--as they had in the 1939 strike or in an earlier period or in the sit-downs.

JEFFREY: Why do you think that was?

INTERVIEWER: As far as the auxiliaries are concerned? Well, Catherine Gelles would be much better to ask. I think in part it was that auxiliaries become "troublesome" to local union officers. When the wives are active, they, in the view of some union officers "become involved in union politics." They didn't like that!

INTERVIEWER: Is this part of the factionalism?

JEFFREY: I don't think so. I think this is just the men considered them trouble. UAW's auxiliaries are fairly weak today.

INTERVIEWER: I didn't mean to interrupt, but you were explaining how the wives became troublesome, the auxiliaries become troublesome to the local union officers.

JEFFREY: In <u>their</u> view. What was described sometimes by some local union guys as a petty politics between the women, and among the women, or their taking sides in a local union election. Most of it, I think, is they just didn't want to see the women around. They just didn't want to see women active. They didn't want their wives active. Part of it is they find out what's going on in the local, or the usual bit--the guy who says, "I can't come home

JEFFREY: tonight because I have a union meeting," and then the wives find out there wasn't a union meeting at all. He was out drinking with the guys--that sort of thing. Maybe it was also that the auxiliaries didn't find a program beyond the traditional service. That they did not find an on-going role. During the strike, during an emergency, providing food, for example, is a very important and exciting with high recognition. This you can do in a crisis. To sustain an organization during peace time, so to speak, during regular activities is hard. This is probably true not only in the UAW but in all auxiliaries. To find something to develop, devise a program that is meaningful and will sustain the interest of spouses, of wives, is hard. What I spent most of my time in the 1945-1946 strike was (a) in union counseling and strike relief and (b) the Committee to Aid the Families of GM Strikers. There was no strike relief at that time. It was a very long strike, and it went over the Christmas holiday period. We, through our union counseling, we set up in each local a welfare operation. Welfare Committee was traditional, but counseling was expanding the welfare concept. Welfare meant you got people on welfare only. You didn't really deal with all their other problems. So, union counseling became an assistance committee within the strike structure.

The Citizens' Committee raised many thousands of dollars, which were then distributed to the strikers to assist their families. That was administered through a citizen's committee. The grants were sometimes to individuals and to locals. They had prescribed uses to which these monies could be put--medical problem, if they were about to lose their house, or some other emergency needs that could not be met through their regular welfare check of any other public or private assistance. During a strike, children are born, people die, there are fires, auto accidents, all sorts of things in the course of human events happen. Especially when it goes on for so long and there are so many people involved. We had big fund raising events. We had Helen Gahagan Douglas and Melvyn, her husband, and Frederic March, Adam Clayton Powell, people like that. Interestingly enough, when we did the same thing in 1970 for the GM strike, it just didn't take at all. I didn't think it would and it didn't.

INTERVIEWER: Why did you think it wouldn't take?

JEFFREY: Because in 1945, we were poor; we were emerging--we were not perceived as powerful. In 1970, the UAW was perceived as being powerful and wealthy.

INTERVIEWER: By strikers?

JEFFREY: No, by citizens. All these monies came from supporters of the union--liberals, people who had money to give. In 1970, it just didn't take at all. We raised some money, but not a great deal. In 1945, 1946, it was....I don't know if there's anything in the archives on that or not, but that was a tremendous effort and

JEFFREY: extraordinarily helpful, very significant in that strike. In a sense, not only the money, but it was also an expression of moral support to the strikers. 1945-1946, that was a big, major test in the union. It was the first time GM did not open its plants and try to get strike breakers to come in. We also had, with Walter, a Citizens' Committee to review, to assess the merits of the UAW demands. That was over the issue of the eighteen-and-a-half cents per hour. Our strike went on for a penny more for quite a long time. People questioned Walter's judgement in that, but be that as it may. The strike was won, not with a great victory as far as money was concerned. But I think that the most important thing was that GM would never again question the fact that there was a UAW and that it was going to be in their plants forever and that there would be a national agreement. It changed their tune on everything. It was a milestone.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. I read bits and pieces which indicate that the women's auxiliaries were involved in consumer boycotts and demonstrations after the war and in efforts to maintain price controls on food.

JEFFREY: They were.

INTERVIEWER: What was your impression of those activities?

JEFFREY: There was a great deal of activitiy after the war on maintaining price control. We had a tremendous rally during working hours. The one and only time there was a rally during daytime working hours at Cadillac Square, now called Kennedy Square. I remember Walter sent me out to Local 174 to persuade Ed Coty to tell the people to leave their jobs. The point was, they had to walk off their jobs to participate in this rally and it caused a lot of problems. In any event, there were 75,000 or 100,000. There were all sorts of activities demanding that price controls be maintained, that rent controls be maintained. Some of them were big and organized by the UAW; some were local union; some auxiliary; some spontaneous rallies all over the country. It wasn't only the UAW; there were many others that demonstrated, too.

INTERVIEWER: I remember reading about it as a particular activity of the auxiliaries after the war.

JEFFREY: It did. We did. We did. The other thing, of course, was the co-op grocery stores.

INTERVIEWER: I haven't heard about that.

JEFFREY: They're not co-ops. What happened was--recently there's a Working Man's store Number One. Now there's Working Man's store Number Two which the Ford local set up. After the war when price controls were gone and prices started shooting up, local unions such as Local 400, which was Ford local in Highland Park with Kenny Bannon as its President -- they purchased canned goods

JEFFREY: and staples and packaged goods and sold this merchandise wholesale. Put them in their local unions, if they had a basement someplace and opened up, so to speak, stores--union stores--in an effort to meet the inflationary costs of food. This is the sort of thing that catches on. One local does it -- it came from local unions; it wasn't a program of the international--then another local union does it, and another local and so on. It's not surprising, the operation of those local union stores became rather difficult. It was out of that experience to a large extent, a number of co-ops, grocery stores were opened in Detroit. There was a large one on East Warren, another, the Fordson Co-op on the west side on West Warren. At Herman Gardens where we lived, we had a little struggling co-op. I remember I was on the board. We'd always been co-operators wherever we lived. Everywhere we'd been, if there was one, we'd been members of co-ops. But I left this co-op because the board refused to recognize the union and pay the manager union wages.

This--let me put it this way--this reflects a period in the UAW in which the union, the international and local unions, leadership at whatever level was, had many dreams of the union extending its services to people in all their needs--in food, in shelter, in culture. The union sponsored grocery stores, built co-ops, owned a bookstore. We had two FM radio stations, one in Detroit and one in Cleveland. When I think of this period, it was the exciting one. The union was reaching out, trying to find ways in which, through the union as an institution, it could enhance the lives of its members. It was a little bit later that Community Health Association came along and that grew out of the UAW Diagnostic Clinic, which had been established in 1946. My point is that union was--it was, after the war, it was flowering. Now, the unhappy thing was that the bookstore did not do well. The Fm radio stations, which were non-profit but were costly to the union, did not do well financially. Along the way, decisions were made, one by one to close these down. I recall Walter saying, "God damn it! When we engage in collective bargaining there's nobody better than the UAW because we know our business. We're good at that business, but when it comes to operating a grocery store or a bookstore, we don't know which end is up."

INTERVIEWER: Well, why do you think . . . ?

JEFFREY: Go ahead!

INTERVIEWER: Why do you think they failed? Or did they not become financially successful?

JEFFREY: I think that there were different reasons probably. If you take the co-op grocery store. I will give you my own personal experience. By 1947, we moved out of Herman Gardens. Earlier

JEFFREY: the Herman Gardens co-op failed. One of the reasons that it failed was it wasn't a good set-up. It was in a basement in Herman Gardens and had very limited merchandise to offer. The produce counter was abysmal. We got into a fight for the salary for the manager of the store. Some of us were for union wages for the manager, and other members of the board saying, "But we can't afford that!" I mention that because that was an ongoing problem in co-ops and still is. It was a conflict between union people and cooperators. There was also this Fordson Co-op where I would shop, but it was a small co-op. So on Saturday I would put the two children in the car and I would drive to the big co-op on East Warren, which was miles and miles and miles from where we lived. But it was a principle. We must shop at the co-op; we must support the co-op. On Saturday--I think the kids were two and five. By the time you got them into the car and drove to the store on Warren, did your shopping, got back home, put the groceries away, it was two-thirds of the day. I recall it was Saturday. I said to myself, "I have done my duty by the co-ops long enough. I am going to start shopping at my nearest supermarket." That's what I did. I cite that because I'm not sure that my experience was unique. I think that travel time was a real handicap, a barrier -- convenience of shopping. Number two is the co-ops of today have an almost impossible job of competing from a price standpoint--I won't mention quality, but certainly price standpoint--with supermarkets. Perhaps it was more difficult today, but it was difficult then. In other words, if you're going to build a mass membership, a mass purchasing, with most people it's going to be what kind of service you get, what kinds of prices--am I going to get good buys? Unless those are continuing and substantial, you're not going to get that mass purchasing, you're not going to get the loyalty of those buyers. That loyalty is essential. So I think that's one of the reasons that the co-ops went under, not only in Detroit but in other places where they started out.

The bookstore, heavens knows! Some would say it was the management of the bookstore. Some would say any bookstore, even in those days, had a difficult role surviving economically and I think that's true. Thirdly, it simply may have been that again, as far as union members were concerned, that there wasn't either the interest or loyalty in going to the bookstore. I say interest in number of books that members would purchase. There was a great effort at that time to encourage local unions to build a library in their locals, either by getting books on a regular basis from public libraries, or by purchasing books and setting aside some space in a local union as a library. Local 174 still has a lovely room which is called the Walter Reuther Library. That was Walter's home local. We were also beginning to get into the period of paperbacks. What significance that that had, I'm not

JEFFREY: sure. In any event, the bookstore went under.

Both FM radio station...the one in Cleveland should never have been opened, but in any event, it was and it never did well at all. The radio stations were nonprofit. For FM, they were ahead of their time. Nonprofit meant that they were supposed to be self-supporting. Self support came from selling advertising. The Detroit station, I think, was an excellent station in terms of its program. Mel Ravitz was our news director. Later he was the President of [Detroit] Common Council. Our greatest achievement was securing Guy Nunn as a commentator on WDET. We had programs like Dissent Week. We taped local union meetings. I lugged the eighty-pound recorder into many local union meetings or conferences until my back ached. We did high school baseball, football games--put them on live. We did all sorts of things that really made it a labor/community-based station, hopefully responsive to all those needs that weren't being dealt with as far as commercial radio was concerned. We started a program with the Detroit Public Library Symphony at eight p.m. which is still going at WDET. We had a great intellectual audience, but it was costing the union money. So I suppose what one really has to get at here is at the decision of the union on the basis of values and philosophy versus dollars. As far as the radio station was concerned, it was also who, what members from the UAW were listening to it. This was before the Congress had passed the legislation requiring that all radios have an FM band as well as AM. So that when the....

INTERVIEWER: All radios have an FM band?

JEFFREY: Yes, Congress passed.

INTERVIEWER: I thought that you could just buy some just AM radios.

JEFFREY: Well, maybe these transistor things you can. I guess so, but whatever radio is defined as, have had. And so it may be under nineteen dollars or something like that. There was some kind of figure like that. I'm not sure of the dollar figure, but whatever the definition was.

INTERVIEWER: When was this legislation?

JEFFREY: Oh, in the 1950's sometime. So the hard questions that would be asked was who, what is the union really doing as far as reaching its own members? Because obviously that was their goal. We were putting a lot of....we had a license, of course, from FCC, so we had to have a balanced program. We didn't have to meet all the requirements of public service, necessity and convenience and equal time, and all of that sort of stuff, which we did. We promoted it so hard at local unions, at Labor Day parades, at picnics, all sorts of things. However, there were a number of union members that either got an FM--you could get an FM adapter

JEFFREY: then, which we also promoted--or when they purchased a new radio. At that time, too, I think when there was a new purchase in the home, it was for a TV set rather than for a new radio. Radios last forever. I think that accurately, one should say, that the real--that underlying all of this was the fact that we had ventured into a new field. We thought-- the union thought that it would be a means of communicating to its own membership as well as communicating to the general public, within the rules and regulations of FCC. That we were not successful in that respect, and that it was costing a lot of money. So the decision was made to close down WDET and it was given to Wayne State University and Wayne is still operating it.

INTERVIEWER: There were a couple of points that you mentioned that I wanted to ask you more about. You mentioned briefly that it was difficult to implement union policy within the locals in regard to women.

JEFFREY: And minorities.

INTERVIEWER: And minorities. I was wondering if you could talk more about the kinds of resistance that you met. And in retrospect, if you think that you could have done it differently or if you would do it differently.

JEFFREY: In retrospect, I think that I should have committed harikari when it came to the lay-offs. I just think we should have been much more dramatic about it. I don't know anything except something like that that would have really commanded the union's attention, including Walter's.

INTERVIEWER: Mass picketing of women or something like that?

JEFFREY: Yes, but we couldn't get mass picketing. I mean, we tried to have demonstrations of women. That was kind of depressing because here we had worked so hard trying to develop leadership, but when it came to this period, it wasn't there. There weren't enough women. I can still see some of those women, like Trudy Riopelle at Local 600. We were trying to stimulate mass meetings of the women from the local, and having little demonstrations, picket lines and whatnot. Nothing happened.

INTERVIEWER: It's interesting. In the Archives, I've come across grievances of women who were laid off and not recalled according to seniority. Now, I haven't been able to--from the archival material--trace it to find out what happens, but it really looks as though the grievances were not processed.

JEFFREY: Yes, it happened, I think, in hundreds of cases. Grievances simply weren't processed. There were all sorts of excuses in the conversion period--that many of them were on "war work" and now it was a different job, different product, etc. Or, "we can't hire women for second shift." Oh, another dodge that was used

JEFFREY: over and over and over again was weight lifting.

INTERVIEWER: This would be under the protective legislation?

JEFFREY: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: In many states, protective legislation prevents women from working second shift, night shift?

JEFFREY: Michigan, Indiana, Illinois--there were a good number of states that had protective legislation. The protective legislation was used over, over and over again as an excuse for not calling women back.

INTERVIEWER: Okay, and then you mentioned the weight lifting.

JEFFREY: The weight lifting. A number of states have weight lifting, either legislation or regulations. For example, in Michigan it's thirty-five pounds that was used. In some states--this was absolutely absurd. There are, going back to the early days when protective legislation was being enacted, that there should be a stool for x number of women workers--one for every whatever it was, fifty or one hundred or twenty or whatever it was. Now that, I say, was absurd because nobody, no plant or no retail store never had observed that particular regulation or legislation. But that would be used. "There's no place for the women to sit." In other words, they grabbed at anything they could to deny the opportunity for recall. Now at the same time, of course, there was a great deal of hostility among men and the general public. The letterboxes were full of letters saying, "women should go back home," or "women are nothing but troublemakers," or wives that would write, "My husband was fucking around with...." All of that that women in the plant created family trouble. There was terrific hostility. The war was over. Women were needed for the war effort to support our men and produce the war material when they were fighting for our country. That was over. The time had come for women to go back to their homes and take care of their families and their children. That was the prevailing mood and attitude. I think that this also had its impact on women in discouraging them. It was attitude setting; it was the environment--it created a lot of pressures on women not to pursue their grievances. It's what's called anti-feminist social conditioning.

INTERVIEWER: Yet on the other hand, I've also read a lot of stuff in the union's literature against the Equal Rights Amendment at the time.

JEFFREY: At that time, the UAW was opposed to the Equal Rights Amendment.

INTERVIEWER: Right! That with the lay-offs expected after the war and the fact that according to the surveys most women working planned to continue working, that they would have to go back into the

INTERVIEWER: lower paid, more exploited sectors of the community like clerical and service--particularly in the service industries: laundries, restaurants, and so on. Protective legislation was considered extremely important to protect women in these industries. So it seems to me that there was some kind of dual understanding. On the one hand, women were being encouraged to drop back into the home, to leave the labor force. On the other hand, most of them, or a large majority of them, did not want to and would continue to work in one form or another.

JEFFREY: That may have been in the subconscious. It was not in the conscious. In the conscious, it was the support of the traditional position of labor and all of the kinds of organizations that had worked so hard to secure this legislation. The National Consumer League was organized not to be a consumer organization primarily but rather to say that as consumers, we should insist that the products that you buy are made by persons who are receiving minimum wages, who are not being exploited, who are working in a safe environment. That's what the Consumer's League was all about. To unions such as the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, the ILG, a minimum wage is their floor and it was absolutely crucial to them in their view. Minimum wage meant very little to the UAW because women were generally receiving more than the minimum wage even if they weren't getting the same rate as men for the same job. So part of the UAW's continuing--at that time--opposition to the Equal Rights Amendment, was in sisterhood and brotherhood with unions such as the Amalgamated, the ILG, the Textile Workers Hotel and Restaurant, et cetera, who were very, very firm against the Equal Rights Amendment for the economic reasons and for their very real protections of women who comprised most of their membership. I recall saying, "We must--we've just got to do something to get legislation." Helen Gahagan Douglas worked very hard on legislation in the Congress designed to deal with the whole question of equal rights, but not to the point of removing the protection, protective legislation. This was why Myra Wolfgang, until the AFL-CIO changed his position. You've heard of Myra.

INTERVIEWER: Yes.

JEFFREY: Myra was dead set against the Equal Rights Amendment. It was for for....in her view--and a lot of people wouldn't agree with me when I say this--but Myra's oppositon was based on her experience and her concerns for waitresses -- waiters and waitresses! Because we have, for example....at that time, we had minimum wages for women in Michigan and a lot of other places, but not for men. She had a floor to bargain from when there was this kind of protective legislation. That's why Myra was opposed to the Equal Rights Amendment. There were many women in the labor movement who, until--what year was it that AFL-CIO took its positon? About three years ago?--who, in my view, had sound reasons for opposing it within the perspective, within the conditions of their industry, for opposing Equal Rights Amendment, as they had to live with their conditions on a day-to-day basis.

JEFFREY: Now when the AFL-CIO changed--which came from pressures in American newspaper guilds, women and some others with the AFL--then Myra changed like that! At least as far as her public statements were concerned. I think that in her heart, she never really changed. What I'm trying to say was that those were the overwhelming concerns and they became the compelling ones to this day. Right!

Minimum wage is all they can get in many a shop. I say it's a union contract. It has a union label, but it's a poverty contract. And that isn't the way I used to say it, but it's true!--minimum wage. Now, minimum wage--the federal laws--of course applies to both sexes. Now hopefully, of course, we're past that period. What we did was shift from, for example....the big push in Michigan and some other states--I'm not sure how many--but we had a fifty-four hour week for the women. You could not work more than fifty-four hours. Oh, which, of course, was another thing they used. It was another one of those protective legislation things, because men were working sixty hours, or whatnot sometimes. The point is, what we had to do was to say--and I wasn't in the [UAW] Women's Department when I say "we,"--the union. But it had to be done, that is, debate. You can't say you're against protective legislation. You have to say that this kind of legislation should be needed for all workers. You can have a two hundred-pound woman who is strong. You can have a hundred fifteen-pound man. Now, that man maybe shouldn't be lifting weights over thirty-five pounds or whatever, or shouldn't have to work, let's say. So legislation should be based on workers' needs and workers' protections, not based on sex. In Michigan, we've been working. We don't have it...forty hour limitation, forty-eight hours for men and women. You had to do things--positive things. You just can't say forget about it! Because the removal of that protective legislation has hurt a lot of women. There's no question about it. It's hurt a lot of women.

INTERVIEWER: To come back to talk some more about the grievances these masses of women being laid off. Were particular grievances ever taken to the [UAW] Women's Department?

JEFFREY: When they were taken to the Women's Department, then we would take them to the regional director, then the regional director would take them to the local union. Sometimes we could get involved in the local union, if the local would, if the women in the local would insist, then they would have to go through.. ..today, there's a very strict protocol on it. In those days, the protocol wasn't so strict. Nevertheless, nothing happened by and large. No, we'd try to get Walter to write letters to the regional director,to get a member of his staff to call. I guess I should point out that Walter wasn't the great big white father at that time. That he became later. I mean it in the sense that there were still regional directors that were opposed to Reuther. Let's see, when did the war end? The war ended,

JEFFREY: what, in April, 1946. Okay! Okay! Walter was elected [UAW] president by 118 votes in 1946. For one year, he was a minority president. The [UAW] board....it's the first board meeting in Chicago after he was elected. The board members met, who were anti-Reuther, and they made the decision. One of the decisions was that they put the Women's Department in with the Fair Practices Department. They appointed Kenny Bannon director of the Ford Department. They appointed Bill Oliver director of the Fair Practices Department. Both Bill and Kenny were not anti-Reuther people.

INTERVIEWER: They were for Reuther?

JEFFREY: Well, sort of, yes. Yes. My point is that that crucial period. ...Walter was still struggling for his existence as president of the union. We had annual conventions then. By 1947--then Emil Rieve was elected, in the 1947 convention. So it was a tumultous time in every respect. There were tremendous lay-offs, reconversion, re-dislocation. There was the GM strike. There was a president who was very much being tested and who had lots of political opposition.

