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Lucile Heming Koshland

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENT

An Interview Conducted by  
Harriet Nathan

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**PREFACE**

The Northern California Jewish Community Series is a collection of oral history interviews with persons who have contributed significantly to Jewish life and to the wider secular community. Sponsored by the Western Jewish History Center of the Judah L. Magnes Memorial Museum, the interviews have been produced by the Regional Oral History Office of The Bancroft Library. Moses Rischin, professor of history at California State University at San Francisco, is advisor to the series, assisted by the Center's Advisory Committee, Norman Coliver, chairman, Harold M. Edelstein, Seymour Fromer, Mrs. Theodore Geballe, James M. Gerstley, Douglas Goldman, Professor James D. Hart, Louis H. Heilbron, Mrs. Leon Mandelson, Robert E. Sinton, Frank H. Sloss, Daniel Stone, and Mrs. Matt Wahrhaftig. The series was inaugurated in 1967.

In the oral history process, the interviewer works closely with the memoirist in preliminary research and in setting up topics for discussion. The interviews are informal conversations which are tape recorded, transcribed, edited by the interviewer for continuity and clarity, checked and approved by the interviewee, and then final-typed. The resulting manuscripts, indexed and bound, are deposited in the Jesse E. Colman Memorial Library of the Western Jewish History Center, The Bancroft Library, and the University Library at the University of California at Los Angeles. By special arrangement copies may be deposited in other manuscript repositories holding relevant collections. Related information may be found in earlier interviews with Lawrence Arnstein, Amy Steinhart Braden, Adrien J. Falk, Alice Gerstle Levi-son, Jennie Matyas, Walter Clay Lowdermilk, and Mrs. Simon J. Lubin. Untranscribed tapes of interviews with descendants of pioneer California Jews conducted by Professor Robert E. Levinson are on deposit at The Bancroft Library and the Western Jewish History Center.

The Regional Oral History Office was established to tape record autobiographical interviews with persons prominent in recent California history. The Office is under the administrative supervision of Professor James D. Hart, the director of The Bancroft Library.

Willa K. Baum  
Department Head  
Regional Oral History Office

31 May 1978  
Regional Oral History Office  
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## INTRODUCTION

The Koshlands' Hillsborough home was a gathering place for their children's friends in the 1940's and 1950's, and a place where the then-younger generation met distinguished older people as well. One family friend who visited occasionally was Mrs. Heming, "Aunt Lucile," a slim woman with brilliant blue eyes and a radiant smile. She was adept at drawing out shy or bashful visitors, listening attentively to their opinions, sometimes asking questions or quietly adding information from what seemed an inexhaustible store of knowledge.

Many of us who were becoming interested in public affairs and in the League of Women Voters, were impressed to learn that she was indeed Mrs. Charles Heming, a widely respected board member of the League of Women Voters of the United States. An outstanding national leader, who combined charm with intellectual force and eloquence, she was a logical choice for the presidency of the League's Overseas Education Fund. Some years later, on July 9, 1959, she married Daniel Koshland and moved to the west coast. She then felt it was time to withdraw from national and international League responsibilities, and with difficulty prevailed on her colleagues to accept her resignation. As her memoir suggests, however, she has maintained her enthusiasm and interest in public policy issues and in government over an unbroken span of 50 years.

When Daniel Koshland's Oral History interviews took place in 1968, the Magnes Museum, as sponsors of the series, agreed that two additional interviews could be conducted with his wife, Lucile Heming Koshland. Mrs. Koshland's memories of the Wolf and Fleishhacker families demonstrate the way in which her life and family form a link between the Jewish communities of California and New York. As she recalls people and ideas, it becomes clear that Grandmother Delia Fleishhacker made a lasting impression on the eastern granddaughter who came west to visit almost every year.

Now a California resident, Lucile Koshland maintains her interest in civic responsibility, the problems of the Vietnam war, a community college, Head Start, her children's and grandchildren's lives and a continued participation in public affairs. She is active in the local League of Women Voters of Central San Mateo. Having come full circle to the role of ordinary, "garden variety" member,

she enjoys the freedom to support candidates for public office -- a privilege the League's Board members must forego, in order to maintain that organization's non-partisanship. She also served the International Hospitality Center of the Bay Area as a Board member, fund-raiser and volunteer hostess. Both she and her husband find it especially rewarding to provide home hospitality to foreign students and adult leaders from abroad.

It is characteristic that she touches modestly on her own contributions, but observes repeatedly that her friends, family and colleagues are people of wit, creativity, intelligence and idealism.

Harriet Nathan, Interviewer  
Regional Oral History Office

6 January 1971  
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## INTERVIEW HISTORY

Lucile Heming Koshland, wife of community leader Daniel E. Koshland, Sr., and participant in community affairs, was interviewed as a part of the Northern California Jewish Community Series sponsored by the Judah L. Magnes Memorial Museum.

Interviewer: Harriet Nathan.

Dates and Setting of the Interviews: November 1, 1968  
November 15, 1968

The interviews with Mrs. Koshland were conducted in the penthouse offices of Levi Strauss & Co. at 98 Battery Street; the first in the office of her husband and the second across the floor in that of Walter Haas, Sr.

Conduct of the Interviews: While Lucile Koshland's first inclination was to spend the time of the two-hour interviews discussing her husband's concerns and activities, her own life and development proved so interesting to the interviewer that much new material was included.

Mrs. Koshland noted, in editing and approving the transcripts, that the interviews were indeed spontaneous and conversational, and spoken as she said, "off the top of my head." She cautioned that a number of details including the early history of her family have not been verified with respect to facts or dates, but were to be understood as recollections from her own childhood and memories of tales told by her Grandmother.

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Harriet Nathan, Interviewer  
Regional Oral History Office



## Obituaries

### Lucille Koshland

Private family services will be held for Lucille W.H. Koshland of Hillsborough, wife of civic leader Daniel E. Koshland. Mrs. Koshland died Tuesday at the age of 80.

Born in New York City and a graduate of Barnard College, Mrs. Koshland was the widow of Charles E. Heming of New York when, in 1950, she married Koshland, then a widower and President of Levi Strauss & Co. He later became executive committee chairman of the San Francisco firm.

In New York, Mrs. Koshland had been statewide president of the League of Women Voters and headed its overseas education fund.

San Francisco's International Hospitality Center and San Mateo Community College student programs were among her Bay Area interests.

Besides her husband, Mrs. Koshland's survivors include a son, Charles Heming of Scarsdale, N.Y.; three daughters, Joan Frank of New York, Delta Cantor of Scarsdale and Harriet Simpson of Berkeley; 14 grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Sinai Memorial Chapel services will be followed by cremation at Emanu-El Mausoleum. Donations may be made to the League of Women Voters Educational Fund.

## A TRANSCONTINENTAL FAMILY

### Grandparents: Delia and Aaron Fleishhacker

Nathan: I was so interested to hear you say that you had a San Francisco grandmother.

Mrs. K.: That is one of the earliest recollections of my childhood. I had a San Francisco grandmother named Delia who was a great influence in my life and a very wonderful person. She produced quite a few children and grandchildren who did interesting things in the community, but we all thought, in my family anyway, that she was by far the star of the family. She was--well, in a way she became the matriarch. She had great influence over everybody.

She grew up in or near Albany, New York. Our family has commuted between New York and California for four generations and acted as though there were nothing in the intervening territory at all. Grandma Delia grew up in a nice Jewish family. At the age of seventeen she married Aaron Fleishhacker, my grandfather, who had left Germany in the mid nineteenth century rebelling against the militarism and the anti-Semitism over there, came to this country to seek his fortune with literally a pack on his back.

They were married and set sail in a sailing vessel from New York to the Isthmus of Panama--there was no canal--crossed the Isthmus in a covered wagon, up the west coast in a sailing vessel, landed in San Francisco, and immediately went up to Nevada where the gold mining was going on in Virginia City. My grandfather started a general store and supplied gold miners, such as

Mrs. K.: the Fairs and the Mackays when they went off to seek their fortunes. They'd come around and say, "Well, Aaron, we need something for panning the gold, and we need some picks and shovels, and we need some food. We don't have any money now, but if we strike it rich, we'll certainly look after you." So he trusted them and when they struck it rich, he became prosperous. Granny, meanwhile, this cute little girl from New York, was helping to deliver the babies of the miners' wives.

Nathan: She was actually a midwife?

Mrs. K.: Well, no, not a midwife [but she went in to help]. I don't even know if they had any midwives in those days; it was very rough country then. She had a very exciting life. Her oldest child, my Aunt Carrie Schwabacher, Jimmy's grandmother, was born there. The rest of the children were all born in San Francisco; they moved to San Francisco shortly thereafter. I'm a little hazy about the dates on this; this was back in the early 1850's and '60's.

My grandfather had started a paper box factory in San Francisco which is still in existence. They lived in a house on 2110 California Street, which I vividly remember--one of those old-fashioned houses with a garden in back and the front steps on the outside. They raised a large family. My mother was next to the youngest. She had three older sisters and one older brother and one younger brother, and there were always a couple of babies that died in infancy in those days.

Mother: Blanche (Bonnie) Fleishhacker and  
Joyrides on Horseback

Nathan: What was your mother's name?

Mrs. K.: Blanche. She was the youngest girl, and they had to marry them off in chronological order. She used to tell us the most marvelous stories. They had a little house out in San Rafael where they spent summers, and gentlemen friends would come to court her three older sisters at various times. Each one would tether his horse outside the house there, and my mother would peek out the window. Then, when nobody was looking, she would sneak down and untie the horse and take a little ride. She was quite a daredevil. She told me this story years later, when there was great consternation in New York City about the amount of car theft, automobile theft, that was going on among the juvenile delinquents in New York City.

This was years later, when I was grown up and married. Mother would say, "Well, darling, you know if there had been automobiles instead of horses when I was the age of these youngsters, I would have been imprisoned for having stolen a ride." And she said, "Don't you think these kids just want a little excitement? They want to have the fun of driving a car around the block and probably aren't thinking of being criminals at all." She was quite a refreshing and wonderful and very youthful person all of her life. She was twenty-six when she married my father.

Father: Frank Wolf, A New Yorker

Nathan: And his name was?

Mrs. K.: Wolf, Frank Wolf. My Aunt Emma, Mrs. Rosenbaum, had married a New Yorker and was ill, had pneumonia, and they sent for her mother, who was Grandma Delia. In those days ladies didn't travel alone under any circumstances, so granny took my mother, who was then a young lady, with her to New York to help to look after her sister. Well, my aunt recovered, and her mother and sister stayed on for a while. Then my mother was introduced to the eligible young bachelors in New York, and immediately--it was love at first sight--fell madly in love with Frank Wolf. He was very handsome. His hair turned white when he was in his twenties, he had a handle-bar wax-tipped moustache.

Daddy took mother rowing and horseback riding in Central Park, and they had a whirlwind romantic courtship. And at the end of about a week, my grandmother and my mother started for home.

Nathan: How old was your mother?

Mrs. K.: Mother was twenty-six. She was seen off at Grand Central Station by this dashing young man, and he very gallantly escorted my mother and my grandmother onto the train, when the conductor yelled, "All aboard." He just sat there chatting, and my grandmother said, "Mr. Wolf, you'd better leave."

But he said, "Oh, that's all right." So he stayed on the train and by the time they got to Utica he had summoned up courage to ask for my mother's hand in marriage. You didn't do it exactly in that way in those days. You asked for permission to woo her, to "pay attention" to her, and, of course, my grandmother demurely said,

- Mrs. K.: "Well, you'll have to write to my husband about this." So he did. And I have the letter still: "Dear Mr. Fleishhacker, May I have the honor of paying court to your lovely daughter Blanche?" Everything was very, very formal. They were married in San Rafael in the garden by Rabbi Voorsanger.
- Nathan: Was this Elkan?
- Mrs. K.: Elkan's father, Jacob. There was a joke in the family that there was a clause in the marriage contract saying that Frank was taking this lovely Blanche--she was called Bonnie in those days--off three thousand miles away from her parents, so he promised he would bring her home to visit at least once every year, which sounded rather fantastic because you know it was five days and four nights on the old Overland Limited--and daddy in those days had very little money.
- His parents had come over from Austria for the same reason that my Fleishhacker grandfather had left Germany--to seek their fortune. They had left a very good business on the other side but had to start from scratch. They couldn't afford to send my father to college. He went to Cooper Union night school and took all kinds of courses. He wanted to be an architect, but he never got to be one because he had to go into the family business and help support the family.
- Nathan: What was the family business?
- Mrs. K.: It was importing bags and leather goods. I don't know the details. Then he started a business of his own which was called the Bruner Woolen Company. It was a mail order business. He was the middle-man between the Hockanum Mills, the people who manufactured rolls of beautiful cloth, and the local tailor who made suits to measure. I remember Daddy saying, "This new idea of ready-to-wear clothing: how can a suit fit as well as the old made-to-measure things?"

Mrs. K.: My father was an inventor. I distinctly remember the machine in his "store" that unrolled the cloth for inspection, measured and cut and also stamped "all pure wool" on the back of every yard. I still treasure some of his documents from the U.S. Patent Office and also the bronze medal he won at the Chicago World's Fair of 1892 for the first revolving cloak rack.

