BAY AREA FOUNDATION HISTORY

Volume V

Milton Salkind

New Vitality in the San Francisco Conservatory of Music

Edwin P. (Red) Stephenson

White Man in a Black Town, 1950-1967

Caroline Moore Charles

Development and Dynamics of Volunteer Organizations

Arabella Martinez

The Spanish Speaking Unity Council, Inc., and Bay Area Foundations

Ira DeVoyd Hall, Jr.

Community Resources: Turning Ideas into Action

Sam Yuen

Philosopher and Community Administrator
[manuscript still in process]

Interviews Conducted by
Gabrielle Morris
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This five-volume Bay Area Foundation History Series, a special project of the Regional Oral History Office, was first discussed in late 1973. Ruth Chance and John May were then preparing to retire as executive directors, respectively, of the Rosenberg Foundation and the San Francisco Foundation, and a group of their colleagues wished to express their appreciation for the guidance and inspiration these two have provided in developing the art of philanthropic grant-making.

In addition to documenting the part Ruth Chance and John May have had in encouraging activities for the betterment of life in the Bay Area and California, it was decided to record an account of significant trends and events in the foundation community of the Bay Area. The resultant project includes twenty-four interviews of varying length with board members, staff, and grantees of a variety of Bay Area foundations representing both traditional and contemporary views of philanthropy. The series as a whole presents a picture of close to half a century of organized philanthropy in the Bay Area, including the processes of foundations and the development of community attitudes and organizations which mirror the evolution of issues of concern not only to foundations but to society in the West and nationally.

The Office wishes to express its sincere thanks to the Zellerbach Family Fund, van Loben Sels Foundation, San Francisco Foundation, and Rosenberg Foundation, whose joint grants made this project possible. We also deeply appreciate the encouragement, interest, and research assistance of the staffs of these foundations and other interested observers throughout the course of this project. Special thanks are due to the participants in the interviews for their willingness to discuss their experience with foundations and for their patience in reviewing their transcripts. It is hoped that readers now and in the future will find these manuscripts as informative and thought-provoking as has the staff who prepared them.

The interviews stimulated the deposit, by interviewees and others, of a number of letters, speeches, pamphlets, grant proposals, and other materials related to philanthropy dating back to 1926. This Bay Area Foundation History collection is being added to The Bancroft Library's extensive holdings in twentieth century Californiana.

The Regional Oral History Office was established in 1954 to tape record autobiographical interviews with persons prominent in the history of California and the West. The Office is under the administrative supervision of James D. Hart, Director of The Bancroft Library.

26 May 1976
Regional Oral History Office
Room 486 The Bancroft Library
University of California
Berkeley, California

Gabrielle Morris, Interviewer-Editor
Bay Area Foundation History Series

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Regional Oral History Office
Milton Salkind

NEW VITALITY IN THE SAN FRANCISCO CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC

An Interview Conducted by
Gabrielle Morris
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INTERVIEW HISTORY

In addition to providing seed money to projects seeking solutions to social welfare problems, Bay Area foundations over the years have given considerable support to the arts, and also to strengthen organizations of value to the community that for one reason or another have become organizationally weak. John May, while executive director of the San Francisco Foundation, considered the San Francisco Conservatory of Music to be one of the Foundation's most successful grantees on both counts. He attributes the Conservatory's rejuvenation to the recruitment of distinguished concert pianist Milton Salkind as executive director, his first administrative position. Therefore, Mr. Salkind was invited to record an account of progress made in the first years of his administration.

The single interview was recorded on 1 May 1975, and Mr. Salkind asked director of development Paul Resnick to participate. Lean, dark-haired and intense, Mr. Salkind sat at a large graceful desk in his light- and plant-filled office. Speaking from personal experience of his convictions regarding music training, he held a short smooth black branch in his hands, somewhere between a baton and a shillelagh, gesturing with it for emphasis and seeming to enjoy its tactile quality. Young and stocky, Mr. Resnick sat to one side, adding detail on budget and administration.

Educated in economics as well as music, Mr. Salkind appears to have translated his ideas on music and education logically and efficiently into administrative improvements, such as the hiring of a development director and a student counselor and an extensive program of student performances in the community.

Under his guidance, the Conservatory is also engaged in a five-year plan of financial development on all fronts: endowment, capital, and scholarships, which has involved extensive negotiations between board and staff and Bay Area and national foundations as well as the National Endowment for the Arts.

Mr. Resnick, as other interviewees in this Foundation History, emphasizes that grants are considered as part of the organization's overall budget picture, and comments that there are usually several proposals in different stages of the granting process. He also reminds Mr. Salkind firmly that the success of the Conservatory's funding requests is due in part to grantors' confidence in the ability of the Conservatory's executive director, which is indeed reported by foundations as the major consideration in grant-making.

A brief note at the end of the interview summarizes an unrecorded conversation with Mr. Resnick in which he gives a rough breakdown of all the Conservatory's present sources of funds. Both men reviewed the edited transcript of the interview, each making minor revisions of a word or two.
Appended is a statement written by Mr. Salkind in 1974 in response to a San Francisco Foundation questionnaire asking how the Foundation might be more helpful in the community.

Interviewer-Editor

22 June 1976
Regional Oral History Office
486 The Bancroft Library
University of California, Berkeley
[Date of Interview: 1 May 1975]

1. FROM CONCERT PIANIST TO CONSERVATORY DIRECTOR

Morris: One of the most important aspects of grant-making foundations, of course, is who the grantees are and the process by which applications are developed, and then what happens with grants after they have been approved. I understand you are one of the more distinguished success stories as president of the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, which has been around the Bay Area since 1925 or so --

Salkind: 1917 [Pause.] Though I haven't been around that long.