So it's that much harder to get support for women's issues through. The basic reasons still remained the same, and I think that is the general environment, the atmosphere was going back to peace time production, going back to the auto production, going back to an industry which is overwhelmingly male. The same sort of thing happened after World War I. Some of the best union women, in those days, were women who had survived World War I and were still in the plant. It was going back to the traditional. Women were in the sewing room and in traditional female jobs. As I say, you had to be a very sturdy woman then to hang on. Some of the policies of the auto corporations didn't change on hiring women until 1971-1972.

INTERVIEWER: What about the attitudes of the men in the union? You mentioned earlier that there was some kind of competition between the Thomas/Addes forces and Reuther forces for lining up women as well as black supporters. Did this create any kind of pressure to process the women's grievances?

JEFFREY: No, not to my knowledge. There may have some, but it was not a great deal according to my recollections.

INTERVIEWER: What was the nature of that competition? Can you recall who were the women stars in the union?

JEFFREY: I can't recall the names. For the most part, they were women who were on the staff and who were not from the UAW. They all sort of disappeared.

INTERVIEWER: Okay! I can come back to ask you about it. You started to say that the company policies haven't really changed until recently.

JEFFREY: Well, I just thought of another....just the environment, what was called FEPC legislation in the states. With the exception of New Jersey, every FEPC state law that was passed did not include females. The whole tenor of that period was that you could not put sex into FEPC because that would lose the support of the Catholic Church and others. If you have a commitment, the dominant problem was race. Here was race as a number one concern and sex was way down in the priority list, as it still is in many respects.

INTERVIEWER: But even in 1964 with the Civil Rights Act when Title VII was passed, sex was added as a joke to try to prevent the amendment from passing.

JEFFREY: Well, that's what's said, but I happened to be there when Martha Griffith opened it, all of the amendment. I don't know what's historically accurate! The only reason I'm mentioning this is, the Women's Bureau, by this time, the Women's Department was in Fair Practice, remember.

INTERVIEWER: The Women's Department of the UAW?

JEFFREY: Yes, was in Fair Practices. It was the UAW, all the Jewish organizations, it was everybody that was for FEPC. Everybody who was working on--this was the big thrust, to get state legislation. Never could we get to first base; absolutely not, when you talked about including sex. It was absolutely a lost cause. I'm only mentioning that as part of another indicator of the environment, the attitude toward women as workers. The UAW can be a great, progressive union, et cetera, but it reflects the society and the societal attitudes. It doesn't live in isolation from that which is going on in the rest of the community or the state or the nation. So all of these things were impinging on what happened as far as the lay-offs and the failures to recall women. In some cases, of course, plants did reduce their number of employees. It's true at Local 600. They went from 80,000 to 60,000. So there were some facts, so to speak, that are real in the fact that not only women but lots of men were called back. That is true! Reconversion took a while, too. It took quite a while! It couldn't possibly happen overnight.

Tooling up for war production, you couldn't buy a car! You're too young to remember. We couldn't buy a car. You had to get on a waiting list. So I don't remember what the period was, but it was at least a year or more in which you simply couldn't buy a car. There were long periods of time in which lots and lots of people were not recalled.

INTERVIEWER: Okay! I noticed that in the current union bargaining demands regarding women and minorities there is now a proposal to give women--even if they do not have three years seniority--up to three years seniority.

JEFFREY: Out front.

INTERVIEWER: Right!

JEFFREY: Whatever they call it.

INTERVIEWER: It's some kind of affirmative action. So this would then enable women to remain on the recall list?

JEFFREY: John Fillion is one of the architects of that. He's the UAW General Counsel here.

INTERVIEWER: Well, I think that's an important policy and it's important that it's coming into the bargaining table. However, it seems to me in some ways the timing is a little late, because so many women were laid off during the past recession--women and minorities.

JEFFREY: My problem in responding to any of this sort of thing is, I'm really not up-to-date. I have not been involved, but I do think it would be interesting. You raised a very interesting point. It would be very interesting to try to do some research on this and contrast the recalls in this period versus the recalls after World War II. My guess is that women are being recalled in line with seniority. That's my guess. I don't know.

INTERVIEWER: Yes. I think so.

JEFFREY: But that would be quite a difference. It isn't in direct response to the issue you're raising. It just occurs to me that maybe some progress has been made in that respect.

INTERVIEWER: I think the problem would be that most women who got jobs in the plants would have very little seniority and might miss the opportunity to get recalled because they had so little seniority.

JEFFREY: Yes, I'm saying I simply don't know what the statistics would show as far as UAW is concerned. I think where it's really wicked, of course, is in aerospace. There were lots and lots of women at one time, but not now. Fifty percent of the people on aerospace were female. That percentage is much less than fifty percent now.

I happened to be sitting in the congressional gallery that day Title VII passed. I heard Martha offer her amendment. I was with Jack Conway and Clarence Mitchell and others from the Leadership Conference. I shall never forget their dismay. "That Martha Griffiths. She's going to defeat the [Civil Rights] bill." I mean, in my view, it was not a game that Martha had worked out with Howard Smith. It was simply that Martha was saying to herself, "God damn it! I'm sick and tired of this and I'm going to offer this amendment." One thing Martha.... I saw a lot of her in conventions since she was chair in the Congressional Rules Committee.

INTERVIEWER: For the Democratic Party?

JEFFREY: Yes. She is one of the most obdurate fighters for women that I know. This has, along the way, gotten her into trouble with labor. In any event, I shall never forget that! Then, of course, it took them forever to adopt the rules and regulations to enforce the provisions of Title VII. My recollection is because even though I wasn't in the [Women's] Department, it got very unhappy about the failure of the auto corporations to employ women. Unhappily, at one point, when Ford Motors started hiring minorities. Well, you know, in 1967, in that period--the rebellions, the civil disorders, the riots, whatever you wished to call them--they then started hiring black males and innercity males. This happened all over the country where there were substantial numbers of blacks in the cities. But they hired no women. Then, according at least to some stories, Ford Motor found these people....their absenteeism records were....these were people that had never worked. They were used to staying up until two or three in the morning. All those things--transportation, all those things. Developing new life styles resulted in very unhappy experiences. So it was said to me by somebody at Ford Motor in a social study that one reason that they were employing women was because they were reliable workers. The absenteeism record was good. I had no idea what the statistics are--how many were hired or anything else--but I know it took.... Olga, if you ask her about it, was on a committee of the Department of Labor that worked on the rules and regulations.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. This would be Olga Madar?

JEFFREY: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Was there ever any consideration or push from within the [UAW] Women's Department or the union to change the structure of the Women's Department so it would be easier for it to enforce the union policy on women?

JEFFREY: Remember, I left in 1949. Have you talked to Odessa?

INTERVIEWER: No.

JEFFREY: Well, before Walter died, Bill Oliver finally got through the UAW executive board a recognized procedure for handling grievances of blacks and other minorities. There is a provision that if there is a grievance and if it goes before the bargaining committee that if there is not a member of the minority who is being discriminated who is claiming alleged discrimination that there will be a member of that group sitting in the bargaining committee sessions on this bargaining or grievance committee, whatever the structure is. This is because there's been the Fair Practices Committee in all local unions. That's a requirement, that every local union have a Fair Practices Committee.

JEFFREY: Whether it is a Fair Practices Committee or Education Committee, how viable that committee is varies.

INTERVIEWER: I think there is also a requirement that every union have a grievance committee.

JEFFREY: Yes. Well, I don't think that's in the constitution. It may be now, because there's lots to gain. And never the twain should meet, either between the Women's Committee and the Fair Practices Committee or between either or both of them in the bargaining committee, and that's going on as far as the local union administration is concerned in handling grievances. So getting a representative of the group from which the person comes who is alleging discrimination was a significant forward step.

There have been questions raised as to whether or not the Women's Department, whether....the easy way to talk about it now is EEOC cases. I mean, to use that as sort of an umbrella, which could include just an internal thing, but there are a lot of EEOC cases, too, which have been filed against the UAW. And that legislation had helped. There was, when Olga was [UAW] vice-president, during that period the Women's Department was given the responsibility of handling these kinds of grievances. It had nothing very much happen. They didn't have enough staff or the staff wasn't skilled in this. Since Odessa has been vice-president and I'm not familiar with all the details, but there is hope--that's my understanding--for a much more orderly procedure about this now.

The Fair Practices Department has developed enormous skills in handling grievances from blacks and other minorities, but particularly blacks. Well, the way Bill Oliver would put it was that to get into a region....no regional director ever wanted him to come in. This was, let's say, an extreme statement, but they never wanted him in the region because that was just going to cause problems for conferences or whatnot. When suits started being filed by individual union members and they were going to EEOC or a local union was getting into trouble with the law, with government, then they wanted Bill to come in to help work some kind of a resolution out. So for the last several years, the Fair Practices Department has been involved in all--well, I don't know how many; there's a giant number, but I know at one time they would have several hundred cases, I believe. My statistics, my figures--I'm not a reliable source at all. What I know really comes from conversations with staff members. It gave the Fair Practices Department a hell of a lot more clout, the legislation did. Lots more clout! Because they were needed. Now that's....I assume that's begun....I don't know....the hell with it! My point is it was my understanding from Odessa that they now have it all, have it worked out. So that this is done on a joint, cooperative basis, sort of together. Also, the Fair Practices Department assumes some responsibility. In the past, if a female case came in, it is my understanding that

JEFFREY: Fair Practices would simply refer the case to the Women's Department and the Women's Department wasn't really equipped to deal with it well. Now this has been put together. I believe that's one of Odessa's accomplishments. How it's working I simply don't know. There was never any serious question of abolishing the Women's Department.

INTERVIEWER: I didn't mean abolishing it. I mean changing its structure so that it would be more effective in processing grievances and acting on the grievances.

JEFFREY: Well, everything--just as I say, this manual which Bill Oliver got the board to adopt, which he'd had on Walter's desk, I'm sure, for two years probably. That's the manual that sets up the procedures. Everything has to be done within the process. You simply tried to add to that or strengthen it. There is no way that you're going to take a woman's grievance or a minority grievance outside or around the procedure, which is established in the contract. That ain't ever going to happen.

INTERVIEWER: To go back to the war period again. Did the Women's Department ever cooperate with any of the women's auxiliaries on any issues?

JEFFREY: Well, I would say we worked cooperatively.

INTERVIEWER: I guess what I was getting at....was there ever an attempt to bridge the gap or bring together women workers and wives?

JEFFREY: Yes. Well, all right! That is something that I cared a great deal about. I will tell you two things. I'm going to have a little trouble dating, but I think that one of them was 1956. This was with wives. I personally, I've always felt very strongly about this. I'm sure that, in my view, at that time Catherine Gelles and I were very good friends. I always tried to be supportive of Catherine. But I'm sure at that time that I did not think that the auxiliaries were a particularly viable instrument in the UAW for reaching wives. So, in I think it was 1956--this was also in conjunction with the Women's Activity Department of AFL-CIO, COPE--1956, when we merged there. Yes. Esther Murray was director of that. We really worked a great deal together. You see, this is 1956, though. How the hell did--well you see, I got into a lot of things. I wasn't in the Women's Department any longer. But I also did a lot of work when I was doing community relations or radio, whatever. I always worked a great deal with Roy Reuther. This was all really worked out with Roy and in this case, the [Michigan] State AFL. What we did was set up a series of conferences in Michigan. We tried to do this kind of thing in other states, too. Working with Esther [Murray] who, as I say, was director of the Women's Department of COPE. She had a special thing on registration and stuff like that, which I won't go into now. These were conferences to which we would invite women. They were sponsored

JEFFREY: by the UAW and AFL-CIO. Women members and wives. We would have one or two-day conferences. The objectives of these conferences were single--to get women interested in political action, and to try to translate to women that political action affected their lives daily. That's where we developed a leaflet and a whole program around it which has been used many times since, in one fashion or another. We would start out the conference by maybe having some opening speaker, start out by saying, "What's the first thing you do in the morning? Well, you turn on the lights, you turn on the stove, and then you go from that. Well, does government affect that in any fashion?" They'd finally figure out that it was a utility and there was a Public Service Commission and that sort of thing. It was around the clock. It was around the clock. So we'd start out and just go through the day, and see what they did, whether they were workers or they were at home and what were the things they did. Then, how did government affect what they did, whether they took a bus, the price of gasoline, whether they went to the doctor. It was really, I think, quite a good technique. We did this in small towns all over the place. I think that was a good program. Its point was bringing wives and union members, women, together, because it was silly to have these big separation. Since at least in the political arena their interests are very much the same if not identical, very similar certainly.

Then, what was the other things we did. Oh, yes. It was Cleveland. Maybe it was the Cleveland Educational Conference in 1959. In any event, this is still an ongoing program, not quite the way it was then. I did this with Catherine Gelles. It was really her program. I know this is what refreshes my memory, when I said that in my view, at that time--and I think it's a fact really--the auxiliaries were not really a vital way of reaching union wives. So we proposed, and it was approved by Walter and Emil, that we did a special, special program for wives at this Cleveland convention or educational conference. Wow--why can't I remember this? So, the first things we did was have a great big reception to which May Reuther came after much persuasion and spoke briefly. I can still remember holding her hand. She was so modest and so shy.

INTERVIEWER: I thought that she was very active in the early day, though.

JEFFREY: Oh, yes, and always. She did a lot of things in education. We had a Serve Your Schools Committee when they moved to Rochester, Michigan, and [she was active] in the community. She was never a public speaker. She was a background kind of person, not a wholly descriptive thing, but for the sake of time. The idea here, of course--and we invited all the wives of [UAW] board members, Emil's wife and so on--the idea was for them to meet the wives. This would be a link to the top officers, particularly May. I can't remember it all. One of the things we did was to take--we had charter buses--all of the wives out to the Ford Foundry, which at that time was supposed to be the most modern

JEFFREY: foundry in the world. It was outside--it's still going, of course--and we took them out so that they could see. Most of the wives had never been inside of a plant, never inside a plant unless they were workers. Many, many wives are not. There are lots of wives who work in the UAW plants, but percentage-wise, I'm sure, it's just a drop in the bucket--ten to fifteen percent. I have no idea what it is. Most wives--I think the statement is accurate--most wives have never been inside a plant, have no idea. What I recall so vividly is when we got back on the bus, here was this woman sitting in the front row by the window and she was sobbing. Being the den mother, so to speak, I was concerned what it was. So I sat down beside her and started to chat with her, as she was willing to speak. It finally came out. Her husband worked in a foundry. She had never seen a foundry. What she was sobbing about was, as she said, "I never knew that it was like that, terrible noise," some other comments and then she said, "I will never scream at my husband again." Now that was one of the things we were trying to do. Well, you could call it strengthening family relations, but also so that the wife would see why the union was important. It was a linkage, not only with her husband but with the union, and why the union had to go out on strike, sort of. I don't mean for this woman, but to enlarge the wives' understanding of why a union was necessary and what it was all about. Then, after that, when we came back--I don't recall all of the details--we had some workshops, discussion session with these women, trying to get them on the one hand to understand this and also trying to move them into political action. Yes, I know what my idea was. The idea was they weren't going to do anything very much in the auxiliaries. The auxiliaries were put down. But they could move into COPE, CAP, what is called Community Action Program now, and have a meaningful role in political action, which was related and dovetailed with all of the political purposes of the UAW. It was a very important contribution they could make. That was the idea behind it. That idea has continued now at the conventions. It's one of the big events at the convention. However, they now have a style show--they have a big luncheon, then they have a style show. It's always a sell out thing. I can't say that I'm happy about that, but that's the way it has turned out. If the convention is in New York City, they do have trips to the United Nations, sometimes, for the wives that come. It's not exactly the way we'd originally envisioned it.

However, for several years after that, we had no pretty meaty content in these programs, not too much, not too heavy. Now, as you know, when Catherine Gelles left....I love Catherine. She and her husband were great people. So when I speak of the auxiliaries, it has, in my view of them, it has nothing to do with Catherine. She was always--Emil Mazey was the director of the auxiliaries, not Catherine. Emil prided himself on this. In his view, he was doing a great job. When Catherine left, then the auxiliaries were moved over to the [UAW] Women's Department and Lillian Hatcher handles it. I know Lillian goes out to

JEFFREY: auxiliary meetings and whatnot. I'm just totally out of date. My guess is I doubt that the auxiliary is growing--not in my view. I know what I think. I think that spouses ought to get into political action or community activities of the union. As spouses, husbands or wives, they can't get directly involved. Oh, of course, the other thing that has happened which you--as long as we're talking about wives, is the Reuther Scholarship Program. Now, because that is tremendous as far as spouses is concerned. Are you familiar with that?

INTERVIEWER: No.

JEFFREY: Oh, that is, that is beautiful. There are some things that don't work out, but it's beautiful. Now, I haven't been up to Black Lake for one of these things for a couple of years. When--in the Scholarship Program, which is a family program and which children come, too; it's Brendan Sexton is the principal architect of setting up this scholarship format--when they come in, they're assigned to local unions. What they do, it's duplicative of--the whole week is simulated local unions. You go into a local union and it has a number like 6,403 or whatever it is. You got through the whole bit about electing your officers, establishing your committees, which includes recreation, and that committee does the recreation that week together with all the other recreation committees from all the other locals. You have a resolutions committee, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. So it's simulated. I remember in one of the locals that I was working with, the wife, a wife was elected president. Many times spouses, but by these days there are men who come who are spouses, too. It is really equal in that simulated local in the Walter Reuther Scholarship Program. It's tremendous, just tremendous, tremendous experience for the women. And of course a tremendous experience for the men, because all of a sudden they see women--it's sexist sometimes--but they see wives in totally different roles, or women in wholly different roles.

INTERVIEWER: What were the visible signs of the men--getting upset?

JEFFREY: Oh, it's just maybe how they react--in a way, it's a class. The locals meet in the morning, but you're supposed to use it for instruction purposes. There the president's running the meeting, and so forth. The afternoon, there are workshops. In the workshops, there's always a workshop on educational leadership and stuff. Generally, I don't know what's going on this year, but there's one on the family. That's where these things generally come out. Freida ________, who lives over here, did them for a couple of summers. She's really the one I spoke with. They're supposed to be getting into the problems people have, the emotional problems and stuff like that--child rearing, parental stuff, how you deal with your children, and all sorts of things, which also comes up from their experiences at Black Lake. Sometimes there are tensions between....they've now put the young people in a youth local and they run their own local. The first year,

JEFFREY: they didn't didn't do that and the kids were just....they became a terrible problem. Then, they had the idea of a youth local.

INTERVIEWER: By the kids did you mean the younger workers?

JEFFREY: The children.

INTERVIEWER: Oh, the children.

JEFFREY: Fourteen, fifteen. I'm not sure what the entry age is for the youth local. I recall the first year--I wasn't there but everybody was talking about it--the youth local comes in with a....at the end, they have a convention. The last day, they have a convention and all the resolutions for adoption by the body, the total body. So the youth local comes in with, I don't know whether it is decriminalization or legalization, probably legalization of marijuana. They had big, big to-dos about this.

In any event, the evidences are just really what a guy may say or how he may react. He may react to the local union meeting. He doesn't do it directly. These things generally come out indirectly. He's mad about this, but really what he's concerned about is he can't really stomach this woman running the local, running in the sense that she's up there as president. Sometimes those hostilities come out in the afternoon sessions, particularly in the one on the family. I'm not sure whether it's called the family, but that's I know the content, at least in the past.

Now the problem of this, and I do not know what is happening, but it illustrates that age-old and continuing attitudes that make if difficult to have this, to fulfill this concept, which is Walter's concept, too. That the family is, that the union is open to the family, that the union is for the family. When Walter'd make his speeches at conventions, he would always talk about, he always related every objective to strengthening, improving life, education, et cetera, economic security, justice, peace beyond the UAW. In any event, I'm not up to date on this, but I trust I know some regions, at least, have been trying to work. Okay! Here you had these wonderful, you have x number of wives who had a tremendous experience at Black Lake. Matter of fact, the truth is and this is also true of union members, but let me not deal with that. Let me just deal with the women for the moment. This flowering and opening up their own lives and their perceptions of the UAW, etc. They'd come back home and want to do something. That's where we have a nitty-gritty problem. One region I know of not too far from here. I'd always say, "Well, did you get the names of the women who were there? Gee, they would be great for the CAP program or something like that." When I first asked the question, it was very innocent. Well, it turns out that the locals don't want these women involved. I mean, in out CAP structure, now, unlike PAC. At any

JEFFREY: event, in order to conform to the law, it has to have lots of local, elected local union people in the CAP structure. This is because we are an independent union. When it's COPE at AFL-CIO, the wives never had...we, the wives could vote in the COPE thing. In CAP, it's a long, complicated discussion. I'm not competent to discuss it fully. Unless you're a member, you can't vote. I just think that's maybe not true now. In any event, what I'm getting at is here were these women, terribly excited, ready to do something in their local or in their UAW in the region, in CAP, something, or in community activities and the word is, no, we can't get in touch with them. Why? Because they'll upset the local union. Now I also have to say as a footnote--see, the whole concept of Black Lake was Walter's dream that he wanted a place--I wouldn't say he was obsessed, but he certainly....the UAW, in his view, had always been beyond wages, hours and working conditions. It was about the condition of life and what is a union, what union members could do about the condition of life for themselves and families and all people, not only in our nation but in the world. That was Walter--global. Anyone can apply. A traditional summer school, winter institutes, et cetera, are for activity. For some locals, it's an election. Other locals, you have to be on a committee before you can go. It's decided by the executive board and it gets very political. It reflects activity in politics, very political institutions. This was for young members, anybody who wanted to go, but particularly go to beautiful place, be inspired, and get the feelings, the spirit, the vision of the UAW. That's what he was really worried about was that--as he went on and time went on--that the UAW would settle for the traditional, narrow focused institution.