### The Annual Visit to San Francisco

Anyway, to come back to the promise that he made of taking my mother to visit her family, he actually kept that, and every year of my life, excepting during the war years when it was unpatriotic to travel, I came out to visit my grandmother in San Francisco.

The first one I don't remember. I was nine months old, and we got stuck in a blizzard somewhere. The malted milk which I was being fed gave out, and I almost starved to death. But somehow they shoveled the snow away and got the train moving, and I got here just in time.

But you know, traveling across the continent in those days was quite an experience. I was taken out of school every year for about four to six weeks, and my sister also. Mother, who was actually a teacher--she was graduated from Hunter Normal School--used to go to see the teachers, mine and my sister's, and get the homework and the lessons, and we had to do them each day. On the train, I remember very vividly, between New York and San Francisco, daddy would sketch a map of the United States and put in all the state capitals, and we had to learn the names. Every time the train stopped at a station to take on water, we got out and walked up and down, and daddy would give us a little lecture about the

LIST OF MY FATHER'S PATENTS

All granted to Frank Wolf of New York, N.Y., by the Patent Office of the United States of America for the term of 17 years from date, and all entitled: "Letters Patent."

No. 882,283      March 17th, 1908

STAMPING ATTACHMENTS FOR CLOTH-MEASURING MACHINES

\*\*\*\*\*

No. 1031899      July 9th, 1912

ADVERTISING DEVICES FOR RAILWAY CARS

\*\*\*\*\*

No. 1382704      June 28, 1921

DISPLAY-CABINETS

\*\*\*\*\*

No. 1644318      October 4, 1927

SAMPLE-DISPLAY DEVICES

\*\*\*\*\*

No. 1687916      October 16, 1928

ARCH SUPPORTS

\*\*\*\*\*

No. 1811220      June 23, 1931

HOLDERS FOR COLLAPSIBLE TUBES

\*\*\*\*\*

P.S. In addition to the above, my father received--and I inherited--a bronze medal for his invention and patent of the first REVOLVING CLOAK RACK, at the 1892 World's Fair in Chicago (commemorating the 400th anniversary of the discovery of America).



Mrs. K.: products of Ogden, Utah and Omaha, Nebraska, etc. In Chicago we changed stations, and it was a very exciting adventure. So my ties to San Francisco started way, way back, you see.

We always lived in my grandmother's house. My grandfather died before I was born. I never knew him at all. My cousin Claire (Claire Scheeline Heller Strauss) and I were the same age, and were great friends. She and her parents, lived with my grandmother. We used to raise parsley and radishes in granny's backyard and sell them to granny for ten cents a bunch. I had fifteen first cousins in the West.

#### Friendship with Ellie Haas

San Francisco was a very important part of my life. That's how I met Eleanor Haas whose parents were friends of my family. I remember Ellie very vividly. When she was about fifteen, we used to go out to parties together. In 1918 she and Dan were married in New York, just a month after my first husband, Charlie, and I were married. They were married at the St. Regis Hotel, and we were married up in Westchester.

As couples, we were very close friends and neighbors. Ellie was my best friend for many, many years. We went to Teachers' College and enrolled in a course in "the care and feeding of infants and young children." We were determined to do everything efficiently. It was funny, because as the course progressed during the winter we became more and more visibly pregnant. Then Danny Koshland was born in the end of March, and my Joan was born in June.

Then the following winter the Koshlands still lived in New York. In those days we had elegant

Mrs. K.: English prams. We used to wheel our babies to the park, find a sunny spot in front of the Metropolitan Museum at Eighty-Second Street and Fifth Avenue and put them side by side so they could snatch things from each other and throw those empty talcum powder boxes on the pavement. And we would have to pick them up and wipe them off and give them back. They've been great friends ever since, Danny and Joan. The Koshlands moved back to San Francisco after the war.

## SCHOOL YEARS

Nathan: Can we turn back a bit to talk about your schooling?

Mrs. K.: I went to an all-Jewish private school.

Nathan: Do you remember the name?

### Miss Jacobi's School for Girls

Mrs. K.: Yes, certainly. Miss Jacobi's School for Girls it was called, and Miss Laura Jacobi was a very remarkable lady. She had very advanced liberal ideas for her time. She used to import the Negro choir from the Hampton Institute and used to tell us how dreadful it was that the Negroes were so badly treated in the South and that when we grew up we must do something about it.

We had marvelous teachers. I have very vivid recollections. I could go back and tell you things about every one of those teachers. We had a geography teacher who "transported" us into countries all over the world and pretended that we were living in Argentina or India or Tibet or whatever. Then in her spare time she took us bird watching in "the Ramble" in Central Park. We would borrow our mothers' best opera glasses and tie them on a ribbon around our neck and learn to identify all the birds in Central Park.

My Latin teacher was determined that I should go to college. In those days most Jewish girls in my group did not go to college. There were

Mrs. K.: fifteen in my class, and only three were interested in going to college.

Nathan: Was this both grammar school and high school?

Mrs. K.: All the way through. Actually I only started in third grade because my mother was a teacher, and she taught me to read, so I learned from her instead of going to kindergarten and first and second grade. Then I started school in third grade and went all the way through and graduated and went to college.

I was the brightest girl in my class, but I had competition from another girl. We were sort of neck and neck because she kept catching up to me, and in the end when we graduated, the valedictorian was supposed to be the girl with the top marks and the salutatorian was the girl with the second best marks. Miss Jacobi had a little difficulty in deciding between me and Aline Buchman, so they finally drew lots, for the honors were equally divided, and she became the valedictorian and I became the salutatorian.

#### Vassar: The Bluestocking Danger

Meanwhile, this Latin teacher of mine had filled me with exciting ideas about going to college and had taken me and my mother up to Vassar. I, of course, was absolutely thrilled, and fell in love with Vassar and decided that was where I wanted to go. Mother was very torn about this, because Granny Delia was still alive and still bossing the whole family, and she took a very dim view of too much education for girls. She thought they'd become "bluestocking," and-- this is literally true, I'm not exaggerating-- she thought it would unfit them for their role as wife and mother if they were too well-educated,

Mrs. K.: and they'd get "ideas" about being independent. She had mother so disturbed about this that I was finally permitted to go to Vassar on condition that at the end of the first year, if my parents felt that it wasn't for my best interest to continue, I would come home to live. I got straight A's my freshman year at Vassar. I was a starry-eyed freshman. I made the German Club, the choir, the glee club, and I was assistant song leader. I made lots of new friends.

### Introduction to Anti-Semitism

Incidentally, that was the first time that I became aware of anti-Semitism. I really never knew it existed before then. At Vassar I used to hear girls make horrible remarks, such as "What do you expect of her? After all, she's Jewish."

And then I would say, "Well, I'm Jewish."

And they'd say, "You are?" I was very pretty and blonde and blue-eyed in those days, which you find difficult to believe now, but I really was. I wasn't particularly a "Jewish type," you see, and so I would hear all these things and then get up and make fiery speeches about it and get very indignant. As I say, it was the first time I ever knew there was such a thing in life as anti-Semitism. You can see what a sheltered childhood I had. Of course, this was all long before Hitler--that was when I really became a "fowl-weather Jew."

Nathan: To go back to the time when you were growing up, did you have non-Jewish friends?

Mrs. K.: No. When I was in school, all my friends at school were Jewish, and it wasn't until I got to

Mrs. K.: college and made new friends that I acquired some non-Jewish ones. Ever since then, I've had almost as many non-Jewish as Jewish friends, but my whole childhood was completely segregated in that respect.

Towards the end of my freshman year at Vassar, evidently my grandmother had been putting great pressure on my mother. So I was told that if I wanted to continue my education--mother was sympathetic and torn, you see--I could transfer and live at home and go to Barnard. I have very vivid recollections of sitting in the telephone booth in what they used to call the Soap Palace (I don't know if it's still there, the main building at Vassar College) which was the only place where there were telephones, and weeping bitter tears and telling them they were ruining my life, that Vassar was wonderful and I had lovely new friends and I was doing well.

Why would I be wanting to transfer to a new place and live in New York City when it was so beautiful at Vassar? We went ice skating by moonlight, and the West Point band came over, and we all wore white dresses and skated to music. The whole thing was like a dream. I had never been to camp or anything. I had really never been away from home before, so this was a great exciting experience, and evidently that's what my grandmother thought was a bad thing.

#### Transfer to Barnard

So I, being a meek and mild little girl, did what my parents told me to, and I transferred to Barnard and finished my education there and graduated in 1919 with Phi Beta Kappa and a gold medal from--this always makes me laugh--the Colonial Dames of America. They give a gold medal

Mrs. K.: to the girl who has done the most outstanding work in American history, and I had never even heard of this. In fact, I had never even really heard of Phi Beta Kappa very much, and I suddenly acquired all this jewelry, a key and a medal.

### Marriage to Charles Heming

Meanwhile, I had acquired a husband, I must tell you, because at the end of my junior year I was married. This was during the war. He was my first husband. I have a picture of him and me in a goat cart in the mall in Central Park with three relatives of his. We used to play together in the park as children. Then we didn't see each other for many years. His name, incidentally, was Heimerdinger, Charlie Heimerdinger. During the war his brother (a Marine aviator) decided to change his name to Heming, because Heimerdinger was too German. After much soul-searching and considerable reluctance, we changed ours to Heming also. But this was after I was married. My Phi Beta Kappa key has Lucile Heimerdinger on it. This is one of these things which always amuses the grandchildren.

Anyway, Charlie was in law school at Columbia, and we used to have lunch together every Thursday when I was at Barnard. Then the war came along, and he had a little trouble getting in. He had flat feet and hammer toes and was rejected by the armed forces a few times. He finally managed to enlist and get in but was never sent overseas.

We were married in 1918, the same year that Dan and Ellie Koshland were married. Both husbands were in uniform. One of the things that Ellie and I used to laugh over was an incident on Armistice Day, which was November 11, 1918, right after we were married. We were walking down Fifth

Mrs. K.: Avenue. All the girls were throwing their arms around the men in uniform and kissing and hugging them, so we made Dan and Charlie walk ahead of us and pretend that we weren't with them to see how many girls would come up. Nobody did, and they were very upset.

I was married at the end of my junior year, which considerably reassured my grandmother, because here I was, you see, performing my normal function as a female. I graduated in 1919, and Joan was born in 1920.

Nathan: You did everything.

Mrs. K.: Yes. I was just a little goody-goody. By the time my sister came along, I had proved that a college education didn't unfit me for normal female functions, so she was allowed to go to Vassar for four years. She got the benefit of all my trail-blazing for her. There was a great deal of joking about that. She did very well at college too; then she married a darling guy, Ferdinand Kuhn.

#### Music at Barnard and Columbia

Nathan: In college did you have any special interest in history or political science?

Mrs. K.: Yes, I did. I had a crazy idea at first that I was going to major in music, because I wanted to teach music to children. I thought I had been taught piano so badly. There was a Diller-Quayle school that had just been started; they have wonderful books; you've probably seen them.

I thought that I was going to major in music, which I did for all of my sophomore year. I took all the music courses that I could get at Barnard and Columbia, but I found out after a while that I



Mrs. K.: just wasn't good enough. I was in a class in harmony and theory, and the other members of the class could look at a sheet of music and they could hear it. Well, I could hear the top melody by looking at it, but I couldn't hear the other three notes in the chord. It was just as though I were deaf, you see.

### History, Government, and Political Science

I decided I wasn't meant for a musical career, so I switched to history. Barnard was very flexible about that. I didn't have to decide until my senior year what my major was going to be. So then I took all the American history courses I could get and also some government and political science. We were very lucky at Barnard because Columbia University had some marvelous teachers like Charles Beard and James Harvey Robinson, and good old Professor Simkovitch, who taught socialism. They had a very illustrious group of faculty, and the upperclassmen at Barnard were allowed to cross Broadway and take these courses. Professor Simkovitch was a Russian, and his wife, Mary Simkovitch, started a wonderful settlement house.

### The New School for Social Research

The New School for Social Research was started in those days, and some of the people like Graham Wallas, who were too far out for Columbia, were teaching down there. My husband was quite interested in all this too, and we attended some

Mrs. K.: lectures. Dan and Ellie went to some of those with us at the New School. I've always been interested in American history and government.

Contrasting Attitudes Toward the Democratic Process

Nathan: So you really got the germ of the public affairs at a very early age?

Mrs. K.: Yes. You know it's funny--there's one thing that bothers me a little bit now about the kids. We have quite a few grandchildren in college right now, and they're all wonderful. Much more concerned with doing good for the world than most of my generation was, certainly. I love all my grandchildren and I'm very proud of them. I think Dan and I are lucky, because we have a very good relationship with our grandchildren. We have a lot of fun with them, and we communicate. I'm very sympathetic with their protests against Vietnam, but I feel that one of the things they don't seem to have is an understanding of using the democratic process.

When I was in college, student government was important, and goodness, when I ask the grandchildren, "Did you vote for the president of the Associated Students?" they say, "Oh, no. I couldn't be bothered. I was too busy." I say, "Well, now, all right. He's representing you and you had a chance to vote. If you didn't like him, you could have gotten a group together and set up another candidate. Or you could at least have written a letter to the Daily Cal and said what you thought, or tried some other methods."

