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

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

and

THE OHIO LABOR HISTORY PROJECT

Oral History Interview

with

PAULINE TAYLOR

Progressive Party

by

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Program on Women and Work

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VITAE

PAULINE TAYLOR

Pauline Taylor was born in 1901 in the mining town of Corona, Alabama. Her family consisted of thirteen brothers and sisters, her father, a coal miner, and her mother, a homemaker. Her family was very transient and by the time she was seventeen she had lived in six different locations, four within Alabama and once each in Nebraska and North Carolina. Although Pauline herself never graduated from high school she did teach for a while in Bridgeport, Alabama. She met her first husband while teaching and was married in 1918.

Pauline's awareness of the labor movement began at an early age as she witnessed her father's participation in the coal miner's union. She herself became an active labor supporter in 1937. At this time she was living in Youngstown, Ohio with her second husband, a steelworker.

She did not work in the steel mills but when the Steel Workers Organizing Committee struck in 1937 she showed her support by working in the food kitchens and on the picket lines. Her involvement in the international labor movement was actually greater than her involvement in local and national union affairs. She helped form an English speaking order of the International Workers Order and was also involved in the International Labor Defense.

In addition to her labor activism Taylor was very involved with the peace movement internationally and nationally. During the Korean War she became a member of the American Women for Peace (AWP). Through the AWP she was sent as a delegate to the Peace Congress in Poland. While she was in Europe she decided to tour the Soviet Union, against the specifications of her passport; a decision that later brought her before the Ohio and U.S. Committees on Subversive Activities.

At different periods in her life Taylor has also been involved with the Future Outlook League, and the NAACP, and the Progressive Party. In recent years she has devoted much of her time to the Progressive Party and is today the chairperson of the party for the state of Ohio.

Oral History Interview

with

PAULINE TAYLOR

August 17, 1978

by Debra Bernhardt

INTERVIEWER: August 17, 1978. This is Debra Bernhardt in Youngstown, Ohio and I'm talking with Pauline Taylor. You were telling me that you are from Alabama. Can you tell me about your childhood there? What was it like to grow up?

TAYLOR: I was born in Corona, Alabama, which is adjacent to Patton Junction, Alabama about a mile apart. I went to school at Corona Normal Industrial Institute. I'm from a family of fourteen: ten girls and four boys, my mother, and father. My father was a coal miner. My mother kept house. She did the sewing and taking care of us. And in 1911 we moved from Corona to Berry, Alabama, and tried to learn how to farm. We had a man hired to help us. And we farmed there one year and we left and went with my mother's sister to Omaha, Nebraska. We lived in Omaha from 1911 until 1913 when the tornado came, destroyed our home, and we remained there until June of that year. That happened to be on Easter Sunday. The same time I think it was a flood in Des Moines, Iowa and the destruction there was terrible as well as [in] Omaha. Our home was destroyed and two relatives, an aunt and a cousin, whose home was also destroyed in this tornado. None of us were killed. So after June, my father decided that we should move back to Alabama. And we went back to Alabama. Instead of going to Corona we moved to Patton Junction. And we lived there until this strike which started in 1917. The coal miners had organized and wanted to try to cut down on the number of hours that they had to work. And in 1917 and 1918 was when the struggle for life and death came about.

INTERVIEWER: Can you tell me how your father, first of all, how he became a coal miner?

TAYLOR: Well, there was nothing else to do there but to coal mine or to farm, and he didn't like farming. So he just worked in the mines. And most of the people who lived there worked in the mines. There was no other industry there. There was a Coca Cola factory and a little business but nothing that could employ the people.

INTERVIEWER: Was your grandfather also a coal miner?

TAYLOR: I don't know my grandfather. So I doubt whether my grandfather knew anything about the mines, you know, whoever he was. But most

TAYLOR: of the people in that little area were coal miners. So we went to Nebraska and stayed there from 1911 to 1914 and we returned. Of course, my father only commuted. He did not live in Nebraska because he couldn't stand the cold climate. So he stayed there and worked in the mines and he sent my mother the money to buy us a home. So we had our own home out there. And everything seemed like it was going so well. We had good schools because she would always like to live where she could put the children in school without going to boarding school, high school, and college. So the family remained there until 1914 as I say and when we came back, he still was in the same mine. And then on up through the organizing of the union in 1917 and 1918 was pretty bad for him. So he was denied the privilege to live at home. He was given a trespass notice [so] he could not cross the company property to go to our home which we owned outside of the company land. But he could not get home. See, when they were ordered to continue working, the union was not going to be recognized. And the company had not dreamed that it was strong enough that they could call a strike. But when they did, that was when the pressure was put on these men who the company could not buy over. The machinery that my father used in the mines was supposed to be bought back by the company in case, you know, he was fired or had to leave for any cause. But when he came out on strike, they would not buy it back. He had to pay quite a bit of money for this machine to cut coal down in the mines. But they asked him if he would just put on his pit clothes and just come down. And he told them no. He was a union man and he would not put on his pit clothes. He didn't want to influence anybody to go in that mine as a scab. So that was when he was given his trespass notice, that he could not cross. After that they tried to kill him. They tried to run over him with a car. They missed him. So then he moved to Parish, Alabama.

INTERVIEWER: Well, getting back to this strike, can you tell me how your father became a union man?

TAYLOR: No, I don't know how he became a union man. I just know that the coal miners were not paid very much and, of course, I suppose evidently a union organizer must have been in the area, but we didn't know too much about it until he became a union man. How? I don't know. But I know why. He felt that because he was making fair money as a contractor, the men under him he could not pay them any more than the other contractor was paying. And he felt that everybody should have an equal share for the kind of work they were doing.

INTERVIEWER: You say that most of the people who worked there were black men?

TAYLOR: The majority were black men, there were white men, but the majority were black men. And that's whey they [the company] attempted to buy all who they thought were the most influential--black men-- to influence the others, to go ahead and scab and not pay any attention to the union. If they joined they didn't care about that, but just don't come out on strike. But the strike caused all the bitterness

TAYLOR: and, of course, the mine operators called in the killers, the people who either would make you work or kill you. So out of 24 hours all of the workers were ordered out of the company houses.* They had nowhere to go but down in Patton Junction. Patton Junction, most of the buildings down there was owned by a black man. And, of course, they had to double up, families had to double up in homes that he had available. And when there were no homes, they stretched tents, and they moved in tents. They had two or three business places and of course it was just like a hospital ward. They just had to take those business places and put beds in them and move into those. They didn't stay outdoors, but they could not live in a company house. So while they were living there, they [the company] decided that they would find some way to cut off the food that the union was sending in to them by train. So they organized a [vigilante]; they called theirselves deputized officers, but they were just kind of what we call thugs. And so they decided they were going to march down into Patton Junction where all the black workers were housed during the time of the strike. They [the workers] were being taken care of by the union plus the farmers on the other side of the river in a white area where Negroes were not allowed. But they had been shopping with the workers, bringing in the food stuff from their farms, exchanges for coffee, sugar, things that they did not grow. And of course, it was a very friendly atmosphere between those white farmers and the black workers. So they would come in and bring food from their farms to help make possible food enough that the union didn't have to send [it] in. Well, the company said that they would have to stop that some way. So then they organized this group of men who was going to march down into the Junction and before they marched down, the owner had went to the county seat and ordered 75 coffins to take care of whoever would have to be killed. And so it just happened a woman that was living in the superintendent's house,** superintendent of the mines, was a black woman, and she had a baby. And of course, she made the excuse that she had to go nurse her baby. So they let her out not realizing what she was going to do. [There were] houses on each side of the dirt road, it was not a paved street, it was a dirt road. On one side was the elevated railroad track and you could lay on the bank of the railroad track. They couldn't see you, but you could see them. So she would tell one house what was happening; they was forming this march and they were going to march down and they were going to kill all the union people that was found anywhere in the Junction. And each house would tell the next house, and that's the way the news spread. But she had a chance to go home and that news spread so the union men didn't meet in the hall, but they did post a dummy in the hall that the company thought was a union head. And they, the union men, laid on the bank of this railroad track. The blacksmith shop that this black man owned was on this side of the track. And of course they, the workers, lined this whole bank. This group of men, I don't know how many it was, I guess it

*Of 400 black workers at the Patton Mine, 120 were forced out.

**The superintendent's name was Kirkwood.

TAYLOR: must have been 25 or 30 gunmen, had high powered rifles and belts of cartridges around their waists just like soldiers. And when they marched to the area of the union hall, this derby hat was sitting on a dummy, which they thought was a union person with his back to the window. And Mr. Atley [was] the man who owned the mine. [His son was leading the parade.] The father run out to the parade and he said, "Son, your future is all ahead of you. You come over here to the plant and let your daddy lead the parade." So Mr. Atley was heard to say because the men was under the houses, they was everywhere that they couldn't see them, but they could see and hear what they was saying. So Mr. Atley said to his daddy, "Oh, hell, dad, let every man stand for hisself." So Mr. Atley, Sr. went back over to the Coca Cola plant, and the Coca Cola man told him that he could not have nothing to do with it. He said, "These black folks own this building that I'm in, and I'll have nothing to do with it. If you want to stay in here, you can. But I'm not taking any part in this struggle." So when they * fired in this union, on this union hall on what they thought was a guard there at the hall, they meant to destroy the food. And they thought that if they got the men hungry, they would come back to work. So when they fired, shots came from every direction. There was a corn field in the back of the hall, the corn was so rank that it was, oh, I guess maybe seven, eight feet tall, great wide leaves and of course a man could hide behind a stalk of corn and not be recognized, not be seen. So we don't know who shot who, but the men fell, the marchers. That broke up that killing. Several of them they laid down till closing time for the mines in Corona which did not go on strike. And of course they had to come up to pick up the the dead and wounded and take them to the hospital in Corona, Alabama where there was a big hospital. And the soldiers were sent in. So it was, soldiers don't always behave too well. And when they were sent in, my mother decided that the best thing to do was to just move out. So she rented a railroad car, and put all of our belongings that we could carry with us and our cattle--two cows. We had our meat killed and had that cured and we left for Kentucky where my father had to leave and go to work after he couldn't come back home.

INTERVIEWER: What became of the strike then when the troops were called in?

TAYLOR: The troops were called in and the mines were closed down and they never did open up anymore. They decided that they would starve the people out. So the sheriff participated in this thing, the sheriff was hired of course, by the company. The company doctor didn't want to go, but the company ordered him because he was being paid. And they told him that he would have to go at the end of the line so that if any of their men was wounded he would be there to dress their wounds. But the wounds were too severe and of course,

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* Mr. Atley, Jr. fired the first shot.

TAYLOR: he just did not have time to dress the wounds. And the sheriff and the leaders of the march were killed. So that made the sheriff's brother go on a rampage to kill any Negro that he saw. And of course, he, one man was a tender where the trains would be getting water and coal. And he [the sheriff's brother] went there and he found this Negro and of course he and his group shot this man to pieces. He had nothing to do with it but he just happened to be a black man. He was trying to get revenge for his brother being killed. So they just practically ruined this little town. People just had to leave and go elsewhere to work.

INTERVIEWER: This was not the Corona mine that was on strike. You said it was Patton Mine.

TAYLOR: Patton Mine, yes.

INTERVIEWER: And what was the name of the mining company that ran it?

TAYLOR: It was owned by Mr. Atley. But I don't know anything about what the name of the company was. It was Atley Coal Mine all I know. * But he did not live there, he lived in Birmingham. But coffins, what they had ordered to put the miners in they thought they was going to kill, they had to be put in some of those things themselves because they didn't kill not one miner. And they, the newspapers, said that the men were ambushed. The men were not ambushed, the men come down purposely to do the killing and they fired the first shot. So five of our men, the three white men, Devil Jones and his two sons who were heads of the union, local union--and I don't know whether it was eight or ten colored that they caught. And they were in jail for about two years. And I think it was Clarence Darrow was the attorney who pled this case. And they were punished very much while they were in there. They wanted to kill the Negroes, but they wanted to give the white men life. But eventually, all that didn't die in prison got out. So that was the struggle for the eight-hour work day in Patton, Alabama. The Corona Mines signed up, you see, so that's why they didn't have to go on strike. And they were the ones who picked up the wounded and the dead. It was hard times then. So, of course, we moved to Wolf Pitt, Kentucky because when my father could not work at home, he went back into the coal mines. He worked in the coal mines there for a long time until he was injured. He had worked in Edwight, West Virginia. And then Wolf Pitt, Kentucky where he had his family move to. We never did live in Edwight [West Virginia] but we lived in Wolf Pitt, Kentucky. And he was what you called a pillar man there. After all the coal from the walls of the mines had been taken out, [the pillarman removes the coal from] the main pillar. It had to be a very experienced man to be a pillar man.

INTERVIEWER: To take out the supports.

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* It was the Corona Coal and Iron Company.

TAYLOR: That's right and that's where he was hurt, broken up pretty bad, and he was sent to the hospital in Huntington, West Virginia. And after he was well, why we left there.

INTERVIEWER: Was this a union mine that he was working in when he was hurt?

TAYLOR: Yes, and they went on strike, they went on strike in Edwight, I think. I married in 1918, and my husband didn't know anything about the coal mines but decided he'd come there and try to work. So when the union was strong enough, they went out on strike, they went on a march. I think it was about 12,000 men on the march.[The total mining area marched together.] And they marched letting the company know than they would not work non-union anymore. And, of course, there was quite a lot of destruction and a lot of shooting, a lot of killing; * a lot of them got afraid and come back home. And I thought it was pretty bad for him to come and leave my father in the line of march. So of course I just told him to go home to his mother, he didn't need a wife. That was our separation. So (laughter) that was just about the end of our coal mining experience. After my father left there we came to Campbell in 1925.

INTERVIEWER: Then to Detroit?

TAYLOR: [My father] couldn't stand the weather here very well, so he went to Detroit. And finally he started to work in the Ford company and he worked there until his death, 1947. That was the end of my coal mining experience. But I learned that the union was the best for the people. So when I came to Youngstown in 1925, I came here and my mother's sister was here [Candace Bronson]. And I came here to live with her. There was no union here except what you call a a company plan, something that the company had organized. And of course, the people who was in that had to work in behalf of the company. They couldn't work for nobody else. And finally some men decided they would try to see if they could organize a union. Well, union was just a bad name here in Youngstown. They didn't know anything about nothing, but just this company union. So people were afraid.

INTERVIEWER: Which mill are you talking about?

TAYLOR: I'm talking about the steel mills here. See, I lived in Campbell. I didn't move here until 1935. I lived in Campbell from 1925, so that's ten years.

INTERVIEWER: So that's Youngstown Sheet and Tube.

TAYLOR: Sheet and Tube, yes. And they had some experience of a strike, a very bitter strike in 1917 that I didn't know anything about because I wasn't here. I didn't come here until '25. But when I heard that they were seeking people who had some [union orientation], whether

*Including Hatfield.

TAYLOR: you had any knowledge or not. If you believed that a union was something worthwhile, they would like to talk with you. So some people come out and talked with my husband [who] didn't know anything about a union. I was a Taylor then; I married him here in 1927. And I said, "Well, I do know somebody out of each family ought to be interested in [the union]." I said, "Because eventually the union, if it gets strong enough to win whatever conditions that are made better for the workers, somebody out of each home ought to be represented in the union, in order that you would be entitled to whatever you were going to get." I said, "You should not get the benefits of what somebody else struggled for unless you help. So if you don't help, you let me help." So that was the interest that I had. But most of the people that talked with me were white foreign people, you know. They were the people who had a better understanding of organized efforts than our people did. Our people was just scared to death of it. So I worked with them. We were meeting in different places. One while we met in Dr. W. O. Harper's church office until the church people started, began to complain and said that they did not want it because they felt like the whole effort, after the newspaper ads made it look like it was a Communist something. And they didn't want their church involved. So then Reverend Harper had to tell us that he could not give us the privilege of being there. And then we tried to find other places to meet and nobody would let us meet, so we had to start meeting in the park. So we sat on park benches and discussed the strategy by which they would try to reach enough people that they could get the union organized. We talked to who we could talk to; some people you could not talk to. And it was quite a struggle. That was, do you know when Governor Davey were here? Did you know anything about Governor Davey? He was the governor of Ohio then, 1937. I had a few union cards and John P. David or John W. Davis. Now, John W. Davis--one of the Davis's was the principal of the West Virginia State College. But this John P. Davis was sent by President Roosevelt to southern states under the NRA.* Because they were giving the farmers, land owners, help to help pay their workers. And this man was sent to make that investigation. So when the investigation was made, he carried his report back. And, of course, he said that it was pigeon-holed. They didn't do anything much with it. But now how he became the secret organizer for the union, I don't know. But I know that he was a union organizer. But quite a big rally was held at the Tabernacle Baptist Church.

INTERVIEWER: What was the name of the Baptist church?