So you had young people who'd go and they'd come back to their locals excited and whatnot. Then, they'd get in a local situation and this is a distortion, okay, to identify it. You had some locals in which almost, in the mind of the president of that local, any member who comes to a union meeting is his enemy because he might run against him in the next election. So you had this, which is true of the Democratic Party, I guess every place. Instead of saying, "Come, come, there's so much to do," they'd think, "No, this young person might be a threat." That's a human thing. That's not unique to the UAW. I particularly wanted to speak about the wives. I don't know what's--I know that it's a concern. I know that it's a problem that has been identified. I do not know what's happening on it. I do think it's interesting, because these kinds of feelings, when you start asking about the auxiliary, there were essentially the same kind of fears, or concerns or whatever it may be, uncomfortableness.

INTERVIEWER: Earlier, you mentioned the Labor Day parades. I remember reading that they were big events. What were they like?

JEFFREY: The Labor Day parades?

INTERVIEWER: And then, when did they change?

JEFFREY: Yes, well, if....you don't come from New York, do you?

INTERVIEWER: I do.

JEFFREY: Oh, you do!

INTERVIEWER: I marched in one as a child.

JEFFREY: As a child. In the old days, there were tremendous Labor Day parades in New York. Also May Day. Remember, I mentioned earlier, or did I mention May Day.

INTERVIEWER: You did mention them earlier.

JEFFREY: Oh, when we went, when we took the shirt workers. That was for May Day parade in New York City. That's sort of a socialist/communist....New York revived its Labor Day parades recently. I don't know whether they are going to do it this year or not. In any event, in Michigan, in Detroit, in Pontiac, in Flint, in Muskegon, in Cleveland, many other places, Labor Day was the big day for a parade. In part, now, this is a long time ago even though it seems recent to me, but like a century ago in a sense, the way time telescopes. Detroit has particular significance because Harry Truman opened up his campaign in 1948 Labor Day, Detroit. He considered Labor Day in Detroit his lucky day. At the Harry Truman Library in Independence, there is an enormous picture of Labor Day, Detroit, 1948. Just to keep on this for a moment. So it became a tradition in 1952, and in 1956 Adalei Stevenson opened his campaign in Detroit. In 1960, John F. Kennedy did. In 1964, by 1964 it was beginning to go down. We could even begin to see it happening in 1960. I remember talking to Kenny O'Donnell about it. But be that as it may. That gave--at least in those presidential years--a really biggie for the labor movement. You'd have the Democratic candidate for President in your city on Labor Day--national TV, national radio, great attention. So the participation was tremendous. From 1960, it started going down. For many reasons: people had more money; they went away for the weekend and it is part of our culture; you could see it on TV or whatever. Now, in those parades before there was the merger between CIO and the AFL, there would be all the CIO unions. Then before the merger, in 1957, CIO was on one side of the street and AFL on the other. Then after the merger, it was all commingled. Lots of floats--in the old days, lots of floats. Generally the Detroit Federation of Teachers had an outstanding float. Some kind of a schoolhouse. All kinds of signs and kids and bicyles and clowns. In 1974, we wanted to be in China on May Day, but it worked out very well because they don't do much about May Day in China. We were in Tokyo on May Day. One million people. One million. They had just hundreds of flags, so many cartoons from locals--very,

JEFFREY: very amusing cartoons and quite creative. There were lots of interesting local union floats--a hearse with the body of Henry Ford or Tanayka. It wasn't exactly artistic, much of it. But you saw all sorts of expressions of where people and what their concerns were, what their anger was, and where their humor was and how they treated some of these things. Generally, not lots of money spent on them. Sometimes, like Local 600 might have a great big truck, all sorts of paper mache decorations that they may have paid for. Most of them were done by the people themselves.

INTERVIEWER: These start to decline in the 1960's, but they're still strong in the 1950's.

JEFFREY: Still in the 1950's, yes. The big, mass meeting was still, I think in many places, it was an expression. Today, in the city of Detroit, if you get a thousand people out that's pretty good. People just don't come out any more.

INTERVIEWER: When does the mass meeting decline, in your experience?

JEFFREY: Well, I'm not sure how to date it. I'll just give you this because this is one date. In 1960 when John F. Kennedy was nominated, we started talking about Labor Day with Walter. Walter always got people in. We'd sit around his office talking about things. There was no question that there was a Labor Day planned for Detroit, and he would come in for that. Some of us thought he should make the whole state of Michigan. However, Pontiac wasn't going to have Labor Day, Flint wasn't going to have Labor Day, Muskegon was, but not Pontiac and Flint. Well, the convention was in July. So this must have been like the first of August or so on into August. It was Walter who got on the phone and spoke to the UAW regional director in Flint and said, "You have to have Labor Day, because we want John F. Kennedy to come there." And the same with Pontiac. So if by 1960, if Michigan UAW centers like Pontiac and Flint were not planning on a Labor Day, that certainly is to me at least, that's one way to pinpoint it.

There were tremendous crowds for Kennedy. They wouldn't have come out without a political figure within the hallowed institution of labor, so to speak. Labor Day celebration had not become, had certainly declined in these cases. They'd abandoned it as a symbolic way of showing our allegiance in this kind of celebration. By the way, the one in Tokyo was very festive. All the political parties marched, too. These cartoons were really out after political figures. It was a very festive sort of thing, very gay, very happy. I don't know what it would be like now. They already had a high inflation by then.

INTERVIEWER: Let me stop this for a minute. Perhaps what we can do in this section of the interview is to discuss the relationship between the union's social philosophy and your own within the union and

INTERVIEWER: the community. Maybe you could describe what the union's social philosophy is first, and then you can go into your own career.

JEFFREY: In 1946, Walter wrote an article for Harper's Magazine. One of the statements he had made in that piece was, "The union makes progress with the community, not at the expense of the community." In those few words, Walter articulated what was an underlying philosophy of his and of the UAW. One example of that is that when the first pension plan was negotiated back in 1950, the pension was tied in with social security. That first pension was a hundred dollars. The cost to the employer was the difference between the social security benefit and the hundred dollars. That gave a motivation to employers, to the corporations, to support increases in social security. This is, is seems to me, an excellent illustration of the practical application of all this philosophy. We always said we are in an industry, in a wealthy industry, and we can negotiate good benefits for our members. But we are also concerned about those millions of workers who either may be in unions in which no matter how strong the union is, they cannot win the same kind of wages and benefits. That auto workers can, but also those millions that have no union protection whatsoever. Prior to this time, every time the union went to Washington trying to lobby for increased social security, they would be told, you come from the auto industry; go talk to Ford, General Motors, and Chrysler. Let them institute a pension program. When we went to the companies, they would say, "Get it from Washington." This was a happy coming together. One, of course, winning pensions for UAW members, but as I say, this is to illustrate Walter's practical application of the philosophy.

As a matter of fact, even before that Ford Motor contract had been finalized, Mr.--I want to call him ~~Bridges~~ Bugas; that isn't quite right--was in Washington testifying before the congress for increases in social security. As a result of that, some increases were secured, and there had been no increases in the benefits schedule since social security was enacted in 1937. That's one illustration. Another illustration is that when we talked earlier about the UAW's ventures into bookstores, co-ops, and radio. Unlike some other unions, or at least at that time, that became involved in housing projects, like the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, or [became involved in] the clinics, Amalgamated ILG and so on, Walter's philosophy was that we should work in and with the community to provide good housing for whoever lives in the community, not just UAW members ; medical care, not just for UAW members; recreation, not just for UAW members. But to use our strengths and our creativity to build with other community groups who represent people who have the same kinds of problems, the same kinds of concerns as our members do. That was a guiding principle all though the years.

So I was most--it was just a great, wonderful privilege and opportunity to work with Walter on these sorts of things. In

JEFFREY: 1963, Walter was working with civil rights groups nationally--the Big March in Washington. But no matter what he was doing nationally, he always had a very high sense of responsibility for Detroit. Detroit was the home of the UAW. He had a sense of obligation, responsibility, commitment to the city. In any event, in 1963, that was the year, if you recall, we had a big march in the city of Detroit--a hundred and twenty-five thousand people--and it was before the big Washington civil rights march. So he was working at the national level on that sort of thing. He wanted to get a community organization which would include not only other unions, but business and education, industry and community leaders. He conceived of this idea of that became the Citizens Committee on Equal Opportunity. He would call us in and we would talk about it and who should be the chair of it. It was decided it should be Bishop Richard Emery. This was a great July 4th holiday. On July 4th, 1963, NAACP was having a big march in Chicago and so we went. We traveled around a great--wherever there was anything going on in the civil rights movement. The 1960's was the civil rights revolution. This was a tremendous parade, July 4th and it ended up in Lincoln Park.

In July, 1963, NAACP's convention was in Chicago. Mayor Daley brought the greetings of the City of Chicago to the opening session. In the course of his opening remarks, he said that Chicago did not have a ghetto. Subsequently, when asked why he had said this, he said he did not know what a ghetto was. These remarks created hostility to hizzoner. So that when he was introduced to speak at the conclusion of March in Jackson Park, he was not permitted to speak. I can still see how red his face got. In any event, we went back to the hotel. We were all very sunburned. We went to John Carter's room, one of the legal defense attorney's room. A friend of mine, Reverend Porter from down river, burst into the room and said, "Eugene Carson Blake was arrested today." So we were all overjoyed and this was the first time Eugene Carson Blake had been in a confrontation. So we were all terribly, terribly excited. The arrest was in a park outside of Baltimore, where they had a march, an integration demonstration, because this park was refusing to admit Negroes. He had been arrested and taken off the paddy-wagon. This was very exciting.

The next morning--I was staying at the LaSalle Hotel--I stopped at the newsstand and, as usual, bought all of the newspapers. I remember very well: I had my NAACP button on, and there was a white guy who started shouting at me at the newsstand, calling me nigger lover and stuff like that. So instead of having a cup of coffee at the LaSalle [Hotel], I walked over to the other hotel. He followed me out onto the street. I didn't get into any confrontation with him. I got to the hotel and I sat down to have my coffee and started looking at the newspapers and was turning over the pages. And on the page three of the Chicago News....I'm turning a page and here's a picture of Eugene Carson Blake and my daughter Sharon being carried out with her legs crossed, limp, by two police officers. There were two pictures.

JEFFREY: Carson Blake being put into the paddy-wagon, which, of course, I saw first. They were side by side. I was so exhilarated because Gene Blake was a great Presbyterian leader, very prominent clergyman--and my daughter.

Then, what to do, what to do, what to do. I wasn't worried about her. She had been working with CORE that summer in Philadelphia. She had told me that she might go away for the Fourth of July, but she hadn't said what she was going to do. First I called the CORE office in Philadelphia and they didn't know where Sharon was. She'd said she might go to Baltimore. I really wasn't concerned about her safety, but I was concerned about getting a message to her. Finally, I decided that I would send a telegram. Those were the days you could send telegrams and they were delivered. I would send her a telegram at the county jail in Baltimore, Baltimore County Jail. So I composed a message and sent it to her, which, of course, was a message of support. She received it at midnight that day. As she tells the story, it was wonderful, because among those arrested were young people who had never been arrested before and they were uneasy. She would show the telegram and say, "See, this is what my mother says."

In any event, while I was in Chicago, I got a call from Walter asking me to persuade Bishop Richard Emerick to accept the chairship of a Citizens Committee on Equal Opportunity. I told him that the Bishop was in Vermont and he had no phone and we would have to write him. Walter was impatient. When he got onto to something, he didn't want anything to stand in the way of moving ahead. So Walter told me, well, okay, letter writing will take much too long. "I want you to go to Vermont to see him. I want you to go to Vermont right away." I remember very well that trip from Detroit to New York, then Boston, and having to change in Rhode Island, then to Vermont. It was a small airport there. I can still feel it. All that day, I did not see one black person employed in any capacity, whether behind a desk or at the ticket counters, or stewardesses, or any employee of any airlines in those four airports, who was anything but white. The only blacks were the skycaps. There were so many things that weren't evident to people in those days. I had good luck because friends of ours, Jack Dawson who was teaching at Harvard Law School then, was from Michigan had a summer place at Peacham. I had called Jack and I was able to spend that night with them. Bishop Emerick lived in West Danville, which wasn't very far from Peacham. I had rented a car to get to Peacham. A wonderful way about Vermont is how people give directions. You want to go to West Danville. Then you keep asking where Bishop Emerick lives, because they know people. The last stop, I'm sure, was the post office, which was in a general store. They gave me directions: you go this way, there's a big stump and you turn to the right and then there's a Y and there's a barn over here--don't go the way. That's the way they give directions, because there are no street signs, or road signs or anything else. I found Bishop Emerick in his home with his wife. I spoke with him about Walter's request and he

JEFFREY: agreed to do it. So that's how we got Bishop Emerick to be the first Chair of the Citizens Committee on Equal Opportunity, which became quite a viable committee.

Walter had talked to Henry Ford and he got Ford, GM and Chrysler, the top people. And once you get them, you can get the utilities, the banks, and other "civic" leaders as well as other unions. We raised money and appointed a staff director. We set up committees on housing, employment, public accommodations, and education. There was a lot of citizen involvement that stimulated activity. As a matter of a fact, that was when New Detroit [committee] was organized. New Detroit came after the July 1967 civil disorder. By that time, they were beginning to start talking about urban coalitions. Walter's dream was that he would demonstrate that this could be done in Detroit and then use Detroit as a national model. In some ways, it did become the model, except some other people picked it up and they started at the national level talking about urban coalitions. So, the Bishop Emerick Committee, as it was called, sort of got folded into New Detroit. New Detroit was the first urban coalition for a city urban coalition , more or less on the model which Walter had established. That's another illustration of his commitment to moving in and with the community rather than separately.

INTERVIEWER: Are you one of the people who provides this linkage function between the union and the community people?

JEFFREY: Yes, that was one of my principal responsibilities, I would say, with Walter.

INTERVIEWER: How many other people on the staff are involved in this union/ community kind of liason work?

JEFFREY: Well, it's grown tremendously, I would say, in recent years, not only in Detroit but in the regions, whether it's Cleveland or it's Grand Rapids or it's Flint. It varies depending upon the inclinations of the regional director. It is not an easy thing to do, because it's more comfortable for many union people, or union leaders, simply to go out and make our own statement. It's hard, nitty-gritty work saying, well, I'm not going to say the UAW stands for this, but working with community people, either initiating the organization, initiating the effort to get something going, whether it's an organization or ad hoc committee or whatever it may be. That's a lot more work. It takes a lot more time. The honor and glory doesn't come solely to the union or to the UAW, or to the regional director, or even the labor movement. The honor and glory comes, so to speak, if there is any in achieving a goal, in the case of the Bishop Emerick, the Citizens Committee on Equal Opportunities. Like so many things, it started being called the Emerick Committee. You really have to have faith that that's the way to do it--we had many failures--a faith that that is the way to make progress is jointly and you don't make it separately.

JEFFREY: Practically speaking, the problems have become much harder as the years have gone by. Or at least maybe they're harder because we're more aware, we know more and we're sensitive to the injustices, and the oppressions, and the brutalities that have existed in our communities. Maybe that's what makes them seem harder, because we know more. As I think of Detroit, I think they are more difficult today than they were some years ago. At least it's harder to move, to make progress, to move even a step at a time. Maybe that's because we were so bad earlier.

I was just going to say as far as I was concerned, it wasn't only Detroit, but the national level. We worked a great deal with all the religious groups. In the early days, for example, I talked about the Citizens Commiteee to aid the Families of GM Strikers. There was also the Citizens Committee to review, assess, the justices or injustices, economics of the 1945-46 GM strike. In 1950 when there was a Ford strike, we had a citizens committee. In those days, the hard support for the union came largely from the religious communities--Catholic, Protestants, Jewish, the National Council of Churches, local council of churches.

INTERVIEWER: How did they support you? With money?

JEFFREY: To some extent, but more importantly than money was the support from the religious groups and the Jewish community. It was the religious leaders who would stand up publicly in support of the UAW. They would speak about the justice of the demands of the workers, if it were a strike situation, or other programs or things that we were working on. So that the ties with the UAW in that period with the religious community were very strong locally and nationally, and to some extent, still are. In the 1960's, of course, that was also very much around the civil rights movement. We worked a great deal, particularly with the National Council of Churches. Eugene Carson Blake who headed up a very important Commission on Race and Religion, which played a very significant and courageous role in the South and raised monies. In those days, you could get a lot of money through the church for various civil rights endeavors. Also, it was organizations such as the National Committee on the Employment of Youth--all kinds of national organizations. As we, as the union grew and had more time, this goes on. For example, Pat Greathouse has been the principal officer that has worked with farm groups, the Farmers Union, farmers' organizations of various kinds, with the co-ops, REA [Rural Electrification Administration] and so on. So there's been a great extension working locally and nationally with a great variety of voluntary organizations. As Walter would say, those with whom we share a mutual concern. We may not agree wholly on the resolutions of those concerns, but we share concerns and we can agree and work together in a lot of programs to which we have a common commitment or agreement.

INTERVIEWER: What were some of the different jobs you held in the union, different responsibilities? Maybe we can get a chronological order.

JEFFREY: Oh, okay! I came to work for the UAW in January, 1944, as director of the Women's Department. I took a leave of absence from that position in 1949. That was during the Chrysler strike. Because I had worked on union counseling and dealing with the problems of the GM workers when they were out on strike, Emil asked me if I would help out. I had really forgotten this until he reminded me of it. So, on a voluntary basis, I started working with the local unions in setting up committees to deal with some of the workers' problems. Boy, it was rough! That was a hundred and four day strike. That was a very long strike! We'd just begun. We had strike relief, but strike relief on the basis of need. It created a lot of tensions within local unions. In any event, at some point along the way--and this is what I had totally forgotten until Emil dragged out the papers--he put me on the Chrysler payroll. That's what I'd completely forgotten. That was in--I don't know how long I was off the payroll. Then one day, I was at home and Victor Reuther called me. He said, "I have somebody in my office that I want you to meet. Can you join us for lunch?" So I said yes. So I went to have lunch with Victor and Morris Novick, the radio consultant for the AFL-CIO. He was the guy who had persuaded the UAW to apply for two FM licenses. I never left that lunch, so to speak. Victor was the director of the [UAW] Education Department. I was put on the payroll as radio director in the Department of Education. I'm not sure how they juggled this in the Payroll Department. In any event, that was my assignment. We built two FM stations. We also had an application for a television station, which we got and never used, a UHF station here in Detroit. That occupied me until 1951. We put the stations on the air; we hired staff; we did programming, we promoted those stations, et cetera. Oh, one very important thing is--for the records, which I'm sure somebody has told you--but when we discontinued, the union decided to get out of the operation of radio, FM radio; it gave WDET to Wayne State University. At the same time, the union said, "We're going to take these monies that we've been spending on FM and we're going to use them to put a labor commentator on the air on commercial radio. We think this will be a better expenditure of our funds and we'll be more likely to reach our own union members." That was when Guy Nunn was....Guy was already on the staff.

INTERVIEWER: Was this Jean Nunn's husband?

JEFFREY: Former husband, yes. Oh, a tremendous person. Guy's first program was at 7:15 on CKLW, and he was between Fulton Lewis and Gabriel Heater. Fulton Lewis was on at 7:00 o'clock, Guy at 7:15, followed by Gabriel Heater at 7:30. Guy was a Rhodes Scholar, a tremendous person, very gifted. He did a news commentary. Then later we had....and I was still in the radio department

JEFFREY: and I worked with Guy....we had a weekly television show on WWJ, Channel 4.

INTERVIEWER: What were the dates you were working in the Radio Department?

JEFFREY: Well, that's what I'm trying to come to. I must have started either in 1949 until 1954 when I started doing community relations. So, as I was saying, I assisted Guy in those programs, in getting people and planning issues to be discussed. It became a choice program for all sorts of people in the community to get on, because it really was a public service program. It was used also, for example, on workmen's comp and you'd get workers who were injured in plant accidents on the air to talk about it and what legislative proposals were on unemployment comp, social security, health, all sorts of things. Always trying, but involving a lot of people who had competence to speak and who had credentials but who might or might not be from the union. In many cases, of course, they weren't from the union.