Apparently, most of these kids have no interest in student government--it's kid stuff. To us it was great. It was a preparation for being

Mrs. K.: a citizen and learning the democratic process. We have grandchildren at Harvard, Ann Arbor, Berkeley, St. John's, Stanford, Lake Forest, Haverford, U.C. San Diego, S.F. State, and St. Laurence University. And one Pomona graduate. I still am waiting to find one of them who takes student government seriously. The little fringe minority is getting all the headlines. They'll have a mass meeting, and they talk as though they represented 27,000 students when maybe they're representing 200 or 2,000 at the most.

We have now five grandchildren who are old enough to vote. Some were excited about Gene McCarthy in the last [presidential] campaign, but one of them didn't even register, and I was simply furious. They've got plenty to protest about. We've made a fine mess of the world in our generation, I think, but I think that they're missing a lot of opportunities to protest in a democratic and orderly fashion and by using their brains and their pens. I'm all for freedom of speech and assembly, but I think before you begin to smash up property and destroy things and sit in and bring the University to a grinding halt, you try other methods. Now I may be getting reactionary in my old age, but I'm getting more and more troubled about this. I don't know how you feel about it.

Nathan: There are tools that could be used that aren't being used, and they are the vote and the pen, as you say. And to say the process won't work when you haven't tried it doesn't make sense to me either.

Mrs. K.: Yes, that's what bothers me. It's a very complicated subject, and there's a lot to be said on both sides, and we can't dismiss it lightly. I was always interested, of course, in student government. Of course, women didn't have the vote when I was in college.

### A Question of Tactics

Mrs. K.: Well, let's come back to the junior college [College of San Mateo] for a moment, because right now this is something that Dan and I are very much involved in and concerned about. This particular little episode that took up a lot of space in the newspapers, first of all involved a very small number of students percentage wise. One of the things they have been protesting about, and they put on quite an aggressive performance at the last meeting of the board of trustees about this also, was the funding of the so-called College Readiness Program, which we think is a great program and which is partly financed with federal money that has to have matching funds. It's a very complicated thing; there are half a dozen different sources of money for various projects up there.

The board of trustees, all of whom Dan and I know personally and have great respect for (one of them incidentally was a past president of the League of Women Voters and is just a great gal), have been trying to explain to the young people that they're completely for this program. They have been, right along, and they want to keep it going, and they want it to grow. But they can't put their hands in their pockets and produce money. The taxpayers have to vote it; the Legislature in Sacramento has to put it in the budget; they have to get matching funds from various sources in Washington, D.C.

The young students just sweep this aside and blame the trustees as though they personally were withholding money. We had a candidates' meeting of the League of Women Voters last Monday night, and there were some of our not so illustrious assemblymen and senators. They're the people who are going to vote that budget.

Mrs. K.: Well now, I didn't see a single student-- there may have been some there--from the College of San Mateo who should have been there questioning Mr. Carl Britschgi and saying, "Are you going to vote for the money that we need for our College Readiness Program and for completing our buildings?" Here they were, you know, locking the president, Mr. Ewigleben in his room in the administration building, which they took over, and shaking their fists at the trustees. They're just going at the wrong people, blaming the wrong people. This seems to me so obvious and so simple, but they're not interested in the slow and difficult ways of democracy. You can't do these things overnight.

I can understand the minority group people being terribly impatient. They've had a rough time. But the white kids ought to have a little more sense and ought to try to point this out, it seems to me. I haven't found any who take the attitude that I take, and I think you take, that you have to try to learn a little something about where this money is coming from, and how you're going to get it. It isn't just going to drop out of the sky. However, I've always been interested in government and the democratic process. My father, who was perfectly wonderful but not quite as progressive as my mother in some things, wasn't particularly interested in women voting, and he certainly didn't think women should drive automobiles. But he changed his ideas on some of those things.

Nathan: Were you involved in the early days of the women's suffrage movement at all?

Mrs. K.: No. I was in college then, and I wasn't involved. I graduated from college in 1919, and we got the vote in 1920. I've just, except for one awful tragedy in my life, been terribly lucky, and I've just sort of had everything fall into my lap easily.

SOME RELIGIOUS AFFILIATIONS AND PERSONAL  
INFLUENCES

Grandmother Delia and the Temple Choir

- Nathan: Could we pick up your grandmother's relations in San Francisco? Were you aware of any particular ties to the Jewish community or the Temple?
- Mrs. K.: Yes. My grandmother had a beautiful voice. This was Delia Fleishhacker. In fact, she used to sing to us when we were children, and she taught us lovely old songs.
- Nathan: Was hers a trained voice?
- Mrs. K.: I don't know. I believe she sang in the temple choir and that after twenty or twenty-five years, when she retired, she was given by the congregation an antique amethyst necklace and matching earrings, which I subsequently inherited. My daughter Joan now has them.
- Nathan: Was this the congregation Emanu-El?
- Mrs. K.: I think it must have been. My grandmother had very strong religious feelings and affiliations. My mother rebelled somewhat against this, and the same thing happened in my father's family. He'd been brought up by a Jewishly-oriented family, and both of them felt that the old customs didn't have much relevance. They certainly weren't interested in kosher food or anything like that.

### Observances that Show Respect

Mrs. K.: I remember mother lighting a little taper in a cup of oil at every yahrzeit, which was the anniversary of the death of some member of the family. She fasted on Yom Kippur, and she observed all kinds of ceremonies privately. She always told us that she did this out of respect for her parents, but she didn't really believe in it, and she didn't want my sister and me to feel that we had to do it out of respect for her memory. So we didn't.

### Bible Lessons at Home

Mother and daddy liked to play golf on Saturdays and Sundays and hardly ever went to temple. We were not members of any congregation that I can remember, but I have vivid recollections of the Bible teacher coming to the house to teach my sister and me. My sister, incidentally, was five and a half years younger than I, and we were the only children.

Nathan: What is her name?

Mrs. K.: Her name is Delia, named after our grandmother. We have quite a few Delias in the family. My sister Delia is now Mrs. Ferdinand Kuhn. She is married to a wonderful man who was a New York Times correspondent and has now retired. They're a husband and wife team of free-lance writers, and they've written some very interesting books. They live in Washington, D.C., and we're very, very close even though we don't see each other very often.

Mrs. K.: Let's see, where was I? Oh, on Bible lessons. We did not go to Sunday school; we weren't confirmed. I think my parents, my father particularly, were very strongly imbued with the Jewish ethic. He had very strong feelings about many things such as giving a tenth of your income to charity and serving the community, and "noblesse oblige." Dan always makes fun of me. He says I'm not a very good Jew, and I'm not actually, because until I married Dan, I hardly ever went to synagogue.

#### Around the Corner from the Portuguese Synagogue

I was born in New York City on smoky Park Avenue and 73rd Street before trains were electrified, in a funny old apartment house which, of course, is no longer there--the kind that had an elevator that you could see through, and a Black man who pulled a rope to make it go up to the third floor where we lived. From the time I was about six years old until I was married, we lived at 5 West 69th Street.

Right around the corner on 70th Street and Central Park West was the old Portuguese Synagogue. In summer, when our windows were open, we could hear the whole service in our rooms. Of course, the women sat upstairs, and it was strictly orthodox. Dr. H. Pereira Mendes was the rabbi there in those days.



### Rituals at the Levy's House

Mrs. K.: The president of the congregation was a gentleman named Louis Napoleon Levy. Incidentally, he was a brother of Jefferson Levy, who owned Monticello and either gave or sold it to the United States government, you know, Thomas Jefferson's home. The Louis Napoleon Levy's had four daughters, and the third daughter who was my best friend all through school, was Florence who was known as Top because she looked like Topsy. We walked to and from school every day together, and we spent parts of summer vacations and weekends together.

Her family observed every Jewish holiday. They had Friday evening services at home. I was present at many of these, and I was fascinated. I thought it was just beautiful--the lighting of the candles and everything. The girls giggled during the whole ceremony, while their father looked at them disapprovingly. The Levy girls were not allowed to ride on Saturday or go to parties, and they were very strictly brought up. This was a little touch of Judaism which came into my young life.

### The New York and San Francisco Jewish Communities

Don't you think you have enough now of me, because you really wanted to discuss a Jewish community, comparing New York and San Francisco. I don't think I've given you that at all, because I was really never part of a Jewish community in New York excepting that I went to a Jewish school. During my childhood my friends were all Jewish, but they really haven't been since I've been grown

Mrs. K.: up. Of course, my affiliation here with Temple Emanu-El is just because I love my husband and he loves it and I love going with him.

Nathan: Well, in a sense, perhaps the two communities are not so different, then.

Mrs. K.: No, they're not really so different. You know I told you my sister and I had Bible lessons. Well, I repeated this with my children. We were very lucky--we had Jacob Weinstein, who lived in New York for a while and taught them. When he departed, we found another young rabbi, so I think they have a little smattering of knowledge, but they're not really religious. Two of my four children married non-Jews. I don't know what their children are going to be, and I don't think it's terribly important.

It's funny--I'm not sure my grandparents would have liked having their descendants marry out of the faith, but it didn't bother me in the least. I know it wouldn't have bothered their father either, because he felt the same way.

I have never been ashamed of my Jewish heritage; in fact, I am proud of it. As for my religion, one of our grandchildren recently challenged me to define it briefly and I wrote to him as follows:

My religion is Judaism. I think you will find the best definition in the Old Testament in the Book of Micah, as follows: "You have been told, O Man, what is good: yet what does the Lord require of you but to do Justice and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God."

This has always been and still is my definition of Judaism. I find it satisfactory too, except for one thing. When I was a child and said my prayers every night I was sure they were heard personally by the Lord God, a benevolent old gentleman with a long white beard who

Mrs. K.: resided "up there" in a blue heaven, surrounded by winged angels playing the harp. As I grew older I couldn't accept the heaven "up there" or the personal God, and I was troubled. Finally, when I was about your age, I discovered the "Ethical Culture Society." This is a nonsectarian International Fellowship to which many Jews belong. The leader at that time in New York was a great man, Dr. John Lovejoy Elliott. He taught me a new definition of the Lord God which I happily accepted and still believe--namely, God is the good that is in every human being.

#### Jewish Ethics and Identity

I have very vivid recollections of my father being very rigid and strict on the subject of what was ethical and what was not ethical. I think he used "ethical" more than "moral," I don't know why. This was something that certainly was associated with Judaism.

My parents felt that Jewish people were quite superior in respect to ethics, for one thing. The Jewish boys made better husbands. Therefore they weren't very happy at times when I went out on dates with non-Jewish boys, because they were a little bit afraid I might get involved.

Also, there was a distinct feeling that Jewish people have a much greater sense of responsibility to the community and charitable endeavors. My recollection of my parents' charitable activities, were very much unorganized.

### A Personal Kind of Charity

Mrs. K.: Somebody who worked for my father's business developed tuberculosis. In those days people who had TB had to be sent off to Saranac, and it seemed perfectly natural that my father would take this young man and send him off and pay for all his expenses including seeing that he got extra milk and eggs provided for him and that everything was being done for him. It was a very personal kind of charity, and I have the impression that this was a very natural and normal part of daddy's life--like setting up somebody in business or going to see somebody who was sick.

But this was the thing in which the Jews may have been a little superior to everybody else--in doing kind and charitable things. It didn't necessarily mean being president of Federation or anything of that sort, even though we were identified and I always knew I was Jewish and felt a very definite feeling of identity. We used a lot of German and Yiddish words in our family, which I guess were inherited from the grandparents. So that was just one little thing.

Another thing that is connected with this is about my activities in the community. Now as you know, in my adult life organizations like the League of Women Voters which are completely non-sectarian have occupied most of my time.

### Jewish Community Activities

But when I was younger, I did work for the Jewish Federation of Philanthropies in New York, and when the American Jewish Committee set up what was called the Survey Committee--I think it's

Mrs. K.: similar to the Jewish Community Relations Committee here--I was one of the first women appointed to that. There were some gentleman who had grave doubts as to whether women belonged. I remember Eddie Gruenebaum proposed me, and I felt quite honored. Madeleine Borg was also appointed. She was a very lovely and important community leader. I was much younger, of course, and I worked conscientiously at that, and went to all the meetings.

I remember going down to Washington one time to try to do some lobbying through the League of Women Voters for the repeal of the McCarran Act--you know the immigration national origins quota act. I always thought this was a terrible blot on our history--the fact that Jewish refugees, many of whom might have come to this country, couldn't come on account of those miserable quotas and went to Israel or South America or elsewhere.

#### A Foul-Weather Jew and Twenty-six Affidavits

People talk about the foul-weather Jews--you know I was one of those. The more Hitler activities appeared on the horizon the more Jewish-conscious I became. I signed twenty-six affidavits for Jews in Germany and Austria, many of whom claimed to be distant relatives. We never did find out whether they were or weren't. Some of them definitely were cousins of my father's whom we had never heard of before and whom we brought to this country.

Nathan: What sort of affidavits were these?

Mrs. K.: In those days, in order to get a visa to come to the United States, it was necessary for each person to have an affidavit. What I signed was guarantee that this person would never become a

Mrs. K.: public charge, in other words, I accepted full financial responsibility. In some cases it meant buying a steamship ticket and sending it over to them if they weren't able to do it. It varied. Some of these were people in very good circumstances; some were not. I remember one or two weren't able to come over for various reasons--if they'd ever been in a mental hospital or something like that. But a lot of them did come, and I still see and hear from some of them.