TAYLOR: Tabernacle Baptist Church over on the north side. That's where we had this mass rally. And this man began to explain some of the things that he had found when he went south under the order of President Roosevelt. And the conditions that he found the people living in and the only way that the people was going to be able to help themselves as workers, was to become organized. He didn't tell them he was an organizer, but he was a secret organizer. So then when the

*NRA - National Recovery Act

TAYLOR: meeting was over, they asked me if I would keep him at my home. So I did. He stayed here with us. And naturally somebody from that meeting reported it to my husband's job foreman. And he was called in and questioned about it. He said that it had leaked out that this person that was staying at his home was connected somewhere with the unions. He was some kind of organizer, and they didn't know what and they wanted to know about him, And he says, "Well, now in the house I run the job. But whoever comes in my home is my wife's company. I have nothing to say for it or against it. So I don't know who the man is. I don't know, but he is in the home with my consent, but I have nothing absolutely to tell you about him." He was harassed quite a bit about it. Because he [Davis] was here but just a few days. But he secretly did quite a job while he was here. And a lot of people who were afraid of the union before, began to join us.

INTERVIEWER: Can you tell me more about this Davis man?

TAYLOR: No, I don't know that much about him. The only thing, I just know he was here for that big rally. And he [left as quietly as he came].

INTERVIEWER: Who organized the rally?

TAYLOR: I don't know. I do know one leader of the rally was Mrs. John Julio. And Mrs. Hannah Blumenthal, which both of those women are in bad health now. And I'm sure Gus Hall was a part of it. But he sort of stayed in the background. I can't recall the name of these other men who were more or less [involved]; no, I don't know. I can't remember their names.But anyhow they were men who initiated the drive to organize. It was called SWOC*, it wasn't called CIO. So this rally, who ordered this man in, I don't know. But he came in I'm sure, invited. And he was able to do quite a job. And then the union was able to organize people a little bit faster. And when they thought they had sufficient strength, they organized and pulled a strike in 1937. And of course, Tom Girdler was the head of the Republic Steel which he said never would sign with a union. And the company had the guns. The union men didn't have nothing but sticks. And they [strikebreakers] killed some people over there, four and several wounded. And that made things very rugged. So finally Governor Davey broke the strike [by sending in the National Guard] and the men had to go back to work. So then they went to court. And they were in court I think it was about five years before they were able to win. And when they did win, all of the men who had been fired because of their union activities had to be paid all of the back pay for the five years, if they were still living. And the ones who were still here that wanted to return to work could return to work without any further harassment. So that was the winning of the right to organize and to have a union that was called SWOC. And finally after that, they did go in with the CIO. Phillip Murray was then living, and the coal miners worked kind of hand in hand. So it was a sort of a joint effort and they finally come out with this CIO which was [integrated]. You see the

*Steel Workers Organizing Committee.

TAYLOR: AF of L union was strictly white. They did not admit colored. And finally they had to break down and take in colored people.

INTERVIEWER: Can you tell me about your own involvement? When did you first make contact with these white nationality people?

TAYLOR: Well, as I say, when the committee was trying to get together to organize, this was a white committee. All except just, well, Welsh was one colored, and he lived on the north side. I don't know his whole name; he's dead now. But anyhow he was one colored fellow. There wasn't too many colored in it. I really don't know how I got to meet with him. I don't know who it was that told him that I had some knowledge about union. But anyhow, I was meeting with them at the time that we were meeting in the Reverend Harper's office. And then finally we were barred from almost any of the halls and no church. Because his private office in a building off from his church is where he let us meet until he was barred from that. But we worked in this committee to try to get the people to understand the importance of organizing the union. Oh, I know, I was working with a group of people in the [ILD]. It was a branch of people, who, oh, I can't recall the name of it. But I think Mrs. Blumenthal was the head of it. But so many people were being evicted, they couldn't pay rent.

INTERVIEWER: Was it called the Unemployed Council?

TAYLOR: Yeah, it was something [like that]. [It was the ILD--International Labor Defense.] What we would do, whenever they would find that you would be set out, the men in the group would go back as soon as the bailiff would leave and put the furniture back in the house. One man I know that was instrumental in doing a lot of that work was Reverend Courtney Walker. He's a reverend now, but he wasn't then. But anyhow, that's where I got acquainted with quite a few of them because [of] the Patterson's, I mean the Scottsboro Boys. Did you ever hear about that case?

INTERVIEWER: Yes.

TAYLOR: Well, I worked on the committee for the Scottsboro Boys. And so through them and the people who were working in behalf of them held quite a big meeting for the mothers of those boys at the Shiloh Baptist Church in Campbell where I lived at that time. And all of the people who were interested in the Scottsboro Boys, or people interested in these people being evicted, interested in the union, and things like that [came to the meeting]. So that was how we kind of got together.

INTERVIEWER: Did anyone ever label them the Communist Party?

TAYLOR: They labeled them Communist. Anybody who did anything different than what the company wanted was called Communist or Communist sympathizers. Yes. So we were called everything but what we were (laughter). But

TAYLOR: it proved out that we felt that we were doing a good job. Some people were frightened off, some were paid off. And the ministers were all called into a conference by the mill heads to tell them that this organzing was going a little too fast. And they wanted to warn them, if they would not fight it with their congregations, do not advocate support of the union because it was a very bad thing for this city. And if this city was organized, Communism would take it over. And of course, the ministers just buckled under this threat, all but one white minister who defied them. And of course, he was fired from his church.

INTERVIEWER: Who was that?

TAYLOR: I think his name was [ed.: Orville] Jones. I don't know his first name. And his church was one of the big influential white churches. And he was hired by the union. You might be able to find that out through somebody else who knew more about it. But he openly defied them and let his people know what was going on. They [the ministers] were given this big meeting, lecture and a big banquet [by the steel companies], and we felt, we don't know, but we believe that they were also paid off. Because our white ministers never opened their mouths; they were just so pallid; they could believe in God doing everything else, but they didn't believe that God could protect them to support the union.

But when this strike came on, and they found out how brutal the company and the thugs, that had been hired by the company, were, it made them realize that whatever they were fighting for, it must have been something worthwhile. Or they wouldn't have stood the kind of punishment that they stood. So we went through 1937 through the strike even with Governor Davey breaking it. The length of time of the litigation that was going on until these men had been re-instated and paid their back pay [was long]. Then a lot of recognition came from the union. They could build halls and could have places to meet and do things that they had not been able to do before. Then people could open their doors to some of the union people, when they wasn't afraid of them.

INTERVIEWER: What kind of work did you do yourself for the union?

TAYLOR: I didn't do anything more than work in the food kitchens and on the picket line. I was not employed in any way.

INTERVIEWER: Were you working then on another job at the time?

TAYLOR: No, no. I didn't work at all. I was just a housewife. No, I just worked at home, but I would go out on the picket line and work, you know, where they served food and coffee. Wherever they would ask me to go and assist, I would do it. So that was the biggest part that I played other than trying to get people to understand the importance of coming into a union.

INTERVIEWER: Did you go to people's houses and try to sign them up?

TAYLOR: Only people who I knew. And when I would meet them in church, I'll

TAYLOR: talk with them. Meet them in different clubs that I was in. That's the way I was able to reach most of them. I didn't just get in the street and go from house to house. No, I didn't do that. The contact was made through people that I would know and then I would ask them if they would talk to somebody that they would know. That way we could sometimes come together and we would meet here at my house when I was in Campbell or at somebody else's house. We would just talk about what was possible. And of course, the people who was in the company plant union, they were quite bitter against the union. They tried to get my husband to either put me out or stop me from being so flamboyant in this Communistic organization because that's all it was. He just kept silent. He didn't take any part with it, but he didn't fight against it, he let me just go ahead. And of course, all what I did was try to influence people to have a knowledge of what it was good for them to do. And that was the part that I played. And then in 1939 the International Workers [Order], I don't know whether you know what that is or not, it was a fraternal organization that Mrs. John Julio then was head of. That was an organization that had mostly seven or eight different nationality groups. I think it had about at that time 150,000 members, but they were all nationality people. [Negroes had not even been invited.] And they asked me if I would like to join and would I like to set up an English division of this International Workers Order Lodge 816, and of course that's what I did. We got enough into that division that we [established a branch]. All the literature coming to them was in their languages which we didn't know. Only those who could speak English could tell us. Because when I went in, I went into the Italian lodge. And then when I got enough to organize the English-speaking lodge, I went ahead with that one. My work with the foreign born was more than it was even with the black workers until they got used to what I was doing. Because they thought that I was either brain-washed or I was being led by people who had come from other countries that they didn't think it was very wise.

INTERVIEWER: Did they accuse you of being an Uncle Tom?

TAYLOR: No, they accused me of being a Communist. No, they never did seem to think that I was an "Uncle Tom." (laughter) No, no, no, I wasn't put in that category at all. But they felt like I had some Red ties because they felt like all foreigners are Red, you know, one way or the other. They had come from a country that either accepted them and then when they come here they tried to bring their ideology.

INTERVIEWER: That's how the black community viewed them?

TAYLOR: Yes. They had a feeling that where they came from these things probably was accepted. But to come here and see they were strongest in the unions and the organizing of the union altogether. And it was not known that Gus Hall was even a Communist, you know, during the time of the organizing of the steel. He might have been, I guess he was. But it was not publicly known. Most of all the people who

TAYLOR: worked with him are not here anymore. When the union was fully recognized and people got staff jobs, they were the people who had fought the unions. They had not been the people who had been interested in the union and went through the struggle of being name-called and mistreated and fired from their job. But they were the people who stood outside and did everything they could to fight the unions. But they were the men, the learned men, and of course, it wasn't too hard for them to get into the leadership. And of course nowadays, [they are] very strong union men but they certainly didn't do anything to build it. They were company influenced men, usually paid by the company, or they just believed that the company was right and they the union and the people working for the union thought that they were all wrong. The same kind of thing happened when they tried to organize the nurses in the hospitals. The teachers, everybody who frowned on those of us who would picket, finally ended up having to picket, themselves, to get their rights. And had to form themselves in unions [even though] they frowned on [them] back in the early years. But if I had been a person with a job, I'd have been fired before I could have got back the second day. But by not working, I wasn't; my husband let me work alone. And they couldn't make it quite as rough for him as they could have if he had been active. They made it pretty hard for my son who was a millman. But they couldn't get me like they wanted to because I was not employed. And I could go on any picket line I wanted to go on. And I did it. I believed in it, and I felt like it was the only way that people were going to be able to get organized. And of course I happened to be almost alone because there wasn't another black woman in the city that would go on the picket line but me. Later when we started picketing the stores, try to get [black people] jobs in the stores, that was with the Future Outlook League. The mother body was in Cleveland but Mr. Holly came down and set up a branch here and of course we worked and managed to get quite a few jobs during that time of the work of the Future Outlook League. And we had, oh, I guess maybe about eight or ten black women who would go on the picket line when we would picket the stores, you know, until they would hire somebody.

INTERVIEWER: Can you tell me who got this Future Outlook League started?

TAYLOR: John Holly from Cleveland.

INTERVIEWER: And when was that working?

TAYLOR: Oh, I don't know what year that was now. But that was back in the forties. Oh, I've got some clippings, if I would have had my scrapbook down here I could show you the clippings out of it. We had picket lines in stores where they said that they would close the store before they would hire us. [Black people couldn't get] anything other than scrubbing, cleaning up; they wouldn't hire us for clerks or anything like that. So we just didn't give them a chance to let anybody come in because we put our picket line on the store there and nobody would come in. They would try to deliver the food. They'd call up and order and they would try to deliver. Well, we would go

TAYLOR: to the house whenever we would see the truck leaving with food, we'd go to the house and we'd picket that house where they couldn't take the food in. We give them a good bit of trouble until they decided to hire somebody. Finally, when we got our few people working in the stores, a munitions factory opened up in, I can't recall the name of the plant [it was in Ravenna]. Shut it off. Let me see, I think I'll find my scrapbook.

(Shows the scrapbook to interviewer.)

[The Future Outlook League also fought for better housing.] The housing committee fought to secure lower rentals. It was a big organization. I don't know how it is in Cleveland now because I'm not there.

INTERVIEWER: But it was based in Cleveland?

TAYLOR: It was based in Cleveland, yes. And they set up branches in different cities, so I was in [it]. (laughter) They said I got in every unpopular movement that ever started. That's him there. (Indicates picture in scrapbook.)

INTERVIEWER: Yes. John Holly. H-O-L-L-Y. And the main goal of it was to get jobs.

TAYLOR: Jobs, and better housing, and everything that had been denied black people. Did you know her?

INTERVIEWER: No.

TAYLOR: She was a famous member of the Communist Party. I think she died overseas. [She was from New York but she spoke here a time or two.]

INTERVIEWER: Claudia Jones. Were you a member of the NAACP while you were working, organizing here in Youngstown?

TAYLOR: No, not then, but I became a member later.

INTERVIEWER: How did the NAACP look at your activities?

TAYLOR: They didn't bother about that too much until after I went to Russia and came back. Then they wanted me out.

INTERVIEWER: When did you go to Russia?

TAYLOR: 1950. I went to a Peace Congress. It was supposed to be in England, but they made so much trouble for the English people so it had to be moved to Warsaw, Poland. So we finished our congress in Poland and from Poland I went to Russia. Then my name was mud (laughter) when I came back. Oh, it's a long story. I was on the Housing Committee for the NAACP when we exposed some bad housing here that the people was afraid to say anything about because they didn't have no place to move. But I got the photographer to go there and make

TAYLOR: pictures of it and force the man to have to tear down those houses after he wouldn't fix them. They had no city water. The water what they was getting was coming from a spring or something. The water was poisoned by this sewer being broken from the city hospital, flowing into the water and people was breaking out with sores and everything. When I got that exposed, I did that for the NAACP. They finally had to get that man to tear the houses down.

INTERVIEWER: These are the pictures of the houses.

TAYLOR: Not the ones that was torn down, but this is where they had had a fire. This is one of the boys that was in the Freedom Fight. We went to Chicago, oh, I don't know.... a lot of places.

INTERVIEWER: Did Paul Robeson ever come here to Youngstown?

TAYLOR: Oh, yes. I had Paul Robeson and Eslanda Goode, his wife. You ought to see the trouble I had when I brought Paul Robeson in. Oh, goodness. I believed in stepping to blaze a trail. I didn't just follow everybody else. I like to do some things that I believed in and was very, very unorthodox. Yeah, when I brought Paul in, they was going to block him from going into the church. I had got the church for a meeting. The people at the church all got scared.

INTERVIEWER: This is when you brought Paul Robeson in?

TAYLOR: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Why were they scared?

TAYLOR: Well they thought that he was a Communist. The way they had pictured him.

INTERVIEWER: So he gave a concert at the church?

TAYLOR: He came to speak for a political person running for state representative. When J.R. Moore was running for state representative, and so Paul was in Cleveland to give a concert. And while he was there, Hugh DeLacey who was kind of managing Paul while he was in the state called me and asked me could I arrange for Paul to come here and speak in behalf of Mr. Moore. And I did.

INTERVIEWER: Who is this Moore?

TAYLOR: His name is J.R. Moore. He belonged to Jerusalem Baptist Church.

INTERVIEWER: J.R. . . .

TAYLOR: Moore. M-O-O-R-E.

INTERVIEWER: And he was a black man?

TAYLOR: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: That was running for?

TAYLOR: State representative.

INTERVIEWER: Was he successful?

TAYLOR: No. He wasn't. So that's what Paul came in for. They called me and told me that they would like me to get some protection for Paul to come into Youngstown. Youngstown just wasn't quite the city that they would trust Paul in without some protection. The police chief was named Allen. I called Mr. Allen and asked him if he would send a couple of men down to the station when the train came in to meet a very special citizen. He wanted to know who it was. Why would he have to send anybody down? And I said, "Well, his life has been threatened and we feel it would be safer if he knew we had somebody there." He said, "Who is it?" I told him and he said he wouldn't think of it. I said, "Mr. Allen, I was notified by Cleveland to ask you for some protection and I would like for somebody to be down there in plain clothes. I wouldn't want for them to be in police uniform." He said, "Where's he going?" I said, "Well, he's going to speak in Campbell." "I have no jurisdiction in Campbell." I said, "I didn't ask you about Campbell. I just want you to protect him at the station till he can come to my house. He'll be at my home. And from there I'll see to it him getting to Campbell." He said, "Well, no, I don't, I couldn't get anybody." I said, "Well, all right, if you don't have anybody I'll have somebody." I said, "I have twenty men who's going to protect Paul. Now you can send somebody down there or you don't have to. But I'll assure you that if anything happens, you might be picking up somebody." So when the train come in, the man who was going down to meet him--he had a brand new car--he told my husband and my son that he would go meet him. Somebody got to him and he left and went to Cleveland, he wouldn't go. So then we had to get another car to go down. And so (laughter) when we got to the station, instead of Allen sending two plain clothes men he sent about sixty uniformed officers down there. (laughter) I was so mad with him I couldn't say so! And so, of course, his ten men came with him from Cleveland, he wasn't by himself. So we had plenty of bodyguards. But they just told me that I would have to respect the chief enough to let him know that this man was coming so that if anything happened he couldn't say he didn't know. So when we got to Campbell (laughter), we was in the church in the dining room basement [that] had been fixed for the banquet. And it wasn't long after that before a fellow by the name of Steve Ritz from the Vindicator came. And he said he was from the Vindicator and he had been sent to cover this meeting. I said, "You wasn't invited." He said, "Well, this is a church, isn't it?" I said, "It most certainly is." And he says, "Well, then you can't bar me from coming in." I said, "I didn't say that I was going to bar you from coming into the church. But you aren't going downstairs."