There was also a place to put on the cause people, ACLU, NAACP, or whatever it was. That was a weekly Sunday program of which Guy was a moderator. It was that kind of panel-participant discussion. This is an important thing that the UAW did. At some point, inevitably, I suppose, some problems developed. It was the feeling of some people in the leadership of the union that Guy was speaking for the union and making comments about issues and questions on which the union had not taken a position, on his fifteen minute newscast. I still remember that as being one of the greatest of all radio programs.

INTERVIEWER: It was only fifteen minutes?

JEFFREY: Yes, but it was a straight commentary. That is on CKLW. CKLW, which is a Canadian station. That's one reason we went there, because there was much less censorship, practically no censorship of Guy's script. He's very hard hitting, very hard hitting. In any event, because there were some questions, and he and Walter in a sense never really hit it off although Walter had employed him. I think it is a hard question. On the one hand, your commentator's got to be wholly free. On the other hand, certainly in a city like Detroit people are quoting Guy Nunn and officers are saying, "but that isn't the position of the union," or "we haven't spoken to this issue."

This was a problem. So, Guy's time was changed. Well, it also again was a question which we had earlier--how do you, you were spending this much money on this commercial program, the first responsibility is to reach UAW members. So it went to two programs. "Eye Opener" and "Shift Break." In "Eye Opener," Guy was on the air from something like 6:00 a.m. till 7:00. That was called "Eye Opener." He was a union disc jockey. He was tremendous. He'd play records and then he'd have social commentary or economic commentary -- just tremendous! He did the same

JEFFREY: sort of thing in afternoon, "Shift Break." Maybe that was like from 3:00 to 3:30, or 2:45 to 3:15. The afternoon shift was coming in and the day shift was leaving. Shifts are greatly staggered in the city of Detroit. So a day shift doesn't end in every plant at 2:30 or 3:00. Even within a plant they stagger for traffic reasons. Then, this was so successful that it was extended to other communities. Other regional directors would hear about it and say they'd like to have it. I'm not sure of the precise figure. It seems to me at one point that Ted Andrus, who was the engineer, was cutting twenty-eight tapes. That would mean it was on in twenty-eight different communities within the UAW family across the country. Guy would record a once-a-week program, whether for Waterloo, Iowa or Des Moines, Iowa, or Chicago, or Cleveland. It was costing up to something like seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars a year, which was a lot of money. At some point, a decision was made that the union couldn't afford that much and they discontinued all of the programs. It's been quite a few years ago now. 1966. Guy's been gone longer than that, I think. Then they had Guy doing producing--now, when did we get the mental health program in Chrysler? 1970? In any event, Guy was producing film, but at very modest cost, which leads me on to something else. No, slides. He would put voice over, but put it on film. I know he was still here, because one of the films he did in this fashion was one that was used by Chrysler to promote, to persuade people to use the mental health benefits that Chrysler had negotiated. In other words, you could get psychiatric care for you and/or for your family. People don't like to say that I need to go to a psychiatrist or I need personal counseling. In any event, Guy left the union. Also, about that time that he and Jean were separated, he went to the University of Puerto Rico in San Juan and did worker's education there. He's in Hawaii now working for ASCFME. He's a great guy. Somebody ought to interview him. I know what I wanted to say! Yes! This is a single view. I think it's too bad that the UAW in its infinite wisdom never produced a film such as "With These Hands" or "The Inheritance."

INTERVIEWER: What's "With These Hands"?

JEFFREY: It's an ILGWU film.

INTERVIEWER: I've never seen it.

JEFFREY: Yes. Well, it's professionally done. Arlene Francis is in it and a great male actor, very professional. "Inheritance"--and this, of course, is in part because of my background in the Amalgamated Clothing Workers--I never tire of seeing "Inheritance." It always, always moves me.

INTERVIEWER: I get to see it four times a semester.

JEFFREY: Yes. At Black Lake they show it. Every week there's a group there, "Inheritance" is shown. The UAW, of course, we used to say when they'd ask us who was your expert on housing, or who was your expert on atomic energy or whatever, we'd always say Walter Reuther. Walter was an expert at everything in the sense that he had such wide ranging interests and was a student of many of these kinds of problems. Somehow or other, the UAW always thought we could do it. We have some films, but they aren't, in my view, great films. This came to my mind when I thought about Guy's being asked to do this very inexpensive production, of using stills with voice over. We just never have. It's been a decision which is based, I suppose, on, you might say, cost-benefits. I regret it, at least. I hope someday that.. .. he great thing about "With These Hands" and "The Inheritance" is neither of them in any fashion glorify leadership. I mean, it isn't Sidney Hillman's film. It's a workers' film and what the Amalgamated did. I sometimes think that what really puts it together is Judy Collins and the music because a lot of it is simply old newsreel shots -- the commentary. Judy Collins singing "Freedom" is a wonderful thing. But that, you have to say, okay, I'm going to trust a producer, trust a director and I'm going to be willing to spend some money. I don't know what "Inheritance" cost. I once was told that "With These Hands" cost a hundred thousand, which in those days was a hell of a lot of money for a union to spend. This is a quirk of mine,so....

INTERVIEWER: There's a new great film that has just come out called "Union Maids," which is about three women who were active in union organizing and community struggles.

JEFFREY: I've heard something about it. Who produced that?

INTERVIEWER: Julia Reichert and Jim Klein and somebody else.

JEFFREY: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: If you get a chance, see it. I think it's going to be at the Ann Arbor Summer School for Women Workers.

JEFFREY: Oh, is it? Oh, good.

INTERVIEWER: Oh, it's great! Let's come back to the Radio Department. Why did you leave it in 1954?

JEFFREY: Oh, because well, Walter asked me to become Director of Community Relations. I was doing community relations anyway on the radio job. Walter kept asking me to do things, as he always had. Tell Otha to get Millie. There was picking up Harry Belafonte or some other special guest of his. We had a meeting with Harry Belafonte when Walter was trying to get a UAW chorus going. So I was somebody he could call upon to do these kinds of things. It just evolved and it made a lot of sense. The radio thing and the TV

JEFFREY: thing didn't take that much of my time anyway. Since we no longer operated the FM station.

INTERVIEWER: How was your job defined in community relations? What were your responsibilities?

JEFFREY: Well, it was never defined. That was not unique in the UAW.

INTERVIEWER: What kind of job did you create in community relations?

JEFFREY: Well, I've talked about it. Let's say that I was an extension of Walter Reuther. I really don't like to say it that way, but I was on his staff. Lots of smallish things, he would just assign. He'd send me a memo and say, "Millle, take care of this," which would be contacting somebody, doing follow-ups with some meeting he'd had, helping getting an organization started. One of them was the Committee Against Poverty. In any event, that was another one of Walter's dreams. It was at the national level bringing together a lot of people to deal with poverty. I helped him get that together. Doing, for example, of the things you always had to do if you wanted to get a national organization set up was who should be invited. So, you get the names of various people. You'd talk to Walter about it--yes, no. Then, you'd prepare the letter he'd signed, then you'd do the follow-up calls. So you'd get a Eugene Carson Blake and other national figures. In any event, we got Dick Boone to be the Executive Director. It was this committee that set up the commission on the inquiry of malnutrition in the South. Out of this came a CBS documentary. Yes. Well, that's how that CBS documentary happened. We also got Bobby Kennedy interested. These are the sorts of things that nobody would probably know Walter Reuther did, but Walter Reuther did it, in the sense that he was the genius that got it put together. That sort of went out of existence after a while. The poverty program flourished and then went down as far as the federal government was concerned.

INTERVIEWER: Did you have a staff working with you in community relations?

JEFFREY: One of the assignments that was given to our department was foreign visitors and to some extent, out domestic visitors. I don't know what it's like now, but in those days, we used to have three or four thousand people coming into Solidarity House every year, many of whom were foreign guests. We used to say that when the people came to Detroit, they wanted to do two things. They wanted to see the Rouge plant and they wanted to talk to Walter Reuther. We could always arrange a visit to the former. It was slightly more difficult to arrange a visit with Walter. What our department did if you really want to know, was read the Report of the President to each convention. The best kept secrets of the UAW are in the Convention Reports of the President. Nobody ever reads them.

INTERVIEWER: I've read some of them. They were very interesting.

JEFFREY: We dreaded writing those things. They're very uninspired writing. Nobody ever kept statistics. Nevertheless, I think they--if you read those reports about a lot of the departments of the union, they are good and accurate historical records. Then along the way, community relations people--one person on each regional director's staff--were appointed.

In a sense, those were extensions of the international operation on community relations. One person in each region, but with divided responsibilities, a lot of it handling....well, for example, the regional director's in negotiations or there's a strike or whatever, he needs someone to help write press releases. Just that sort of thing! Also to get stories into Solidarity. They also worked with community groups.

The [UAW] Education Department was another dimension of Community Relations. The Education Department had a large staff. Part of the thrust of the Education Department has been to work with public schools in getting union materials into the libraries, to social science teachers as supplemental materials, examining textbooks and that sort of thing for the inclusion of labor history, working with community colleges, working with universities to establish labor program, the whole wide range of programs with public education at every level. That's education, but in a sense, that's community, too. Their staff had the principal responsibility out in the regions for that kind of activity. Also, union counseling now came to be called community services. In addition to doing training for community services committees in the local unions, they assist workers on their out-of-plant problems. Community Services also does the representation of UAW on voluntary agency boards.

INTERVIEWER: Who runs Community Services?

JEFFREY: In the UAW? Andy Brown is the Co-director of Community Services and has been for quite a few years. Even though we're separated from the....UAW works closely with Leo Perlis, Director of Community Services for the AFL-CIO. They have a much more extensive program. They are, for example, in the state with the Michigan United Fund. It is AFL-CIO, Michigan AFL-CIO, that's sort of the principle. Even in Michigan, but in many states, the state AFL-CIO will be much larger in membership, or affiliated unions, their memberships, than UAW. Even in Ohio, Illinois, Pennsylvania. So the AFL-CIO had, in most states, developed programs and relations so that the state United Fund, whatever it may be called, employs labor people on their staff. So there are jobs for labor people. Then their job is to assist in fund raising and labor representation on agency boards and committees making known to union members the services that are available--girl scouts, boy scouts, family, or whatever the case work agency may be. So that's a very well developed--established, I should say--established program in the labor movement now. The UAW does

JEFFREY: similar things, and works closely with AFL-CIO.

I had written Walter memos through the years urging the creation of a consumer department, or at least a consumer staff position. In 1968, this was done. Maybe I came on in 1969. Let's say 1970. At the end of 1968, a consumer department was established. Olga was given that responsibility as [UAW] vice-president. Each officer in the union has certain designated responsibilites, designated by the president of the union. In other words, "Leonard Woodcock, Irving Bluestone, you're going to be directors of the GM Department." So Olga insisted that I do this. I had recommended somebody else, but Olga was insistent. So I accepted. Walter wanted me, too. I didn't know anything about consumer issues. I just knew that the union should be engaged. It turned out, oh, and I continued doing community relations, supposedly. I did both for a while. We got a consumer program set up and it turned out to be fascinating.

INTERVIEWER: What did that program consist of?

JEFFREY: At the 1968 Convention, one, we, we got the constitution changed to require that every local union set up a consumers affair committee. The Department was to assist, persuade, provoke, whatever, local unions working through the regional directors to set up consumers affairs committees. Secondly, the concept of setting up the department was to coordinate consumer activity with other departments in the international. We were to work with Education, the Legal, the Political Action, the Legislative Departments in giving an emphasis and focus to consumerism. So, for example, with the Education Department, we worked very hard to persuade them to (a) incorporate consumer materials in the CORE summer school courses. We also organized regional consumer conferences. We were successful one year in having one week training for consumer committees at Black Lake. We had weekend institutes.

I should say, to interrupt for a moment, as far as staffing is concerned, was that all of the members of the staff in recreation and conservation also worked on consumer problems. Some of those staff members were located in regions. For example, Ken Henderson in Region 3. He was an enthusiast and frequently had consumer presentations at regional meetings or auto council sessions. Consumer conferences or weekend institutes. In California Versia Metcalf had a tremendous thing going with the local union consumer committees. So, it was to get the consumer committee set up and formed and educated. One of the things that committees did--which at first I was very hesitant about, but I was totally wrong--was to establish a hot-line so that if an individual member of the union has a consumer problem, he/she could come to the local union and receive assistance in resolving it. I was afraid that the committee wouldn't really know the resources in the community, wouldn't know what remedies were available to consumers, the consumer department at some level in the government,

JEFFREY: or the County Prosecutor, et cetera. I was totally wrong. Our experience showed that where you had even a feeble local consumer committee, the clout of that local union was such that when a person comes and says I've been ripped off by Sears or whatever it was, that the chair of that committee would call the merchant and in eighty to eighty-five percent of the cases were resolved satisfactorily. That, I've learned later, is not unique. The individual was pretty helpless, but when he/she belongs to an organization that has some clout, and obviously in many communities whether it's Waterloo, Iowa or Burlington, Iowa, for example, merchants don't want to get into trouble with the union. Most of these problems--a watch that doesn't work, or a refrigerator or something, that doesn't cost the merchant that much. In Cleveland, the Cayuga County CAP Council put on a very energetic program which dealt, however, only for union members and only in new cars. In Cayuga County I'm not sure it's still going, but it was very strong for a while. Their classic case was a Chevrolet with a burned out engine. This dealer had refused to do anything about it. So the Consumer Committee organized a big picket line and they picketed regularly, particularly over weekends. This dealer sued the UAW for a million dollars. That really got everybody scared because there is a question about consumer boycotts. In any event, the judge did not find the union guilty. There was no fine. It was kind of scary for a while. So the bottom line was to get a local union consumer committee.

This was all bedded into the philosophy and purpose structure of CAP. CAP is Community Action Program. The philosophy of the Community Action Program, which again is Walter's philosophy was before we had been called Committee on Political Education or we had been PAC, Political Action Committee, and the functions were citizenship ones, to be sure to get people registered to vote, to educate them on issues, etcetera. He and others were unhappy with the narrow perspective here. Not that it wasn't important. So when the UAW became independent and we had to have, to conform with the laws, a whole new political structure was developed. For example, local union presidents have to sit on CAP councils. Now, I'm talking about the philosophy and purpose of CAP. That was to work on a year-around basis in the community in which you live, on community problems and to have an extension of UAW concerns, whether it was the adoption problem, consumers, litter in the streets, whatever it might be, malnutrition, whatever it might be. That's the philosophy. They're still working at that, because it's been so hard to get people to go beyond the traditional, of registration, get out the vote, interview candidates to get those candidates elected. In some places, now, that's where the consumer committee was supposed to be established. The community acts at the CAP level could be either county-wide or area-wide. In some regions that are very spread out, they will have an area CAP council, which will include more than one county. It's related to the number of

JEFFREY: union members in the area because it doesn't make sense always to have a CAP committee in a county if there's on local in the entire county and there are two hundred people in it. So in that case, it would be folded into an area council. People like Martha Reynolds, for example, worked very hard in Region 1D. She was one of the staff persons in getting consumer committees set up in all of their twenty-eight area councils. It is a vast region. It includes the entire Upper Peninsula. It's very hard to sustain these committees. The experience frequently is to get somebody very interested and half a dozen people. They'll work very hard. Then, a number of things may happen. One is sometimes they move on into a local union office which sometimes is a threat. Or they get transferred to another shift. They work very hard and accomplish a great deal. But when it comes to the local union giving them some time off, because they find that it takes a lot of time, sometimes they need to meet with merchants during regular working hours. Sometimes the local union will give them some time off to do that, paid time off. They do it for a while and then somebody gets cranky about it or they won't do it at all. So there are a lot of things that happen. Or the people just get tired, or their family situation changes. So then you have to get a new leadership group. The international union can be of assistance with materials and conferences and that sort of thing. You get unhappy about that. On the other hand, when you realize that all of this is done by voluntary people who are working full-time, who may live a long way from the plant, who have family responsibilities, be they parenting or other family responsibilities. Sometimes I think it is absolutely remarkable how much is done. I really do.

Then, of course, there is the whole legislation thing. That's state legislation and national legislation. In collective bargaining, Canada and the U.S. are very integrated. When it comes to legislation, it is very different. We're always sensitive to including Canada. What we did in consumers was there's a staff person from Canada, Andy Pauley, whose principal assignment was recreation. Fortunately, he was also very interested in consumerism. Canada has to develop their own materials. The legislation is different. However, their problems are essentially the same in Canada and the U.S. when it comes to the individual consumer problem. The larger consumer issues are pretty much the same, although generally Canada has better legal protections than we are in this country. Andy is a wonderful person.

Legislative concerns, both at the state and federal level, included no-fault auto insurance, holder in due course, discrimination in credit, utility rates, product safety, consumer protection aid. The legislative effort is handled by CAP, both at the state and federal levels. We worked closely with the legislative office in Washington. Together we keep track of where bills are. Sometimes they'll know about it. They have a very small legislative staff, but it's super. A staff member will have a number of areas of legislative concern that are

JEFFREY: assigned to that person. One of them will be consumers. So you know that's the staff person you work with. You may write a testimony. If Leonard Woodcock is to appear, as we did for no-fault auto insurance, we prepare his testimony. They're more likely to know where a bill is and when it's coming up, although since we worked with Consumer Federation of America, which is the principal lobbying organization for consumer things in Washington, we might know before our staff did. That's just because of pressure of time. If they're in the middle of campaign reform, when you're working in Washington and a bill is hot, you can't do anything else but that.

INTERVIEWER: What's your own role in this? In securing the legislation, for example, do you testify?

JEFFREY: Oh, I may. I have testified. Generally, our stance is to have an elected official--Woodcock or Pat Greathouse, Doug Fraser. It depends on the subject. Or Odessa, Olga, when she was vice-president. Or I would do it. Or sometimes Steve Schlossberg, the general counsel. For example, the Federal Trade Commission had hearings on a proposed rule and regulation. I asked Steve to testify. He did a great job. You use whatever power you can for this. Now at the state level, we would ask Doug Fraser to testify because Doug is the chair of Michigan CAP and has a hell of a lot of influence with the state legislators. So we would try to get Doug. Sometimes it wouldn't be necessary for Doug to do it. I would do it or sometimes we would do testimony for Kenny Morris or others regional directors. I liked to have the regional directors do it because if they testify, they're much more likely to become involved in caring about it. All of these people have such large agendas. That is very understandable. Sometimes, if a consumer issue isn't at the top of it--because you have workmen's comp, unemployment comp, et cetera, et cetera, the traditional concerns of labor. So if you can get the regional director....in other words, my perceptions of this have always been to try to get your elected official involved. One way of getting him involved is asking him to give testimony. First of all, they've got to learn something about it. Not only do they have a written statement which you prepare for them, but they know they're going to be asked questions and so they have to prepare. Pat Greathouse is great on that! He always will study something. He's got a real skill in responding to questions. Sometimes you are just amazed as to how he has absorbed something so fast; he's a quick learner.

INTERVIEWER: Do you ever try to mobilize rank and file people to come to hearings to testify?

JEFFREY: You are now touching, I think, on what I consider one of the really hard problems of the labor movement. At the state level, yes. We would work at it at the state level.

INTERVIEWER: Is it difficult to do?

JEFFREY: Of course it's difficult!

INTERVIEWER: I mean, suppose . . .

JEFFREY: It's very difficult to do, because when are hearings? They're the during the week and during work hours. Now, in some states, such as Michigan, the committees now have hearings all over the state and they will have some in the evening. It's very difficult to get people to come to hearings if they're working.

INTERVIEWER: Does the union ever provide compensation?

JEFFREY: Sometimes. The whole question of lost time is a very, very difficult and complex and a political question. Paying lost time to people is, many people would feel, at the local union level or other levels, it's a "Pandora's Box." In Texas where they spent all kinds of money sending people to the state capitol, to Washington--these were some aerospace people--and according at least to what the staff person told me, and a very good person who is the CAP representative in Texas, the local wasted, wasted money. These were junkets. There are just no simple answers to this problem. I think it's a problem that should be identified and studied. I'm just speaking of the state level at this moment.

In the last few years, when utility rates have been such an issue, there were some local unions who would send people to Lansing to speak before the Public Service Commission which had hearings from time to time, not on rate increases as such, because if Detroit Edison has an increase in and the Commission is considering this, to intervene to speak before that Commission you have to be an attorney or presented by an attorney. They also have hearings. For example, Local 900 would send people up. We'd try to get at least local union presidents to come who are maybe full-time officers. That's really the first approach, trying to get full-time people to come up, at least in Michigan. I'm not sure about other states. Reliance has really been upon the retirees. They have really been tremendous! Retirees will go. Almost any of these consumer problems, of course, affect them very much. So the retirees are the group that gets mobilized, whether the hearings are Detroit, or Lansing, or wherever they may be.