#### A Boy from Holland

We also had a little Jewish boy living with us for two years. This was in New York City, in our home. He went to Horace Mann School with my daughter. His parents had to leave Holland at the time that it was invaded by Hitler, and I got to know them through my brother and sister-in-law, who were newspaper people. And Robert Vas Dias was just like one of my children.

#### Jewish Clubs

We belonged to Jewish clubs, of course, and most of our friends were Jewish.

Nathan: What sorts of clubs were these? Social clubs?

Mrs. K.: Yes. My father and mother belonged to social clubs called the Freundschaft and Harmonie and to the Century Country Club, which was a golf club. These were all, as far as I know, one hundred percent Jewish.

### Grandmother Delia: Excellence and Activism

Mrs. K.: Another thing that I think I just touched on the other day was the question of people who influenced me. That was one of your questions. I remember I talked to you about my Grandmother Delia. I've been reading quite a bit lately, as a member of the State Committee on Public Education, and particularly enjoyed books by James B. Conant and John W. Gardner who emphasize "excellence." Every time I come across this phrase, it reminds me of Grandma Delia, who used to say to us, "Hitch your wagon to a star." That's another way of saying excellence, isn't it?

Another thing that I think she impressed upon me and my sister was the importance of activism. If you're lucky enough to be born with a good healthy body and a reasonably good brain, then it behooves you to do something with it and not just sit back and enjoy life. This was dinned into us from the earliest days.

### Lending Books to the Delivery Boy

I remember also Granny being somewhat of a matriarch. She could make her opinions heard not only to her children, but to anybody with whom she came in contact. For example, there was a boy who delivered the bread at Granny's house. Granny used to lend him books. She thought he was very bright and he wasn't making sufficiently good use of his time. She got to know him very well and found out that his aim in life was to be an actor. By the time she got through with him, he decided that his aim in life was to be a member

Mrs. K.: of the Congress of the United States. And he was elected. His name was Julius Kahn.

Nathan: Is that right?

Mrs. K.: During World War I, he was the acting chairman of the Armed Services Committee. I believe the chairman was a pacifist. Julius Kahn was a very important person at that time. And when he died, his wife was elected to take his place in Congress.

Nathan: That was Florence.

Mrs. K.: Florence Kahn, yes. She was a marvelous person. She was also a large lady with a tremendous derrière. I once sat up in the balcony of the House of Representatives and watched her taking my children down the aisle and up to the Speaker. Of course they were simply thrilled. She was like a great ship, sailing down the aisles. My children were quite small at that time, and it was the funniest sight.

### Love and Idealism

Nathan: You got the idea from Granny Delia that you should take part in public questions?

Mrs. K.: Oh very definitely, yes. I guess my parents influenced me more than anybody else, because they were wonderful. I was surrounded by a great deal of love, and I had sort of a charmed childhood. My mother was one of these people who could always find something good in everybody.

Then another person who influenced me, of course, was my first husband, Charlie Heming. We were friends from the time that we were teenagers, and he was very idealistic. He had inherited some



Mrs. K.: money from his father, who died when he was very young. He felt that it behooved him to prove to himself that he was able to support a family when he married; but having once done that, hopefully, before he was forty, he intended to devote the rest of his life to social work. He had enough income to live modestly from this inheritance. Unfortunately, he didn't live long enough to realize his dream. He died when he was thirty-two.

John Lovejoy Elliott

Mrs. K.: I think that the person who influenced him a great deal in this and also influenced me and my children was John Lovejoy Elliott, a short of a Jesus Christ incarnate, I always thought.

He lived a completely selfless life. When he was a student at college at Cornell, Felix Adler, a Jewish leader who founded the Ethical Culture Society in New York City, came to Cornell to speak. John Elliott went up to Dr. Adler afterwards and said, "Could I come and work for you after I graduate from college?" So he did. Dr. Elliott started to work in Chelsea, in what was known as the "Hudson Duster District," one of the toughest West Side areas of New York City.

Nathan: Hudson Duster?

Mrs. K.: Yes. "Hudson Dusters" were a gang. Dr. Elliott started by making friends with some boys who were sitting on the curb and throwing dice. He took them into his room, and that was the beginning of the first Boys' Club, which grew into the Hudson Guild, a remarkable settlement house. He called it a neighborhood house.

Mrs. K.: Charlie, my first husband, lived down there for a while and spent his summers working for Dr. Elliott. He started the first free outdoor movies in Chelsea Park and also worked at the Guild's cooperative farm. Hudson Guild was always a very big part of his life.

### The Ethical Culture Society

There is another strand to this. Charlie's grandfather was one of the Liebman Brothers who started the Rheingold Brewery. Through Charlie's two uncles, Walter and Charlie Liebman, we became involved with the Ethical Culture Society. We used to go there on Sunday mornings to hear Dr. Elliott speak. He eventually succeeded Felix Adler as the leader of the Society. This was a substitute for the Jewish services that we did not attend.

Nathan: What was the Ethical Culture Society?

Mrs. K.: It's an international fellowship. The one in New York, the only one I know about, had a large preponderance of Jewish people in the congregation.

Nathan: There is no particular deity recognized by the Ethical Culture Society?

Mrs. K.: No. The sign over the door reads, "The place where men meet to seek the highest is holy ground." And the services were very informal, somewhat like the Unitarian Church.

Dr. Elliott believed that God was the good in every human being. He was the kind of man who loved all the families down around the Hudson Guild neighborhood. We got to know some of them very well, and if someone committed a murder and was sent up to Sing Sing, Dr. Elliott would go up there

Mrs. K.: every week to see him and keep in touch with his family. He was a very strong pacifist, a very strong Prohibitionist. He had seen these people-- there was a big Irish group in that neighborhood and they were gentle, kindly family men until Friday or Saturday came and they had their pay. Then they'd stop in at the corner saloon and spend the whole week's pay and come home without any money for the groceries. Prohibition, Dr. Elliott thought, was fine.

We didn't go along with him on that but I was impressed by his strong pacifist ideas. He used to come to the house after we were married, and tell stories to the children. They all adored him. And he was very handsome. He revered Abraham Lincoln; he had pictures of Abraham Lincoln all over his room. He had a great influence on my life and certainly on my husband's.

#### Judah Magnes and the Hebrew University

Then another person who influenced me briefly, was Judah Magnes. I only saw him a few times in my life, but I developed a great crush on him. I was quite young at the time, and he was very handsome and a wonderful speaker. I distinctly remember the first time I heard him speak. He was then Chancellor of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem when it was in the old place up on Mt. Scopus. He came to New York and delivered a speech explaining how the scientists over there were making the desert bloom and making wonderful discoveries. It was a very scientific, kind of cold subject, but he made it so romantic that I promptly joined the American Friends of the Hebrew University. I was on that board for a number of years. I met him a couple of times after that.

Mrs. K.: He was originally, you know, a rabbi in the Temple Emanu-El in New York City, and then he went over to Israel and became the Chancellor of the Hebrew University. I still see his wife. Dan and I had tea with her when we were in Israel. She's quite an old lady now, but she's still wonderful. We also know his son and daughter-in-law, who were lovely to us when we were in Jerusalem.

I have another very vivid recollection of an evening we spent at the Arthur Sulzberger's when just my husband Charlie and I were there and Dr. Magnes was there. He had just had a shattering experience. He said to us, "I've always said that I could never, never kill anybody. I could never touch firearms." (This, of course, was the same philosophy that Dr. Elliott had.) He said, "But I was in an automobile accident in the desert, and there was a whole caravan of cars, and one person was killed and several people were very badly hurt." The driver of the bus, or the head car, decided to set forth across the desert to get help. It was getting dark, and there were known to be bandits around that part of the desert. So the driver suddenly put a gun in the hands of Judah Magnes and said, "Dr. Magnes, you seem to be about the most able-bodied person around here. If any of these gangsters or bandits come along, you'll have to use this and protect these injured people."

Judah Magnes turned to us and he said, "I didn't want to touch that, I've never touched firearms in my life, but I knew darn well that if some bandits came along and attacked, I would grab that gun. Meanwhile, I had no choice; the driver just dropped it in my lap, and there it was." "But," he said, "it was a terrible shock to me to realize that I could be picking up a gun." The way he told the story, I've never forgotten it. It's quite interesting, don't you think?

Nathan: Yes. It's very honest.

Mrs. K.: But that's the kind of person he was. As I say, I only saw him maybe four or five times in my

- Mrs. K.: whole life, but he made a great impression.
- Nathan: His activities in Israel were early, weren't they?
- Mrs. K.: I don't really know exactly. I'm a little vague about the chronology of his career between his being rabbi and his becoming Chancellor. He was convinced the Jews and Arabs could live at peace if there were no political pressure from the Big Powers.

Delia and Ferdinand Kuhn

- Mrs. K.: I was also influenced by my sister and my brother-in-law, Delia and Ferdie Kuhn, two very intelligent and kind people. They have friends all over the world.

After I became a widow in 1929, Ferdie was one who tried to make up to my four children for not having a father, and was a great influence in their lives. My children's father had a devoted brother and good friends who helped me bring up my four after they lost their father. (The oldest was eight years old and the youngest not yet born, when he died.) No one was more helpful than Ferdie Kuhn. The children loved him and used to say, "Uncle Ferdie knows everything."

We used to spend summers in England with my sister and her husband and her two children. We also took wonderful trips to little known places, like Middleburg on the island of Walcheren in Holland. There the women wore wooden shoes and Dutch old-fashioned costumes, with long skirts they picked up when they went wading. We swam at the beach of Vere, and bicycled along the dikes. There was a lovely abbey there, that had beautiful chimes (all destroyed by the Germans

- Mrs. K.: later, I believe). Ferdie always found out of the way places and interesting people. We felt like members of the New York Times family, and met the Times correspondents in every country we visited. They opened all kinds of doors.
- Nathan: Was Kuhn a working journalist?
- Mrs. K.: Oh yes, a foreign correspondent. He was the head of the London Bureau of the New York Times for ten years.
- Nathan: Did this interest you to some extent in the overseas relationships that the League of Women Voters had developed?
- Mrs. K.: Actually the League of Women Voters overseas relationships did not start until after World War II, but our travels with the Kuhns were good preparation for me.

Daniel Koshland

I certainly couldn't end this list of people who influenced me without taking about Dan. He certainly has influenced my life tremendously. I've learned a great deal from him, and I've been extremely fortunate. I think you know, he has some very special wonderful qualities. We have a great many interests in common, and a great many friends in common, and a great many happy memories in common too of the days when we were both young, married people and a very happy foursome. Charlie and Dan were friends and Ellie and I were friends before we were married, as you know.

But, of course, Dan is so marvelous. He always listens, and he can always see both sides of everything, and I've learned so much from him.

Mrs. K.: He's got such good judgment. We both love people, but he's much more understanding than I am. If I get excited about something that I think is unjust, I'm awfully apt to get carried away and to exaggerate and to get a little wild on the subject. But he never does. He's always well-balanced. I think you know him pretty well, so I don't have to tell you.

Nathan: Do you think of yourself perhaps as a partisan?

Mrs. K.: Yes, I think so. Of course, I am a Democrat, and Dan is a Republican, but we vote alike in every election.

#### Herbert Lehman's Pointers on Lobbying

Nathan: Among the people you have listed, were there any other public figures in New York in politics or government who struck you as inspiring?

Mrs. K.: Well, Herbert Lehman was certainly one from whom I learned a great deal.

Nathan: Did you get to know him?

Mrs. K.: Oh yes. His wife is still a very good friend of ours. This goes way back to our younger days. I knew that whole family. There were very close friends of my first husband's family. Herbert Lehman--I always admired him tremendously as a person, and then when he was governor and I was active in the League of Women Voters, I used to see him, and I still quote him all the time.

For instance, if the League of Women Voters gets interested in some project and we study it and then have consensus and then put it on our program and go up to lobby in Sacramento or Albany, as the case may be, I now unconsciously,

Mrs. K.: without thinking, now say, "Well, if we want this particular service (if we want Head Start today, in those days it used to be kindergartens, believe it or not, we lobbied for them. That was the first time I ever lobbied, when we were asking for state aid for kindergartens, imagine). But I always say, "If we go up and say that we want this service, we also have to say where we want the money to come from, who is going to pay for it." You can't have one without the other. I learned that from Herbert Lehman the first time we went up to Albany.

Another thing that I quote from him most frequently is the importance of writing to your Congressman. I think of it now when I see these kids on campus who are running around throwing bricks and typewriters out the window. I always want to go up to them and say, "Have you ever written to your Congressman about this? Or to the President? Or to the Secretary of State? After all, the head of San Francisco State or Berkeley can't stop the war in Vietnam. This is what's being done by our government, and how much have you attempted to influence your government?"

But the big thing that Herbert always added to this was, "You must write when you are angry, or when you're opposed, or when you're critical. But even more important, you must write when one of your elected representatives does something that you approve.

He said, "It's the most lonesome thing to be a public official, and we're always being criticized. If only more people would occasionally sit down and say, 'Well, this was a fine thing you did and I agree with you.'" He said, "For every letter I get telling me 'Well done, Herbert,' I get hundreds telling me that I'm a vicious, cruel, horrible man."