TAYLOR: And he said, yes he was. And I said, "Oh no, You don't go downstairs." So he asks some of the men if I'm an officer of the church. And they said, "No she's a member. She's the one that's the head of this meeting." They sat down. He said, "Well, I have to be admitted downstairs." So I called Paul's manager. I said, "You come up here and talk to this fellow. See, I'm not letting him downstairs. All he wanted to do was see who was down there so he could name them." And so Louie Burnham was the manager from New York and he told him, "I can give you a copy of his speech if you want it." He said, no, he wanted to talk, he had never seen Paul Robeson. He just wanted to see Paul Robeson. "Well," he said, "You'll see him when he comes up to sing and make his speech. You can go in the sanctuary, but you're not invited into the banquet." So he come back up and he asked two or three men couldn't he go in. And they said, "Well, you'll have to ask Mrs. Taylor." So he was so furious when he come back in, he said, "If I could just hear Mr. Robeson sing one song." I said, "If you heard him sing one song, you'd twist it. Everything you've wrote in the Vindicator had been against Paul Robeson. And you will not go downstairs because he's not going to sing downstairs. If you want to sit up there in the sanctuary till the people come upstairs, then you can." He went down and reported to the police department that I threw him out of the church, and here come the flying squad. One of the black officers got out and he come to the church steps. I was standing in front. He said, "Mrs. Taylor, what's happening?" I said, "Nothing." He said, "Well, Steve Ritz said that you bodily threw him out." I said, "That man weighs 175 pounds. How could I bodily throw him out?" I said, "He didn't just only tell a lie, he wanted to go down into the basement where the banquet was going. All he wanted to do was find out who was down there." I said, "There's more whites down there than there is blacks. And I don't intend for him to put one name in the paper of who's down there." "So," I said, "you just take your flying squad and go back to the station and just know that Steve Ritz just lied." So that was the end of that. The speech went on (laughter), and it was quiet.... I think I had some headlines of what they said about me. I guess they just said I was a straight out radical. Turn the machine off until I can find it.

INTERVIEWER: Tell me again what happened with your activities with the NAACP?

TAYLOR: Well, was the [housing] a point of a conference we had when Nate Lee was then the president. I was on the state housing committee as well as local housing committee. And I had brought in my report of all the things that I had to report on.

INTERVIEWER: You took lots of photographs.

TAYLOR: Yes. I had them. Well, all of that was the NAACP material, you

TAYLOR: know. I turned it over to them but I told them, "Now there are things that need to be done that you all are not willing for me to do. You have this business of red baiting. You've got too much red baiting going on." I said, "You know officially that I am not a Red but," I said, "if I worked with them that is not any of your business. And you are not going to tell me who I can have as friends and who I cannot have as friends. So from now on you find somebody else to take care of your housing work." And I walked out of the meeting and I haven't been back since. They didn't turn me out, but I just let them know they would not tell me who my friends could be. They wanted me to isolate myself from the people that I worked with in the Progressive Party, called us all in the party, reds or red sympathizers.

INTERVIEWER: And those clippings of you as the party chairman of the Progressive Party.

TAYLOR: Yes, from here.

INTERVIEWER: For Ohio.

TAYLOR: For the state, yes.

INTERVIEWER: Can you tell me about, tell me about the Progressive Party?

TAYLOR: Oh, there's so much to be told about the Progressive Party. It was interesting I became a part of the Progressive Party from the peace movement that we started. See, quite a large delegation of us from Ohio had gone to Washington for the American Women for Peace.

INTERVIEWER: When was that?

TAYLOR: The Korean War, you know, that was when we [our government, I wasn't] meddling over in Korea, and so we went there for a peace meeting in Washington, one of the black churches. None of us knew each other. We were all interested in peace, from Cleveland, Youngstown, Akron, and Canton. As the bus would pass through, there would be delegations that would get on the bus. We went up there with a big bus load from Ohio. None of us was really acquainted with each other, but we were just interested in peace. So we went to this meeting and there we officially organized the American Women for Peace. They didn't know me and I didn't know them. I don't know why they chose me as their delegate for Peace Congress in Poland. After that, why, I was a target for Youngstown. But we still had our peace meetings. We would work and do whatever we could. When the death list would come back from the newspapers, any Youngstown person who had died we would have a committee to go to that home and try to talk to the mother of that son [or] the father to come into the peace movement, try to make it something important, something big. Some would come in and some of the boys would write to their

TAYLOR: mothers and tell them to get into the peace movement because this war was hell. Others would say no. They had lost their sons. We did not do anything to prevent their son from dying. If the rest of them die, they didn't have any feeling for them because they had lost theirs. We were turned down in some homes we went and some homes we were accepted. That's the way our peace organization would grow. Well, then we started putting out the petition, the peace petition. The police was trying to stop that. Sometimes when we would go in one door to try to get the people to sign the petitions, the police would come in the other door and we'd go out the back door. We never was arrested by anybody, but they harassed everywhere we went to get these petitions signed. Oh, I don't know if I can recall the name of it.* But anyway, we met a lot of people getting ready for this peace congress to be held in, it was supposed to be, Sheffield, England. But we were denied the meeting in England because they would not allow the interpreters in. That was in November of 1950. The interpreters were not allowed to come in England. Then the peace meeting was shifted from there to Warsaw, Poland. So then the immigration authorities notified all of us we'd better go back home because if we went to Poland we would not get out alive. They made out things were so terrible you know, in that country and [we] couldn't go. So they [England] would not allow their planes to take us. So they had to get planes from Czechoslovakia. So we just loaded up our junk and went on to Poland. And that's where [the congress] completed its week's meeting in Poland. We were fixing to go to Dachau, one of the concentration camps, where they had destroyed so many people. And we got an invitation that the American delegates and several out of the other delegations was invited by the peace committee to go to the Soviet Union. So instead of going to the camp, we got a chance to go to the Soviet Union, nineteen of us. And it was an education that I had never dreamed that I would have a chance to have. Not knowing the things we had heard about the Soviet Union were so far from the truth after we got a chance to go there, we had not quite two weeks in the Soviet Union. And they let us ask the things that we were interested in. They give us all a notebook to write out what we wanted to see while we were there. And [they said], "All the things that you want to see, we'll be glad to show them to you, if we have the time. And after that, we'll show you what we want you to see." So we were on the go day and night while we were in the Soviet Union. When we had finished our tour there, we left to come back to France by plane and from there back home by ship. So it was a real education to have a chance to go there because we were in France, we were in two or three places in London, Czechoslovakia, and Poland, and several places in Russia. And 81 countries of the world was in the Peace Congress; all kinds of people. People who was heads of the

*The Stockholm Peace Appeal.

TAYLOR: government, rank and file people, so it was really something. The people were concerned because we had made such a bad impression in Korea. That's the war that was going on at this time that I was concerned about the peace movement. And it was hampered in every way that they could hamper it. And the peace movement and anything that was against the war in Korea, you was considered to be a sympathizer or you was a red clothed in sheep's clothing. (laughter) So well, you just had to be sort of hard boiled to stay in these things because you was treated so bad and you was talked about. People tried to isolate you from your friends and if you cared more about your friends than you did about the movement, then you just would not go into the movement. But I felt the movement was worthy of my being in it. And if I didn't have a friend left, it just didn't make any difference with me because I felt that if they knew what I had already learned, they wouldn't have had any objections to being in the movement. But they were too cowardly.

INTERVIEWER: When you came back then from Russia, is that when you became involved with the Progressive Party?

TAYLOR: I was in the Progressive Party before I went to Russia. The Progressive Party was organized in 1948. When I got to England, well all the questions; they wasn't going to let us off the ship. When they called me in, they had went through my suitcases to borrow my books and everything that I had to read except a Look and a Life magazine, they wouldn't take them. And then they wanted to know about the Progressive Party, what it was. I said, "It's a political organization." And of course then I found out that they wanted to know who did I know. I had an address book that had a lot of names and addresses. So I made an excuse and went to the restroom and tore it up and flushed it down the toilet so they couldn't get no names, nothing but mine. They started questioning because they wasn't going to let us off the ship. So they wanted to know what was the Progressive Party? Why was I in it? And I told them it was a political party that felt that the Democratic and Republican Party was not doing all that could be done for the masses of the people. And we felt that the Progressive Party had a program that would make things much better for all of the people. And what they would do, they would ask you a question one way, and then behind was people that would ask the same question another way, I guess to see if you were lying. You couldn't tell the same thing over and over again. They questioned me from the time that we arrived, just before we got into London--I can't recall the name of the place now but the ship stopped--and they said that we couldn't get off until we were questioned. When they had finished questioning, why it was 9 o'clock. Well, the Peace Committee was on the pier and then they told me that I could be excused. I said, "Where do you think I'm going?" They said, "Well, you're excused. We find nothing against you." I said, "There was nothing against me when you called me in here. It's dark out there and I don't know nothing about this place

TAYLOR: and I'm not going out anywhere till all the rest of us can go." So Reverend Ed McGowin from New York was questioned. Finally they freed him and we both refused to go. We told them, "Our passage paid for our meals. We haven't had any meals, and so we'll have to eat and we want to eat with the rest of our delegates from America." And finally the shipcrew had to give in and let us eat together. Then the white delegates told us since we two were the only two that was going to be allowed off, for us to go on and try to get to the Peace Committee and get an attorney to get them off the ship. That's what we had to do. We got off and then we had taken a train and went in and they had got, the Peace Committee, had got us a room in the Ambassador Hotel in London. And we told them that the others were being held. They got their lawyer to intercede for them, so they let them come off. But they really treated people bad and a lot of people didn't even get into London. They had to stop in France and they was there a week that they didn't let them come in. They did everything that they could to block that congress from being held. But it was held with better than two thousand people that had come from 81 countries in the world.

INTERVIEWER: Youngstown, Ohio, November 30, 1978. Would you go into some of your family background as you were just doing?

TAYLOR: Yes, I will. The information you want, I don't remember all too well. But my grandmother who was Jane Gaines, was born in Georgia and was sold to George Gaines. And Jack Gaines [was] her husband. My understanding is that grandpa Jack was used as a man to increase George Gaines's slaves. I never saw him.

INTERVIEWER: They were both slaves?

TAYLOR: Yes. I don't know any of Grandma's people, or the place in Georgia she came from, and I don't think she knew either. Mama's mother was a full blooded Black Crete Indian. She was never a slave. Her name was Judy Dobbins. She never married. The old white man's place she lived on took her as his wife. There were seven children born to her. He was called Doctor Dobbins. The place was known as Fernbank, Alabama then. Now, it is Melbourne, Alabama. I never did see grandma Judy. The school of Patton was organized in 1902. And the laying of the corner-stone was May 8 in 1903 and William Counsel was the speaker from the A & M College of Normal, Alabama. Booker T. Washington was to be there but was detained and William Counsel came as he was president of A & M.

INTERVIEWER: You're talking about the Corona Normal School?

TAYLOR: Industrial Institute.

INTERVIEWER: And can you tell me more about that, how it was organized?

TAYLOR: It was organized under the instructions of Booker T. Washington. And he was to speak and failed to come on the day of the organization, but all of the ground work had been done through him.

INTERVIEWER: And how was the school financed?

TAYLOR: Well the school was financed by the workers in the mines paying one dollar each for the number of children--if they had one or if they had more--each month. And a single person could pay seventy-five cents. Every black worker in the mines had this amount to pay. And that plus the boarding fee of students who come in from other places was what made the school go.

INTERVIEWER: What was its curriculum?

TAYLOR: I don't understand.

INTERVIEWER: What kind of courses did they have?

TAYLOR: They had from the first grade to twelfth grade. It was grade school and high school combined. And they had an agricultural department where the people could learn, because that was Booker T. Washington's thinking, that you work with your hands. There was quite a big difference in my mother's thinking on Booker T. and his outlines of education and Dr. DuBois who was never there but we knew quite a bit about him. W.E.B. DuBois believed in educating the brain, and he felt that was the most important thing while Booker T. felt like educate the hand.

INTERVIEWER: You mean W.E.B.DuBois was the brain person.

TAYLOR: Yes. W.E.B. DuBois was the brain person and he felt that was important to make it possible for a person to think. And they could make a better life for themselves by being highly educated instead of just educating the hands. And that was where my mother differed even though she was not a schooled person. She was a person with an understanding of what she thought would be best for her children. Because there were only fourteen of us, ten girls and four boys. And it was not easy for a person who made the kind of money that people made in those days to send someone away to boarding school. And we moved wherever my mother felt like when the children were old enough, some would go to grade school, some high school, and some college. So in that way we moved about quite a bit. My father still remained in the mines. But wherever she felt that she wanted to live for the benefit of better schooling, he would go with her and purchase a home, and then go back and work in the mines, and he would commute.

INTERVIEWER: You said that you were born in Corona?

TAYLOR: Lockhart, which is a part of Corona.

INTERVIEWER: It was a mining location?

TAYLOR: A mining town, yes.

INTERVIEWER: Do you remember the community there?

TAYLOR: It was a small community and it was just a very few people who lived in that particular area. And there's only one family I can remember, and that was Ann Miller. And my mother planted an orchard and had 500 trees. Mr. Miller wanted the property that my mother had bought. So he employed a surveyor to come out to survey the property over, because part of his property was over an old mine pit. And he wanted Mama's property and, of course, my father being a Mason could not get into the argument between my mother and Mr. Miller. So when he had the land resurveyed he took our orchard.

INTERVIEWER: Was Mr. Miller a white man?

TAYLOR: No, he was a black man.

INTERVIEWER: He was a Mason?

TAYLOR: No, he was not a Mason but my father was a Mason, so my father would not fight with this man. And he took the orchard over, then he dared us into the orchard. So my mother went to town and bought two little blade axes. And she and my brother [who is now living at the age of 86] cut down all the trees that night, while my father was at a Mason meeting. So he didn't get anything but cut-down trees. You had to do something to help yourself. But that was she and my brother, and my father couldn't be hanged by the Masons for such an act.

INTERVIEWER: And this was in Lockhart, Alabama. Were the houses in Lockhart built by the mining companies?

TAYLOR: No, no, no, they were privately owned houses. The house that we had, my brother said the house was built by the Coal and Iron Company because of the excellent work that my father did. So that house was given to him but not built by him. And the other homes were owned by the people who lived in that area. And we were living very close to a creek, what you would call a lake, but we called it a creek. The land was very rich and that's why--and her trees were small--but they just bore so much fruit. And this Mr. Miller's sons would get up in the trees and shoot the fruit down. So they didn't have many days to do that before my mother cut them all down. We lived there until my father bought a place over in Patton Junction and we moved from there to Patton Junction, and we lived there. He still worked in the Patton mines. He worked in the Lockhart

TAYLOR: mines before going to Patton. We were not in Patton, per se, but we were in Patton Junction, that's where our home was. But he would go to and fro to the mines, in Patton.

INTERVIEWER: You mentioned that your mother was the daughter of this Cherokee Indian woman and the doctor. . .

TAYLOR: Dobbins.

INTERVIEWER: She wasn't a slave but . . .

TAYLOR: The Cherokee woman was not a slave, my mother was not a slave, but my father's mother was.

INTERVIEWER: So how was your mother raised?

TAYLOR: My mother was raised on a farm down in Fernbank or Melbourne, Alabama. And her mother died at the age of 38, leaving seven children. My mother's two older sisters had a disease that caused them to go deaf. What, I can't recall the name of it now. And after her mother's death, this deaf sister, by the name of Harriet, had to raise the rest of the children, because there was younger children there that could not take care of themselves. So different white people would want to hire them out to be companions for their little children. But they didn't treat them very well. My mother was at that time 14, and she was, they said, a dreamer. So very often she would dream that her dead mother had come back to tell her not to let somebody [who] was coming for this child or that one [take them]. And her deaf and dumb sister would say, "You didn't see mother. You know she's dead, so you didn't see her." She said, "No, I didn't see her, but I heard her. She come in, I see her open the latch and come in the door, and she says, 'Don't let her go.'" And the woman that was coming for her that morning was a colored woman. But she was getting her for this white family. So when Aunt Harriet, the deaf woman, told her that Savannah had seen Judy in her sleep and said not to let her go, she said, "Oh, no, I don't want her, if Judy's been back here, I don't want her at all." So in that way they tried to keep the children together. And when they did let them out.... So many times colored girls working at homes where there were boys were abused. And that's why mother just never did believe that it was right, so as long as she was able to keep the children from going into any home to work, she did.

INTERVIEWER: Can I interrupt? How did the doctor, their father, treat them as children?

TAYLOR: They were treated well. They were not enriched with anything, but they were treated well.And so, of course, he died. My grandmother died first, and he died later. But they were not abused by this man, or by anybody; he didn't let anybody abuse them, seven children of that family. And now they are all dead.

INTERVIEWER: And then your father, was he born on a plantation?