Now when it comes to Washington, I don't know the answers to this either, nor do I know nearly as much about it. One of the programs that UAW has in Washington, out of the Washington office, is that region by region, delegates come in. When I say delegates, these are people that go through some process of being chosen, elected, selected for what will be known as a legislative conference in Washington. They will come in for a couple of days. They have presentations by members of the Congress, et cetera, et cetera. I think, I'm not sure, for the most part they're not organized to come in around a particular piece of legislation, but for the more leadership on the legislative process, to meet members of the Congress and the government. So, whatever bill,

JEFFREY: there's always something that's before the Congress that is high on the agenda of the UAW. In the course of these two days, they visit with their respective congressmen and respective senators, both Democrat and Republican. You'd have to get an appraisal from the Washington people. I know that staff works very hard in putting these together for the regions. No, hopefully, what comes out of this experience is a prompt response when Frank Wallick's letter goes out, or when Dick Warden, or Leonard Woodcock, whoever, communicates with the local unions and CAP councils. First it's to the CAP councils, say the Humphrey-Hawkins [bill] is tied up in committee. We need letters and telegrams to members of that committee. The union pleads, "Please get on the horn." Or "When your congressman comes home for the weekend or Easter recess, be sure to call upon him/her." There's such effort put into doing that. I think that the response, that we still do not do very well, but the Washington office could tell you much better. Every effort is made to do this. I'm not sure that the union knows what are the best techniques. Olga Madar raised the issue with the Committee of 100 that has been spear-heading National Health Security, of women's involvement because women are so exploited by the medical and health industry profes-sion. Her point was "You're not going to ever get National Health Security unless you get the women of this country behind it." That includes union women. One of the things that came out of that was she made a speech. They did a leaflet. There was a wonderful conference--four hundred or so women. It was sponsored not only by the unions women's committees but there were a num-ber of other groups from the Presbyterian Church, YWCA, and others. Most of the women who came were from labor. It was fascinating to see the women's consciousness awakened. Like an iceberg, the medical hospital problem below the surface, but haven't emerged on the consciousness of people that something can be done to rectify the abuses women and minorities endure. For many of the women at this conference, it was the first time their union had ever sent them to a conference in Washington. This is a separate value, but also a very important one, because generally unions send men to conferences.

In any event, the questions is what's happened? What follow-up has there been with these women? What, if anything, have they done? I don't know the answers to these questions. The thought that came to my mind was--and I've never been in any of Heather's [Booth] training sessions--that center around how you organize, how you do things, how to do follow-up, how to build sustained effort, how to get local groups to maintain a continuing interest and activity. I don't know what happened to these women when they went back home, whether anybody's tried to get them involved. The question is how do you effectively involve people in large numbers in national legislation, state legislation, too. Even harder, I think, is national legislation. The greatest effort that was ever made on this, the most effective one, I believe--and maybe it takes these kinds of combinations--was on Medicaid/Medicare. The combination I'm thinking of now is in 1962 Kennedy

JEFFREY: said, "The issue in the 1962 campaign is going to be Medicare." And he ordered the Democratic National Committee to direct the campaign. A staff was provided; speeches were written; TV clips and bumper strips and just everything, packets. These were distributed because there was a staff, because it was a good staff perhaps, too. All candidates for Congress, everybody, every candidate knew this was to be a principle thrust in their congressional campaign. Meanwhile, of course, the unions are very involved. In the UAW it was the retirees. They got thousands of petitions signed, thousands of postcards. They took it on as their cause. They would go out to speak to CAP and local union meetings, as consumers, as persons directly affected. That's what I think is the core, the basis of ever getting things really changed in this country or any place, is as the persons who are directly affected get mobilized, involved, speak out, fight.

I'll never forget those retirees. They were absolutely magnificent! They were all, of course, on their own voluntary time. But it is a lot easier for them to do it than for somebody that's working. I'm sure along the way they got some money for mileage, that sort of thing; some expenses, but not very much. We at least--I could think of others--but I think that is one campaign in which there really was an effective massive but individualized in the sense that it always has to happen out there in small places.

INTERVIEWER: What about your work in the Democratic Party? How did it relate to the philosophy of the union and your role in the union and your work in the union?

JEFFREY: As I've said earlier, I've lead an unplanned life. For some reason--and I cannot identify why--but from the time I was a little girl, I was very interested in politics. I couldn't wait to vote. The first time I voted, I had to vote by absentee ballot and it cost fifty cents to get it notarized. I didn't have fifty cents to my name. I borrowed fifty cents and I sent my absentee ballot in. In succeeding years, this interest was there. I suppose it also comes out of my Socialist Party experience. I was interested in the political process. When we were in Washington, we were also very good freinds with Eli Oliver, who was the director of the National Labor's Nonpartisan League. We were very good friends. I suppose along the way that this was one reason I was interested. When we moved to Detroit in 1944, Richard Frankensteen ran for mayor. Richard Frankensteen was the vice-president of the UAW. So there was a labor candidate running for mayor. We were brand new. So we worked very hard in Herman Gardens in getting people registered and out to vote, distributing the Frankensteen literature and stuff like that. It was without any association with the Democratic Party. Then one year on primary election day our neighbor, Clayton Fountain, who worked for the UAW who wrote a book called Union Guy, who is largely Indian--American Indian--came over early that morning when we were eating breakfast

JEFFREY: and said to my husband, "We're going to run Millie for precinct delegate today." I hardly knew what a precinct delegate was. So he explained that all you had to do to get elected precinct delegate was have a write in. He said to Newman, my husband, "You write her name in and Edith and I will, and Joe and Dora Tuma will. We'll elect her." That's what happened. I didn't pay much attention to it for a while. That was when Mennen Williams was running for governor in 1948 in the primary. The Democratic Party was in the hands of very conservative people. It was really a shell. So I got involved in Mennen's campaign whom the UAW was supporting in the primary in my own area and in my own congressional district. Then we had a bitter, bitter internal fight. Our forces took over, and Hicks Griffiths, Martha's husband was elected chair of the 17th District. "Blood on the pavement," it was called. Bitter, bitter, big stormy fights. So when I was in the 17th District, before I knew it I was on the executive board of the 17th District. Then one time, they decided they wanted me to go on the Democratic state central committee and I said, "No, no, my life is fine." I had two young children, and I didn't want anything else to do.

INTERVIEWER: The state central committee?

JEFFREY: Of the Michigan Democratic Party. All that I was doing was around my, I mean, it was in my precinct or in the 17th District, which is around your home. It doesn't mean that you have to do a lot of traveling. I mean, it's a limited geographical area. I didn't want to have to go to Lansing for meetings and that sort of stuff. Well, in any event, the agreement was that they would get somebody else. Then our forces, our caucus, it was left there and somebody else was going to make it if I didn't run. So they put the hammer lock on me. I ran for state central. So my first state convention I hadn't even gone to state conventions. Other UAW people were going to state conventions, but I hadn't. So as I said, I had enough to do with my job and my family and the children were young.

In any event, I went to a state convention. I was appalled at how they were handling the platform. I had been told the way you do a platform is somebody sits down and types it up and that's it. At one convention, it was Louis Carliner from the UAW, and a very gifted writer. I was appalled. So somehow or other, I ended up being the chair of the platform committee of the Michigan Democratic Party. We felt if you were going to have a platform, that there should be lots of people participation in the development of that platform.

INTERVIEWER: What date is this?

JEFFREY: Oh, this is 1955-56. So we held hearings around... well also, we had a Democratic governor, so when you have, there's supposed to be input from the chief administrative officer because he has to live with that platform. We also wanted people input so we

JEFFREY: had hearings around the state and got all sorts of committees set up and all sorts of people involved in the preparation of a platform before we got to the convention. This included Democrats, a representative of the governor's office, but also people like, for example, Wilbur Cohen who later on was Secretary of HEW [Health, Education and Welfare]. Wilbur is at the University of Michigan, one of the guys who helped write the original social security bill, a young man, Lynn Bartlett who became the Superintendant of Public Instruction, the teacher's union, and so on. If it's education, you got people who knew something about education, together with people who were experts when we had concerns and were reacting to things as consumers of those services, or who were victims in not having services or good programs. I chaired the platform committee for several years. I remember in 1952, I could have been a national convention delegate from my district, but I let somebody else do it. In 1956, I was a delegate because of my activity in the platform committee, I guess. I was put on the platform committee of the Democratic national committee convention in 1956, and that convention was in Chicago. That's why I can have some perspective on the changes that have taken place in the Democratic Party. I've been a convention delegate ever since then.

That was my first experience. I was so naive. I had been told, which was a fact, that the platform committee would be conducted under the rules of the House of Representatives. So I got the Cannon Rules, this great big thick book--red I believe the cover was--and I'd read it every night and had it by my bedside. I was going to learn the rules. John McCormack was going to chair the platform committee. Well, I did have the wit to understand, realize that I was never going to learn the rules of the House of Representatives by the time the platform committee met. In any event, John McCormack was the chair, and we had hearings. Now, the hearings are months ahead all over the country. In 1956, there were hearings for a solid week, just the way the Republicans are doing it now. On that committee were a number of people, including Senator Stennis, including Senator Urban, William Benton, Charlie Diggs, George Wallace. The hearings were held at the Blackstone. In any event, as is today, there was a drafting committee of fifteen persons. That drafting committee wrote the platform. Adlai Stevenson was a candidate and Avrell Harriman was a candidate. Diggs was supporting Avrell Harriman and so was Nancy Williams, and therefore, sort of, Mennen. In any event, that's just on the side, but it does fit in later. For the life of me I cannot at this moment give you what the particulars were on the civil rights issue. However, over here in the hotel is Walter Reuther with a suite, and there's Roy Wilkins and Clarence Mitchell and ADA types like Joe Rauh, heavy and high in the civil rights struggle. So I met with them all of the time. I was the most naive person in this world so I, well, we had regular meetings with Walter. I'm sure about many things. I know I was there being informed and instructed with Clarence Mitchell, and so on. These strategies

JEFFREY: were being developed on what to do on civil rights, the platform plank. Nobody could find out what the drafting committee was doing. So at one point, I suggested why don't we go see. Why don't we get people together and go see John McCormack. So Leonard was there and Jack Conway, and so on. I remember at one point when Walter said, well, I'm turning you over the Leonard now, something like that. In any event, we got--and I'm not sure who did this--I'm sure it was Walter or....I'm sure I didn't come. We had Mennen Williams, governor of Michigan; we had the governor of Minnesota, Orville Freeman; we had the mayor of the city of Philadelphia, Richardson Dilworth, and two or three other people whose names I do not recall, and myself tagging along. We called upon John McCormack about 4:00 in the morning. Oh yes, at 9:00 o'clock that morning, the drafting committee was to report to the floor committee. Here we were and we didn't know what was going to be in that draft on civil rights. So the purpose of this visit was to find out from John McCormack what was in the platform on civil rights. John McCormack refused. See, everything was secret, refused to tell these people, two governors, mayor of the fourth or third largest city in the United States. He refused to tell them. I had been told by Joe Rauh that if we were going to have, you talked about what stretegy, the minority report was only 10 percent but would have to be signed before the committee adjourned. That was one of the things I was told. Secondly, I was told you cannot go in or out of the room. You're going to be incommunicado. Well, we worked out a system where there was--I can't think of his name, red hair, he subsequently worked, I guess he was working for the Ford Foundation....

There were some good liberals on that committee. At 9:00 o'clock first thing out of the box, John McCormack had the civil rights plank read. Are they going to deal with the whole plank or are they going to deal with it seriatum? Paragraph by paragraph. So I felt that I had to ask this question, which is a usual question anyway to ask when you're in that kind of situation. To show you how composed I was, instead of saying, "Mr. Chairman" I said, "Mr. Paragraph." That shows how composed I was. In any event, we went through that. I made amendments and all of them lost. Neither Charlie Diggs, nor anybody else, Monroe Sweetland, Senator Bill Benton, nobody would support me, nobody. I'm nor sure that I was very bright or very astute. Well, then I had to report back to Walter and I was told we would be held incommunicado. But I found a house phone. In any event, Phil Perlman, who was then the Solicitor General or had been Solicitor General of the United States was staying in that hotel. I always charged the call to his room. I happened to know the room number. I'd call over and Jack Conway would answer, or Leonard Woodcock. I told them to prepare a minority report immediately. I got a copy of what they had. I got a hold of this guy who was a messenger on the floor below. Oh, it was just cloak and dagger! I remember I was on the phone or trying to get these messages out, and I remember at one point here I'm the big platform buff and I'm

JEFFREY: sitting here as a member of this committee and I don't know what they're passing because I....oh, and I'd go to Charlie Diggs and speak to him and he wouldn't help. Oh, and the guy that's in the judiciary committee that Ms. Holtzman defeated. In any event, he was on the committee from New York. Here are all of these senators, congressmen, and little, little, naive, inexperienced, unsophisticated me. Oh, I can't tell you how inadequte I felt. I remember at one point thinking it must be obvious to people that I'm not paying very much attention. So I sat down. They were, I remember, on a section dealing with juveniles and juvenile delinquency, about which I knew something. So I could stand up and participate in the discussion. Then, in my simple-minded fashion to demonstrate that I knew what was going on and that I was concerned about more than civil rights. In any event, one time when I called the headquarters room, Walter answered. Walter always used to say, "Oh, Millie, you're doing all right. We'll let you know when I want to talk to you. And that's when you're going to be in trouble, when you're not doing all right." Something like that. Well, I remember this time saying, "Walter, I need help; I've got to have help." He said, "Well, what do you want?" I guess I really got through to him this time. By this time, I think, that they had gotten the minority report in to me. We had to have the language. It had to be properly stated. In any event, I'll come back to that, because I remember going up and saying that congressman--oh, it's at the tip of my tongue. I knew he wouldn't sign it, because New York wasn't going to; anyway, it'll come--and say this is the minority report which I wish to file. I know you will not sign it, but I want to know whether it conforms to the rules, because I didn't want any errors. I didn't want them to throw out the minority report because of some little omission or inadequacy in their strict interpretation of the rules of the House of Representatives. In any event, when I said to Walter, "I need help," he said, "What?" I said, "I want Senator Lehman here. I want Jim Lord from Wisconsin." He's now a federal judge. "I want people from California," and so on. The idea was to get these prestigious people to the platform committee meeting so that we could get signature on the minority report. I couldn't convince, oh, sure, I had the petition out for the minority. But I couldn't get any signatures, or very few. Oh, they just folded. So they got people over there. They came to the outside where there was sort of a circular platform. I would take the Wisconsin people out to see whoever it was from Wisconsin and so on.

I remember going up to Bill Benton saying, "Senator Lehman is here. He would like to see you and he's just outside the door." There was a sort of a riser in the back, and Senator Lehman stood up there, and I think, a few steps up. I think that gave him privacy for conversation. I suppose that's why he did it. These people would come up and they'd talk with him. They'd come back into the room and they still wouldn't sign the minority report. Well, when we left that room, I'm thinking, because Joe Rauh had told me that we had to have the signatures by the time

JEFFREY: the committee adjourned. I felt like total, total failure. I remember going back to the hotel and being so distressed. Well, it turned out that you didn't have to have the signatures. I don't know who found this out, but somebody did. You had like twelve more hours after the committee adjourned to get the necessary signatures for the minority report. The New York caucus met and New York got its platform committee members to sign the minority. For some reason, Harriman was playing games with this issue--he was a candidate for the Presidential nomination. When New York won't sign a minority report, you're in trouble. Well, one of the guys who spoke on the minority, Robert Short, he wasn't on the committee; he was from Minnesota. He was a Kefauver delegate. He now owns the Redskins. In any event, when I contrast that experience in 1956 with what happens now, with the changes in the rules which have come about through our party reforms, I am delighted. There is so much greater openness and orderliness and process, and I can say to people things are a lot better than they used to be, greatly improved. Some people think....I'm uncomfortable talking about 1940 or 1956 with many people. It's just foolish to talk about those years. It's just not real. A historian is different!

INTERVIEWER: I was looking through the Women's Department files and I saw something on the Wagner-Dingell something . . .

JEFFREY: Murray Wagner Dingell Bill.

INTERVIEWER: Bill on comprehensive health insurance?

JEFFREY: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: I never saw a reference to it before.

JEFFREY: Oh, really! Well, that, of course, was the first big try.

INTERVIEWER: And I was just....

JEFFREY: Following England, really. That was the first big try.

INTERVIEWER: Has your own work within the Democratic Party changed a great deal over the years?

JEFFREY: Well, in any event, at each convention except 1964, I've been on a committee and committees are very important. In 1960, I was on the platform committee again. In 1968, credentials; in 1972, on rules ; in 1976, on rules ; in 1972, rules committee was.... Well, 1968 credentials was when we seated Mississippi and the Julian Bond delegation. These were tremendous experiences. I feel after Bobbie's death in 1968, I was a basket case. Yes. I do have a feeling that my participation in the Democratic Party has been meaningful and fulfilling for me as a person and that in some small fashion, I have been a participant in change and in building the Party, certainly in this state.

INTERVIEWER: How did . . .

JEFFREY: I was elected a member of the Democratic National Committee; actually, an alternate before this, when Margaret Price went to Brazil. I did serve as a full-fledged member of the National Committee from 1964 through 1972 and also as elected by the fourteen Midwest states as a member of the executive committee. I mentioned that because nobody would think that me, the liberal/ radical minority person would be elected by the fourteen Midwest states to the executive committee. But I was, twice--in 1964 and 1968.

INTERVIEWER: Has your work in the Democratic Party gotten easier since the Women's Movement?

JEFFREY: Well, I didn't run for re-election in 1972, so I haven't been a Party officer since 1972.

INTERVIEWER: What position did you leave in 1972?

JEFFREY: The National Committee. As a member of the National Committee, oh, I'm still a precinct delegate, this time against all of my wishes because I thought I had somebody to run. In any event, in Michigan as a member of the National Committee, you're a part of what is called leadership. That meant we had meetings every week or every two weeks. A lot of it was housekeeping stuff. I didn't run because I do have a principle that people should not hang on but should move on so that other people have those opportunities. That was really my principle in not running again in 1972. In a way, I've missed it, but I've also saved a lot of valuable hours that I could use for other things. Then, in 1974, I succumbed and ran in a statewide election. Well, first I had to get the nomination and then as a Democratic candidates for state-wide election for Wayne State University Board of Governors. It was the first time I'd run for public office. No it wasn't. I ran for Constitutional Convention just because they told me I had to. Roy Reuther told me I had to. They thought I could be elected. They were wrong.

INTERVIEWER: When was this? When did you run for Constitutional Convention?

JEFFREY: Yes. It was a Spring election. It was a disaster for the Democrats. Let's see, the Constitution was 1963. It must have been the Spring of 1961. There were--it was two to one Republican in the state, which was not representative of the political climate or situation in our state. It was a Spring election, Constitutional Convention Delegate. People simply didn't go to the polls. That's when George Romney started his political career. He was chair of the Constitutional Convention. That was his springboard.

INTERVIEWER: You were starting to talk about running for the Wayne State University Board of Governors.

JEFFREY: Well, I just mentioned that.

INTERVIEWER: And that's 1974?

JEFFREY: That was 1974.

INTERVIEWER: And you were elected?

JEFFREY: And I was elected. It was a Democratic year. I was lucky with the ticket.

INTERVIEWER: Did your work in the Democratic Party have a particular relationship to your work in the union?

JEFFREY: Well, as I've said, I've been a very fortunate, lucky person. My work in the union was--you asked earlier for a job description--I suppose that was really the nice thing about it. I had tremendous freedoms and liberties. I could do whatever I wanted to do, in a sense. I don't mean to personalize it that much. Walter Reuther was an absolutely magnificant person to work for. Since his perspective on the role of the UAW was so broad, and since I was supposed to be doing community relations, there just wasn't any conflict on this. Also, it should be very clearly stated, whatever I did politically was in the Democratic Party was with the blessing, permission of the union and in particularly, Walter, because of course it did take some time. I always said it was on my voluntary time and essentially that's true. But, for example, if it was platform chair I worked very hard at getting UAW people there or other labor people into those platform committee meetings so that they would be expressing labor's point of view. So it happened naturally, not somebody saying this is what labor wants from the top.

You ask me, did it relate to my work in the UAW. It certainly related to Walter's concerns and interests in the Democratic Party. Walter never was out front. Leonard is much more out front, and has been with the Democratic Party from times past. Leonard was always a delegate when he was a regional director, to the Convention. Walter was never a delegate. Walter never spoke at a Jeff Jackson Day Dinner, for example. He finally did go to some big fund-raising dinners in Washington, especially after Kennedy was elected. The fact that I was on the Democratic National Committee or I could be on this platform committee or something like that in those days, well, I was much more--except for Leonard and maybe a few others--I was much more inside the Democratic Party than a lot of other UAW people. Now, it's very different today, but in those days. I think that's more or less accurate.

INTERVIEWER: Does that mean that today there are more UAW people inside?

JEFFREY: Oh, yes. In elected party positions.