When he vetoed the New York law which would have given bus transportation to children in parochial schools--violating the separation of church and state--he got vicious letters telling him, "My poor little child who goes to parochial



Mrs. K.: school is standing out in a blinding snow storm, and a school bus goes by to the public school and can't pick him up because he has the misfortune to be a Catholic. If my child dies of pneumonia, you will be a murderer." This is what he showed me, literally.

Lehman was beloved by many, many people. I know, because I worked in the campaign and I used to see these people who came to the headquarters who just adored him because he had done some kind deed for some relative or friend which nobody ever heard about. He was called "The Conscience of the Senate." He once almost had a fist fight with old Senator McCarthy, because McCarthy claimed he had something in his hand, you know the way he used to do, and Herbert walked up to him--Herbert was not so young in those days--and said to him, "All right Senator McCarthy, come on now, let me see what you've got in your hand."

Nathan: This was Joseph McCarthy.

Mrs. K.: Yes, Joseph McCarthy, old Senator McCarthy. And somebody just grabbed McCarthy's arm; he was about to punch Herb.

Lehman also loved young people. I remember one time being in Washington--this was when he was in the Senate--and he was very late getting home. I was at their apartment with Edith, seeing the grandchildren. Edith said, "Well, he's very late tonight, but I'm not worrying about him because he's talking to a group of college students, and talking to young people relaxes him more than anything. He just loves it." I've thought of that often too, because I love talking to young people also.

Nathan: Did you work in his campaigns?

Mrs. K.: Yes. I took a leave of absence from the non-partisan League of Women Voters Board to do it. I worked in two of his campaigns. The women's division was entirely separate. Not only was the campaign organized to get the Polish vote, the

Mrs. K.: Negro vote, the Jewish vote, and the Lithuanian vote, etc. but in addition to that, the women's division had to have three co-chairmen--a Catholic, a Protestant, and a Jew. I was the Jewish co-chairman of the women's division of Herbert Lehman's campaign. This was not the Democratic Party organization; this was the Citizens' Committee for Herbert Lehman, which really was important.

The party machine had some people who were objectionable and who expected everything to be done their way, and Herbert just wasn't going to do everything their way. So that's why he always had a Citizens' Committee. Also they would have Republicans for Herbert even though he was a Democrat. Everything had little separate labels. I learned an awful lot; above all I learned that a man can fight and win in the arena of party politics without compromising his high standards of honesty and idealism.

Nathan: Perhaps this is putting it too strongly, but would you say it was because the Democratic Party in New York was linked to Tammany that you turned to a non-partisan group for your public activity?

Mrs. K.: No, I don't think so, because I wasn't really very aware of Tammany in those days particularly. I just turned to the League of Women Voters because I found that the League was interested in things that I was. I really went into the League originally because I was troubled about New York's public schools, and I thought the League was doing more to improve the public schools than any other organization that I knew of. Then I got gradually excited about the League's overall purpose, which I now think is its greatest contribution.

Edna Gellhorn and "Finance is Fun"

Nathan: You were saying that you had become interested in fund raising both for the League and other activities. How did you get interested in this?

Mrs. K.: That's a good question. It reminds me of another person who influenced me, Edna Gellhorn. She is the mother of Martha Gellhorn who married Ernest Hemingway. Edna was on the board of the League of Women Voters of the U.S.A. before I was. I think she still lives in St. Louis. She visited us a few years ago out here and we had a marvelous evening with her. I used to see quite a lot of her at League meetings.

There was also a staff member named Bertha Pabst, whom I think Edna trained. "Finance is fun" was their slogan. Most people thought finance was painful--something to be avoided at all costs.

I like to go out and raise money for the League of Women Voters because even if I don't come back with a cent, I've had a chance to tell some other person face-to-face about the League of Women Voters and get that person, male (or female) interested in his responsibilities as a citizen. If he isn't interested himself, maybe he has a mother or a wife or a daughter or secretary who might be, and maybe come the next election, he might come to a candidate's meeting or read some League publications. So I'm really doing a great favor to this prospect.

There are a lot of stories I could tell to illustrate this, but Edna was a person who influenced me, and probably got me over my timidity about raising money. I think we all naturally start off hating the idea and feeling a little embarrassed about it, don't you think?

Nathan: Yes. It's something one doesn't like to talk about very much. Then when you became more interested in Jewish organizations as such on the west coast, then did you also do fund raising for them?

Mrs. K.: No. I'm not really active in any Jewish organizations out here, I have to confess to you. I work for the League of Women Voters, and I work for the International Hospitality Center, and am active in both. I was on the Urban League board for a while. I learned to work with Black people without being at all conscious of the color difference. I tried to organize a branch of the Urban League down on the Peninsula, which wasn't very successful. It would have been a full time job, and I felt I would have had to drop everything else. I felt myself being torn, and so I finally resigned from the Urban League board.

## THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

### An Interest in Public Schools

Nathan: Let's return to the subject of the League of Women Voters. Who started your interest in the League of Women Voters? Was it a friend?

Mrs. K.: Yes. It was Jean Poletti, who was a Vassar classmate of my sister's and a friend of mine. I was interested in the public schools of New York, which were pretty bad.

I guess I was feeling guilty because I sent all my children to private school although I believed in public school. Back in the 1930's there wasn't a single member of the Board of Education in New York who had a child in a public school. Mayor Fiorello La Guardia had a daughter in my daughter Harriet's class at Horace Mann. Jimmy Marshall, who was president of the New York City school board, had his children in Lincoln School.

I was PTA president at Lincoln School, and we organized a committee to visit and study the public schools and find out what we could do. In addition to the Child Study Association and the PTA's, there were half a dozen concerned groups.

But I felt that the League of Women Voters was doing the best job (and going about it in the most intelligent way). Jean Poletti was then the state League president, and she persuaded me to come on the New York state board, and I was made education chairman. I really should have come up from the ranks a little more slowly, but they

Mrs. K.: needed somebody who was interested and wanted to work. I ended up being state president, and I've been in the League ever since, and I love it. I still think it's a great organization. I've met wonderful people. I've learned a lot and it's been fun.

Nathan: You've also been active on the national board, haven't you?

Mrs. K.: I was on the national board for six years.

National Portfolios: Education and Organization

Nathan: What was your portfolio on the national board?

Mrs. K.: Education and organization. Organization meant traveling around the country and helping organize new Leagues and staying in the homes of League people and meeting always the finest people in each community.

Nathan: That's about the best job on the national board.

Mrs. K.: Oh, absolutely marvelous. In those days the League had federal aid to education on its national program. The southern Leagues were against it, and we had a fiery debate one time at convention and dropped it. But while it was on, I testified before the Senate subcommittee on Labor and Education. It was the first time I ever did that; I was scared to death, but it was very exciting.

First President of the League's Overseas  
Education Fund

Nathan: Did you have anything to do with the League's Overseas Education Fund?

Mrs. K.: Oh yes. I was the first president. When I was on the national board, I was also always interested in fund raising. We were having difficulty with the fact that contributions to the League were not deductible [for income tax purposes].

One of our good friends and generous contributors was Beardsley Ruml, whose wife was on the New York State League board. He used to scold us and say, "You girls are so stupid. Why don't you have a tax-exempt arm like the Bar Association and the American Association for the United Nations? Every organization that wants to get foundation money sets up a separate tax-exempt arm. I would double my contribution (which was then one of our big ones) gladly if I could write it off my income tax." So we began investigating this.

At that time, Zelia Reubhausen was very active in the League--she was a darling and her husband Oscar was a brilliant lawyer. He became the League's attorney and helped us greatly on this issue.

A Memorial to Carrie Chapman Catt

Just at this psychological moment--this was in 1947--Carrie Chapman Catt died. Carrie had been the founder of the League of Women Voters in 1920 when the suffrage party had performed its function

Mrs. K.: and the nineteenth amendment was ratified. She said, "Let us then raise up a League of Women Voters." The National American Woman Suffrage Association, which she had started and superbly organized, with branches all over the country, became, in effect, the League of Women Voters.

There were various proposals in honor of the memory of Mrs. Catt, including scholarships and a library on suffrage. A very wise lady, Mrs. F. Lewis Slade, said, "The League of Women Voters must insist that all of these many people who want to contribute to a memorial for Mrs. Catt write and give to the League's Carrie Chapman Catt Memorial Fund." Which we did, and I was the first president.

This was very interesting because there were three distinct needs that blended neatly into one, just by coincidence: honoring the League's founder, creating a tax-deductible arm, and last but not least responding to the calls for help from abroad. In 1947, shortly after the end of World War II, the League was being besieged with letters from women in about twenty countries who wanted to exchange people, information and literature.

Mussolini gave the vote to the Italian women. The French women had just obtained the vote. MacArthur had given the Japanese women the vote. India had a new constitution which gave women the vote. All over the world, women wanted to learn participation in government. They wanted to send people here, and they wanted us to send people there to help them organize. There is now, you know, a Philippine League of Women Voters and a Japanese League of Women Voters, and there are many similar organizations with different names in other countries.



Anna Lord Strauss and General Clay

Mrs. K.: Anna Lord Strauss was then the national president of the League of Women Voters. At a dinner party one night, she met General Lucius Clay, head of the U.S. military government in Germany. He was telling her that carefully screened Germans would soon be brought to this country to study democracy at the grass roots in action. And Anna asked: "How many women are you bringing?"

He looked at her and said, "Women? Why would we bring women?"

She said, "First of all, there are more women in Germany than men, and secondly, don't you think the women could influence their children?"

"Well," he said, "I think it's a wonderful idea. If we bring some over, will your League of Women Voters plan and execute a program for them?"

So seven "Deutsche Frauen" appeared on the scene. We met them at the ship at Station Island. This was our first venture. Literally we "learned by doing."

They were seven extraordinary individuals. I could write volumes about their travels in the United States, as they visited local Leagues of Women Voters. We secured some good advice, and showed them much that astonished them: such as our churches; the words "In God We Trust" on our coins; and the sight of a husband and wife (their host and hostess) voting on opposite sides of a question at the old-style Town Hall Meeting in Washington, Connecticut.

Meanwhile Oscar Reubhausen took me and Katherine Stone to hear the Commissioner of Internal Revenue in his den. (We'd heard he hated women.) On December 1, 1947, we received the

Mrs. K.: official notice that all contributions to the Carrie Chapman Catt Memorial Fund were deductible from federal income tax, under section 101 (6) of the Internal Revenue Code, since we "were organized and operated exclusively for educational purposes." Our purposes: "to increase the knowledge of individual men and women in all parts of the world about the structures, functions, techniques and problems of government."<sup>1</sup>

Florence Law and the Italian Society to  
Abolish Illiteracy

During this period, the League of Women Voters of the United States had also received letters from three organizations in Italy, each of which called itself "our sister organization." They wanted someone to come over and help them organize the League of Women Voters of Italy. We had a national board member at that time who happened to read Dante for pleasure and spoke Italian fluently and had also taught us the discussion group technique and conducted Great Books classes. She still is a great lady, Florence Law. Meanwhile money was coming in from all over the United States.

Among other things that we inherited was a beautiful star sapphire brooch, a joint gift to Mrs. Catt from many admirers. She had given it to the Suffrage Association, who, in turn, bequeathed it to the Carrie Chapman Catt Memorial Fund, CCCMF as we called it. We took it to Tiffany's, where it had come from, and we got \$3,500 for it.

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<sup>1</sup>See appendix for Treasury Department letter, December 1, 1947.

Mrs. K.: We sent Florence Law to Italy, and she discovered that the three so-called Leagues of Women Voters weren't leagues at all. One, for example, wanted to restore the monarchy. She discovered the Society to Abolish Illiteracy--Unione Nazionale per la Lotta Contra L'Analfabetismo--functioning in poor villages in the South where the people couldn't read or even write their names. The CCCMF financed the first course to train teachers to teach adults: thirteen hundred teachers immediately applied, but there was room for only one hundred. It's fascinating and another long story which I don't think we have time to go into now.<sup>2</sup>

Anyway, later the CCCMF became the League's Overseas Education Fund. We'd found a little difficulty translating Carrie Chapman Catt into foreign languages. One of the presents we got was a little Simplified Robert's Rules of Order, which you've probably seen, which a dear old parliamentarian presented to us with the copyright attached thereto in memory of Mrs. Catt and which we promptly had translated into fourteen languages, including Pakistani and Urdu and various others. So that's the story of the Overseas Education Fund, which is flourishing now and has been devoting a lot of time to Latin American women.

#### A Visitor from the Japanese League of Women Voters

Tomorrow a Japanese lady is going to be here. She's the executive director of the Japanese League of Women Voters. She's here in this country for forty-five days at the expense of the State Department and being programmed by the Overseas Education Fund of the League of Women Voters. She's been all over the country studying election procedures and so forth, and with a particular

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<sup>2</sup>See appendix.

Mrs. K.: emphasis on the role of the volunteer. She's going back to report on the fifteenth of November to the national convention of the Japanese League of Women Voters on what she's seen here. We're very honored, because the State Department picked the San Francisco Bay Area for the fatal week of November 2nd to 9th. [1968] She's arriving tomorrow and going to stay until the ninth, and the League is responsible for planning her program. This is the kind of thing we do. The State Department is paying her expenses and providing an interpreter for her.