TAYLOR: No, there was no plantation where my father was born. But my father was not a slave, but my father's father was a slave. I don't know whether it was in the same county or not, but the information coming from our older brother [was that] my [grandfather] Jack Gaines was used to increase the family of slaves for Mr. Gaines. And in order to be able to hold these people together--you see he had his own white wife he was married to--then he had a colored woman by the name of Flird that he had several children by. And he bought a huge cemetery where the Gaineses could be buried and would not have to be Jim Crowed. Gaines' Hill was the cemetery that was owned by this white Mr. Gaines. Well now, Mr. Gaines was the owner of my grandfather, my father's father. But my father was not born in slavery. And his mother, Jane Gaines, was born in slavery. And what was so sad about what she told us.... When she was a girl of seven they lived on a farm and the owner of the farm was very brutal to the workers. And her mother had a small baby and she says she had to take the baby from the cabin out to the field to let her mother nurse the baby. And in nursing the baby the other people who were hoeing their rows was able to get quite a bit ahead. She couldn't sit down, she had to stand up and hold the baby to nurse. And she'd give it back to my grandmother to take back to the cabin. And when she couldn't catch up, the whipping boss told her that he would give her a chance when she got out to the other end if she could hoe fast enough when she come back. Now these rows were half a mile long. When she'd come back if she couldn't catch up with the rest of the workers he would have to give her fifty lashes. So she couldn't. And when the others got to the end of the row and she was a good ways from the end, he had her to strip to her waist and he had a leather belt four inches wide. Holes had been drilled into this belt. He soaked it in water. And when he would hit her, that belt would wrap around, and when he'd pull it, he'd pull the flesh. And when he gave her the last of the fifty lashes, she went to the ground. And, of course, he thought she was dead, but she did have enough life to crawl to the spring that's where she died. That was what Grandma Jane told us about her mother. (pause) When you go through these kind of things.... You know, people have asked me so many times why would I get into so many unpopular movements. Any movement that was fighting for civil rights, I felt like I ought to be in it if I was accepted. Because what my mother's and my father's people went through [it] would make me feel that I would be less than interested in my family background, to sit by and let somebody else fight these battles. Every time I think about that belt being pulled from the body of my great grandmother. He had no mercy on her. She couldn't catch up and he didn't mind to kill her. It didn't make any difference. A slave was only worth his work. If he or she could do the work that was expected of them, they lived. And if not, they could be done away with and nothing would be done about it. (pause)

INTERVIEWER: Was your father educated?

TAYLOR: No, I'm sure he didn't finish high school. But he had a very good brain. He could ask us questions when we were going to school, and he could figure out the answer before we could. He was just kind of a self-made man, same as my mother.

INTERVIEWER: How old was he when he began working in the mines?

TAYLOR: I don't really know what his age was when he began working in the mines.

INTERVIEWER: But that was what he did for most of his life.

TAYLOR: Yes, he did that, most of his life he was a miner. And wherever we moved, if he didn't decide to live there, he would still work in the mines and commute. He'd come to and fro to see us. And as I say in 1911 my mother moved from this home in Patton to Berry, Alabama, where she wanted us to learn something about farm life. She would not allow any of us to ever work out. So we went to this farm, a farm with a man on it [to be] what you call sharecroppers. And whatever we raised, half would be his for the use of his land, and the other half would be ours. So the year that we worked there, we had a very good year and my father hired a man to do the heavy work. And we raised cotton, and we raised peas and many other kinds of vegetables. So when we sold our cotton, my aunt that was living in Omaha, Nebraska, wrote to my mother and said that she would like for her to move out there, because they had good schools, high schools, colleges and regular grade schools. And she thought it would be much easier for her to come she said, because if you're here close to me I can be of some help. So when my mother talked it over with my father, he said, "All right, we'll go out and see if we can buy you a home." So we went out and we bought our home, and you saw the picture of our home, it was destroyed by the tornado in 1913. And that's where we had our schooling until after the tornado. We returned to Patton, Alabama.

INTERVIEWER: Your own home was destroyed during the tornado?

TAYLOR: Yes, nothing was left there but the lot. So he said he would not rebuild here, maybe another storm would come. [He didn't] think the family would be safe to live there in this place anymore. So we all moved back to Alabama. And a while before we bought the home up on Crownover Hill, we lived in a company house. We rented that house for, I guess, maybe about six months before my father had a house built on this small farm, just about 11 or 12 acres. And we had a house there, barn, we had some cattle, we had hogs, and we had a little truck farm. Not a big farm, we just raised enough food for the house, and corn for the cattle. And we lived there then until my mother decided to--no, we had come back from Omaha, we had lived out there until 1913--I guess I'm getting this sort of mixed up. And when we come back, that's when we bought the place on Crownover Hill. And that man had owned slaves, too, but he didn't own any of us. But he owned, the man who owned this property we bought this from, so we lived there until I left home in 1916 and went to Winston-Salem, North Carolina. I

TAYLOR: went there and I spent some time with one of the teachers that had taught school there at Corona Normal Industrial Institute.

INTERVIEWER: What did you do when you were there?

TAYLOR: I didn't stay there very long. I stayed with these friends, with this teacher's mother. Then I went back home and my sister was teaching in Bridgeport, Alabama, my oldest sister, Hosea Lee, and she had signed up for another school a month before this school was out and she asked me to finish up the work at this school.

INTERVIEWER: So you taught?

TAYLOR: A little while. And I went home from that and I met this man while I was teaching for her, finishing out her school. And he thought he wanted to get married to me and we married in 1918. And my two children were born. One was born in Bridgeport, Alabama and the other one--I had gone to Kentucky by that time--and my daughter was born in Wolf Pit, Kentucky.

INTERVIEWER: Were you there in Corona when the strike happened in 1918?

TAYLOR: Oh, yes, see we left the strike area--I mean when the strike was on--my father had to leave home. You see, we didn't live on the company premises, as I told you, but we couldn't get to our home without going through the company premises. So when the killing happened, when all those people were killed after the strike come on and they were ordered out of their homes, then when the soldiers come in my mother was afraid of the girls being abused by the soldiers. So that's when she rented the box car and put the furniture in one end of the car and the cows in the other and we went to Wolf Pit, Kentucky. My father had gone there to work after he had left Paris, Alabama. And we went there and we arrived there with two beautiful cows, one Holstein and one Jersey cow. So the mine superintendent wanted the Jersey and he offered her $150 for it and she told him that she paid that for it and had paid express charges on bringing it to Kentucky and she couldn't let it go for that. So he didn't argue with her, he just had it killed that night. So we didn't have no Jersey cow, we only had the Holstein. These are the kinds of things that happens when you are in areas that's completely controlled by the mine company heads. So we lived there until after I married the second time. I went back to Alabama and my mother and the rest of the children moved to Charleston, West Virginia, where they had better schooling ther they had in Wolf Pit. And they lived there, I don't really know how many years because I wasn't home. And then in 1922, when my daughter was born, I was in Arkansas with my mother's sister and I come to Wolf Pit, Kentucky to be there with my mother when this child was to be born. And my husband had gone to Edweight, West Virginia to work with my father. He didn't know much about coal mines, but he was going to try. So he tried until this big march

TAYLOR: come on where they were striking for full union rights. And he got afraid and come home from the strike. And my baby was three weeks old and I said, "Where's my father?" And he said, "Well he's on the march." And I said, "Well, why didn't you stay?" He said,"I was afraid." And I said, "Well you just pack up and go home to your mama, you don't need a wife. Anytime a man will walk out of a line of marchers, of 12,000, and you leave my father in it." And I said, "I don't want you as a husband." So that was our separation.

INTERVIEWER: Well you talk about getting married. What did you want for yourself? How did you see what your future would be as a eighteen year old?

TAYLOR: I didn't want to stay. I was 18, 17, a little bit past 17 because I married in March and my birthday was in June, I would have been 18. My oldest sister had gone to Omaha, Nebraska, and she was writing about how beautiful everything was and I wanted to go there. I didn't really want to get married. But I agreed to get married because I was going to run away, go to my sister. I didn't want to be married because we were from such a big family. I just felt like I would just like to go, she and I would work and find whatever we found that would be something, that would be something to make life a little bit more enjoyable and not have to be taking any sisters and brothers. So that was my purpose of going but then I found I couldn't duck the man so I had to go on and marry.

INTERVIEWER: He forced you into marrying?

TAYLOR: No, my mother made me. She said I couldn't be dishonest. She says, "You're not going to accept his ring and think you're going to go somewhere and ignore the promise you made. You evidently promised, you didn't have to, but you won't treat him like that." So I agreed to get married, and I still was going because I didn't intend to have no children. But I didn't know I didn't have the say so. And so the children was born, the boy first, and three years later the girl. Because I was going to leave him when I started home, she says, "No, you stay with your husband. You're not taking no child away from him to bring home." So I couldn't go home, I didn't have nowhere to go. So I remained with him until 1921, when I found out I was pregnant again and I says, "Never again." So I left and went to Arkansas where my aunt was. And then time for the child to be born, I went to Kentucky where my mother was. And then I sent him home because he was too scared to stay in the line of march. Wasn't I silly?

INTERVIEWER: You didn't have any illusions about marriage?

TAYLOR: No, my sister was able to teach and she was able to work and she was a very smart person and I just wanted to kind of be with her. I had some dreams, maybe pretty crazy dreams, [about] wanting a kind of career. And I felt like if I had more education and could follow her, I could get it.

INTERVIEWER: What did you want to be?

TAYLOR: Well, I didn't really want to be a teacher. I had an idea of being a kind of a social worker. I like to do things like that. And I thought the kind of training that I should have I would be able to get elsewhere.

INTERVIEWER: Well, you turned out to be a social worker.

TAYLOR: More than I realized, but it was by hit and miss. I mean I was not a trained social worker, but that was the kind of thing that I wanted to do. And my mother and father did so much of that for people during our growing up period. There was no such thing as a rest home, it was called a poor house. And when people had no family and they would become ill, they would call on my father to take them. And most all of the time we had sometimes three and four elderly people that we had to keep on our home and wait on them until they died. Then my father would have to bury them because everybody was ashamed to go to what they called the poorhouse. And my mother and father took care of so many people during the life time of us as children. So I guess that's why. They were not middle class people, but they were successful enough to always have food and clothing for us. We never had to miss school for the lack of a pair of shoes and we had to walk five miles from where we lived from Crownover Hill to the school in Patton Junction. That was a five mile walk each way. And we would cook our lunch and carry it to school, and we just got along real well. And we had this big campus with all kinds of pine trees, long needle pine trees and those trees with huge worms. And I was always afraid of worms. So one day I was coming to school and the boys at recess time would catch those worms and run us all over the campus. So I decided I would do something to stop them and coming from school I had on a little red suit with big patch pockets and I saw a snake and I just said, "I'll get the snake." I caught the snake and I pinned him up in my pocket with thorns and went on my five miles. I was behind the other children because I was trying to catch the snake. And when I got to school the tardy bell rang before I could get to the stile. There was a stile where you go eight steps up and eight steps down, you know what a stile is. And Professor Knox was standing on the top of the stile so I ran to try to get by him and he stopped me and he said, "Don't you realize you're late?" I says, "I'm so sorry Professor Knox, but," I said, "my mother sent you a gift and I was kind of late getting here." And so he said, "What is it?" And I said, "It's in my pocket," so I began to take the thorns out of my pocket to give him the package. I had it all wrapped up, I had torn out a lot of paper out of my tablet and pinned the snake up in the paper and put him in my pocket and pinned him up in my pocket so he couldn't get away. And when I handed it to Professor Knox, his hand was hard and different from the feeling of my hand, so he didn't bother me. Professor Knox fell off the stile, and the snake fell out of the paper, and the boys came running and he says, "What on earth did you do a thing like that for?" And I said, "I wanted to get in school, and I was tired of

TAYLOR: these boys running around with worms, and I thought I'd bring something to stop them." And he said, "Do you know what kind of snake it is?" I said, "No, sir, I don't." He said, "That's a ground rattlesnake." And they sent me to be examined, but I wasn't bit, I hadn't been bit.

INTERVIEWER: Had he been bit?

TAYLOR: No, but he thought evidently I couldn't have walked no five miles with a snake in my pocket like that and not be bit. That's how much sense I had.

INTERVIEWER: How old were you then?

TAYLOR: I was 15. (laughs) He was going to make me go back home, but I was able to get by and while he was getting up off the ground I run and got into line. He couldn't believe that I had not been bit, but I wasn't; it was a crazy thing to do. And I don't know why the snake didn't bite me. And I didn't know it was a poison snake, it was not a long snake. I tried to get a black racer, but he was too big, he outrun me and I couldn't catch him. So I caught the ground rattlesnake because he was small and they look so much like the ground you can hardly tell them, they camouflage themselves with dirt and you can't hardly tell them. But I got him and I caught him in back of the neck and I pinned him up and carried him on to school. These are some of the crazy things. So, anyway, I believe that was about the last year because I didn't finish high school. I was promoted to the eleventh grade but I didn't do any eleventh grade work before I left home.

INTERVIEWER: In growing up, was there anything about your family that was political that would have precursed what you did later in your life?

TAYLOR: No, my family was not political. It was just the common sense and understanding that my mother had. You know she just kind of give us a feeling that conditions were not right for us but she said, "We will have to make out with what your father is able to make because I cannot allow you to go into homes to work as servants." She said, "That I do not believe in." She would not allow one of her boys to go into a hotel to work because she said there were too many things going on in hotels that would be something to learn to sink in the minds of her boys. She did not want them to be flunkies and she didn't want them to have the knowledge of the kinds of things she felt would go on in hotels. So, we had no knowledge of working for anybody except doing our work at home. My mother did all the sewing. She was taking care of everything. Of course, our shoes had to be bought, but she was taking care of all our clothing and was a very good manager. She managed quite well on what my father made for us. As we went to school, my older sister she wanted to teach and she did teach. Another sister worked

TAYLOR: in the hospital after she was grown. She married but she never worked in a private home. My older brother went to school in Normal, Alabama and he went to college there. He married early and he went to Arkansas to live. There is another brother that lives in Detroit who owns a grocery store. My oldest brother who I talked to about this information I wanted for you, was a coal miner for a long time. Then he went to Arkansas and lived there for a while, came back to Detroit, and I don't know if he worked in a plant or what he worked in until he moved to Milan, Michigan--he was a real estate broker--and there he became a bailiff in the court and he worked there until he retired, due to poor health. He is quite alert and everything now. From his family there was two daughters. One daughter lives in Cleveland and the other lives in Ann Arbor. He is a Seventh Day Adventist Minister.

INTERVIEWER: Speaking of the ministry, what role did religion play in your upbringing?

TAYLOR: My father was a Methodist, my mother was a Baptist, and of course we always had the church office in our home and I got pretty tired of it. I just said, "If I ever got grown and married I wouldn't allow one to come into my house," because we had to feed and take care of them and when they came in they would stay maybe two or three days. Finally, my mother was able to persuade my father to come into the Baptist Church and we just had one set of ministers after that. It made me have an understanding of what was right and wrong. They were no fanatical Christians but we were a Christian family and all of our children belong to different churches, most of them Baptist churches. Some are teachers and some are just workers in private families. I have three other sisters that are dead now and the others live in Detroit; working in different fields. My mother died in 1949, my father died in 1947. She was semi-invalid for about ten years after having a stroke, she was in a wheelchair. There was one sister who stayed home most of the time. She had had bad marriages and she would always go back home. I would go over and relieve her, I would go and stay two or three times a year a couple of weeks and give her a chance to get out and have a little relief. The rest of the children would just come in and out, but I lived here. One sister lived in California and we couldn't get home too often but I could go more often than she could. We helped her out that way until my mother passed. So, I have been here in Youngstown since 1925.

INTERVIEWER: When did you first become involved in politics?

TAYLOR: I believe through the activities of the International Labor Defense and trying to fight to make it possible for these people to have somewhere to stay even though they didn't have enough money to pay the rent. It made me realize something was wrong. I didn't know what it was so I began to study a little bit more about the political people who we voted for in town. My husband, he did run one time for a councilman. He didn't win. So, through that, it

TAYLOR: was just a little bit of activity that made us feel like if we could get the right representatives, we could make things better for us, those of us who lived in Campbell. And, of course, after I was there ten years and moved over here, I still was active in the Democratic Party until the Progressive Party was organized. So, it was the need that I felt that made me try to study more about it because I felt the country was run by politics. If you didn't have any understanding about it you would not know who was worthy to be voted for and who was not. That made me study a little bit more. Then, when the Progressive Party was organized, the Republican and Democratic Party was doing so little to relieve the people of some of the things that we were going through, especially the poor people. We felt like a new party, a third party might be better. So the principles and everything that was outlined in our meeting of getting the Progressive Party organized looked like real beautiful ideals. I said, "If they ever could be reached then we would have a country where everybody would be taken care of according to their needs." Of course, I launched into more activity in the Progressive Party than I ever had in the Democratic Party.

INTERVIEWER: You were a member of the National Executive Committee and you were the Chairman for the state of Ohio. What does that mean? What kind of work did you have to do?