INTERVIEWER: Were you seen as a labor representative by others in the Democratic Party?

JEFFREY: Well, that's another good and sticky question, very difficult to make clear to people. Of course, I was perceived as a labor representative, but as I always said, I cannot speak for the UAW; I could not speak for the UAW. If they want to know what the UAW position on this, go to the appropriate person in the UAW, Roy Reuther, whoever it was, Doug Fraser. I am not here as a spokesperson for the UAW. I couldn't be. I wasn't an elected person. It was not my staff responsibility to get that across to people, including reporters. Reporters I had a terrible time with, was very difficult and would cause some problems from time to time. The big question when they had the big brouhahas as to whether or not I should go on the National Committee was as an alternate. But this was a vote at State Central in which Mennen Williams' representative was Paul Weber, a very dear personal friend of mine. He was very opposed to my becoming an alternate National Committee woman because he said, among other things, if Millie does a good job and she'll get elected. His concern was that somehow Mennen was going to run for President, that this would be another evidence of takeover by the UAW. Huh, little league! In any event, also, the question which goes to a person's integrity was that I might learn or hear things going on as far as Mennen Williams was concerned, or whatever was going on in the governor's office or in the Democratic Party that they didn't want UAW to know, so to speak, to put it bluntly. On the other hand--the UAW never said this but I suppose Paul did--I might know stuff from the UAW that the UAW didn't want the Democratic Party to know. I think that was unlikely. In any event, it was perceived as being a very difficult, ethical question of the capability of a person to operate with integrity. I must say, I never found that a problem, but it was a concern. I don't think that I ever got into trouble on that. I sometimes got into trouble because of this other problem--that I would be perceived as representing the UAW, which could be resented by the UAW. Of course, that's why Walter was always so great. If a regional director got unhappy with me, he would always back me up. I tried very hard to act reponsibly, but perhaps I didn't always. I thought I was, but....

INTERVIEWER: Well, there are always differences of opinion.

JEFFREY: Right! Walter was so great! In any event, the question was were they job-related? They were certainly person-related. It was with the provision of the UAW, and I never found in those years any conflict between what my position or my thinking might be in the Democratic Party and my position on issues and the UAW. Now, when it got to the war years, then that's when it all became very, very much more complicated and difficult.

INTERVIEWER: Which war?

JEFFREY: The Vietnam War. Yes. Because I was a peace person. I restricted myself, however. I'd go to meetings, but I didn't make speeches. I supported the anti-war efforts, but I didn't get out in front, because the UAW wasn't out in front. I was clearly identified as a peacenik. That was at the point when some regional directors would get unhappy with me and complain to Walter. They were so unbelievably difficult. People talk about all the unity today. But the war so divided people. As I used to say to the peace people who felt so deeply that the people who were for the war also felt deeply. It was such strong, emotional feelings. Whatever their viewpoint, feeling just as right about it, feeling just as strongly as the person on the totally opposite side. That's why divisions were so strong and so deep. It's one thing to be on a different side in a primary campaign, like we just went through one. It isn't difficult for people to come back together again if it's around a person pretty much and there isn't any strong overriding issue or deep issue. With the war, it just wasn't that way. I wasn't that way at all.

INTERVIEWER: Were there issues other than the war that have gotten you in trouble with the regional directors or where the regional directors complained about your political role?

JEFFREY: Oh, yes. Support of candidates for Party office sometimes.

INTERVIEWER: They objected? On what grounds did they object?

JEFFREY: Oh, that I might take a position before the UAW did. I might vote on something, even in my own district, before there had been a UAW caucus --things like that. Very irritating at the time. One issue would be election of a National Committeeman. In retrospect, I really think I was wrong. John Swainson came from our district. We had asked him to run for state senator at a time we deemed that the District Chairman was from the teachers' union, not the UAW, and myself in particular, a couple of other people. We had asked John to run because it had been held by a Republican and we were sure we could win with a Democrat that year. Then in 1960, we also encouraged John to run for governor. The secretary of state was a popular figure and everybody thought he would win the primary. The UAW took a hands-off position, and I was absolutely scrupulous in that. I never did a thing for John but everybody knew I was for John because he was a political friend. That didn't cause a particular problem, but subsequently, oh, yes. Although this wasn't a big problem--what year, we supported Zoltan Ferency for state chair of the Michigan Democratic Party, but I had Leonard's permission on that. Sometimes you could get Walter's or Leonard's okay but that didn't mean that regional directors were happy with you. I supported Zoltan Ferency. We went into that convention with like twenty votes against Neil Staebler's choice, who was the incumbent. Neil was a big, big, biggie here and a very good friend of mine and a very wonderful person. I remember

JEFFREY: I went around with Zoltan, for example, to all the caucuses supporting him. By that time, I was pretty well known in the Democratic Party. I asked Leonard. I said, "Leonard, I would like to do this. Do you have any, do you see any reason why I shouldn't." He wasn't my boss but he was the top UAW person. He was like Doug Fraser. He was the chairman of Michigan UAW before we had CAP. So I always checked at least with a principal in the UAW. That didn't mean that every regional director knew Leonard had told me I could do it. We won and Zoltan was elected chair to everybody's amazement. That did cause a lot of divisions in the Party. I don't know, in retrospect, whether that was wise or not. One really silly thing I did--John Swainson was, he and Neil had had some fallings out, so we ran a person for National Committeeman against Neil. We lost miserably. That was pretty stupid, I think. In any event, that was one thing I remember that some regional directors thought I was pretty bad. As I recollect it, the UAW didn't take a hard position on that. But you know, there goes Millie sort of thing. All of those things are forgotten now, I think.

INTERVIEWER: What I'd like to do now, unless you want to . . .

JEFFREY: And the worst part, the worst thing was 1968. I said I was a basket case. I was for Bobby Kennedy. I--my son was there with me. The 1968 convention was a terrible period. I really always push it out of my mind except for what we did on credentials and rules. Walter called me in with Irving Bluestone asking me to support Humphrey and I said I couldn't do it. We finally made a compromise. I say I was a basket case, but I just couldn't do it. After Humphrey was nominated, I put a Humphrey button on. I remember meeting Walter Mondale as I was going out of the Conrad Hilton Hotel. I remember I had the button on and I remember Mondale looking to see if I had it on. He said, "You have it on?" I said, "Yes, and I will support Hubert," and I did. He was the nominee. I had also gone to some of George McGovern's things. There was a lot of unhappiness with me and rightly so, absolutely rightly so, because all of the UAW people were for Humphrey, although our delegation in Michigan was miserable. Although in the end Walter shifted his position on the minority peace thing. I mean, he didn't shift, but the word went out that it was okay if....I remember saying that morning to Sam Fishman, "Sam, I think you should know I have to vote for the minority peace; I just have to and I just wanted you to know." In the course of the day, the word went out that it was okay to vote for the minority peace and the Michigan delegation was the only decent vote they had in that convention. That's a prejudiced viewpoint. We had been so miserable on the credential challenge vote. Michigan voted for minority peace, fifty-one to something or other. It was also incredible because Jim O'Hara was the Humphrey leader for the whole convention. They were so hard on their supporters. Everything was a test of Humphrey strength. That's why we, credentials

JEFFREY: votes went so badly in Michigan and some other states. Jim had been very opposed to minority peace. We'd drive back from Chicago to Grand Rapids immediately into our state convention. The delegates to that 1968 convention had been chosen by Precinct Delegates who had been elected in 1966. There was one delegate for Gene McCarthy. That no more represented the sentiment in Michigan than the man in the moon. When we came back to . . .

INTERVIEWER: You mean there was a lot of Michigan support for McCarthy?

JEFFREY: Oh, there was quite a little. Certainly more than that! When we come back from the convention, here are precinct delegates that have been elected two weeks before that. They'd all seen Michigan's performance on TV, and they'd seen those votes. They had blood in their eyes because these delegates, in 1968, McCarthy, Kennedy forces had done very well in getting precinct delegates elected because they were representing the attitudes and feelings of people at that time. Oh, it was a screaming convention. Jim O'Hara sitting in a room. Here he'd led the fight for the majority peace, and he agreed that we at the Michigan Democratic convention could support the minority peace. That's what we did. That's one of the things that kept the convention together. He didn't fight it. In any event, that's another long, long story.

INTERVIEWER: Okay, what I'd like to do is go back over your career and ask you how you managed your work responsibilities and your family responsibilities and also, what your particular experiences were as a woman. You mentioned a few times that you took short leaves of absence to raise your children. When you took those leaves of absences, were you planning to drop out of work for a period of time?

JEFFREY: For a period of time, but not permanently.

INTERVIEWER: I mean, until they were older or they were in school?

JEFFREY: Oh, no, a short period of time.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. What kinds of domestic responsibilities did you have when you got home from work?

JEFFREY: Well, while the children were young and after we moved from Herman Gardens to our house on Grandville where we still live, we had space for a live-in housekeeper. We were very fortunate. We got a splendid woman, Bertha Freeman, who got along very well with the children. She was an excellent cook and a poor housekeeper, but a fine, fine person. It makes such an enormous difference when you have a live-in. Kind of rare these days, but it was an enormous, enormous help. I couldn't have done it, I really don't think I could have. Those days you didn't think much about it; you just knew you had to have a live-in. So that was very important. Secondly, as I've indicated, when the children were young,

JEFFREY: I tried not to travel too much. Now on my job, you'd go out to a conference, that sort of thing, but it isn't a regular assignment. I was asked by Emil to go to Kohler.

INTERVIEWER: The Kohler strike?

JEFFREY: The Kohler strike. That's when I say, in some ways I felt I was a privileged person because I said I could not do it. I knew if I went to Kohler, I would get stuck there and I could not be away from home that much. So the UAW was very good to me. Secondly, one of the things I always tried....first of all, start out the day, start out the day by being as happy as possible. My daughter Sharon was sunshine. She always woke up happy and smiling. So that was a good beginning. And have a family breakfast, at least myself and the children. I'm very old fashioned: I believe in a very substantial breakfast for the kids. We would always eat breakfast together, which was a time to talk, chat about the day or whatever was on their minds. As much as possible, always being home for dinner, even if I had an evening meeting. In the car going home I would always say everything goes out of your mind. You go home at 6:00 o'clock or 6:30, until they go to bed, depending upon their age. Of course when they were younger that's their time and that's the whole world. So we had great times together. I'm speaking particularly when they were younger--lots of game playing, reading stories, or whatever, whatever they were interested in doing. It was their time, and I loved it. It was my world, so to speak, as much as theirs. I remember one day when it was Sharon's eighth birthday. I was getting out of the car with a bag of groceries. It was a Saturday. It just happened to hit me that up to that point, I had always thought of a home with children. Those first eight years had gone so fast. I knew the next eight years would go even sooner and at sixteen she'd be a young lady, a young woman. I think I always treasured and enjoyed the time with the children. I recall so well, that was reinforcing. So that I almost hung on to those years when they were still young, because you know they have to become adults and they have to define their own lives, as they certainly begin to do in high school as they, or even before, but certainly in high school with their own friendships. Another thing we treasured were our summer vacations. In retrospect, those are some of the greatest, most beautiful, enjoyable times of my life, was when we were all on vacation together. Whatever it was, just absolutely beautiful. Of course, after they get older, they want to do their own vacation things with their own friends.

I said earlier that we put Sharon in nursery school when we were still living in Falls Church because I felt that nursery school was significant for the emotional, psychological, and mental development of a child. So when we came here, the thing in Detroit was Merrill Palmer. Well, Bal was young, and it would have been nice to get Bal into Merrill Palmer Nursery School, but

JEFFREY: to get into Merrill Palmer Nursery School they always said you had to register your child before or she was a gleam in your eye because there was a long waiting list. I did get Bal into a nursery school. It was a settlement house nursery school financed by UCF--not outstanding, but a good nursery school. Then, in addition, Merrill Palmer had an after school recreation program. I think I was kind of crazy now, but in any event, at that time, I thought get the children into that. So once a week I would pick them up and take them there. Once in a while they would take the bus, and I would meet the bus halfway, wherever they got off, and take them there and pick them up. It was a two or three hour program. Also, Merrill Palmer had a summer camp. I remember Merrill Palmer was the place where you tried to get your children into, and if you do, you're doing something well for your children. So I can still see Sharon when we left her at the Summer Camp. At the tender age of six, I guess, we enrolled and were fortunate enough to have Sharon--because again there was a waiting list for this; there always was one--admitted to Merrill Palmer Summer Camp, which was for six weeks. It was a tremendous camp. When I ask the kids now, they both say yes, it was good. Because you don't know. I recall also very well that one of the reasons, in addition to thinking it would be good from every standpoint for Sharon, I also thought it would be nice to have Bal at home alone so that he was the king of the roost for those six weeks that she was gone. Sharon was always very outgoing and when anybody came into the house, they always talked and spoke about Sharon. Bal was sort of, not ignored, but certainly not given the same kind of recognition. He wasn't as outgoing or attractive. Sharon was very outgoing, as I've said, very smiley, beautiful brown eyes. Bal related very well to people, particularly adults, but it was more on a one-to-one basis. So we thought it would be good to have all the attention center around him that summer. Then, when he was old enough, he went to Merrill Palmer, too. There must have been two or three summers when both of them were there together, which turned out to be very nice. They enjoyed being in the camp together. Then, after that, for summer plans they went to the UAW camp. By this time, they really liked camp life. Sharon went to YWCA Camp. Also, during the summer months, it was, without school, Camp Cavallo, for example, she could take horseback riding which she by that time enjoyed very much. Both kids learned to ride in Rouge Park, which we lived very near and which had a stable. They don't anymore, but Bal and Sharon learned to ride on horses. That's one reason we bought the house we did was that it was so close to Rouge Park and you could either walk or bicycle there without any problem. They spent many wonderful hours in Rouge Park, overnight, and all sorts of things.

INTERVIEWER: How did you and your husband share child care and household responsibilities?

JEFFREY: On household responsibilities, well I guess I should say this: having the environment in which I met Newman, the truth is today I would have probably been through consciousness raising sessions. Having met him in the radical movement, it never occurred to me that he wouldn't be wholly supportive of my working. And intellectually he was, but emotionally he was not and I became a threat to him. I don't know what it was. I think we didn't deal with that well at all. As far as the household is concerned, he was absolutely magnificent in taking care of the house. Just absolutely great, repairing things and all of that. When it comes to cooking and dishes and cleaning and all of that sort of stuff, he didn't do anything except he enjoyed making salads and seasoning meats.

INTERVIEWER: Did you have to do all of that or did you . . . ?

JEFFREY: Well, you see, I don't think it ever really became a great issue because I always had help, except on weekends or holidays or when there was vacation. We had live-in help for a long, long time. I have to reconstruct it. As far as child care was concerned, he was a very good father, very good father. He was a great instructor. His discipline, I thought, sometimes was harsh and erratic. He and Sharon used to have great contests of will and they have not had a particularly good relationship. Those contests have continued. Now the relationship is pretty good, but for several years they didn't speak. I'd finally get her to write a postcard or a birthday card or something like that. They've had a rapprochement, I'm happy to say, when Sharon was in Washington a year or so ago. He was a splendid instructor--very good on books, appreciation of literature and that sort of stuff.

INTERVIEWER: Could you talk a little more, if you can, about how your working became a threat to him?

JEFFREY: The first time it happened was way back in 1940. It really was related to the Baltimore scene. He sort of wanted to stay on in Baltimore and become part of the staff. I don't remember the detail, but in any event, the idea was a business agent. They did not want him and that was quite a blow to him. That's why when Victor offered me this job we talked about it very carefully. That's why he went with me for the interview and agreed to everything, but I don't know. As time went on, he also started drinking very, very heavily, along the way. It got very bad at one point later on. I mean, he really became an alcoholic, and that does not help. That's very difficult to deal with. At least it was for me. That's really why, when I spoke about his erratic discipline, I think discipline has to be reasonably consistent. Any parent can get angry at something. I am sure that also, people, I don't know what they said or did. They probably said, "Millie's doing all right," or whatever they said. Men! I don't know whether I was a threat. Let's put it this way:

JEFFREY: he wasn't able to accept it. I'm sure that this was my fault just as much as it was his.

I remember one night....when I say everything was unplanned, it really was. I actually never wanted anything. But Workman's Circle gave me a Community Award and I was very excited about it because I'd done a lot of work. We had an English-speaking branch. Phil Hart and I were receiving awards the same night. The children were maybe ten, twelve. I got a new dress and Sharon got a new dress and we got all fixed up. It was on a Sunday evening and Newman absolutely refused to go. That absolutely crushed me! That's when it really hit me very, very hard. Really, this was devastating to me! Because he had said....everything seemed to be very good and he was going to go. Then he decided no. I don't know what that really meant, except it was ....I suppose it looked as though I was doing very well. I didn't feel that way, but I'm saying probably because I wasn't sensitive enough to really be fully sensitive to what was going on, what was happening in his mind. But I remember that really hurt. I was totally unprepared for it because that was the first time anything like that ever...I always thought we were together. Part of this was that we were in the labor movement. We shared the same commitment. I remember when I first met him and we'd walk around the textile mills and he would tell me where the picket lines should be, how you would organize this and how you would do that. He was a great teacher. I always felt that way about him, that he was so able. I think I always felt, well, we're in this together, and it isn't you or me, it's the cause. Well, I was mistaken, and I wasn't sensitive enough to realize all this. So that was the beginning. And then he wanted to leave. He wanted to become a rancher.

INTERVIEWER: He wanted to leave?

JEFFREY: Yes, he wanted to leave the labor movement altogether. He looked in Texas for a ranch. He looked in South Carolina. I don't know how serious he was about this. So he left home and he worked in Texas on a ranch for a while.

INTERVIEWER: What year was this?

JEFFREY: 1955. All I said was, "It sounds like a lovely idea, Newman, but how do you know you're really going to like it and want to?" He was the kind of person that moved on. He changed from job to job. Sometimes I thought that he had, well, there's some evidence of this -- he could not accept success. He'd get up right close to something where it was going to really develop well or be "a success," and he'd do something. He'd walk away from it. He'd move away from it, do something and would not have. It would not culminate in a success experience which would bring recognition. Then later on he decided he wanted to go. Although during the war he had gone to Germany, after the war for some

JEFFREY: kind of program for which he had a uniform on. I can't remember the name of it. My point is, he kept, he was, it was very hard for him, I guess. It's very hard for me; whatever I say I'm very uncertain of, but there was, he'd done this thing in Germany sort of for the labor movement. That's when he met Irving Brown and got all involved in all sorts of internecine warfare with the labor movement. He was right! I don't know whether you know who Irving Brown is. Irving Brown is Jay Lovestone's agent. They're the ones who had all these years influenced George Meany's policies on foreign questions. It is still true that the unreasonable fear of the Soviet Union and communism.... Irving Brown--I don't think anybody speaks this--was a funnel for CIA money into right wing union organizations in Italy and some of the other European nations. He and Newman got into it big. Part of this is that Newman was an idealist. If things didn't go the way he thought they should....a psychiatrist talked with me about his not achieving success--that is, not being willing to accept success. It was perhaps also this business. He was a very, I guess, uncompromising idealist. He couldn't tolerate the weaknesses, the deficiencies of others that he was working with. In any event, he kept moving from one thing to another. That's why I said, all of this, when he was going to get a job at the UAW, that's why, really, there was no question in my mind, and I had, I mean, and it was just as clear as all of that to me, that I should, I was going to resign. Jack Conway said, "No, no, take a leave of absence." There was just no question in my mind that he ought to have that opportunity of working with the UAW. Absolutely no trauma for me leaving the UAW.

INTERVIEWER: Was this an intuition or was it sort of explicit? I mean, did you understand this clearly at the time or was it like an intuition on your part?

JEFFREY: Oh, I don't know how clearly I understood it. I mean, we talked about it. I just said from the beginning to him that I'm delighted and so on. Part of this is that I will resign from the UAW, because that's a policy of the UAW.

INTERVIEWER: If you had it to do over again, would you have changed your work in any way to protect your marriage?

JEFFREY: You see, what I think is that if I had in fact resigned from the UAW and that had been severed, I would have done something else. I don't know what it would have been, but I would have done something else. The fact that I didn't resign and I got back on the payroll. Obviously there was nothing greater in life than to work for the UAW. Now perhaps what I should have done, but I didn't, is not to have gone back to the UAW. But Newman had no objections to my going back to the UAW. He was then working in Region 1B and, as a matter of fact, we did many things together. I was at the international. He was out at Region 1B. By that time, Caroline Davis and her husband were both working at Solidarity House, so that a husband and wife was no longer the

JEFFREY: biggie thing that it had been. I'm sure people make comparisons and all sorts of things. There, just like when people would talk about the three Reuther brothers and they'll say Walter was this or Walter was better or Victor was really better. I always say I never compare the Reuthers. I think that happens in husband and wife teams. It certainly used to. Because I always thought of it as a husband and wife team.

INTERVIEWER: It still does.