PARTISANSHIP, VOLUNTEERING, AND INNOVATION

Nathan: Just very briefly then, after you ceased to be active on the League of Women Voters boards, then did you feel free to get into partisan politics?

Mrs. K.: Yes. I've kind of dipped in and out. I've enjoyed the League theory that when you're not a board member you can be partisan, and right now I'm being quite partisan.

Candidates and Junior College Bonds

Nathan: For whom are you partisan?

Mrs. K.: I'm for [Hubert] Humphrey (D) and Pete McCloskey (R)--a good Democrat and a good Republican--and [Alan] Cranston. The junior college bond issue is the thing I'm really working on. I'm doing a small telephone precinct job.

Nathan: Is that Proposition 3?

Mrs. K.: No. State Proposition 3 is for the university and state colleges. The junior college proposition is for our local San Mateo County junior college district, and we are in the midst of it. Dan was chairman of the Citizens' Committee last March when the bond proposal was defeated. Instead of 66 and 2/3 percent of the vote, which we needed, we got 64 and 7/10 percent, so now we're going to try again and hope that it will go through to finish the buildings that have

Mrs. K.: been started up there. The population of that student body has just doubled and tripled and quadrupled in the past few years. So I'm working on that. The League of Women Voters has come out for that too. I take two hundred names in the precinct who have to be called up, then phone people and farm the names out. But these are little things along the way.

Nathan: To anyone else they would be major, but to you they're just one more little thing.

Mrs. K.: Well no, because after all, I didn't call up the two hundred people; I got twenty other people each to take ten to do it. We lost the election in spite of that.

Nathan: That's always a blow.

Mrs. K.: But we're going to try again. Incidentally, the election last April or March was when Dan was chairman of the Citizens' Committee and raised all the money. Did you hear that story? He raised too much money.

He wrote letters and said, "We need money just to run this campaign to put some ads in the paper and get a little radio and television time." When he got through he had money left over, so everybody who had sent in a check got back thirty percent of what he had given. I think nobody's ever done this before. It was really Dan who was doing it, but I was just helping, and we had fun.

#### McCloskey's Vietnam Views

Nathan: Speaking of some of your other more partisan activities, were you involved in McCloskey's campaign?

Mrs. K.: Yes, a little bit. I didn't work very hard; I didn't have time. Before I met McCloskey, I had grave doubts. First of all, I'm a Democrat and he's a Republican, but that isn't too important. He had a very fine military record--you know he was a Marine and was decorated in the Korean War--and I had sort of a feeling that he was inclined to be militaristic.

I went to a meeting at Marcella Jacobsen's house at which he was going to speak. This was when some of our young relatives and friends, the Thedes and others, were very excited about McCloskey, and we'd met him and we'd been quite impressed. When we went to this meeting, I said to Dan, "I would like to go to that meeting, but I have a terrible feeling I will end up probably asking some questions, and I don't want to embarrass you. So would you rather I didn't go, or would you rather I didn't talk?" And of course he said, "Go ahead and talk and ask questions."

I asked McCloskey how he felt about Vietnam and he said everything that I thought was right, you see, so then from that moment on I was for McCloskey, because I feel very strongly; I still do. I'm very terribly upset at thinking about all the people who are being killed every day, and I can't see that it's a very just or noble cause. I know it's very difficult once you get into a thing like that to get out, but I still am very unhappy about it.

The man McCloskey was running against was a friend of ours. But he wouldn't speak out on Vietnam at all, and it was quite obvious that we didn't agree. I was sorry; he was a nice man.

Nathan: You mentioned Marcella Jacobsen.

Mrs. K.: Oh yes. She's a League gal too, you know, and very active in conservation.

The College Readiness Program

Nathan: Do you get involved in the conservation movement?

Mrs. K.: We all get involved in little temporary things, and we have all kinds of problems, like the College of San Mateo, the junior college we were discussing. Dan and I have become very much involved in it, partly through Dr. Bortalozzo when he was the president, really a very remarkable person. He was very disturbed about three years ago, because I think there were eight thousand students at that time up there on the new campus, and less than thirty who were nonwhite. Dr. Bortalozzo made up his mind that something had to be done about it. He got a number of people interested, and they started something called the College Readiness Program.

Dan was having a birthday coming along--this was not his seventy-fifth, which was his big birthday--I think it was really Sissy's idea; Sissy said, "Now can't you find something that his children could give to in honor of Daddy's birthday?"

So I talked to Dr. Bortalozzo about it, and he said, "Well, actually we need just a few hundred dollars to get this thing off the ground, to be able to hire a tutor or two for the summer and try it out on a very small scale and see if it will work." He had this idea of this one-to-one tutoring business. So actually, I think each one of us, Danny and Sissy and Phyllis and I, each put up seventy-five dollars. The whole thing was three hundred dollars--just nothing, you know--but it was just enough to get this little experiment started. His idea was (and this sounds very immoral and I don't say this to everybody) but in effect, what we were doing was practically to pay these students to come up to the college, bribe them.



Nathan: This was the Blacks?

Mrs. K.: This was the Blacks, and they were high school drop-outs, and they thought they were dumb. They were "Agin' the Establishment," and they were getting into trouble. Julio's ideas was to find some other Black students, the few who had made it, and to get them to go to these kids' homes and yank them out of bed practically and pull them along, treat them to breakfast, get them in the car, and say, "Now come on up to the college and let's show you what's going on up there. Here's this wonderful school that's teaching people mechanics, and here's another one that's teaching them stenography, and you can learn all these marvelous things, and you could get a decent job then and earn some money." They got out a little pamphlet with a picture of a Black boy on the cover saying, "Who--me--go to college?"

They actually picked these kids up, drove them up there, gave them lunch, and actually paid them if they stuck it out and went to a class. At the end of the week they gave them a couple of dollars, because this meant more to them than any kind of words or pieces of paper, to have a few dollars in their pockets.

It worked and there are almost six hundred of them up there now in the College Readiness Program. It isn't a hundred percent, but a large percentage of them stay. We haven't got all the figures now. This is the third year, so some of these kids have gone on after two years of the college to Berkeley, and ninety percent of them are sticking in Berkeley and haven't flunked out, which is marvelous when you think that they'd probably be in jail by now if they hadn't had this done for them. So this is the kind of thing, when I say I'm not doing anything else, that I get involved in.

Nathan: Are there any other organizations that you are fairly well attached to?

Mrs. K.: Yes. The only one that I'm really working with is the International Hospitality Center. I'm on the board.

### The Urban League Board

Nathan: You just dropped the name of the Urban League in part of your conversation. Were there any people you remember particularly?

Mrs. K.: Oh yes. It was a great board. There was a Negro who was our executive director who was marvelous. Whitney Young was one of the people whom I met and heard speak and was tremendously impressed by.

One of the things being on that board did for me, which I'm very grateful for, was that I had grown up without having very much contact with Negro people, and I was a little self-conscious at first. For the first time, after going to all these Urban League meetings which I regularly did, of course, I found myself talking and arguing in a very relaxed fashion with a fellow board member and then suddenly realizing, you know, I'd completely forgotten that he's black and I'm white. It didn't enter into my feelings about the matter. And I must say that maybe ten years ago if I had been carrying on a conversation concerning something about which I felt very deeply, with a black man I would have been quite conscious of the fact, I think, and maybe stopped to think, "Should I say this or shouldn't I say it just this way? I might hurt his feelings." But I lost that inhibition completely just from being on that board.

It was a very fine board, very dedicated wonderful people. Clara Denman was on it. Judge Alvin E. Weinberger, incidentally, was our chairman of the board for a while and was a very good

Mrs. K.: chairman. Incidentally Judge Joseph Kennedy, who was a Negro judge, was one of the people also whom I respected and admired very much. It was a great group.

Nathan: You were speaking a little earlier about small jobs that come your way and your, as you call them, minor activities. Have you been very interested in musical affairs--just as a listener or in a more responsible position?

Mrs. K.: No, really just as a listener. I used to play the piano a little bit, but I haven't in years. I love music, and I'm a Wagner fan and a Gilbert and Sullivan fan.

Nathan: Now that's a strange combination.

Mrs. K.: No, as a matter of fact it isn't. I know quite a few other people who have these two loves. Dan is one, for instance, and we can hear them over and over again. We can go and hear "The Ring." In fact one of our sorrows is that the San Francisco Opera Company only does one quarter of "The Ring" each year, and for a while they didn't even do that. Of course I used to go to "The Ring"--they gave them in series you know--when I lived in New York, and a whole group of us went regularly and didn't miss a single moment or a single note. And we still have some wonderful old [Kirsten] Flagstad and [Lauritz] Melchior records which we play frequently.

Nathan: I have a very vague recollection--perhaps you can tell me if this is right or not--but after the Second World War Kirsten Flagstad was being criticized because she had remained with her husband. And wasn't Dan one of those who said, "If she is an artist, let her be an artist, and don't keep her out of this country?"

Mrs. K.: Yes, I think so.

A Head Start on Head Start

Nathan: Haven't you also been doing some work with children?

Mrs. K.: One of the things I got involved in a few years ago was what we call "A head start on Head Start." Another one of my League friends had been talking to some of the nursery school teachers, a very lovely Japanese lady named Ann Ito, who had been a kindergarten, nursery school teacher. She told us that it was so sad to see the difference that was so apparent at kindergarten age between the two groups of children: those who had attention at home and those who came from deprived homes who had never seen a book and had no incentive and were shown no interest by their parents and had no experience in being part of a group. She said they got all these wonderful children and you start off loving them all and thinking they're going to do very well, and after three or four months, the poor little deprived ones are so far behind that it's absolutely heartbreaking, and something should be done about it. So a group of people--I wasn't one of the people who initiated this, but I got involved.

Nathan: When was this?

Mrs. K.: This was about three years ago. It was just the year before Head Start started in San Mateo, which I think was either three or four years ago. Emily Skolnick was really the person who took the lead in this, and I was on her committee and helped a little bit. We got the school people, one of the principals, to give us the kindergarten room, the use of the room and the playground, and we found a perfectly marvelous nursery school teacher who volunteered her time, two of them in fact--one outstanding one. Then we got some young volunteers from the Volunteer Bureau, college girls who wanted summer jobs and didn't care whether they were paid or not. Then a few

Mrs. K.: of us older ones just went along. First of all, I took notes on the behavior of the children, which the teacher was very anxious to have us do. Then I mixed the juice and was responsible for providing the juice, which is very important, you see.

Then we also, three or four of us, acted as chauffeurs when the children were taken on trips. We took them to the dentist one time, for instance, and this was a great event. We found a marvelous Negro dentist, by the way, who put each child in the chair and gave him a ride up and down and explained to him all about how important it was to eat the right food and to brush your teeth and told them stories. It was just the most hilarious and wonderful event in their lives. All I did was drive six or seven of them over in my car and listen to all of this. I think I did it three mornings a week, and it was such fun. They later got some money, you see, and started a real Head Start.

Nathan: Where did the children come from?

Mrs. K.: San Mateo.

Nathan: Are there deprived children in San Mateo?

Mrs. K.: Oh my goodness yes. Didn't you know that? We've just gone through a big integration. Fortunately the percentage is much smaller than Berkeley-- I think it's only about ten percent non-white, the city of San Mateo. But we had two schools, Lawrence and Turnbull, on the wrong side, which is the east side, of the railway tracks. They were about ninety percent or more non-white. Now they're not all Negro. There are some Mexican-Americans and some Orientals also, in fact a few Japanese children whose parents didn't speak English. But the largest number of them were Negroes, and there were hardly any white children at all in these two schools. One of the schools was where we had this group, and it was well done by the people who prepared this. It was a very good committee. They went around under the auspices of

Mrs. K.: a Negro Baptist church there and invited the mothers in for a coffee hour. We went over, and I poured coffee; I was just sort of a menial.

But it was fascinating just to be associated with it and to watch it. The parents paid, I think, a dollar a week, for the privilege of sending the children to the Head Start program. It was only a two hour session each morning. These kids were brought, and they didn't know how to mix with other children. They didn't know how to pick up the pitcher and pour the juice. If they spilt something, they didn't know how to go and get a sponge and mop it up. They didn't know about putting their toys away. They didn't know about taking turns. You know--all the things that our children just automatically learn.

These kids had parents, I suppose, who came home and yelled at them when they were tired, and the children were noisy. But it was marvelous watching them blossom forth.

Nathan: You really were at the very beginning of this program. Are you concerned now...

Mrs. K.: About the cut in the money--yes, very much so. I don't know what they're going to do. I'm not personally doing anything about this. There are just too darn many things to do, Harriet, isn't it awful?

Nathan: I didn't mean to suggest that you ought to be involved, but just to catch up with what you are doing.

Mrs. K.: I kind of lost touch with that, because we felt that having started it and having had it taken over by the school system we had demonstrated something that was worth doing. Now we've closed out these two schools completely. I say we--it's the school board of the city of San Mateo, and there are twenty other schools in addition to these two which have absorbed the children from those two. Fortunately, the ratio was such that it was done painlessly, because it meant

Mrs. K.: just bussing a few, and they did it over a three year period, very gradually. This is the final year now. They've just as of now closed off these two other schools. One of them, luckily, was declared a partial earthquake hazard, which helps greatly, and one of them was needed for administrative purposes and they needed a room for handicapped children, and there were various things so that these buildings were not just going to go to waste. They did it so intelligently.