TAYLOR: I didn't have to do very much work because there was a whole staff of us that worked and that was to make people have an understanding of what the Progressive Party meant, what could be accomplished if we could support Henry Wallace and Vito Marcantonio, the presidential candidates. We first had to let them understand what was possible and they did know that neither one of the major parties was doing all that could be done. We were able to persuade quite a lot of people. Our meetings that would always be held in Cleveland. We would discuss the strategy by which we would try to influence people to understand the importance of fighting for more rights than what we had. So, that was the main thing and then our reports that we would have to make up of what was to be done in each locality would be taken into the National Committee. They would see what sort of progress we were making. That was the main thing.

INTERVIEWER: I would like to go back and touch over some of the many activities that you were involved with and then I would like to go on to your "subversive" activities.

TAYLOR: Oh yes! Of course, my son was in the service during World War II. We had a very bitter feeling about going into Korea to interfere with people there. We just didn't see why we should have gone. Then, many people began to say we should form some kind of committee, a protest against our involvement in the war in Korea. People were really stirred up then. So from small meetings here, from home to to home, we began to discuss the possibility of maybe sending a delegation to Washington. So we got ourselves organized in this

TAYLOR: peace pilgrimage. We were going to Washington to see what we could do, but the representatives wouldn't talk to you. You couldn't get one to come off the floor. They just didn't pay you any mind. So we had a chance to meet in a Baptist church there in Washington, D.C. and we had come from all over the state. We had our bus named a peace bus. Where we passed through, sometimes people would be just standing at the station to get on the bus. So, we just carried a bus load of people to Washington. We discussed all of the things that we thought possibly the rank and file could do because our leaders were just so war-minded that you couldn't talk to them. We had this large meeting, the church was filled. Nobody knew each other, we just knew that we were from Ohio. When this meeting was over we formed Women for Peace. I couldn't imagine why I was selected as a delegate. We were told there was going to be a second World Peace Congress held in England. They would like for a delegate to go. The Ohio delegation voted that I should be the one to represent them in Sheffield, England. I didn't think I would ever get there. I didn't see it was possible. The peace movement was one of the things that brought me more in line with the political arena. Because all the people in the peace movement had more knowledge of politics than I had but I learned from them and the importance of knowing what kind of men to elect to our county, our state and our national men. We thought Henry Wallace would be a person who would be a very wonderful president. That's the way we felt. His wife was very bitter about him going into the Progressive Party, because he was at one time President Roosevelt's vice-president. When Roosevelt chose another person Wallace became very disillusioned with his party. So he was willing to help form the Progressive Party. Mr. Benson, Marcantonio, and quite a few if the very polished politicians supported it. Of course, they started working to make it possible. It looked like we had a platform that most everybody would have been willing to take part but the Democrats were a little bit smarter than we were. They took our platform and put it into action themselves. At least they promised it. Then when it came down to voting for Henry Wallace, he didn't make it. He didn't have any support from his home because his wife was very much against any kind of.... She was a very conservative woman and I suppose they were pretty well to do. So I guess Wallace grieved over his loss of political power and died a few years later.

INTERVIEWER: Did you ever run for office yourself?

TAYLOR: No, I never did want to.

INTERVIEWER: [Why not?]

TAYLOR: Well, I feel that sometimes you have good intentions when you are running for office, then if you are elected, you find out you have to work with the crooks, I mean, the people that are already there. You have to support what they want when maybe you wouldn't want to in order to get them to support what you want. That kind of give and take, I just don't think I could ever make a good

TAYLOR: politician because I would be standing out and would probably have no friends because the things that I would want to do for the people would not be the thing that would be in their minds. They would be thinking in terms of how they could climb up. I just didn't seem to ever want to be a politician. They tried to get me to run for office and I said I didn't even want to run for precinct committeeman. I like to be sort of just free willed, say what I want to and how I want to and if it's wrong why they can't do anything to the office about what I have to say.

INTERVIEWER: Well, what do you think were the things that contributed to your being called before the Ohio Committee on Subversive Activities?

TAYLOR: Because I had left here and my passport said I was to go to Sheffield, England and, of course, after I got to England, the interpreters weren't allowed in. Then the Polish government extended a blanket visa for all of the 2,000 people that were stranded, some in France and some that had got in England. There were 150 interpreters that were not allowed in. So, then for me to go to the country that I didn't leave here to go to, they said I had violated the law of my passport because I was not supposed to go to Poland. When the congress was over in Poland, we were invited to Russia and, of course, we were committing an unpardonable sin to go to Russia. When I came back, immediately I was notified. I had made a number of speeches throughout the cities because when people found out I was back I was invited to so many different places to speak here in Ohio and also in Michigan. The Western Reserve invited me to speak there, the student body, and, of course, they posted me that there would probably be secret servicemen in there listening. They didn't want me to become frightened but to say what I wanted to say because they had speakers who would get frightened that they couldn't even tell what they wanted them to tell. When I spoke I told them I was a housewife, I was not a teacher or a professional of any kind, but I did know what good living was here and also would be able to discern what good living was away from here. Having gone to the Soviet Union I was really surprised to find that most of the representatives that had been there and came back, what was published about them, I found out was not the truth. I said, "It's a lot more freedom there then you want to give the people credit for, whether you like the government or not."

I might be harassed in some way. I said, "I don't mind that. I have been harassed ever since I have been back home anyway." That auditorium was filled. I knew that three of the men on the front seat were the people the students had warned me about. I began to tell all the fine things that I had witnessed in the Soviet Union by sight, by speech, and how much of the Soviet Union we had been able to tour. When the question period came, one man asked, he was from Latvia, I think that's how you

TAYLOR: pronounce it, and he said did I think that people were free in the Soviet Union? I said, "They are freer than we are in the United States." He said, "Don't you feel you have made great progress since slavery?" I said, "We had no business being slaves in the beginning and we should not have been forced to come over here. We didn't come over here on our own." I said, "In as much as we have come out of slavery a little progress has been made but I don't think any great progress has been made since we were supposed to be free." I said, "Because we are enslaved now, not by chains but we are enslaved by mind. How many black students do you think could pay the cost here to come to Western Reserve? Not very many can pay it. I don't know about Latvia, I don't know what you had to go through while you were there, but I can say this, the first time I was ever treated like a human being by whites who did not look down on me with scorn was in the Soviet Union, it was not in America." I was just talking, just rattling. I mentioned just before it ended, "I understand that everybody in this auditorium are not students, they are not all teachers, we have three men who are sitting on the front seats that were sent here on purpose to find out what I had to say and I certainly hope they will take it back to their department." I said, "They should go to the Soviet Union and find out the truth, because I am not afraid of anything I have said because I have no job to lose and I don't think I will go hungry. But I have told the actual truth, as a housewife, not as a professional." I said, "I do know when I am treated well and I feel that what I learned in the Soviet Union is more than I would have ever learned by books and I certainly can't believe the reports that have come out of that because I have found out different."

INTERVIEWER: How long was it after that speech that you were called to Columbus?

TAYLOR: I guess it must have been not quite a month. I prepared a speech, I think here it is. I prepared this and sent it to the radio station to be broadcast. I got a letter back.

INTERVIEWER: This is called Peace is Possible, a report by Pauline Taylor. Do you want to just summarize what you wrote in here?

TAYLOR: It is a beautiful outlay of what I found out. I wish you would read it before you go.

INTERVIEWER: I will, but for the tape would you tell them what is in it?

TAYLOR: Our trip to the Soviet Union was.... We were invited by the Peace Committee and, of course, what I had a chance to see with my own eyes. We were not just shown the things that they wanted us to see but we made notations. They gave us all notebooks to write down what we wanted to see. We had in that delegation, housewives, we had teachers, we had farmers, we had ministers, we had lawyers. So our delegation it was nineteen of us. That

TAYLOR: represented the different categories of people who, some of them were very well prepared. We had a chance to see different things, things that we wanted. I wanted to see what life was like in the homes with the people, with children. The farmer wanted to go to the collective farmers. The minister wanted to meet with the rabbis and other ministers at the churches because there are more people in the churches in the Soviet Union than there is in the United States all together. Still they said there are no churches there. I was very anxious and when we would go on our different tours during the day then we would meet back at the hotel and discuss what we had a chance to see. I had to try and remember it in my head because I could not take anything in shorthand but some of the girls on the delegation from Chicago could take it down in shorthand. It was just a beautiful thing to see life, what it was like. "A lifetime fight for a a better world" was part of it and "what I saw with my own eyes" and "the war destruction in London" and "our peace train." That was a beautiful experience. We were in Czechoslovakia. After we got to Sheffield, we had to leave there by a Czech plane because the people in London government would not let us have a plane. We arrived in Czechoslovakia and we dined at one of the most beautiful hotels and when the peace train was made up, they had garlands of flowers all along that sixteen-car train taking us into Poland. The first time I had ever had a berth [was] on that train. I had been traveling on trains here but I would always have a car seat. Everywhere that the train would pass there would be just looked like thousands of people standing waiting for this peace train to pass and they would wave and those that did get up to the train would be asking for autographs while the train would slow down. It was the most moving thing that I have witnessed in my life. The treatment of the people going into Poland was something that you just couldn't believe that the people were that anxious to see, to think about a peace delegation. One of the subjects here was "they know what war is." We hadn't had war in our country; we had gone elsewhere to fight but it hadn't been brought to us. We didn't realize what they had gone through. Then I was grilled in Columbus.

INTERVIEWER: You wrote this [before] the Columbus, Ohio Committee on Subversive Activities?

TAYLOR: Yes, it was printed but I had it wrote on scratch. I had sent a copy to the radio station that I could broadcast. The station wrote me back and said if they would allow me to give that address over the station there would be a lot of people that would not want to go to war and since I was a peace advocate I could not have that. When I went to Columbus I tried to present it to the Un-American Committee and they wouldn't have it so the Progressive Party had it printed in this pamphlet form. I had it all written but they just wanted to grill me, like you see that copy there. My experience with the committee was a very unpleasant one because the committee room was as hot as it could

TAYLOR: be and when we went in with our lawyers, Mrs. Hamilton on one side and I was on the other.

INTERVIEWER: This was the summer of 1951?

TAYLOR: Yes, in May. It was so warm that I did ask for a drink of water. They brought me some warm water in a Coca-Cola bottle and I had to drink that from the bottle. The committee lawyers and the members of the Un-American Committee would grill you the questions they would ask. One, I think it was Arnes, I don't know which one, he wanted to know, "Mrs. Taylor, do you travel throughout the country, throughout the state speaking?" I said, "Yes." "How are you able to travel?" I said, "The people who invite me usually send me my transportation. When I arrive in the city they take me wherever I am supposed to." "How can you afford to do that?" I said, "Well, I tell you it is quite a sacrifice because while I am away my husband has to cook for himself or find somebody who can cook for him." But I said, "As long as my son is involved in the war, there is no sacrifice too great for me to make for peace and I will continue that." "Mrs. Taylor, do you read the Daily Worker?" Before I could say I did or didn't he raised up the Daily Worker with a picture of me on it. He says, "Do you recognize this?" I said, "It looks nice doesn't it." I couldn't say nothing else, didn't know anything else to say. (laughter) So then they grabbed this pamphlet and they got this and they wanted to know if the Communist Party printed this. I said, "The Progressive Party is not the Communist Party and one thousand of these were put out by the Progressive Party." If I had been able, I would have read this in the hearing of the Un-American Committee but they would not permit it. So, then they wanted to know where I got my money. If I was a steelworker's wife, how could I afford to go to the Soviet Union at the expense of approximately $5,000. I said, "Well, my money was raised. I was a delegate and it was raised by people in the Peace Committee." "Who were they?" I said,"I don't know their names." "You must know them." I said, "I know my name but I don't know the names of the people who gave me money. From 50¢ up was given to me and what I didn't raise through that, my husband gave to me and that's how I went." Everywhere I had ever been to a meeting they had all of this down. "Wasn't this a Communist meeting?" I said, "If it was I didn't know, I attended these meetings." "Mrs. Taylor, what kind of education did you have?" I said, "I can read and write." "What kind of degree do you hold?" I said, "None." "What college did you go to?" I said, "I haven't been in a college, only to visit." "How can you go around all over the world, all over the state speaking and you have no education?" "Oh," I said, "Mister, I can read

TAYLOR: and write and I think I can do that pretty well. I don't need degrees to speak for peace and I will continue to speak for peace." So this question went on for I guess about an hour. They were very hostile and the wives of these committemen were sitting there and everytime they would ask a nasty question they would get so amused. They were very happy to see this, they thought they were putting me in a corner so when I turned to a question I wasn't going to answer I would turn to my lawyer and I said, "I am not going to answer this." I would whisper to him, "Are you going to protect me?" That's when he told me I was being obstinate. But I had already went to a white lawyer, a woman lawyer in Cleveland, and I found out what I could answer and what I couldn't. If they ask you a name and you name that person, then youve given them a noose around your neck. Anything else they ask you, if you don't answer, they can cite you for contempt. So, what I would do was I would always take the Fifth Amendment when they wanted me to point out some person if they were Communist. How did I know what people belonged to? I knew what I belonged to and what I didn't belong to, regardless of what they said. These were the kinds of questions they asked. They would ask you one question in five or six different ways to see if you were not telling the truth. The main thing is that I didn't know they had estimated that my trip had cost that much. In that way they were trying to find out where the money would come from. "Who gave you the money, did you give receipts?" I said, "No receipts because the people trusted me." They felt that if I was able to go and see for myself, attend this congress when I would come back they felt they would get a true report. So they were willing to help me. I didn't have sufficient clothes to make a trip like that. I didn't know what the countries were like. Some of my friends donated their clothes so I would have sufficient clothes and I had a chance to go and I was well taken care of and we were given beautiful gifts while we were there and we were treated like human beings.

INTERVIEWER: Repeat again what the local media here in Youngstown said about that hearing. You said that in the morning at 6 o'clock they started out.

TAYLOR: Well, that was when the local prosecutor for sixteen years, J. Maynard Dickerson, had been called to the Un-American Committee. He thought he was having a secret testimony. He didn't know it would get out and the first thing at 6 o'clock in the morning it said that J. Maynard Dickerson had named Mrs. Taylor, Pauline Taylor, as a Communist.

TAYLOR: He said he knew there was no possible way for me to have enough money. I guess they give him the estimated figure to go because he went ahead to say how much money he made a year. He knowed a man in the mill didn't make what he made and he could not have afforded the trip. So, every newscast and great big headlines in the newspaper, [said] that Pauline Taylor had been called a Communist[by J. Maynard Dickerson]. So when he came in on Friday some of the lawyers who knew him said, "Are you sure Mrs. Taylor is a Communist?" He said, "I didn't say she was a Communist." He said, "I just said she couldn't afford to go to the Soviet Union at the expense of what they said her trip was. Because I could not have afforded it." "Well," they said, "every newscaster today has named you as calling her a Communist." So, when he got home he called, he said, "Mrs. Taylor, this is Maynard Dickerson." I said, "Yes, what do you want?" He said, "I understand that the paper says I called you a Communist. I didn't do that." I said, "Why did you go before the Un-American Committee trying to tell them that I couldn't afford to go to the Soviet Union at the cost of the trip?" I said, "Do you know my husband works and had good credit?" And I said, "Of course, he has lived here long enough and he owns his home and if nobody give me a dime, I think he could have borrowed enough money to have sent me. You didn't have to tell them you thought I got money from the Soviet Union. I didn't get a dime. Every dollar I had came from Ohio, right here in Youngstown, Warren, Akron, Cleveland, et cetera is where my money came from." I said, "When I called your paper to come out and interview me you wouldn't come, you wouldn't send anybody. So you went up there to tell somebody that you did not know anything about it." He said, "Well, I didn't know that." Well, I said, "Then you call the Vindicator, you had better get it straight at the Vindicator, because," I said, "they have published it." He went down to the Vindicator and he called me from there. He says, "Mrs. Taylor, I have been down here for two hours and they will not let me see the transcript, because the transcript came from Columbus." He says, "What they have reported here was not what I said." I said, "You make the corrections with the Vindicator." I said, "I don't intend to let you get by by attempting to tell me what I belong to that you don't even know if I belong to it or not." And I says, "You didn't know where my money come from. You could have easily known every dollar I had given to me. I would have told you if you had covered the news. Now I will never tell you." Then around 12 o'clock he called again he said, "Mrs. Taylor, they promised they would give me the transcript. I haven't got it but I am certainly going to see that they deny it." They did make a denial that he said he did not call me a Communist. But everybody was under the impression of what he said, because the denial, they didn't see that. They had great big black headlines [for the accusation]. That was the beginning of real harassment. Everywhere I went there was somebody following me. If I went to church, if I was going to be on a program in

TAYLOR: church there would be somebody there. So, one of the ministers who baptized me in 1911 called here and he said, "Mrs. Taylor, I would like to talk with you." I said, "Alright." His name was Maston Rhodes. I said, "Do you want to come here?"He said, "No, your house may be wired. I'll talk to you somewhere else." He came by and I had to go out and get in his car and he told me he had been called in by three or four of the judges here in the city and they asked him if he knew me. He said, "No, you know I had to tell a lie because I baptized you in 1911 but I told them, no, I had read about you." They said they were surprised. They said, "Where did she get her training, who is she, what is her background." They said, "The woman has more courage than anybody that [they] had ever seen and if she had five more people that had the courage that she had and would fight like she is fighting, Youngstown would be a better place to live in." They said, "We admire her but we can't publicly state it." So he said when he found out they didn't have anything against me he was sorry he had told them he didn't know me. So then he wanted me to know, "I can't help you, but I want you you to know that you are admired by people in power and I don't believe you will ever go to jail, so just keep up the good work."