JEFFREY: Yes, it still does, I'm sure. Well, your question was, to protect the family.

INTERVIEWER: Well, your marriage.

JEFFREY: Yes, the marriage, the marriage. Of course, by the time Newman went off to Africa, he had, he was very, very bad at one point. He went to a sanitarium but that didn't work. It was horrible. He was drinking a fifth a day and it was affecting him so physically and emotionally and everything else. Then, because of Frank Wynn, really,who had been an alcoholic, who was director of public realtions for the UAW. It was Frank who really persuaded him. We were all, we were very good social friends as well as union friends. Frank persuaded him to go to Brighton to the Alcoholics Anonymous Hospital. He went to Brighton and he stayed there for quite a while. I'm happy to say he's never had a drink since then. It's just really great. It also changed his personality a lot. It sometimes happens. That's when he decided he wanted to do something in the AID program and he got this job in Africa. I was supposed to come over when the kids were out of school. That's when he apparently fell in love with the woman he married. So that's why we separated. I got the divorce and he's very happily married, which is fine. It really is! He'd been terribly ill. He's had a very serious operation, but he's doing quite well now. Fannie, his present wife, I think has done all of those things for him that I wasn't able to do.

He and our son have a splendid relation, as I said. He and Sharon are now sort of back together again. We really had a wonderful family life. We did all these things together and we enjoyed them so much, whether it was vacations, or a year-round holiday, Christmas, all of those things. So I think on a whole the memory of the children is really very good. When he was drinking really heavy he would shout, throw dishes, that sort of thing. I'm sure they remember it, but it isn't anything that gives them any great trouble from what they tell me.

INTERVIEWER: They're old enough to have thought about it. Do you think your work experiences would have been different if you were a man?

JEFFREY: Oh, I think inevitably, yes. The answer is yes! How would they have been different? Well, for one thing, I'm sure that I

JEFFREY: personally would have fought harder for recognition in the UAW if I'd been a man, and more pay. I am certain that, there's no question that in the labor movement and in the political movement you're not counted in or included because you're a woman and lots of different things.

INTERVIEWER: Do you have experiences of being excluded?

JEFFREY: What, to document my statement?

INTERVIEWER: No. I mean, I'm sure that your statement is true. But do you have any particular experiences where you were aware of being excluded? On the one hand, you're in a staff position where you have a lot of leeway, so it's probably quite difficult....

JEFFREY: And I worked for Walter Reuther . . .

INTERVIEWER: Right!

JEFFREY: Who was....Walter had no prejudices about people--black, white, male, female, everybody was equal. Politically, oh, I think it's just that, sort of, the boys get together. That doesn't happen--I'm speaking generally about women in the Michigan Democratic Party--nearly as much as it used to, but I'm sure it still happens. It isn't like formal exclusion. It isn't like when blacks first said no whites can enter this meeting, like a really closed door. I can't come up with anything specific at this moment.

INTERVIEWER: Did you feel the exclusion of women more keenly in the Democratic Party than in the UAW, the informal exclusion of women?

JEFFREY: Not in the Michigan Democratic Party, no. As far as I'm concerned, I did not personally feel it a great deal, but I knew it existed. I was always fussing about it. In the National Democratic Party there's no question that women were excluded. Also, it was simply, it was more than that; it was....we got to those national levels with some of these people like Governor Lawrence. As you got to know him, and more importantly I suppose, as he got to know you, you didn't feel as if you were being looked down upon.

INTERVIEWER: Have you participated in any nonunion feminist issues?

JEFFREY: I'm not sure what you mean by nonunion.

INTERVIEWER: Something in the women's movement like the National Women's Political Caucus [NWPC] or NOW or any of the women's organization?

JEFFREY: Oh, yes. I was at the founding conference of NWPC. I participated. I was with Ellie Peterson, a co-convener of the Michigan Women's Political Caucus. Ellie Peterson right now is President Ford's particular woman on politics. She was state chairman of the Michigan Republican Party. She was vice chairman of the

JEFFREY: National Republican Party. Ellie and I were the conveners for the Michigan Women's Political Caucus. We got that going. I'm a member of NOW since its founding and I go to their meetings, but I've never been very active in NOW.

INTERVIEWER: The Women's Equity Action League?

JEFFREY: Yes. I support the Gay Alliance. As a matter of fact, Jean O'Leary is a very good friend of mine. In the NWPC, what I've done for this last year is chair the Democratic Task Force of the National Women's Political Caucus. That was the group that together with the women's caucus of the National Democratic Committee that formed the women's caucus at this convention. We did all this. We and the Democratic Task Force did most of the work. Raised money. And then there are other kinds of women's groups. There's a Women's Forum in Detroit which is a communication network organization. YWCA.

INTERVIEWER: Are you active in the YWCA now?

JEFFREY: Not now. I once was a national board member. I resigned from that. It was just too demanding in time and I was not making my contribution, so I resigned.

INTERVIEWER: Do you want to talk about your work within the National Women's Political Caucus? What kinds of changes do you think that women being organized within the Democratic Party, within the political parties have been able to make over the last few years?

JEFFREY: Well, let me start out by talking about the Women's Caucus in the Michigan Democratic Party. On 1970, 1969, well, let us say that wherever one has ever been, you have to fight for and with your sisters. That's why people would say to me in the Party or other places, "Millie, what are you fussing around about this?" This is sort of that same thing. "You haven't had any problems. You've gotten what you've wanted."—that same sort of thing. So all through the years in the Michigan Democratic Party we always were fussing and fighting for recognition of women. Even though I would say that in the Michigan Democratic Party we were far advanced on the question of women. We had a wonderful woman who was vice chairman, Adelaide Hart, who loved Mennen Williams but she would fight to the death with Mennen. She's not much taller than I am. Mennen's so tall. She's a school teacher. She'd shake her finger--not her fist, her finger--at Mennen about appointments of women or whatever it was. In 1959, we had a party reform commission. I still remember how angry I was at Sandy Levin who was state chair when I saw the membership of that committee was less than 20 percent female. I really raised cain. The chair of the committee was Bill Haber, a distinguished, wonderful man from The University of Michigan. It became known as the Haber Commission. So we sent Bill names and we finally got more women on.

JEFFREY: In that commission we had a number of issues that affected women. This culminated in a party reform convention in which the recommendations of this commission were to be adopted into party law. It meant restructuring, opening up the party, all sorts of things. Well, as we were getting ready for that convention, I wrote a note to Jean King who was then in law school. She's now a woman attorney from the second district, which is Ann Arbor and surrounding communities; was always very good on women's, there were always a lot of women very active in the second district and in Washington County Democratic Committee. So I wrote a note to Jean and I said, "Jean, it seems to me it's about time for a women's caucus. What do you think?" Jean and some of the Ann Arbor women thought it was a good idea. We had out first Democratic women's caucus meeting at the Masonic Temple at that 1970 January convention. Now before this, we'd always had a federation of democratic women. Adelaide had worked very hard in that to get women to fight for their rights, et cetera. But a caucus is different than a traditional kind of women's organization in the Democratic Party. In any event, there was a tremendous turnout. There were four hundred women at this first meeting. Out of this came three floor fights. One was equal representation of national convention delegates, which we lost. The second one was equal representation of everything in the Michigan Democratic Party, which we lost. The third one was these little words "alternating by sex." What that referred to was the make-up of the Democratic State Central Committee. In the past it was always two men and two women. Because there's a long history of equal representation. That's why we said in this fight in New York, in the convention, the rules committee, we relied on tradition, tradition. Because from 1920 when women got the suffrage, the National Committee had been composed of, it had been all men. When women got the suffrage it was one man and one woman for each state, tradition. When we restructured the State Central Committee, it was to reflect Democratic voting strength. So for example, the first district, as it subsequently turned out; but anyway, the first district--which is John Conyers--which votes 80, 85 percent Democratic would have representation on the State Central Committee in relationship to that Democratic voting strength. Nothing, no mention of sex. We lost this in the Haber Commission. We took it to the floor of the convention, adding these words: "alternating by sex." This meant that first district as it turned out subsequently, there were to be nine members of State Central. It would be five males and four women. The second district as it turned out had five positions. So it was three women and two men, alternating by sex between the districts. We won that to the amazement of the state chairman who insisted that we hadn't won. In any event, we did. So we got that established.

We've had a women's caucus ever since then, which done a great deal. It's an established, recognized caucus in the Michigan Democratic Party now, like the black caucus, the labor caucus, the educators' caucus. We work at activizing women in the districts.

JEFFREY: We work at our rights. We, for example, on our state party committees, there used to be one from each district; now there are two from each district. Now there are co-chairs, one man and one woman. That's threaded through the Michigan Democratic Party. So meanwhile in other states, there've been some developments along these lines, too. Now, this is the Party. What was your question? This was Michigan. Oh, we also had the Michigan Women's Political Caucus also going on which, in a way, that's multi-partisan, but really bi-partisan. One reason we worked in that was that we were very eager to have Republican women raising cain, too, because the more they could get, that would help us raise more issues in the Democratic Party. Well, at the national level, in NWPC, and this evolved. I was never on the steering committee. I didn't run for anything. But I was a delegate to the famous Houston convention and participated in that. At the Boston convention of NWPC, which was at the same time that the international women's tribune in Mexico City in 1975. This was a year ago, yes. They finalized the creation of a Democratic Task Force and a Republican Task Force in NWPC. That's where I became chair. I'm just dealing with this year, but that's all right. It was that task force who really did the planning and the communication, newsletters, correspondence, all that sort of thing, in preparation for the 1976 Democratic convention. We worked with the women members of the Congress. We worked with the Women's Caucus of the Democratic National Committee --Koryn Horbal is the chair--and the Democratic Women's Agenda. We took the U.S. Women's Agenda, piggy-backed on that, and added some points about the Democratic Party and circulated it widely throughout the country. Koryn and the DFL feminist caucus of Minnesota did most of the work on that.

INTERVIEWER: What is the DFL?

JEFFREY: Democratic Farmer Labor Party. That's what it's called. It is called the Democratic Farmer Labor Party.

INTERVIEWER: Is that the regular Democratic Party in Minnesota?

JEFFREY: Yes, the Party in Minnesota used to be the Farmer Labor Party and the Democratic Party was the third minor party. In the course of time, which included internal factional fights involving the CP, the Farmer Labor Party got pretty torn up. It's twenty years ago now. There was a merger of the Democratic Party and the Farmer Labor Party. That's why it's called DFL.

INTERVIEWER: Could you describe their working?

JEFFREY: Well, I think the Task Force played an extraordinarily important, significant role in mobilizing women for this convention, together with the women's caucus of DNC, which was really two or three women from there, Corinne and Pat Darien.

INTERVIEWER: DNC is the Democratic National Committee?

JEFFREY: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Could you comment on the major changes? How significant do you think they are? What do you think are the most significant accomplishments?

JEFFREY: In the Democratic Party?

INTERVIEWER: Yes.

JEFFREY: Okay. I've spoken about Michigan and there have been significant changes. It's very customary now to have a woman chair--for example, the Jeff Jackson Day Committee. That's a big fund raiser. A few years ago they never thought of having a woman chair of that. Now it's very accepted and very comfortable. We, by the way, one year ago we ran a woman for state chair. We nominated her and then she declined.

Oh, I think we made a lot of changes in Michigan. We gave a county chair to a woman. Oakland County, a big county, there's a woman chair. It's much more accepted and much more comfortable for men and women. Many women have been uncomfortable with pushing for leadership, recognition and so on. In the National Party....immediately I have to think about Barb Strauss. There was Jean Westwood who was national chair named by George McGovern. Jean was the one who appointed Barbara Mikulski, chair of delegate selection. Actually it was Leonard who was chair and Barbara who was vice chair.

All of this had to do with the reform stuff that has taken place. The Mikulski Commission was Barbara Mikulski. It was the basis for the call to this convention and so on. Part of it comes out of that commission, part of it comes out of the mandates of the 1968 and 1972 convention. Anyway, my point is it was a woman. In 1972, we won in the rules committee that the chair of the national convention would alternate by convention between male and female. Actually, in 1972, we elected Yvonne Burke as co-chair to Larry O'Brien who was the chair of that convention. As far as the whole world was concerned, she was the co-chair with Larry O'Brien because she chaired so much at the convention. We put into the law of the Party that at every other convention there will be a woman, every other convention a man. This year since Larry was chair in 1972, it was a woman. It was Linda Boggs who was selected by Bob Strauss and confirmed by the National Committee and the convention. We also have co-chairs which we got out of the rules committee in 1972. So that there's a Latino, a black, et cetera. Each committee, but this is really traditional, each committee has equal representation of males and females. The committees now, again reflect Democratic voting strength. It's a formula. It used to be there'd be two from Nevada and two from New York. Now the number of members on the standing committees are determined on a formula which recognizes both population and Democratic voting strengths. New York

JEFFREY: has twelve persons and Nevada would have one. So that's part of Party reform, but we kept in that there should be equal representation. You get into trouble when there's only one because frequently that's a man. So it may not be perfectly divided between male and female.

At this convention, there were a number of states that had woman chairs. Ohio has a woman chair. Nevada had a woman chair. Vermont had a woman chair. There were about seven states. Ohio was the only large one in which there was a woman chair. In a number of states there were co-chairs as there were in Kansas City. Again, the most significant thing we won was this--the women were simply not recognized as a group having certain concerns, a caucus.

It was Kansas City when we broke in. We never could have done it without Bella Abzug. We had an operation going at Kansas City which the Women's Political Caucus organized called Democratic Women for Affirmative Action. We had caucuses every day. We had issues and there were certain issues there. The Convention almost disassembled over, because the blacks threatened to walk out in a dispute over Article X in affirmative action. It was in all of this that the women were recognized as a caucus and sat down with the governors and with labor and with the chairman. When there was one meeting, this time very compressed, of representatives from all the caucuses. We had finally won--we were recognized as a caucus. I thought we were going to have to win that all over again for New York City, but as it turned out we didn't--that is, to be recognized as a caucus. Along the way, Bob Strauss was on TV--Meet the Press, the Today Show, or whatever, and he'd be asked questions like this: "Is it going to be a brokered convention?" He would respond by saying, "The question is who's inside the room, not who's outside. And inside the room must be governors, representatives of labor and the women's caucus and the black caucus," and so on. Bob Strauss was the person who talked about the Democratic Party and all its beautiful unity and how he's gotten it out of deficit by saying, "It reminds me of my dream girl. She's deaf, dumb, over-sexed and owns a liquor store." So that gives you some kind of measurement of Bob Strauss. But the women's caucus was here to stay like General Motors learned in 1945 and 1946 that the UAW was here to stay. We are here to stay until we're no longer needed, which I hope happens. So I think that was very significant.

When we asked to meet with Carter, we asked for weeks, but it didn't happen until New York City. We sat down and negotiated with [Jimmy] Carter and that was the first time women have ever negotiated with a Presidential nominee. In 1972, it's true, we talked with George McGovern, but we weren't prepared either as women. I'll never forget that meeting in his living room. Women were making statements. We didn't have an agenda. We hadn't worked together on it. Women were also making statements across each other and past his head. People like Betty Friedan

JEFFREY: would say, "Well, I write for McCall's magazine, not a small journal." She was referring to Gloria Steinem at Ms. who she's always trying to cut-up. My point is, we were making statements and McGovern was making statements and it went like this. This time it was different.

INTERVIEWER: They went across each other?

JEFFREY: Oh, they went across each other! We had a Women's Advisory Committee. In my view, Gary Hart was a chauvinist. I don't think George McGovern was, but I think Gary Hart was. We never had any real significant input in that campaign. That doesn't mean there weren't a lot of women on staff. There were all kinds of women. Many of those McGovern women weren't caught up in the caucus at all. They were there for George McGovern. This time we said, "We want to come to this convention with our own agenda, not as a candidate, not a candidate's agenda; our own agenda." That's why we called it The Women's Agenda and it had eight or nine points.

The single most important thing, however, is what happened to the women themselves at that convention. I heard a woman in the seventeenth district make a report the other night which I must say thrilled me. She gave a report on the women's caucus at the convention. She was opposed to the compromise, which was fine. But it was really thrilling to me because she's caught--at least not everything--but she caught the impact of the caucus. First she said--which I think is true--that it was the most exciting thing that went on at the convention. She came to practically every caucus. We had one every day. Attendance went up and down, but the big day we had 1,350 women there. We debated for two and a half hours, as I said the other night, on a main motion. To hear her make the report was really exciting. As I say, what really counts is what happens with these women in the next year or so and whether they do their thing in their own states. That's where the action is and that's where it counts, not just in the campaign, but in the states.

INTERVIEWER: What about CLUW? Have you participated in that?

JEFFREY: Yes, I have participated in CLUW. I helped make the arrangements for the Chicago meeting, the Detroit meeting. I don't hold any office, even in Wayne County CLUW, nor do I aspire to hold any office. Olga [Madar] and I are very good personal friends. So I see Olga a great deal. Therefore, I'm exposed to lots of discussion about CLUW and, at least, her perceptions of what some of the problems are and some of her hopes and aspirations for CLUW. I see Addie Wyatt quite a little and Joyce Miller, and Gloria Johnson to some extent, Patsy Freyman to some extent.

INTERVIEWER: Do you have a different evaluation of CLUW than Olga does?

JEFFREY: I don't know what her evaluation is. I know the problems that frustrate her. I don't know what she would say. I just never have asked her.

INTERVIEWER: Well, maybe I should ask you differently. Well, have you . . .

JEFFREY: I assume she believes that CLUW's very, very important.

INTERVIEWER: And will make it once they get going?

JEFFREY: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Do you, from what you . . .

JEFFREY: She wouldn't still be there if she didn't think so.

INTERVIEWER: From what you've seen of CLUW, how would you evaluate its contribution today?

JEFFREY: Well, I mentioned the other evening, but now we're on tape. People might dismiss this as a cop-out answer. Joyce Miller is now an elected member of the international union executive board of Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union. Addie Wyatt is now an elected member of the executive board of the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen International Union. Neither of those things would have happened if it had not been for CLUW. Even where there are large numbers of women in a union women are not and have not been recognized in being elected to policy positions. The answer was, I think, in CLUW that union women need--the time has come--it was an idea, whose time had come to band together across union lines in what became a Coalition of Labor Union Women.

Talk about exciting conventions. That founding conference of CLUW was one of the most exciting and dramatic events, in my view, in the history of the labor movement. As in the beginning, they were going to have five hundred, seven hundred, nine hundred, eleven hundred, ended up thirty-two hundred women, most of whom paid their own way. One of the many exciting, most beautiful things about it was that many of them were young women. For many of them it was their first convention, and for many of them it was the first time they'd left their home towns for anything involving labor. While many were young, there were hundreds of women who had been making the fight for equal rights for many, many years in the labor movement. Women's lib--this wasn't something new. This had been going on.

Mental pictures come. I remember this woman from the IAM. She had a cowboy hat and pants and boots. She was from California. She probably was as old as I am. She was one of the most militant fighters in that convention. Her speeches and the remarks she made made it clear that she'd been in the battle for twenty-

JEFFREY: five, thirty years inside her union, where it counts as far as working women that had been cloistered within their own union and knew nothing about the problems of women in other unions; for example, UAW women didn't know anything about the problems of public workers who do not have the right to strike, about airline attendants. There was such an exchange of views, an interchange as resolutions were spoken to. Whether it was child care or employment discrimination, the speakers brought their experiences from all these different backgrounds. It was a tremendously enlightening and sharing experience for women.

Now, I think there was only one way for CLUW to go after that and that was down. Because that was so exciting, and such an unexpected number of women. Then they had to start doing the hard nitty-gritty work of organizing. In that first year and a half there was, in so many cities, much harrassment by left wing groups. The left-of-center groups were saying here was a new opportunity in the labor horizons so let's take it over. In Detroit, Cleveland, Chicago, New York, the left wing tried to dominate every meeting. I don't know so much about California. That was and that was why a lot of women got discouraged. Here in Wayne County, women asked, "Why come?" Why take a Sunday afternoon and listen to the same harrangue and same battles going on. Without question, this hurt the organization of CLUW. Heather Booth was saying, in Chicago they're gone now. That's no longer an issue in Chicago.

INTERVIEWER: The radicals are gone?

JEFFREY: The Sparticist League, the U.S. Labor Party, the Maoists--she said are gone. They're now going to try to raise money for at least the part-time staff for Cook County CLUW. The December 1975 convention adopted a constitution. It turned out very well. The big thing there was Bella Abzug's speech, which if you haven't listened to on tape....

INTERVIEWER: I haven't.

JEFFREY: It's not only what she said, but it's also the audience response. It was electric. You should really listen to the tape. Leonard Woodcock was sitting there and heard it all. All the international union presidents had been invited, but ten or so sent representatives. Leonard was the only president who came. So he sat there listening and really, I think, especially when Bella started talking about hysterectomies and that the U.S. is the hysterectomy capitol of the world. It was, it was just electric. Women spontaneously standing up and applauding and thumping on the table. This was all in relation to the remarks she made about a woman on the Executive Council of AFL-CIO when they had the vacancy and they couldn't find "a qualified woman." She handled it very well. But CLUW has got a long way to go. The fifteen dollar membership--I don't know what Olga thinks but I'm sure that's been somewhat of a barrier to some people.