This is something that the League can claim a little credit for, because Ruth Nagler, former League of Women Voters president, had been one of the moving spirits. She was president of the San Mateo City School Board while all this was being planned. She's just been great. They organized it so well. They had meetings, coffee hours for the mothers of the children who were being bussed with the mothers of the children in the receiving end who said, "Now, don't worry. If your child should get sick or something, he'll know that my house is just around the corner and I'll be there on certain days and somebody else will be there when I'm not there." It was marvelously thought out, and they had special meetings for the teachers to discuss how to work with these children. So far as I know, it's going ahead like a dream.

Nathan: Well, you've really been involved in starting a lot of things. I was thinking of the program at the junior college also.

Mrs. K.: Yes. But of course I can't say I did it, because I didn't do the actual work. I just helped a little bit with a little money and a little advice and a little friendly interest. But there's a girl called Jean Wirth, who is on the faculty at the College of San Mateo, and I think she deserves a lot of the credit. She was picked for this job and wanted to do it and was very dedicated. Then they decided they needed a man, and a black man, to head it, so Bob Hoover, whom you've probably read about in the paper, is now the head, and Jean Wirth is working under him. She at one time was the head of this.

The Values of Innovation

Nathan: Of course, you've been a volunteer in many of these activities. Do you feel then that the role of the volunteer is primarily innovative?

Mrs. K.: Oh yes, very definitely. Don't you think so? I feel that way about private schools too. I really believe in public education, but I think the private schools are so much freer to experiment and to try out new ideas, and I think that's the real excuse for their existence, even though other people may have very different reasons for sending their children to private school. But I would hope there will always be private schools and private colleges and private hospitals and private welfare agencies of all kinds--counseling and everything else--because I think we have to keep improving. And I think that something that is run by the government with taxpayers' money just can't be as free to experiment. Don't you think that's true?

Nathan: Yes.

Mrs. K.: And I feel that way about the volunteers. A volunteer can go a little far out sometimes and try things that may succeed or may fail, and it's not too important. It's not a matter of life and death or losing your job or wrecking an organization that is part of the established government of the city or the county or whatever.

My sister and I have great arguments about this, because she's always been a professional and I've always been a volunteer, and she thinks if you're any good at all, you should be paid for what you do. She's a writer, and also during the war she worked in the Point Four Program, but she was a paid government official. She doesn't quite understand how I can be perfectly happy to go on not getting paid for anything I do, but it really doesn't bother me at all.



Nathan: Perhaps she's thinking in terms of standards, but volunteer standards can be very high also.

Mrs. K.: I think so, yes. I think I'm just fortunate that I haven't had to work for my living, you know. The only time I ever earn money is when I'm on jury duty or registering voters. The funds are not very lavish, as you know, in either one of those capacities. But I guess I'm just conceited enough that I could always get a job as a babysitter or a chambermaid or a stenographer if I had to, I'm sure. But it hasn't ever worried me really, because I think I've enjoyed being a volunteer, and I've met all kinds of wonderful people, and it's been very satisfying.

#### Political Attitudes

Nathan: Before we forget this, I do want to ask you a little bit about your voting habits, if this is something you are going to discuss.

Mrs. K.: Oh, certainly. When you used the word "habits" it stopped me for a second, because I'm a little undependable. I mean I'm a registered Democrat and I always have been, but I don't always vote for Democratic candidates. You see, McCloskey is an example, and I'm quite pleased about McCloskey. We carry on quite a correspondence.

I'm keeping my fingers crossed a little bit, because...I don't know. I think he's all right. I think he's really fine. The thing that endeared him to me very much was at the time of the Pueblo incident when he sounded off. Do you remember? He said, "The only thing those Koreans understand is force, and we should have rushed in."

It just gave me heart failure, and I wrote him a frantic letter, and I said, "Did you have

Mrs. K.: any information actually, first-hand information about where that ship was, whether it ever was in the waters within the three mile limit, where it was the week previous to the capture when the Japanese papers were all saying that it was spying and snooping?" And I said, "If you have inside information and you know that the Pueblo never in any way violated any possible rules, that's one thing, but do you have it?" He wrote back and said, "No, I don't, and I'm sorry. I make a mistake and sounded off without getting my facts, and I apologize." Now you can't ask more of anybody. I thought that was quite wonderful. He went way up in my esteem.

Well now, he is a Republican. I voted for [Senator Thomas] Kuchel; I voted for [Senator Jacob] Javits when I lived in New York. I have no really strong partisan feelings; I just vote for the best man. I think that all things being equal I'm inclined to be loyal to the Democratic Party, because I think it's been the party of progress and a little international progress, although not so much recently.

Nathan: Were you interested in [Senator Eugene] McCarthy?

Mrs. K.: Oh yes, very much so. I contributed to McCarthy; I met McCarthy and shook his hand proudly and told him I thought he was great and I appreciated what he had done for the young people of this country. I think if he did nothing else that he was really great in getting them understanding the democratic process.

He had our granddaughter, little Alison Geballe, going over with a busload of kids from Ann Arbor, Michigan, to Oshkosh, Wisconsin and pounding the pavements and ringing doorbells and sleeping in sleeping bags and making phone calls and licking envelopes--you know, really learning how the thing works, and I think this was great. He had them saying "Keep Clean with Gene." He was a great influence on the young people.

Mrs. K.: I was terribly tempted to write his name in as a protest, and then I realized that I couldn't do that. I was throwing my vote away. Emotionally it would have been a great satisfaction, but the little brain I have left told me that it wouldn't have been a very smart thing to do, because it was really giving a vote to the person I dislike the most. Is that what you meant about my voting habits? They're not very strictly partisan at all.

Nathan: Yes--whether you think first of the party or first of the man.

Mrs. K.: No, first of the man, always.

Nathan: So party discipline as a concept isn't too important?

Mrs. K.: No, not terribly important. Well, Dan's a registered Republican and I'm a registered Democrat, and we manage to get along very happily and we almost always vote for the same candidate with very few exceptions.

### Personal Ethics

Nathan: These ideas of ethics that you referred to as having been part of your household upbringing--these concepts have held up pretty much through your life. You haven't felt the need of any other beliefs?

Mrs. K.: You mean of a religious nature? No, I haven't, and I've tried a few times, Harriet. After I lost my first husband, I went to the services at Emanu-El in New York a couple of times, and it just didn't mean a thing to me.

Nathan: Your ideas of ethics interest me, partly because it seems almost like noblesse oblige, besides the

Nathan: question of taking a personal interest.

Mrs. K.: Yes, it's partly that. You know, losing one's parents is very sad, but if your parents live to a fairly ripe old age and have had a wonderful life and you've had a good relationship and you loved them and you knew that they loved you, I don't think that losing one's parents is a tragedy, but when you lose a thirty-two year-old husband whom you adore madly, it's devastating. That's the only tragedy I've ever had in my life. What kept me going wasn't religion. First of all, it was my children. When you have four children you have a job. I had learned from my parents that feeling sorry for yourself does not help. It's better to keep busy and try to think about other people. Otherwise, you can just wallow in self-pity and get nowhere.

## A FAMILY ROSTER: THE NEXT TWO GENERATIONS

Nathan: Speaking of your children, I'm not sure we have all their names.

Mrs. K.: The first born was Joan. She has worked since she graduated from Vassar, first, during World War II in OPA, then as field secretary to the New York State Americans for Democratic Action, and finally in the theater world. Her present boss is George Schaefer who produces the Hallmark Hall of Fame plays on television. She married John V. Frank, who is in the travel business. They have a son Dan who goes to Collegiate School and a daughter Kathy who attends Dalton, both in New York City.

My next daughter is Delia. She married a psychiatrist, Dr. George Naumburg. Their children are Peter, who is married; Eric at Harvard; Janet at Lake Forest College; and Betsy at Scarsdale High School. Delia was divorced and married Myron Cantor, a businessman. They have a son, Daniel Charles, born January 1, 1963. Delia teaches math to the eleventh and twelfth grades at Scarsdale (New York) High School.

My son is Charles Heming. He and his wife, Olga (Landeck), have three children: Michael, Lucy, and Amanda. Charles practices law in New York City, in the firm of Dammann & Heming. He is active in the New York Bar Association, the Princeton Alumni Association, the government of the city of Scarsdale, where they live, and he does other civic work. Olga was PTA president. She is now doing graduate work in city planning and sculpture at Sarah Lawrence College, and is teaching Great Books in junior high school.

Mrs. K.: My youngest child is Harriet. She is married to Dwight Simpson; they and their four children live in Berkeley, California. The children are Anthony, Charles, David, and Margaret. Dwight taught at Williams College for nine years, and was president of Robert College in Istanbul, Turkey. He is now teaching political science at San Francisco State College, and Harriet is teaching remedial reading as a volunteer in Berkeley.

## APPENDIX I



TREASURY DEPARTMENT  
WASHINGTON 25

OFFICE OF  
COMMISSIONER OF INTERNAL REVENUE

ADDRESS REPLY TO  
COMMISSIONER OF INTERNAL REVENUE  
AND REFER TO

IT:P:ER  
RDM

DEC 1 1947

Carrie Chapman Catt Memorial Fund, Inc.  
c/o Debevoise, Flimpton & McLean  
20 Exchange Place  
New York 5, New York

Mesdames:

Reference is made to information furnished in support of your request for a ruling that you are entitled to exemption from Federal income tax.

The information presented discloses that your incorporation is proposed as a living memorial to Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt, the founder of the League of Women Voters of the United States which at the meeting of its General Council in May 1947 authorized your creation. Your purposes, as stated in your proposed certificate of incorporation, are to increase the knowledge of individual men and women in all parts of the world about the structures, functions, techniques and problems of government; to facilitate the diffusion of knowledge and understanding concerning government; and to carry out such purposes by:

- (a) promoting and supporting studies of, and research in, the structures, functions, techniques and problems of government by persons qualified to make such studies and engage in such research;
- (b) promoting and supporting discussion groups, study groups, meetings, exhibitions and field trips;
- (c) providing scholarships and fellowships for qualified students of government without regard to sex, age, nationality, race, creed or color;
- (d) promoting and supporting the publication and distribution of addresses, essays, summaries, treatises, reports, surveys, studies, outlines, graphs, pictures and other visual aids to learning in the field of government; and
- (e) making grants in aid to others.

2 - Carrie Chapman Catt Memorial Fund, Inc.

It is stated that you will be organized and operated exclusively for educational and charitable purposes and that you intend to start a nationwide campaign for contributions on January 9, 1948, the anniversary of the late Mrs. Catt's death.

It is the opinion of this office, based upon the evidence presented that if you are operated in the manner and for the purposes stated in the copy of your proposed certificate of incorporation you will be exempt from Federal income tax under the provisions of section 101(6) of the Internal Revenue Code, as a corporation organized and operated exclusively for educational purposes.

Accordingly, you will not be required to file income tax returns unless you change the character of your organization or the purposes for which you were organized or engage in activities not indicated in your certificate of incorporation.

Under substantially identical authority contained in sections 1426 and 1607 of the Code, the employment taxes imposed by such statute will not be applicable to remuneration for services performed in your employ so long as you meet the conditions prescribed above for an exempt status for income tax purposes.

Contributions made to you will be deductible by the donors in arriving at their taxable net income in the manner and to the extent provided by section 23(o) and (q) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Bequests, legacies, devises or transfers, to or for your use will be deductible in arriving at the value of the net estate of a decedent for estate tax purposes in the manner and to the extent provided by sections 812(d) and 861(a)(3) of the Code. Gifts of property to you will be deductible in computing net gifts for gift tax purposes in the manner and to the extent provided by section 1004(a)(2)(B) and 1004(b)(2) and (3) of the Code.

Since the actual activities of an organization are a material factor in determining whether or not it is organized and operated in accordance with the several provisions of law referred to herein, you should, after your first complete year of operation, furnish the information called for in Form 1023, a copy of which may be secured from the collector of internal revenue for your district, in order that your right to exemption may be determined on the basis of your actual operations. You should attach to the Form 1023 a classified statement of your receipts and expenditures during the year and a complete statement of assets and liabilities as of the close of the year, together with a comprehensive description of all activities engaged in and copies of printed matter distributed or used in carrying on your activities. There should also be submitted with Form 1023 certified copies of your approved certificate of incorporation and bylaws.



3 - Carrie Chapman Catt Memorial Fund, Inc.

The collector of internal revenue for your district is being advised of this action.

Very truly yours,

  
Commissioner

## APPENDIX II

Carrie Chapman Catt Memorial Fund and the Association  
for the Struggle Against Illiteracy (Unione Nazionale  
per La Lotta Contro L'Analfabetismo)

Letter, Anna Lorenzetto to Lucile Koshland, 1968

Northbrook News clipping re: Mrs. Marc Law, 1969

Page, The National Voter, 1969

UNIONE NAZIONALE  
PER LA LOTTA CONTRO  
L'ANALFABETISMO  
PALAZZO DELLA CIVILTÀ DEL LAVORO-EUR  
ROMA

73

Rome, April 29th, 1968

IL PRESIDENTE

Dear Mrs. Koshland,

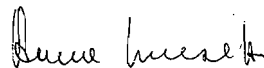
I am glad to inform you that the Senate of the Italian Republic, during its meeting of March 6th, 1968, passed the bill concerning provisions in favour of UNLA submitted by the deputies Cassiani, Codignola and Valitutti.