INTERVIEWER: So what became of the hearing in Columbus?

TAYLOR: The hearing in Columbus, they were three months trying to decide if I or Mrs. Hamilton had lied. What do you call it?

INTERVIEWER: Perjury.

TAYLOR: Yeah, had we perjured ourselves. So every day for three months there would be something in the paper that they were going through our transcript with a fine-tooth comb. Finally it ended up with them not being able to find anything in the transcript that I had lied. Of course, they were going to arrest Mrs. Hamilton because she hadn't denied being a Communist, but she just wouldn't tell them she was a Communist. She went to the bank and had left her pocketbook and they had went through it and found a 1947 membership card in the Communist Party. So, they were going to arrest her and when they come she had moved to New Jersey. That ended her trial period with them. They could find nothing against me other than just talking about me.

INTERVIEWER: You were called to testify only that one day?

TAYLOR: One day in Columbus, but then later on I was called to Washington. I was coming from church and was standing at the bus line waiting with some of the people having to go across town and a car rolled up and this man jumped out and come running over where I was. I don't know how he [knew me]; somebody must have been in the car who knew me because there

TAYLOR: were three or four women there. He said, "Mrs. Taylor, I have a subpoena for you." I said, "What for?" He said, "You have to go to Washington, the Un-American Committee is calling you to Washington." I said, "For what, I have talked to the ones in Columbus. I don't have anything else to say." He said, "Well, I was just ordered to give you the subpoena." I said, "Did they give you any money? I can't walk to Washington." He said, "No, they didn't give me any money. I'm not authorized to give you any money." I said, "If they want me in Washington before the Un-American Committee then they can come and get me. Because I have no money to go. I don't have one nickel I would spend going there to tell them anything." So he said, "You write to the Un-American Committee and they will make arrangements for you to come."

INTERVIEWER: Did they want you to come to Columbus or Washington?

TAYLOR: Washington. So I wrote to them and told them I had received the subpoena. I didn't know what else they would want from me but if they wanted me, they would have to come after me or send me my expense. Send me my transportation and since I don't know anything about Washington, I will have to have hotel reservations, have to have a service of a taxi to take me to eat and then I will tell you what I want you to know. So , I called Reverend Morford of the National Council of American Soviet Friendship in New York and told him I didn't know anybody in Washington and that I would need a lawyer and if he could recommend one I would like for him to do it. One that I hoped would be half-way reasonable. So, he sent me a letter back, Attorney Forer, I think he was the lawyer he recommended. I wrote to him and got a confirmation that he would represent me. But he said, "I would like to talk to you before time for you to go before the hearing." I said I would just come in a day ahead. I went a day before I was to testify. They had about thirty people from Cleveland that they had called in about the same time they had called me from here. So I had a chance to talk with him and tell him what I would answer and what I wouldn't. Then he took me down to the hearing room at the House Office Building and I heard the testimony of the people from Cleveland, the way they asked the questions. The woman who had been the stool pigeon, everywhere she had been a precinct commiteeperson for the Democratic Party,but she was a stool pigeon for the FBI. When they started asking these questions then I could kind of figure out what my course of action would be because I had to testify the next day. I didn't testify that day because I had come in a day ahead. They started out on me with my disobeying my passport going to Poland and the Soviet Union when I was supposed to go to England. I told them why I went. Then [they asked about] several meetings that I had attended in Cleveland. [They were] Progressive Party meetings but Mrs. Brown had told them they were Communist Party meetings. So they wanted to know what was done in the

TAYLOR: meetings. I said, "I don't know anything about the Communist Party meetings, because all the meetings I attended in Cleveland was the Progressive Party. That's the party that was on the ballot and I think it was a legal party and I had the right to go to these meetings." They went from one question to another. They asked me questions about different people which I took the Fifth Amendment on everything. I don't have a copy of the report like I have there because a man made this from my trip in Columbus. When they got this they tried to find different places where I was more or less praising other people for peace efforts and none in my own country. I didn't answer but a very few questions because I took the Fifth Amendment on most everything. When they tried to get out of me my husband's name, like they did in Columbus, I wouldn't tell that either. Finally they decided I wasn't a very good person to testify so they got rid of me. They told me I could go over to the table for my expense. So when I went to the table for my expense, he said, "Well, you have been here one day." I said, "I have been here two days." He said, "But you didn't testify but one day." I said, "But when I got my notice it said I would have to be in the House Offfice Building at 9 o'clock so I had to come the day before so I expect my expense for two days." (laughter) So I got it. That was my trip to Washington. After that the FBI would send men around to see how much influence I had over my son. He was in the army and they felt like maybe I thought I knew what I was doing but they were sure that I didn't. They wanted to know if I would be able to influence him to leave the army. He was no problem and never was a problem. He was just a regular soldier. He wouldn't have the lives of so many people in his hands. Of course, that is why they went to some of the neighbors to see how much influence I had over my son. Right away I just wrote to my sons-in-law in Austin, Texas and told them to tell him to leave the base and come there and call me. When he called I told him to come home I wanted to talk to him because I didn't want him to re-enlist. When he came home I gave him the whole low-down on what I had seen while I was gone. You just don't know what. I'm jumping back over to Poland now. They showed us a picture in Poland that they said anyone of us who had a son in the service we would not be allowed to see the picture. Well, my son was in service but he was in Texas, training in Texas so he did not go back to Korea; he was in Japan. Well, I said I would be allowed to see it because my son isn't over there. It was a picture of how they used those napalm bombs to burn those people out. This was a movie the Americans had made of the things they were doing. The movie was captured by the Korean people and they had to show us. The dead was piled up just like a mountain. You could just see the flies blowing. They would get up in the planes and drop gasoline on the rice. They had mountains of rice for the people to eat. They would drop flame throwers down and burn the rice up-- what they called the scorched earth policies. The horrible things

TAYLOR: that were being done was almost beyond belief. This was letting us know what the American troops were doing. Even though they blamed all the [Korean] people for being brutal but the policies that our boys carried out was also very brutal.

INTERVIEWER: How did your son feel about your asking him not to re-enlist?

TAYLOR: He understood and he didn't re-enlist and he did not go no where. When his time was up, he came home. But he might not if I had not been able to get him the information I did. He might have stayed in. I was glad I learned what I did, that I could advise him. He was drafted, he did not volunteer. Of course, he had to go under the draft. I think so many times if families can warn their children of the injustices of these wars, they wouldn't be so eager to go. Some of them go because they feel like they can travel. Some feel like they can fly airplanes or they can use guns, things that they have never had. They go with the feeling they are doing something great. They are going to be great soldiers. I didn't want my son.... "I told him I don't want you going anywhere or doing anything to anybody. Don't you go over there, they are not your enemies."

INTERVIEWER: After the Korean War and after this period of McCarthyism passed how did that affect you and what you were doing in the community?

TAYLOR: It didn't bother me because the things I am in are not political. I am in sewing clubs, garden clubs, senior citizen's club, county extension club and in these things they are not fearful of that. But if I were very active in politics, I believe they would start right out after me again. They found out that they knew that I was not a Communist but they felt I knew communist people and they thought I would tell them. When Paul Robeson come here, you saw the headlines how they tried to defame him. They never was able to prove that he was a Communist because he believed in rights for all people regardless what their political beliefs might be. He had travelled in the Soviet Union. In fact, he and his wife had travelled practically all over the world. Part of their son's education had been in the Soviet Union. Anybody that said anything good about the Soviet Union was a suspect. They certainly did try to make it very hard for you.

INTERVIEWER: We haven't talked very much on this tape or the other tape about your efforts for equal rights. Those date back to when you first moved into the community here in Youngstown or I don't know, maybe before that. Can you tell about that?

TAYLOR: The equal rights movement. I don't know what we called it here. It was a part of the Cleveland-based equal rights national organization you see, because they had Equal Rights Committee throughout. I could talk to the people and let them begin to understand although they were not too willing to be too active.

TAYLOR: [They would circulate] petitions for this man that was accused of raping this woman in Mississippi, Willie McGee. Things like that. They were very good about that. I was able to give them a greater understanding. Of course, they felt they didn't want to be singled out as I had been singled out. They were very slow to become active. Sometimes they would become members or they would give you a donation once in a while, but they did not want to make so many loud protests. People kind of feel like they want to be on the safe side. They want to be accepted. If I was accepted, oh well and good. And if I wasn't, it didn't make any difference. Our activities in the IWO, I thought were very good because we were able to reach quite a few people through that International Workers's Order as long as we were allowed to have our meetings.

INTERVIEWER: This is through the cultural branch?

TAYLOR: Yes, the building was a United Cultural Association. Then these foreign people could tell us so much about what had happened in their countries.

INTERVIEWER: Do you want to start over and explain how you got the building and the kinds of programs you had there? We don't have that down on the tape either.

TAYLOR: We were members of the IWO long before we had a building. The Slovaks had their own building. It was not an IWO building, but they could have their meetings. Our nationality groups decided they wanted to have a home of their own. This place was put up for sale,Thornhill Park, which had been a mansion of one of Youngstown millionaires, I don't know who it was. They had gone to Florida to live and the building had been left. It was one man living in the building. He only used one room. He was there more or less as a person to keep the building from being destroyed. The rest of the house was just locked up. It went up for sale for lack of tax being paid. I think a group had tried to buy it once but it was so expensive to keep up they just gave it up. This one man remained. When we heard about it, some of the trustees of our organization thought they would try to buy it. They wanted to know how many would be able to pool enough money that the building could be bought. That's where we come together: the Jewish, the Romanians, the Czechoslovakians, the Armenians, the Jewish, the Italians, and our English-speaking people. The Italians were the first ones to start in the IWO. We would have our meetings, our discussions, I was the secretary of them. We would have our discussions on what we were going to do. If we were to petition against high prices, we would get our petitions out for that. We would have different speakers to come in. We would have movies. During the summertime we would have picnics because we would have a big shelter where they would have whole barbecued lambs.

TAYLOR: They were very well attended picnics. On one occasion, Mr. DeLacey came down and brought a truckload of clothing. We were going to announce an exchange of clothes for people who needed clothing for their children to come and bring something. We were going to have this exchange at this big picnic. We got racks up and put the clothes up and Chief Allen sent some of his spies out to see what we were doing.

INTERVIEWER: The police chief of Youngstown?

TAYLOR: The Chief of Police of Youngstown. Then they wrote a great big article in the paper that the Communists had come from underground and were meeting at this big statewide picnic at the Thornhill Park, and he had to send his men out so he could see what we were planning to do because if they had come from underground he thought we were getting ready to start a revolution. (laughs) All those beautiful clothes but the people were afraid to come out. I called for an appointment with Chief Allen to find out why they would do a thing like that. Don Rothenburg came down and we went to Chief Allen. When we got there he was busy. We sat in the outer room. Finally when he came out he said, "Is this the Pauline Taylor?" I said, "I am Pauline Taylor," I said, "this is Mr. Rothenburg from Cleveland." He said, "Come right in." I said, "Mr. Allen, I have come to speak to you about the article in the paper. I don't know whether you were responsible for this statement or not. I want you to know it is not correct." I said, "This was the Progressive Party statewide picnic and you know the Progressive Party and the Communist Party are two different parties. The Progressive Party is a political party and it is on the ballot. I don't think this kind of statement did us any good and didn't do you any good." I said, "You don't realize how many nationality groups are involved in that Thornhill Center and they all have votes. And don't think for one minute that you hurt us as bad as you hurt yourself." I said, "The statement was not true." He said, "I know, I sent my men out." I said, "Did you find anything that was going wrong?" "No, they didn't." I said,"Then why did this kind of story come out in the paper?" I said, "We know there are plenty of people in Youngstown whose children need clothes and we have an exchange. We wasn't trying to sell anything but we were going to give them clothing, and whatever they had to benefit their children, they could leave it there and it would go to somebody else. But this story that you put in the paper-- if you didn't put it in, you ordered it done-- it had stopped a lot of people that need clothing [and] shoes. They were afraid to come out." I said, "Nothing was going on wrong, nobody was planning to overthrow the government, it was no communist meeting. It was a Progressive Party meeting." "Well, I don't like the Progressive Party." I said,"Well, I don't like the Catholic Church, but you belong

TAYLOR: to it. What you have to understand is this. I am an individual and all of us, we can believe in what we feel like we want to believe in as long as we do not break the law. No law was broken out there." He was not quite as nasty as I thought he was going to be. He was really disturbed when his spies didn't find anything going on that was against any of the laws. He started sending them out whenever we would have a movie or have a big program or have a out of town speaker. He would have them out taking the license numbers of the cars and people's license numbers would be published in the paper. They just got afraid to come. Oh yes, it is so. They would put the license number in the Vindicator, oh they had space for that. They did that until they just broke up our attendance and the place was pretty expensive to keep up. When we had a buyer after we got through with this law suit that cost us pretty close to $3,000 to fight, [Attorney General] Tom Clark and his aides that were trying to take it all over. Everything that they thought belonged to the IWO [they tried to take over]. And by this not being the IWO property it wasn't involved with IWO property, it was not bought as our property, It was the home for IWO to meet and anybody else that wanted to rent the place would do that. We sold the home. I represented the nationality people in many of their meetings. I would go to Detroit, wherever they wanted me to go. They worked and they wanted me to go because I was the secretary here. Then I would bring back a report of the foreign born organization. I can't think of the name of it now.

INTERVIEWER: They mentioned it in here somewhere. It was called the American Committee for Protection of Foreign Born.

TAYLOR: [They discussed] all the problems they had with getting their citizenship papers. All that was discussed because they had meetings always advising them what to do in order to become a naturalized citizen. So whenever there was a meeting in Detroit or in Cleveland, wherever they wanted a representative, they would send me to represent them and attend all the meetings and I would bring written reports back to them and the banquet everything they paid for. I was in that organization until our organization was dissolved.

INTERVIEWER: When was the Thornhill Club disbanded?

TAYLOR: It must have been back in about 1954. I believe, or 1955, because they were still in existence when I came back [from the Soviet Union]. We have not met together since then. Mr. Nadrich belongs to the Slovak Club. I don't know what they do there because they are quite conservative in that club and he was kind of like sort of a lost sheep in there because he had very progressive ideas that some of them in there did not

TAYLOR: like, but they did not bar him because he was a Slovak. Many of the other people who worked with us, Panchak and Commanita, they are all dead. Ben Blumenthal is still alive, but they withdrew the Jewish Organization from here after the red baiting had got so strong that he was afraid it would interfere with his private life. So many that I can't even think of the whole name of them, that was just beautiful working with them. They were so real and they had so much understanding because so much oppression had been against them in the countries they had come from. When they come here they wanted to help make this better just like they were about the union. More of them understood the solidarity that you needed to make a union what it ought to be. They sacrificed much. Many of them were very badly mistreated. When we started to campaign for social security the people were afraid of that. They thought that was some kind of communist something and they didn't want it. So we had quite a strong delegation here that would go to Columbus and we would go to Washington and many times some of our white friends would be beat up and put in jail. I was always with them but I never got put in jail and I never was hit by a club or nothing. But then they found out there was a lot of people following the method of trying to get people to support the issue of social security. When they saw it was getting a little bit too strong then they said the president would die before, nothing like that could ever be made possible, they didn't care what Roosevelt said. We went through all the abuse trying to get social security legislation. When it was passed we felt that we had really accomplished a lot because it certainly wasn't easy. Because people were afraid of it. They were afraid of social security legislation just like they were afraid of the union. Now when I look at them, I tell them about it. Whenever they allow me to. This is one of the things I have taken part in that has benefited somebody else. I wasn't out there for my own benefit. But what benefited them benefited me. I didn't go in it selfishly. I went in it for the people that didn't understand. If I had not had the background of my father and mother that I had, I would not have understood either. I would have been afraid. We suffered a lot but I think we have accomplished much.

INTERVIEWER: I guess this isn't the way to ask the question, but because you are a black woman had that had a lot to do with the way you have looked at things?

TAYLOR: Yes, because it is the black people that have suffered so much more than anybody can understand. Oh, they may say a little discrimination didn't amount to nothing. They didn't know how much we have been abused. They don't know how many of our people have been killed. They don't know how many have

TAYLOR: been stripped of everything that was meaningful to them like it was in the school desegregation in Arkansas, and what the governor did in Alabama to keep the blacks from going to school with the whites. It wasn't just the matter of wanting to be with the whites but they had so much better schooling and better teachers than we had. And the purpose was that we could have equal education but they wouldn't have it in all black schools. We had to take the people who were less educated and the poor buildings. We didn't have enough finance to make the building what it should have been, so we just felt like we wanted to have the same kind of education so we could make our way into the world just like the whites are making it.