JEFFREY: I think CLUW is here to stay. The teachers have been very active in it. They're the backbone in a lot of places. You talk to Olga. She knows much more about it than I do.

Right now I'm working on a proposal for a grant from the German Marshall Fund of the U.S. I'm working on it because it accidentally happened to be my idea, when Olga was looking for an idea, that seemed saleable to them in which we would be taking something like twenty trade union women, all of whom are either elected officials or high up on staff, from twenty different international unions for an intensive study of child care in European nations.

INTERVIEWER: Sounds interesting.

JEFFREY: We're going to get child care. We can make speeches about it, but we don't really know very much about it except the Amalgamated Clothing Workers and the teachers, at least to some extent the teachers. I think Amalgamated is by far the most advanced on this.

INTERVIEWER: Has the development of the women's movement changed any of your own personal ideas or understandings or had a special impact on your own life?

JEFFREY: I will start off by saying that it's been my experience, we've talked about labor and the political parties, the Democratic Party. It's been my experience, generally speaking--but don't ask me to document this--that chauvinism is even worse in radical and liberal groups than it is in the union or it is in the Democratic Party. I stated that as a preface to make this statement. When SDS [Students for a Democratic Society] was being organized, it was organized, and it just happens that in the radical movement, sometimes women were like groupies. Of course there was lots of theoretical discussions. Including me, many other women didn't have the capacity or the interest to be student of Marx. In any event, I was speaking of SDS and it just happened that largely because of Sharon, I got to know SDS leaders. As a matter of fact, I helped them secure the FDR-CIO Camp at Port Huron. That's why it's called the Port Huron Statement. And I went up to the conference. As a matter of fact, I was there one day, not for the whole conference. People like Tom Hayden, Rennie Davis, Paul Booth, Al Haber were all friends of Sharon. They came to the house a lot. Tom, at Christmas, used to read Alice in Wonderland and such stories. In any event, I went to quite a few of their meetings, especially at The University of Michigan when they were having national gatherings. I was appalled at the treatment of women. There was nothing that I could do about it. I was distressed, really. By the time of that Chicago meeting, the women had rebelled and SDS was beginning to go in different directions. Women's Lib began to, to use an expression, began to take hold.

JEFFREY: You ask me how did if affect me? Okay. Well, the first thing I would say is that as it was happening and as I have said frequently, I felt so indebted to the "bra burners," because it was those young women who, even if they appeared extreme to some, who are responsible for women's lib today. Here I am a person who was not greatly discriminated against personally, had always fought with other women for women's rights and got pretty discouraged sometimes. I'd also been for civil rights. Just as Addie Wyatt would say, it was also true of me. As a black, Addie says this: "I was late coming to the women's movement because I had other things to do." In my commitment to the civil rights movement, I learned out of that we had also to fight for women's things. So I feel deeply indebted and I am very thankful to those young women who said we aren't going to stand for it anymore. There was a period of time in which, I suppose like everybody else, I was very conscious of language and I don't mean just "Ms., Mrs., lady," because that was very easy for any of us who came from the labor movement. We could always say "sisters" because we were accustomed to saying "brothers and sisters." Now I say feminists. "Welcome, feminists." That's what I say when we were having these caucuses of women around the country for the Democratic Party Task Force. Feminists includes the men that were there too. In any event, but I was really very self-conscious about my own vocabulary. So you try to pick up some of the vocabulary and some of the language and you read and you listen. By now, I've sort of forgotten about it because as I listen to other women....in circles I've been in, anyway, I don't worry about my langauge. I've picked up a lot of vocabulary and expression. I think this is important. I think it has to do with people's comfortableness or self-consciousness in any kind of group. Certainly, for example, in the civil rights movement the language has changed, the vocabulary has changed.

Now what has it meant in terms of my own life? I guess some people would think that I'm crazy to have spent as much time as I have in this last year, how would I say this, I think what it has meant to me is that it has given me an opportunity to work in the political field, which I never would have had if the women's movement hadn't grown and become as articulate and as effective. A lot of gains have been made. I think we still have a long way to go. The environment has changed and there's more that we can do in the political movement.

INTERVIEWER: Has the analysis that the women's movement developed given you a different perspective on your own experiences in any way?

JEFFREY: Well, with all of the consciousness raising, of course, one looks more carefully I think at one's past experience and perhaps, let me say, more analytically than I might have before.

INTERVIEWER: Have you been through consciousness raising? Have you participated in any consciousness raising groups?

JEFFREY: Not on a regular basis. I've been in some sessions. Sharon had a group in Chicago that met for two or three years every week, once a week. No, I haven't done anything like that.

INTERVIEWER: Let me ask another question. What was the most frustrating part of your work within the unions?

JEFFREY: Oh, I suppose, oh, I suppose the frustrating part was that you didn't get things to change in local unions or in the union as fast as we would have liked.

How fortunate a person is to have spent a lifetime working in the labor movement which, for all its faults, I believe is the most significant social force in the United States of America and to have had the opportunity to work in the UAW and with Walter and their leadership. There's just no question. That was very fulfilling.

INTERVIEWER: Did you ever feel that it wasn't worth it?

JEFFREY: No.

INTERVIEWER: If you could be sixteen years old again, how would you relive your life?

JEFFREY: Oh, I can't answer a question like that. I truly can't. I suppose in part it makes you feel.... well, first of all, I'm never going to be sixteen again, and secondly, it's sort of a put down on what you did do. I know that what you mean is a changed environment, et cetera.

INTERVIEWER: Was there anything that you would want to be different? For example, would you want to marry again or change the number of children?

JEFFREY: I sometimes think I would like to have had four children, but I'm not certain that I really mean that. I know what I had to do because I was the oldest of seven and it was still coming out of the Depression, too, was the thing. What else would I have done? One of the things I admire about both of my kids so much is that they have integrated physical activities fully in their lives. I like to think of all the experiences--recreational, physical--we tried to give them, when they were young, contributed to that. My son cannot function unless he has a certain amount of physical activity. It may be a trampoline; it may be swimming; it may be tennis; it may be golf; it may be skiing, whatever. It's totally integrated in his life. I think that's beautiful. It is not in my life at all. I have to force myself--and I don't very often--to do any of these activities which are important from a physical standpoint, but I think also for one's emotional well-being also. It's a way in which you can have associations with either the same or different persons in a different dimension of life. That's one thing I would really

JEFFREY: like to have done differently. I suspect in part it was that I've worked outside the home from the age of fourteen and didn't have those opportunities. However, I could have made them in later years. So I'm not giving myself an excuse. I just haven't been disciplined enough.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. That's the last question on the interview.

JEFFREY: Oh, great! Another little aspect of the UAW....oh, I should have looked at some of these things. It was the 1964 convention. I proposed that we have students at the convention. So we invited SDS people, and CORE, and SNCC, and some other groups, including the National Student Association, the more conventional organizations. We had kind of a structured program. Of course, they were enabled to go to all of the sessions, but they also met with, Walter, other officers and staff spoke at scheduled sessions. We had Bob Moses there. He was also known as Bob Paris. He'd been working in Mississippi. He's now in Africa, I believe. A number of people from SDS....Irving's [Bluestone] son, Barry, came and both of Leonard's [Woodcock] daughters Leslie and Janet, which was very nice. That's where Leslie, Leonard's daughter, met Barry, and they subsequently were married. It all came out of this. They're now divorced. I keep running into SDS students. Oh, and I think Paul Booth was there, not Heather, as I recollect it. Oh, goodness, I can't think of his name. He's now the director of the A. Philip Randolph Institute. I can't think of his name. In any event, it was, I think, for those students--from what they say--a tremendous experience. They of course didn't agree with everything that the UAW stood for. But the openness, the exposure. It was also good for the UAW. A good number of the officers came to lunch or they'd come in for a bull session. We continued that program, but we never duplicated it in quality, the quality and diversity of the participants, in succeeding conventions. That was another example of Walter's openness in being willing to accept a new idea.

When I first was on the National Committee, Carmen De Sapio from New York, Governor Lawrence, Jake Arvey from Illinois, and others like that were leaders of the committee. As a woman, you were zero. They would decide what they were going to do because they'd have the power at that time to do it. Well, subsequently--it's interesting; I hadn't thought about this. With Dave Lawrence, of course, I was brought up in the Michigan Party to think he was terrible. I got to know Dave Lawrence and he was a magnificent person. He was chair of the special equal rights committee for a while, which I served on. It was a very small committee so I got to know him quite well. Jake Arvey is a famous political from Chicago. He's in his seventies now and lives in Florida. He's a very civilized person. Before I knew him, I thought he was a great big power, a wheeler and dealer. Actually, he was a short man and a very gentle guy, very gentle, true, and a very influential politician. In any event, he got so he respected me. I wasn't just a woman without a brain. That

JEFFREY: wasn't because we agreed on things necessarily. I guess what I'm saying is boy, you have to work so hard to get recognition and acceptance. I don't know whether I ever went all the way but at least it was, you had to work. Whereas a man would come in and he wouldn't have to go through all of this testing.

INTERVIEWER: What kind of recognition would you have wanted? Do you think you would have been able to achieve if you were a man or would you have wanted to achieve?

JEFFREY: Well, that's my problem. There was nothing that I wanted to achieve. There was no position that I wanted to achieve. That's kind of silly to say, but that's the truth.

INTERVIEWER: That's interesting because a number of the women that I've interviewed who got quite far, go into top positions within the union have said the same thing, that they didn't feel personally ambitious, the job fell open to them, that it wasn't stuff they were trying to achieve.

JEFFREY: Well, I think that is characteristic of our conditioning as women.

INTERVIEWER: I think that's true! I thought that was very striking!

JEFFREY: Yes, I don't think there's any question about it. I remember one time....you see, you never know how you're perceived. I remember one time a woman said to me--this is in the seventeenth district and was Frances Lee who was the wife of Ed Lee who was on the education staff in the UAW. In those days we did so many things together. It was lots of fun! The kids did, the kids were very active in the Party, too. They went to all sorts of things. They went to a lot of union meetings also. All I remember is her comment. It was something I must have said, "Well, I'm not interested, or I don't care about that, something." I remember Frances said to me, "Millie, don't say that to me. You get everything you go out for." She didn't say it in a nasty fashion. She just said it firmly. So I've never forgotten it because you know you have to think about how other people perceive you. I'm sure I was perceived by many as a very hard driving ambitious woman, because I was active and I did make fights and I did stand for things. In my perception, I was doing it because I thought I was doing the right thing. That sounds as if I'm being righteous and I probably sounded that way sometimes to people. It wasn't for my own advancement, in my mind. But I may have been perceived this way by some. That I would get to be a convention delegate or something. Isn't that strange! What goes on inside a person and what all the world thinks can be so different. I suspect there are men who would say the same thing, not only women, men. Most men don't consciously start and say, I'm going to be the president of the UAW. I mean, some will, but many will not, many will not.

INTERVIEWER: To go back to the experience of being a woman on the UAW staff. A couple of women have told me that they often met a lot of resistence from regional directors which they were sure was because they were women, and also that they experienced bad resistence among the executive board members while working in Detroit.

JEFFREY: I'm sorry, I didn't get....

INTERVIEWER: Resistence to their ideas or attempts to organize or requests to go into regions to set up programs and so on. They felt this came in part from the fact that they were women. I was wondering if you ever felt that any resistence that you encountered might be due to that.

JEFFREY: Oh, I think there's no question about that. However, I don't think that was personalized as much as it was that they just didn't want to be bothered with women, and they thought that all this would mean would be trouble, or you would stir up the women. Oh, directors have said that: "stir up the women." I'm sure people like Dorothy Haener have heard that many times.

INTERVIEWER: And they don't want the women's . . .

JEFFREY: But they did the same thing to Bill Oliver.

INTERVIEWER: Yes?

JEFFREY: No question. They did the same thing to Bill. So I don't know whether it was solely toward women. It was also to minorities. Oh sure, I'm sure we were perceived as nothing but troublemakers. If you could avoid it, fine. That's the way men feel about women. The fact that a man is a leader in the UAW doesn't make him free of prejudices of any kind. That's the dominant attitude.

INTERVIEWER: Would you be willing to talk about the kinds of personal relationships you developed over the past years that have sustained you in your work?

JEFFREY: Well, one is my women friends. I am fortunate enough to have a great number of wonderful women friends. Maryann Mahoffey, for example. Very dear friends! Esther Shapiro. I stayed with Esther when I broke my leg. She's just great! Lois Wildy, the YWCA secretary, Phyliss Segal, Olga Madar. She's an old, old friend. Really, just all kinds of women and also some very good men friends. I mean, and staff guys like Johnny Tutro, who was a coordinator in the seventeenth district. We worked together so closely in that district. He died tragically. He sort of went to pot, too. Tragically, he lost his son in the Korean War and he started drinking. Oh, a good number of guys on the staff. Not a lot, but a good number. Frank Winn, and I spoke about Guy Nunn, Joe Walsh, Steve Schlossberg, Irving Bluestone, Doug Fraser, Leonard, Jack Conway. Really good, solid friends. A lot

JEFFREY: more in the Democratic Party like Phil Hart and Janie Hart. The kind of people you know that if you're in trouble you can call on. That's the kind of people I'm talking about. If you're ever in a jam, you know you can pick up the phone and say I need help and they would respond, like that. You have a lot of other friends, a lot of people that you get along with very well and you can have a very nice time with, at a union party or whatever. But you're not exactly bosom friends. I do enjoy people. I've stood up at so many cocktails parties on my heels looking up because of my size, getting a sore back or a crooked neck; that I can do without--a lot of cocktail parties, the mass scenes. I have done so many of them! I really much prefer these days a small social setting. Sometimes you can have a great time, but sometimes you get stuck. I even went on a boat ride the other night down at Pontiac, which I'd avoided for several years because you're stuck on a boat ride for three hours. You can't get off! You have to engage in a lot of inane conversation, which is true in politics, also. On the other hand, I guess I really don't mean that. I say that because it does not matter who the person is if you really get into a conversation. The problem is if you're in these settings, you've got to do so much chitchat. If you can really sit down and talk to somebody. The other night at the David Miller Building one of the staff guys was leaving and he saw me there and he said, "Oh, I didn't know you were here. Come on!" There'd been a party or some kind of council meeting adjourned. So there was this guy, a black guy, and then the janitor came in. As usual, you go over everything that's happening in the UAW. They had very strong feelings about Leonard Woodcock and that he should retire, not take a government position. So we went--my God, for two and a half hours just having a wonderful time expressing all sorts of ideas. That's what I like--discussions in which each person has a different view. He'd say every once in a while, "Now you understand this is just within these wall, Millie!" Oh, yes, of course everything we say is between these walls. Well, that's another thing that happens in the UAW a lot. Oh, one of the fellows had just won his precinct election. He'd just won his write-in precinct delegate. That's how it all started. He wanted me to tell him what to do. So we developed a model program so he would be a model precinct delegate. This would be written up and it would be sent over and all that sort of stuff, which is a lot of fun, lot of fun, and hopefully he'll do some of it. I don't know. There's a lot of good comrading in the UAW and also in the Democratic Party --a lot of it. Those are very sustaining things, really are, even though it isn't a close,personal relationship. The children, my family, my next door neighbor....

INTERVIEWER: What was the most exciting part of your life?

JEFFREY: Having children.

INTERVIEWER: If you could relive that part of it, when would it be?

JEFFREY: In my own life, you mean? I can't make a new life! I have to talk about my own life. I'm not going to fantasize. I think the happiest times were when the children were young. I've had a very happy life, so it's very hard to say what was the happpiest, but those were really wonderful years. A lot of it is because young children are just so beautiful. They're so full of curiosity and excitement about the world and they don't have a lot of problems yet, as they do when they get to be teenagers. I think that was the happiest time, if I have to sort out any one single happy time.

INTERVIEWER: If you could make any part of it really different?

JEFFREY: Oh, I suppose most of all I would like to have been more perceptive as far as my relationship with Newman was concerned. If I'm honest, I know, I wouldn't redo it, but I would say that I feel that I in a sense failed, or was certainly deficient. I thought that I was doing things okay, so to speak. That's what I thought, but I was just really wrong, as it turned out. So I suppose that's what I'd like to undo.

The other thing I would say is, and I'm most uncertain about it and certainly ambiguous. I was asked to run for public office over and over and over and over again. The reason--as a matter of fact, when I became National Committeewoman, or alternate National Committeewoman, at that same time Walter Reuther had asked me to run for Detroit Board of Education. We had worked very hard on trying to change the Detroit Board of Education. As I suggested earlier, May Reuther was one of the persons who first organized the Save Our Schools Committee. We had run Victor Reuther. He had done very badly. This was ten years later, maybe. Walter asked me to run. Well, when Walter asks you to run, and at the same time this [Democratic] National Committee thing came up very shortly, so it was in the same time frame, which decision....these decisions had to be made. I had two very good friends who were members of the school board, both of whom our groups had worked very hard to get elected. Both of them splendid persons! One of them, Jane Lovejoy, one of my dearest, dearest friends. The other was Betty Becker, who didn't live too far from us. She would get calls at 4:00 o'clock in the morning or at midnight or whatever. A person who had a big problem wanted something done about it. One of the problems at my home was always the telephone because when I was at home I used to take the phone off the receiver or dial time because Newman resented it and the kids resented it if I was on the phone when I was at home. So I always tried to control the phone as much as I could, either by asking people not to call me; in other words, all these UAW members, especially women, would like to call. So there was a fair amount of telephone business going on at home. I remember this in particular because I thought oh, dear God. If you're an elected public official you have a telephone responsibility. Secondly, this takes meetings. A Democratic Party meeting....many times there would be a conflict.

JEFFREY: Where was my responsibility? Stay at home or go to the meeting? You had to resolve those one way or the other, and it would fall both ways. A Democratic Party meeting, voluntary meeting, if it was a job assignment, then you'd go unless there's something really terrible at home. So it was just a question of where you're going to be, no great crises or anything else, but are you going to be there to get dinner or are you going to be at a meeting. Public responsibilities mean that if you're elected you really do have sort of a super responsibility. You're an elected public official. This was a major consideration. It would be just that much harder for women. An elected official, even a school board member. But that was a very important decision in those days. Members of the school board got a lot of publicity. It was those combination of factors, and the latter one was a major reason I didn't want to do it. Because I knew that would not help my marriage relationship at all. Because by that time I knew it was very, very hard for Newman to accept any kind of success which he perceived as a success. So I decided not to.

Today, with all of the things going on in the general environment, I might have decided to run for public office. Martha Griffiths, you know Martha would tell when she, in 1948, we asked or I asked her to run for the state legislature and she said she couldn't because she wanted to get Mennen elected. I said, "Martha, you could do both; you could do both." She did and she was elected to state legislature. Out of that she became a candidate for Congress. I was always with her. Now, I don't regret my decision not to run for public office. I totally don't. I think I made the right decision. I'm saying if you could do it over in today's time, it might be different.

INTERVIEWER: If you were giving your daughter Sharon advice based on your own experiences, are there any kinds of experiences you would encourage her to have or to live through? Are there any that you would want her to avoid?

JEFFREY: Well, she's had quite a few experiences. Oh, dear me! I don't give her advice. The kind of advice I gave my children was always have a personal friend who's a doctor. He or she may not be able to take care of you, but they will see that you get a doctor who'll give you good medical care. That was for years. Subsequently, I added attorney and that was after I saw in the courts here how poorly attornies would defend their clients. I I'd say to them, "and also have a good friend who's an attorney so that when you need an attorney, you'll have an attorney who will represent you well." I haven't extended that to dentists or others. I always encourage the children to be eager, to welcome new experiences. For example, when Sharon was a junior in high school, we had some friends that were in Paris. Sharon babysat for them. They invited her to babysit one summer in Paris. So in order to get her to Paris, she went on an ADA trip

JEFFREY: with Carol, who is Victor's [Reuther's] daughter, when she was a junior in high school. That was a wonderful experience for Sharon. She had resisted things like the symphony and ballet. But when she came back she was a mature young lady. I think that was because the family was pushing it too hard. It was a tremendous experience, an unfolding experience for her. She had always been eager to do a lot of things. As I say, she was in SDS. There was a period of time where every weekend, they would go South. That's why I'm speaking about her being in jail. I never knew when the phone would ring and she would say, "I'm in jail someplace."

INTERVIEWER: Was she in jail a lot?

JEFFREY: No, no. Just a very few times, very few times. Yes. Two or three times, I think, and they were always demonstrations. She never got beaten up in the South. What would I want her to avoid? Well, the greatest thing to avoid is to be uninterested in life and not trying new things. The greatest thing to avoid is to be insensitive and not caring. The greatest thing to avoid is not to have something, hopefully, that you can believe in and that you feel a part of.

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