As everybody knows, this provision foresees - starting from the 1968 budget - a yearly contribution of 150 million Lire (about \$240,000) to UNLA for the educational, civic and social activities carried out by its Adult Education Centres.

While giving you this news, I wish to thank you for the help you have offered to UNLA during periods of great difficulty and for your friendly support to our Association.

Trusting in your continued interest and precious collaboration, please accept my most cordial greetings and best wishes.

Sincerely yours,



Anna Lorenzetto

Brook News - July 31, 1969

# Mrs Marc Law recalls venture for Italian League of Women Voters

The 28th edition of Who's Who in America lists "Law, Mrs. Marc A., vice-president of the League Women Voters of the U.S., St. Paul, Minn., Feb. 2, 1892" and goes on to say she attended the University of Wisconsin, St. Agatha conservatory of music, the England conservatory of music, married, had three children, Who's Who is a big book. The names of many illustrious persons are listed in it. But they are names. Statistics.

Mrs. Law is hardly a statistic. She is an intelligent, vital, gracious lady. Journalists rarely use the term "lady." They are forbidden to do so by every journalism book ever written. But journalists are cautioned to be precise.

I am precise. Mrs. Law is a lady. My definition of "a lady" is that she is a superior woman who can cope with anything.

Mrs. Law lives in a log house in the midst of spacious grounds on Lawton rd., south of Willow rd. near Kingston rd.

"We moved out among the corn," she said. "But the corn is gone."

And so it is. Mrs. Law went to Italy in 1948 to see if she could help Italian women learn how to be voting citizens. After World War II, Italy had a new constitution. Women were allowed to vote. They didn't know how. Most of them couldn't read. Most of the men couldn't read either.

It was the days of the European Recovery plan. Italian emissaries came and asked for assistance. The League of Women Voters came to the rescue as they are wont to do.

The League didn't have the money, really. But there was the Carrie Chapman Catt memorial fund. Carrie Chapman Catt was one of the first vociferous fighters for women's rights in America and founder of the League.

Italy was not the only war-torn country where the women needed help. The military governments of Germany and Japan sent women to the United States to learn how women went about being informed voters here.

Mrs. Law, invited by several

Italy had not yet begun to repair the ravages of war. There was hardly a road, she said, that was not largely destroyed by the war.

Water, always at a premium in Italy, was even scarcer than usual.

Mrs. Law tells how she finally got to a hotel of sorts in the southern part of Italy. It was cold. She says it was always cold. She slept in her clothes habitually.

This night she couldn't sleep, it was so cold. She went downstairs to the small lobby and asked if she could have a cup of coffee. After a good bit of time, one of the hotel employees came through the lobby with a small container of liquid.

"Good," she said. "Is that my coffee?"

The attendant told her that it was not. It was the bath water for the two ladies in number whatever-it-was.

She never did get her coffee.

I told Mrs. Law that, like the Queen Mother of England, I was a great booster for the hot water bottle.

"But there is no water," said Mrs. Law.

Then she showed me some fascinating copper pots that really fit beautifully into the depression around the hot water bottle.

"Try it," Mrs. Law said. "Hold it up against you."

These pots with a few coals in them take the place of the hot water bottle admired so much by me, the Queen Mother of England, and, I hear, Mamie Eisenhower.

But I am getting ahead of my story.

When Mrs. Law arrived in Rome, the cultural attache at the American embassy gave her a reception. Persons who were interested in educating the women of Italy to vote were invited.

"Did you speak Italian?" I asked.

"I spoke a little," said Mrs. Law. "And then I took a crash course before I went. I never did learn to speak some of the dialects, though. I got so I could understand them pretty well but I never could speak

she said, she was in more places than she could possibly visit.

She was most attracted to the Union for the Fight Against Illiteracy, founded by a few men and women teachers and workers. This organization (UNLA) has grown and prospered, many others have dropped by wayside.

In time, UNLA became, and is, connected with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

Mrs. Law set off on her journeys of southern Italy with two women from UNLA and a cultural expert.

UNLA had set up six "cultural centers" at which they conducted classes in reading and writing and gave information about practically everything.

These cultural centers were hardly as elegant as their name. Usually, said Mrs. Law, they were very small and contained bare rooms with low-watt electric lights hanging from the ceiling.

"But they were so eager to learn," she said. "They would crowd in and stand. Some of them had walked five miles or more to get there after a full day's work in the fields."

"And the questions! One man said he had heard there was a light inside a bulb that gave off light. He wanted to know how this possibly happen."

UNLA, said Mrs. Law, has been upon conducting community projects along with the local sessions.

"They are not what you expect," she said. "Do you know what one was? The classes were in the troughs for water so the women of the village could do the family work in them instead of in the fields. They slapped the cloth against their stones as they had done for generations."

Mrs. Law showed me some lamps that looked like a miniature of Aladdin's lamp—or like those Greek oil lamps that archeologists dig up on expeditions—or like the ones Jacques Cousteau brings up from the bottom of the Mediterranean. They are very

MRS. MARC LAW Recalls Venture for Italian League of Women Voters

Northbrook News - July 31, 1969

the bowl of the lamp, and she  
 wick in her hand, indicating the spot  
 "I have in many many homes  
 in 1948. There are a great  
 provided the only light."  
 "I've found the homes do  
 have running water," I said, "is  
 the women wash in the river."  
 "Oh yes," said Mrs. Law,  
 each village there is a fountain  
 the source of everyone's water."

an government of recent years  
 granted 100 billion (in  
 40,000) a year to these schools.  
 In 20 years the UNIA cultural  
 centers have increased from nine to  
 40 and 32,000 persons attend  
 The teaching, other than the  
 reading and writing, is done in  
 group discussions. "Like the  
 League," said Mrs. Law, "exper-  
 ienced collaborators come in to  
 and take part in the

that today? You were there in  
 1948."

"I've been back every five  
 years," Mrs. Law said. "I don't  
 expect I shall go again. But it was  
 the same the last time I was there  
 I don't think I really  
 comprehend the poverty," I said.  
 "No, you don't," said Mrs. Law.  
 "Do you picture grape vines  
 growing along the roadside with  
 stalks of wheat growing up  
 between?"

officers but the  
 ration in tightly controlled by  
 a group of trustees based in Rome.  
 Mrs. Law is one of the trustees.  
 Mrs. Law was quick to give  
 it to other organizations and  
 centers of other countries which  
 deal with rehabilitation and  
 education. She mentioned the  
 Swiss and the American  
 Society of Friends.

I nodded.  
 "That is the grain for a whole  
 family for a year," she said.  
 "What are the houses made  
 of?" I asked.  
 "Some are bamboo," she said,  
 with earth floors.

her favorite organization  
 is Mrs. Law, whom I  
 picture tramping through the  
 countryside, using what  
 transportation was available  
 crossing bombed-out roads  
 recovering in her sleep, eating

Suddenly I remembered how  
 years ago I had interviewed  
 an American Beret veteran of Viet Nam  
 who used the same description.

Italian kitchens by the light  
 of miniature Aladdin's lamps. And  
 I could equally visualize her leading  
 Great Books discussions  
 participating as a member of  
 the Northbrook board of education  
 attending the music conservatory

"Bamboo?" I asked.  
 "Yes, it grows there."  
 "I didn't know that. But then  
 finding out I didn't know a lot  
 of things."

the year of 1969—the 50th  
 anniversary of the League  
 of Women Voters—there can be no better  
 representative of the League  
 of Women Voters' best than Mrs. M.

"I didn't go to the northern part  
 of Italy," Mrs. Law said, "but  
 the northern part of where I did go  
 most of the homes are ancient and  
 made of stone. And you should see  
 the schools. They aren't even safe  
 they were built a hundred or two  
 years ago. There is one room. There  
 may be one of those little lights  
 but usually not. And the floors  
 are probably have big dangerous holes  
 in them."

She leaned forward. "One  
 of the cultural centers was in  
 the half of a pig sty—and the  
 other the better half."  
 The first time Mrs. Law was  
 in Italy she attended the second  
 annual conference of UNIA.  
 When she came home she  
 received a \$4000 grant from  
 the League to instruct prospective  
 teachers for the cultural centers  
 in Italy. Mrs. Law said

# Wide Illiteracy Is Combatted in Southern Italy

Began a front page story in *The Christian Science Monitor* in 1949: "As a direct result of a feminine envoy's visit to Italy, the Carrie Chapman Catt Memorial Fund has voted to send \$4,000 to Italy to be used in a fight against illiteracy.

"The money, voted after the visit of Mrs. Florence Law\* of Chicago . . . will be used for a 20-day summer training course for 100 young night-school teachers in the southern Italian province of Lucania." (It was not reported that 1,300 teachers applied.)

UNLA stands for the *Unione Nazionale per la Lotta contro l'Analfabetismo (Association for the Struggle Against Illiteracy)*. Early in 1948, Italy adopted a new constitution giving women the right to vote. Later that year, UNLA was organized in Rome by a few Italian social workers and teachers who had made a literacy survey of southern Italy, Sicily and Sardinia, finding that the southern women—now voters—were illiterate.

In response to requests for assistance from three Italian women's groups, Mrs. Law, former LWVUS vice president and OEF trustee, made four trips to Italy and Sardinia on behalf of the League's international work.

"When I first came in contact with UNLA," wrote Mrs. Law, "it had a budget of \$500 . . . no recognition . . . and was staffed by seven volunteers." Today UNLA, a UNESCO-sponsored,

nonprofit, nonsectarian, nonpartisan organization, conducts 90 Adult Education Centers which service approximately 32,000 Italians. Recently the Italian Senate voted 150 million lire (about \$240,000) annually for the educational, social and civic activities of these centers. They are administered by locally elected officers.



Dr. Anna Lorenzetto, a founder of UNLA, with Sardinian dignitary.

UNLA later expanded its offerings to include vocational and agricultural training courses; discussion groups; recreational activities; extension courses in history and geography, and, according to local needs, welfare activities—distribution of food, clothing and medicines. The "cultural courses" led by community leaders pertained to local needs such as sanitation and water supply.

After senior members of a center had mastered reading and writing skills, they formed "autonomous" citizen groups—composed of both men and women—to undertake the study of

public issues: Sanitary conditions of the streets, homes and schools; laws regulating work, health, education and emigration; determining which governmental agency had responsibility to formulate legislation for a particular area of public concern. New members continued to begin their citizenship education by learning to read and write.

UNLA gradually began to receive support from international and domestic well-wishers. Donations from Denmark, Switzerland, UNESCO and the U.S. ranged from scholarships for UNLA teachers to study abroad, to copy books, food, clothing and other gifts in kind. The American Friends Service Committee, the Ford Foundation and the Carrie Chapman Catt Memorial Fund supported UNLA. Italian donors represented public and private sectors.

Israel and Greece a decade later sent teachers to UNLA centers to observe adult education methods. Portugal expressed interest. Iran volunteered to set up an adult literacy program at government expense. "Today UNLA is at work in Africa, Asia and the Arab world," wrote Mrs. Law.

Said Dr. Anna Lorenzetto, UNLA's principal founder: "The Autonomous Groups . . . represent a new position for the peasant of the south . . . that of reflection, of organization of thought according to modern, rational forms . . ." □

We regret the July issue's acronym slip. It should have been OEF Program, not OEO. Ed.

\* Mrs. Marc Law of Northbrook, Ill.



WASHINGTON, D. C. ELECTS NEITHER its local government nor any member of the Congress which levies its taxes, spends its money . . . A statement in the Congressional Record advocating home rule for the District of Columbia is given to out-of-towners at the Washington Monument by D. C. Leaguers (left to right) Mrs. Oswald Johnston and Miss Paula Ayers. The all and chain are symbols of the District's captive status.

## The League of Women Voters of the United States

August-September 1969



THE NATIONAL VOTER  
1730 M Street, N. W.  
Washington, D. C. 20036

94010-KOSHS-1518-5 LWV CA024  
AND DANIEL KOSHLAND  
DANIEL KOSHLAND

## APPENDIX III

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS ON DEPOSIT IN THE  
BANCROFT LIBRARY

- A. A looseleaf binder enclosing Carrie Chapman Catt Memorial Fund Program Progress Reports from No. 1, Fall 1948 through No. 33, September 1961. The latter also carries the new name, Overseas Education Fund of the League of Women Voters. Subsequent publications included in the collection (from September 1962 through September 1964) appear under the new name.
- B. Two folders concerning the Carrie Chapman Catt Memorial Fund.

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Harriet Siegel Nathan

Graduated from the University of California, Berkeley, in 1941 with an A.B. in Journalism. Was assistant women's editor and managing editor of The Daily Californian, then known as the Monarch of the College Dailies. Prepared President Sproul's biennial report to the legislature, 1942-44; wrote advertising copy; edited house journals; served on local and state boards of the League of Women Voters, primarily in the fields of local and regional government and publications. Returned to U.C. for a Master of Journalism degree in 1965. Wrote for the University's Centennial Record. Now doing research, writing, and editing for the Institute of Governmental Studies, U.C., Berkeley.