INTERVIEWER: You were involved with a number of organizations in the Youngstown area against Jim Crow and racial prejudice. Do you want to run through them?

TAYLOR: Well, there are so many I don't know whether or not I can remember them or not. All of the organizations had a little civil rights struggle in it. It was not all political. We tried to in our different groups to bring out the injustices that were still meted out. That is why I think I was so won over by the Future Outlook League because they had to do quite a bit of work in Cleveland and we had our branch here. We were able to get an understanding of just how weak people were in fighting for their rights. They wanted [them] as much as I did. They weren't satisfied about how they were being treated. Yet they did not want to be isolated. They did not want to be a person to get out and be considered a radical minded person. They just were passive. Then some of the professionals were too professional to do anything. Of course, I call them parasites because they live off of us. If we didn't work they wouldn't have a job. They couldn't be doctors, they would have no patients. They couldn't be teachers because they wouldn't have any students. They couldn't be in any of their professions if it wasn't for the working man. But the working man was downtrodden by them, when they know they can only live through us. In the entertainment field, if we didn't go for their entertainment they would not be able to sell their records and do their plays or their movies and all of these things.

INTERVIEWER: You mentioned there is an organization of professional people here in Youngstown that went back to 1919, the Inter-racial Committee.

TAYLOR: The Inter-racial Committee was an independent committee that was organized I think back around 1902. That was organized before I ever came here. There was such a division between even the professional blacksand whites. There was just no mixing at all. These people began to realize that this division was hurting Youngstown more than it was helping, so many of these were ministers. I didn't know them personally when I joined the organization, I joined after I moved to Youngstown in 1935. They had a luncheon meeting every month and they would discuss all the problems that were facing the division of the people, blacks and whites. I thought that was something worthwhile to be in so I attended the luncheon meetings. I guess five or six years.

INTERVIEWER: We missed the tail end of what you said happened to the Inter-racial Committee.

TAYLOR: Well, when it felt it had accomplished the bringing together of both races in just about every walk of life, I suppose, they felt like there was no need for any special continuation of the Inter-racial Committee. It is not now functioning. They did have a chapter of the United Nations here which I was in that too. I guess it must have lasted about two years. In the beginning of the United Nations so many people were opposed to it so we were trying to acquaint the people with the good it could do once it was set up in New York. To realize the way you can understand the problems of other people is to allow them to come to you or you to go to them. It was set up here in New York and they felt like the people should support it. That was the whole emphasis that was put on, making people understand the importance of the United Nations. The chapter is no longer existing. There was another organization, but I can't [recall] the name of it. It handled the problems of our deprived people. Most of the things we were in, even the sewing club during the time of the depression in the 1930's when people were out of work and things were so bad for them, our sewing club got permission from Youngstown Sheet and Tube to sew for the workers from the mill. The Sheet and Tube furnished all the material for us and we furnished our own machines. The mayor of the city of Campbell let us have a building over the post office and our women would go down and they would sew everyday but Saturday. The clothes we would make would be for the children of the steelworkers who had no jobs. Of course, the company would give them extended credit so they could get food but they did not give them clothing. That was just a regular sewing club. I organized the club in 1927. The meeting we had here last Wednesday was the [anniversary of] 51 years that we have been organized. We did that kind of sewing

to help during the time that many of the chapters of the Red Cross had sewing going on at the different churches. We did our sewing directly for Youngstown Sheet and Tube workers.

INTERVIEWER: Are there any white women in the sewing club?

TAYLOR: No, it is just a small Negro sewing club. We didn't have but fifteen members. Six of them are dead. We don't have many now but we still meet once a month. We have just a very beautiful relationship. I think I am the oldest in the club. It was organized in my house in 1927 when I was living in Campbell. So we sew and we make different crafts and we enjoy talking and eating. We don't do as much. We used to work and give memberships to the Y and things like that, but we are a lot older now and we can't do the things we did then. I was just very happy about our sewing because we made so many garments and some of the people who sewed over here,a lot of their work was sent to us to correct. Sometimes they were not made properly and we would have to correct them because we had some very good seamstresses in our group. We were sort of proud of it because Youngstown felt they were sort of superior to people in Campbell. They had that feeling of division. Because they were in the big city and we were in the small town. They didn't count us too much because we knew what we could do and we produced very good work that we put out for the children. During that time in the 1930's my husband had a pool room and restaurant combined. We had gardens but there was no such thing as organized relief and the city relief they could give only 60¢ a week. That was all they could allow a couple. We would take our scrip and help get the people meat to cook their vegetables with. They could raise their vegetables but things were very bad in Campbell.

INTERVIEWER: Who issued the scrip?

TAYLOR: The company. So we would be able to give them that help. I mean individually all of us would try to do it. We would go from house to house where we would find people with children who were in bad circumstances and we would usually take food out of our house and take the scrip and buy them some food and take it to them. We did quite a bit of that.

INTERVIEWER: What did your husband's pool hall have to do with it?

TAYLOR: He was just a person who was able still to do that. He was not working in the mill but he had an income and he was not exactly broke. So I helped out like that and I would put up five or six hundred cans of food. I divided it with the people who didn't have any food. This has been a part of my life

TAYLOR: all the time. Where there was sickness or death or where people couldn't pay their phone bills or their phone was cut off and everybody who had sickness in the area, probably within ten or twenty blocks would come there for the use of the phone. So my husband said the house was a telephone booth because there was somebody coming all the time in some kind of distress to use the telephone. When we would call when there was death, I would go to the home of the bereaved. If it wasn't clean enough I would help clean the home up, wash the dead because I thought the undertaker shouldn't take a dirty body away from the house. I thought they were supposed to clean them up so we did crazy things like that. These were the kind of things you call missionary work now. We just did it because we felt we were neighbors and we felt people needed and we would just go ahead and do it. We all did something of the same kind of work. When the Urban League sent someone down from New York to investigate the conditions of the workers in the mill, we entertained the representative of the Urban League. The people who knew their work when the element of the foreign people came in had to train the foreigners [who] was then given their jobs. The Negro had to come and be the helper. Well, there was a lot of dissatisfaction on that. When the Urban League sent this representative down, Mr. Fout was the representative who represented the black workers in the mill.

INTERVIEWER: How do you spell that?

TAYLOR: F-O-U-T. I don't know his first name. I can't remember his first name. He said [about] these complaints, "They have a right to have a meeting and register their complaints but they don't complain to me and there is nothing I can do about it."

INTERVIEWER: He worked at Public Relations at Youngstown Sheet and Tube?

TAYLOR: For Youngstown Sheet and Tube, yes.

INTERVIEWER: Was he a black man?

TAYLOR: No, no, he was white. He represented the black workers and he said they didn't complain to him and he didn't know these complaints had gone into the National Urban League. He appeared to be very surprised and he said there would certainly be no objections if they wanted to meet. So we met in the Shiloh Baptist Church. We wanted the people to get up and register how they had been treated on their jobs although they had did the job well and knew the job well, but as soon as the whites were trained for the job, they had to lose the job and come to the white's helper when the whites had to be trained by blacks. So Mr. Fout said he didn't know this had happened. They had never came to him with these kind of reports.

TAYLOR: He pretended. He knew what was happening. He just wanted to make it appear to the Urban League Representative that this was beyond his knowledge and if they don't come in and make a formal complaint there is nothing [he] can do about it. So this was some of the work of our sewing club. Everything that had to do with community life we were part of it.

INTERVIEWER: Getting back to the black workers in the mill, you showed me an article that talked about the kinds of work they did which was the worst and the hottest.

TAYLOR: Yes, we were finding out how many people who worked in the coke plant had to go through all that heat and fumes and many of them have what you call black lung disease. The conditions no white worker would work in a coke plant and that was all black workers. Well now, since so much of the plant is closed down, the whites have gone in and displaced the blacks. The blacks have been let out and some of the whites are now working in a place where they would not have gone before. That was a whole bit of information that had been gathered by Mr. Thornton when he was here on the condition of the black workers in the mills and how it had been through the mills. He was an international representative that had come in.

INTERVIEWER: He was a black man himself?

TAYLOR: Yes, he was a black man but a very learned black man. He was exposing the whole thing to the public to let people know that if you was in Youngstown Sheet and Tube, in Republic, in the Ohio Works, it didn't make any difference. The Negro had the worst job and was treated the worst and was the first one fired until they got a union in. When he was not satisfying the company they could get rid of him [or] if they thought he was a troublemaker or what they call a troublemaker. If you make a complaint they consider you kind of dangerous. They can get somebody else that is satisfied and get rid of you. So you had no comeback.

INTERVIEWER: Since we are on the subject of the mills, what do you remember about the strike in 1937, the Little Steel Strike?

TAYLOR: Well, I remember that during the Little Steel Strike the workers were out, I forget how long they were out before Governor Davey took a hand. The strikers had sticks that looked like a baseball bat but the company thugs had guns. You could picket, but every once in a while, they would make trouble for you. The union had set up food kitchens where people who were on the picket line [could eat]. Each set of pickets would have to work so many hours, so we would make

TAYLOR: food in the stations and carry the food and coffee to the picket lines. They would have something to eat while they were on the line. They wouldn't leave the line to come to the station you would have to bring it to them. That was where I helped out in that. Of course, as I say, I was the only black woman on the picket line with the most of the nationality women because they really do stand by their husbands. They weren't afraid. Stop 14 was where the biggest trouble happened. That's where they threw tear gas into the crowd to disperse them, but some of the foreigners knew how to turn on the water hydrants, where you put out fires. When water would run that would kill the effect of the gas and that's the way they could stand it. As soon as they could get the gas down they would go right back. They didn't stay away from the line.

INTERVIEWER: What was Stop 14?

TAYLOR: Stop 14 was a Sheet and Tube area. Stop 5 where my son works is in the mill. There's Stop 5, then there is Stop 8. These are different departments of the mill. Stop 14 was where the Sheet and Tube main office was. That was one of the ways that the people come in and out of the mill. So there was a large delegation of strikers picketing there at the time the company thugs shot into the group and they killed four and wounded several. The only killing that happened was at Stop 14. Many of them were beat up by the company-hired men who were there to disrupt and to try to make it hard enough for them. Governor Davey didn't come in right away. The strike lasted quite a while. I don't know how many weeks it lasted before he came in but then he brought in the National Guard and broke the strike up because Tom Girdler was such an anti-union fellow. He was so strong financially. He had great influence in the whole steel outlay. He said that under no circumstances would he ever consider a union. After the strike was broken, the men went back to work, the ones that the company would allow to go back to work. A lot of them were fired, especially those they considered leaders, people with some influence. They had to carry the case to court and it was five years before that litigation was over. They found that the mill heads were at fault. They would have to recognize the union and allow the people to come back to work that had been fired. Those that had lived through that period had to be given their back pay for the years they had been unemployed. In that way they have not interfered with the union as far as trying to break it up anymore. The company had a lot of trained men that was highly educated, who were able to help make decisions and, of course, they were put into the union for the purpose of trying to make as much disruption as possible. People not knowing who they were would very readily elect them to the office because they were able men, educationally. That brought about quite a lot of trouble in the union because these men were not there for the purpose of building the union and helping consolidate

TAYLOR: whatever gains they had made, but to disrupt them and get them fighting between each other so the company would be able to have their hand over their head. That was my experience in the steel strike. When the men had to go back to work there was no picketing that was allowed to be done because they had to go back to work. The others were fired and they went elsewhere to get employment because there was no such thing as getting unemployed insurance. That had not passed, there wasn't anything, there wasn't any in the mill contracts. Things went pretty bad for them and the different families had to help each other to take care of the expense until such time as they could get work elsewhere. The ones who still lived and come back was well paid off because they had went through a lot of hardship, but they did get their money in a lump sum.

INTERVIEWER: Did your husband have any problem getting his job back?

TAYLOR: No, he didn't lose it. He went back when the mill reopened. At that time he was not on the picket line, I was.

INTERVIEWER: Did that present any conflict between you because you were so active and he wasn't?

TAYLOR: No. He permitted it because he saw it was so much of my makeup. He disapproved awhile and I told him, "Now I can understand how you feel. You have not been raised with a labor background as I have and I can understand your fear. You are an older man and you feel that you do not have a chance to get out and fight like my father used to fight in the unions. Now if you think I'm going to make it too bad for you, you just give me my expense and I will go to California and I will stay with my sister out there. I won't stay here and see this struggle going on and you not taking part in it. Once it is won, it will be won. You have no right to have the benefits what somebody else has suffered for. So now I don't use your name, I use mine. If you are willing, let me go on. I don't care what anybody calls and tells you to put me out or that I am too radical. I am radical because I want change. If we can get along that way I will stay home. If not I will leave." So he never bothered me anymore. (laughs) In that way I was able to carry on my activities under Pauline not Eleazar. His name was Eleazar Taylor. That's the way I managed to get along. It was nice but every once in a while there would be a little harassment because one of his foremen told him one day, "If your wife was on the other side of the picture instead of being so radical, she could make a lot of money. She lectures all over the country. She could make plenty of money here because we would be glad to present her, but she is on the wrong side." They felt like if I was out for something for myself I would get on the other side and [they would] pay me for what I was telling.

TAYLOR: I said, "No I don't want that." They didn't bother him too much because he let them know in front that I run the house and he says, "I run my job. I take care of my job. Anything that I am asked to do on my job, I do it. But I don't tell her how to run the house. When her friends come in they come in with my permission, but I don't ask any questions." He would ask questions, he knew what was going on, but that's how he would get by with them! We got along quite well. We didn't have too much trouble. I just laid it out to him, "I can't sit back because my father was too active and he had a lot more to lose than you have. He had fourteen children and none of them were able to work. My oldest brother was the only one that could work with him." And I said, "We had to eat, we had to have clothes, we had to have schooling, we had to pay doctor bills, all of those things had to be done. If he had the courage to come out of the mines at the threat of his own life, and refuse the money the owner of the mines who said he had six million dollars to spend to break the strike, and if he didn't break it he would go to hell trying." I said, "He went somewhere because he sure as hell died." Yes, sir.

INTERVIEWER: How did your children feel about having a mother who was so active?

TAYLOR: They were with me. They were very, very encouraged to fight along with me. When we opened up these swimming pools....There was only one swimming pool that Negroes were allowed to go in. All the others were strictly white.

INTERVIEWER: We didn't get that story on the tape either. Do you want to tell about that?

TAYLOR: Naturally I didn't swim, but I was in the movement. We felt that they had a right to swim.

INTERVIEWER: Was this with the Future Outlook League?

TAYLOR: Yes, it was the Future Outlook League.

INTERVIEWER: What year was that?

TAYLOR: I don't know what year that was. It's in one of them scrapbooks.

INTERVIEWER: In the forties sometimes?

TAYLOR: I guess it was. Shut it off and let me see if I can find it. (tape off) The police would set on the outside and said we didn't have any business there.

INTERVIEWER: You said there were four or five hundred whites who would attack the black children that wanted to go in and swim.

TAYLOR: Right [but it was] black grown-ups [who were attacked]. We wouldn't dare put any children in. Let me call my daughter and see. I think there was just three that went in the pool. Dorothy, Burt, Attorney Robinson's son , and one girl, I don't know who she was. They were the first ones to go in after we found the pool was open. Of course they fought them very hard with water, the whites did. There wasn't as many whites in there as there was later when they found out there was another delegation going to come back. That's when they had around five hundred people there. They stopped selling tickets when the Negroes came up to buy tickets. A few of the whites that did not approve of that gave the tickets to our people and they got a chance to go in. As soon as they went in the pool manager decided he was going to close the pool. So we said, "Let the whites come out first, then we will call the black ones out. We are not going to call them out. You [would] call them out and let the whites stay in." They were so mad with us they couldn't see, but our people stayed in until they called the whites out. They closed the pool and soon as they saw us getting in our cars they must have give a sign for them to come back. So when they went back we got out of the car and went back again. So one of the colored officers said, "Why don't you all go to the Lincoln Pool. You know they don't want you here." I said, "You are a black and they don't want you on the police force, either, but you are not giving up your job. So we are going to stay right here. If the pool opens again and the whites go in we are going in too." So they found out we weren't going to leave so they closed the pool earlier than usual. After the ice had been broken then some of the professional people went to the Northside Pool. Of course, they knew who they were and let them swim without any provocations but we radicals was the ones, they called us, they tried to do away with. The Southside Pool. How many of you all were at the Southside Pool,Dorothy? (Mrs. Taylor's daughter joins the conversation).

DOROTHY: I have no idea.

TAYLOR: It was a large delegation of people that went to the Southside Pool and the committee went around and gathered up a lot of the people's children. They were going to let them have a chance to swim. These hoodlums had been kind of courted by the police department and they were there. They started them a fight and, of course, it was enough for the swimmers because quite a few were down here from Cleveland. There was enough of the swimmers to beat up the rough ones and they were sent to the hospital. The police were ready for an arrest for the fighting knowing the trouble had come from the hoodlums

TAYLOR: that the police knew what they were there for, but they didn't try to stop them until they found out they were getting the worst end of the fight. When they got ready to arrest them, those people that didn't belong in town was gone. They couldn't arrest us for what they did. We managed to break the Jim Crow pattern at the Southside Swimming Pool. It was in a neighborhood where they were very, very prejudiced and they were not going to allow [it] but that was broken down. Of course, my son, my daughter and their friends [took part]. This was from the NAACP, they were supporting the struggle.

DOROTHY: Right here it says there was about forty Negroes and twenty whites.

TAYLOR: At the Southside Pool.

DOROTHY: Yes.

TAYLOR: So we managed to get that broken down with a few heads beat up and some arrests. But we finally managed to get out of it.

INTERVIEWER: Dorothy, you were just telling me about the skating episode. You brought suit against the roller skating rink?

DOROTHY: Yes, whoever was in charge of the rink at Adora Park. This was a ballroom and this group leased it when the park was closed. This was anywhere from 1938 and 1939 because in 1940 in January I graduated. They were having problems even after that but I never did go out there after that. I really wasn't that interested in roller skating. It was a thing that the teacher said we all had to participate in so, therefore, we had to participate in it. [It was for the Spanish Club]. The only problem was we got sold down the river by our attorney. Is all this permissable?

INTERVIEWER: Sure, go ahead tell me the truth. I have got the tape on and if you want to take it out later you can.

DOROTHY: The truth can't help that. My father did get Attorney Howard who is now deceased. What he was doing was taking civil rights cases. . .

INTERVIEWER: Was he black?

DOROTHY: Yes, as a matter of fact he was the only one that would take one. We would pay him naturally and, of course, he got paid from the other side, then he settled it out of court for fifty bucks. It was a pretty dirty low-down thing but a number of cases were settled that way, I think out of the whole deal I got, by the time you paid him half of what you got $25 was all you left out of it. He settled out of court

TAYLOR: naturally, so he didn't have to listen to all this who said and who didn't . Because you didn't have to get the proof together. We had the proof but, of course, he really didn't want that. All he wanted was the money. Therefore, I think that stopped a lot of the civil rights cases here because the one attorney was the only one that would take the case. The rest were rather frightened by it. This other group, I think the pictures are in here somewhere, they were supposed to go out there. I don't really know if they went skating or not. I know I was supposed to go and I changed my mind for some reason and come back home. I didn't particularly like getting into riots. That type of fight. I didn't like fighting, but I didn't like standing back and letting people run over me either. I couldn't go along with that. My mother never brought me up that way. She said, "You are just as good as anybody else and anything you think you want to do that is within your rights, you are permitted to do it." So I did. I broke a few hearts. I hate doing this, and it made a lot of people a little leery about going with me places, but I managed. (tape off)

INTERVIEWER: You were going to a Progressive Party meeting?

TAYLOR: We stopped in Maryland, I guess, wherever we stopped, there were sixteen of us to get the dinner we ordered. And when they had prepared them they said I would have to take my dinner outside. I was the only Negro in the group, all the rest of them were white. They asked why if it was not crowded she [couldn't] eat in here? They said, "We don't serve Negros in here. She can have it but she will have to take it outside." So they had fixed a dinner for the sixteen and all of us walked out. We didn't eat and didn't pay nothing either. That is one of the patterns of Jim Crow that they broke down.

INTERVIEWER: Were you ever refused a hotel room?

TAYLOR: Yes, in Pittsburgh when we were there. We went for an IWO convention and they had made reservations for rooms for seven hundred that were supposed to be there [at the] William Penn Hotel. They did not want not only me but the rest of the Negroes, they didn't want us to come in. The [the management] said they would get other accommodations for us. The [the IWO] said, "We don't want any accommodations. If they can't stay here, we won't stay." Rather than lose that seven hundred reservations they changed and allowed us to stay there. That was I think the first blacks the whites fought for to have the benefit of the hotel the same as they had. They were willing to send us somewhere else but they said, "No, we will not accept anything unless all of our delegates [can stay] because our delegates are black and white."

INTERVIEWER: I don't imagine there are many organizations that would have done that.

TAYLOR: No, the IWO fought on every front for the rights of the people, blacks as well as whites. I really liked the whole attitude. They were mostly all foreign-born. There was very few English people other than us few blacks. It was not in their blood to take that kind of thing lying down and they don't care how much they might have to suffer but if they stand up for you, they didn't back down because things got kind of rough. It was a big convention, too.

DOROTHY: Did you find this on the Northside Pool here?

TAYLOR: No, I was talking about the time you and Burt were in the water first and they went in again.

INTERVIEWER: The swimming pool was in 1949?

TAYLOR: My personal philosophy, if I can understand the meaning of it, is I believe in people treating others as they wish to be treated. Whatever the circumstances are, I think if they can be relieved in some way--I don't mean people who do not try to do anything for themselves that you should take yours and give it to them--but those that are in need of help and deserving of it I feel that they should be helped in whatever way we can. That has been my makeup and that is the makeup of my father and mother. They always was doing something for others even though they had a very large family. There never was a time they were called on any kind of emergency that they were not able to go and help. Burial dresses, cooking for the bereaved, taking care of older people who did not want to go to the poor house, and keeping them in our home. When death come my father would get a few men together and go dig the grave and my mother would make a shroud. The people would be taken care of in that way when they had no relatives whatsoever. None of those things were ever any money paid to my father. All they did for the poor people, they did out of their interest in people. The church people, the community people alike, they did not discriminate. My philosophy came from them: "Do for others as you wish to be done by." (tape off)

INTERVIEWER: [You were talking about] the Scottsboro Boys.

TAYLOR: There were nine of them I think that were arrested. Some of them died in prison. So we raised money through the committee

TAYLOR: and our meetings were held at the Shiloh Baptist Church. Two of the Scottsboro mothers stayed in my home and it was amusing when we were making dinner for them. We just went all out trying to make everything nice and I thought very tasty. So one of the mothers [when] we had light rolls and I didn't know she wanted biscuits, she said, "I am so tired of eating these wasp nests."

INTERVIEWER: What did she call them?

TAYLOR: Wasp nests. You know what a wasp nest is. [She] meant that the bread was too light and it was not as filling. Here I had went all out. And some of my neighbors had come in we had cooked a beautiful dinner. That was the only thing that she disapproved, the wasp nests. So we raised the money and helped them as much as we could. They were only here on one trip. It was sponsored by the International Labor Defense. So many activities I have been a part of. It is awfully hard for me to recount all of them.

INTERVIEWER: You have had a lot of interesting people as house guests here, Paul Robeson. . .

TAYLOR: Oh yes, I was amazed when I got Dr. DuBois. I had made arrangements at the West Federal Branch, that was a colored YMCA, I had five hundred leaflets printed announcing his coming and a week later after the leaflets were out I had taken them up to Mr. Smith, He said, "Mrs. Taylor, I am awful sorry but I cannot let you have the Y." I said, "What happened?" He said, "Well my membership committee refused to work if I let you have the Y for Dr. DuBois." He said, "He is a controversial figure. I can't use my membership". I said, "Mr. Smith, did you consult them before you gave me the Y? Now I have gone to the expense to have all these leaflets printed." He said, "I am awful sorry, Mrs. Taylor. I would like to hear Dr. DuBois but I can't let you have the Y." Well, I didn't have any more sense then to go to the white Y. I knew they controlled the black Y. So I went there and I asked to see the head of the Y. I told them what my predicament was. I said, "I have invited Dr. DuBois here to speak and it is too close for me to change his coming. I can't change it. The West Federal Branch of the YMCA had promised me a place and now they have denied me that place." I said, "I think you have something to do with the West Federal Y. If they are afraid for me to come there, would you let me have a place here for Dr. DuBois." He thought for a minute before he gave me an answer and I was so scared it was going to be no. He said, "Well yes, Dr. DuBois is a very famous man, so you can bring him here." So I was turned down at the colored Y but I got in at the white Y. But they sent a stool pigeon to sit outside so they could see how many came. They didn't come in that room but they sat outside so they could watch everyone that came in.

INTERVIEWER: What kind of a crowd did you get?

TAYLOR: Oh, it was a full house. Dr. DuBois and Shirley, his wife, came and we just had a beautiful time. The church that brought the largest number of their members, we gave them a $25 gift. That was the way I had managed to influence the churches to bring the people there because there was a street car strike and people had to find transportation. But I had a full house. We had just an interesting meeting because Dr. DuBois had spoke in Akron and came here. We were able with that kind of hindrance in the beginning and, of course, some of our people who did not want to be seen in the room with Dr. DuBois, would sit out in the rooms apart from the auditorium to hear what he had to say. Later they invited him to a private dinner where they didn't have to be seen with us common people, you know. They wanted to be with him. They knew he was too famous a man to come here and they not at least put their little bit in, but they would not be seen publicly. This is just the way they were about Paul Robeson. They were scared to death and also Eslander. We have really went through something. Most of these kind of people I have brought in here, I have had some problems. Now we heard that the Ku Klux Klan Convention up on--what mountain is that where they have the big sessions?--I decided I would invite the Kleagle of the Ku Klux Klan. (laughs) We had heard there was more Ohio license [police] at this meeting than any other state so I just wanted them to get a chance to see and hear the kaigle. They let me have the white Y for that.

INTERVIEWER: You brought in the kaigle?

TAYLOR: Yes ma'am, I think I got his picture here somewhere.

DOROTHY: Who was he?

INTERVIEWER: How did he react to you when he found that a black woman had asked him to come to Youngstown?

TAYLOR: I don't think he paid that any mind. You see he was a kaigle in name, but he was the person who somebody in our group could talk to. You see, he got in the KKK in order to get their secrets. He wasn't one of those vicious ones. We had a full house to hear him. I think I have his picture here somewhere.

INTERVIEWER: What did he say in his talk?

TAYLOR: He was telling their plans and how they had planned whenever they felt like they wanted to make a raid, how their plans

TAYLOR: would work out. In a lot of these places the businessmen were a part of the KKK and then they would put so much money in. He would tell what each company, these big companies would put money in for the Klan to organize, to be able to organize and pay the fee. It was $3 a person at that time. It was being paid by companies to keep the trouble still going. A lot of secrets of how they were able to terrorize the people and how they had money to organize, we found out. [It] was sponsored by some very prominent people and companies that made it possible. It was just an exposé of the Klan and it's operation. (laughs) I was told who he was and what was possible. I don't know what scrapbook he is in but he is in one. It was really something. People didn't know that we knew there was somebody we could trust because they didn't know he had got in there for the purpose of exposing them. They just felt like when he came out of it he came out disillusioned but he was put in there for the purpose of spying on them. (tape off) Sojourners for Truth and Justice. It was an organization of black women that was organized in New York. They went around and set up branches in different places. Mrs. Hunton was a part of our delegation which we met in Philadelphia.

INTERVIEWER: The wife of the writer, William Hunton, who worked with W.E.B. DuBois?

TAYLOR: In getting out his last, I don't know how many volumes have been completed before his death, but he was working on it at the time Dr. DuBois was living and after his death trying to get it ready. Shirley, his wife left and went to Egypt. That is where she died. Dr. Hunton, whether it was completed after he died or not I don't know because I haven't bought any of his new volumes.

INTERVIEWER: What activities did this Sojourners for Truth and Justice have in Youngstown?

TAYLOR: We didn't have anything more than just the same kind of activities.

INTERVIEWER: Did you have speakers coming in?

TAYLOR: Yes, we had speakers to come in and we would try to portray the life of a Sojourner and how she struggled to make it possible during the time of the organization after the slaves were free. What was it, Dorothy?

INTERVIEWER: The Reconstruction.

TAYLOR: Reconstruction period. She wanted to get the vote of the women. They wanted the women to be recognized. She was an untrained person but, just like Harriet Tubman, there was just so much about her that made people realize there was rights that women should have whether they were black or white. Because white women didn't have too many rights either. We carried on and studied on the basis of a Sojourner's life and tried to get people to have a better understanding of who she was. Then the businesswomen taking it away from us and they began to handle it in their professional way.

INTERVIEWER: Wasn't it like a fraternal organization?

TAYLOR: Oh no, it was just like a club. Our local chapter was just like a club. There was many clubs throughout and, of course, we just called ourselves the Sojourner. I have got clippings of that somewhere, too.

INTERVIEWER: Dorothy just came up from the basement with a leaflet.

TAYLOR: She didn't find the [right] one.

INTERVIEWER: You were looking for one when Joseph, your son was running for the president of his local of the steelworkers.

TAYLOR: And they put out a leaflet condemning him because of my visit to the Soviet Union. I thought he would be in here before you left. He usually gets off about 3:30, but he is not here yet. I showed it to him. I think that was the time, one that had the article in where they. . ,

DOROTHY: I told him that they were downstairs. He might have taken them . I don't know how many there was.

TAYLOR: There were two or three down there.

DOROTHY: They could be mixed up in some of the other papers.

(tape off)

TAYLOR: How many people are now living off Social Security that was afraid of it before? How many people who had condemned me for going to Russia and look how many of our professors, how many of our doctors, how many of our legislators, how many of our presidents have gone to Russia. They have found they can't run the world by themselves. In 1950 we were the first delegation to arrive in the Soviet Union in 27 years. We were more or less kind of made outcasts when we came home. But in this period of years since 1950 all these power structure people have found cause to go. Nixon decided to go to China. Eisenhower was going to Russia

TAYLOR: until the U-2 plane flew over Russia and the boy was captured so he was denied a trip to go.

INTERVIEWER: But you feel of all the efforts that you worked for many of them have come to fruition?

TAYLOR: That's right, and people come to realize that I didn't come back and tell them anything they didn't find out when they went over. Whether they want to admit it or not. Our local congressman that lost his seat in the 19th congressional district was so bitter. He had been sent down with the labor vote to Columbus as a representative and he allowed himself to be put on that Un-American Committee, sit up there trying to question me about my going to Russia. When he come home we called his house to talk to him and I wanted him to know that we wanted him down there to fight for FEPC not to be trying to degrade me because I had gone to the Soviet Union as a delegate. He was so furious with me and he said, "You have been so praiseworthy of the Soviet Union, why don't you go back over there and stay?" I said, "I happen to be an American and I have the right to travel and, of course, what I learned there was no point coming back and trying to cover it up. I am very glad what I told was the truth and if you ever live long enough to go over there you will find out I have told the truth, whether you tell it when you come back or not." He hung up on me. I called him right back. I think I called him about six or seven times. Then he said he was going to call Chief Allen on me if I didn't quit harassing him. Then my daughter called him and said, "Mr. Carney, I haven't seen anything in the paper in the last two weeks about Mrs. Taylor and Mrs. Hamilton. What is going to happen to them?" "We are going to throw the book at them. They have had a million dollars worth of publicity and we are not going to put anything in the paper about them, but we are going to throw the book at them." He was so sure we were going to jail and neither one of us went to jail and then last year he went to the Soviet Union. So I told my son, "He's running for office and I don't care how many good things he had done, he will never get my vote. And if I ever catch him anywhere by himself, I'm going to let him know I am the same Pauline Taylor that he tried to treat so bad over the phone." This is just how they felt. They were so bitter. If you didn't come back telling lies about the people were hungry, they were starving, they were poorly dressed or they were piled up in houses like sardines in a box. It wasn't that way. The people were living good and then when we went into the plants, we had the union head and company head showing us through the plant. The union was recognized but here that don't happen here. The mothers of children when the woman was

going to bring forth a baby, she was put into a public clinic, a place where she was taken care of for two months prior to the birth of that child. They did not have to give her sleeping medicine, she had a painless birth and someone was sent to her house to take care of her children while she was there. All of these things were made possible for women when they had children. But could you go into a hospital here or a public clinic or anything and be taken care of and somebody running your house while you were getting ready to have a baby? All the training and things they wanted that child to be like. The mother was trained to bring that baby forth without it being a dumbell. But do we do that? No, all of the things that I tried to tell about what I saw in the Soviet Union and how the mothers and children were treated and all these thousands of children that were left without their parents that were killed in the war. How these other people have taken them and mothered them and how they cared for them. When we went in the nursery we had to put on a gown and a nozzle to keep from taking any disease into the nursery where those children were staying and the pre-school children. All of these things we had a chance to see because I was interested in how they actually lived in their homes. No place where we went were they all crowded like they said they were. Their rent is very low compared to what we have to pay for rent over here. I found life there very pleasant and I told them. When Mrs. Roosevelt went and come back after I did she ran a series of articles in the paper. She saw the same things I did, but she could have told more than what she did tell. I couldn't put nothing in the paper because they wouldn't take nothing I had. That's Picasso [drawing] on the back of a program of the first meeting we had in Sheffield. It was, there was a bid on it and everybody that wanted to bid on this program in order to get.... The man that got it was Mandel Thurman, he was head of the National Council of American Soviet Friendship in Chicago and he bid 60 pounds. Just a paper program. Picasso was on the stage where we were and he sat there and sketched this dove and it became the emblem of the Peace Movement throughout the world.

INTERVIEWER: I didn't realize that was Picasso's.

TAYLOR: That was Picasso's dove.

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