Morris: No, I would say not. [Laughter.] I gather that, as organizations sometimes do, it had kind of run out of steam, and then you came in to take over and to bring about all the things that are going on now.

I wonder if, perhaps, we could start with a little bit of your personal background. Are you a native of the Bay Area?

Salkind: No, I am not. I was born in Delaware -- Wilmington, Delaware -- and I grew up in Dover. I studied music all my life, and studied in Delaware and in Philadelphia. I went to George Washington University and received a degree -- B.A. -- in economics.

Morris: Did you? So, music wasn't your primary --

Salkind: Well, it was, but my family felt that I should get a degree in something else in order to earn a living.

Morris: Was your plan, in your student days, to make a career in music?

Salkind: Probably. So then, after George Washington University, I went into the army for three and a half years. Meanwhile, I was always playing the piano.

Morris: You kept it up during your military service?
Salkind: Yes.

Morris: That shows some ingenuity, doesn't it?

Salkind: Or boredom. [Laughter.] I'm not sure. Then I decided I didn't want to become an economist. So, I tried for Juilliard -- I auditioned for Juilliard -- got in, and there I met my wife, who was a student there, too. She is from California -- San Diego. And we got married and had moved out here -- after living a couple of years in New York. We have two children, both of whom are musicians.

Morris: How nice that it carries on. [Pause.] You did become a concert pianist yourself?

Salkind: Yes, we both played the same piano -- one piano four hands.

Morris: That's a rare skill, isn't it?

Salkind: It was rare; it's getting a little bit less rare. But, we actually -- sort of -- created a renaissance in the area of four-hand music because we were the only ones who did it exclusively. We didn't play two pianos. And we commissioned a lot of works.

Morris: Was your home base here in California -- in the Bay Area?

Salkind: Yes.

Morris: So that during your own professional playing career you were part of the musical establishment in San Francisco?

Salkind: We were part of the scene, yes.

Morris: It's quite a complicated scene, I gather. There are a number of musical organizations?

Salkind: Oh, yes. In terms of institutions? Sure, the Opera, the Symphony, the Conservatory -- What else? There are a lot of chamber music societies. There are many things going on now. There weren't when we first started out, just the Opera and the Symphony and the Conservatory. This is -- what -- my eighth year, do you recall?

Morris: How did you happen to decide to stay put and take on the presidency of the Conservatory?

Salkind: Oh, it was sort of by a fluke. I wasn't at all interested in doing this kind of work. My wife and I were in London -- we were giving a concert -- and at the same hotel was a friend of ours who was conducting the Oakland Symphony. He's the one who told us that the director here had died and
Salkind: that they were looking for another one. (I hadn't known him; I had just met him a few times, but didn't really know him.)

Morris: This was Robin Laufer?

Salkind: Yes. Then I saw a friend of ours when we got back -- Jim Schwabacher, who was on the search committee. And I told him that I would be glad to call Juilliard and introduce him to the president and the dean there, and see if they might have some ideas. So we had lunch and got on the phone, and they talked, and I left.

Morris: They were prepared to do a national search?

Salkind: Yes, they had already contacted Yehudi Menuhin and some people in Europe. In any case, then Jim asked if I was interested, by any chance, and I said: No. Then I went home and asked my wife if I was interested in this and she said: Are you kidding? Of course not, why would you be interested in it?

So, anyway, one thing led to another and I went off to Sun Valley where I was teaching that summer. And I got a call saying that the chairman of the board wanted to meet me when I got back.

It seemed like a challenge, when I got back and thought about it, because I was always talking about why wasn't there a top-notch conservatory in the West. So, I guess I talked too much about it.

Morris: So, they said: If you've got so many ideas, why don't you take the position?

Salkind: Yes. So that's how it happened.

Morris: There was not another conservatory in how far?

Salkind: There was a small Los Angeles conservatory -- not a very good one. And that's all.

Morris: Except this one, which was sort of between things at that point?

Salkind: It was a small school.

Morris: What did you see as the role that the Conservatory might play in the Bay Area?

Salkind: The training of young musicians is a very critical area, and I certainly don't feel that every gifted student needs to go to the East. The purpose of the Conservatory here is to train any gifted young people who want to become serious, professional musicians. There are many, many gifted students all over and they all can't conceivably go to the East, but they should get good training.
Morris: Do the universities generally provide much training?

Salkind: Some. But in order to become a professional, you have to devote at least four to five hours a day to the skill of your instrument. By and large, that kind of time is not available in a university or a college with all the academic subjects. We offer degrees — Bachelor of Music and Master of Music — but not with a great deal of academic work. Some, in the humanities.

Morris: Did you have discussions, in general, with the board of directors as to what ideas they had what you had in the process of deciding — ?

Salkind: I knew what kind of ideas they had; that wasn't so much a question because board members are not musicians and they shouldn't set up a curriculum. And they don't pretend to.

Morris: Whose idea was it to enlarge the school?

Salkind: The idea wasn't so much to enlarge as to develop the quality of the school and, when you do that, you have to attract the students. You do — sort of — automatically. When I got here, there were forty-one or two students and now we have one hundred and forty.

Morris: Is that what you envisioned that it would grow to?

Salkind: I think I'd like it to grow to two hundred or so. We expect about a hundred sixty in the fall.

Morris: This is all students at the college level?

Salkind: Yes. We also have a preparatory department, students from anywhere from three to eighteen. We also have an adult extension division. If you have a child in high school, in after-school hours and weekends he can take classes and lessons.
2. EXPANDING PROGRAM AND FUNDING

Local Foundation Support

Morris: How did the decision evolve to go on this five-year fund-raising campaign?

Salkind: We're always in a fund-raising campaign. The building started because one of our board members died, and her husband talked to me and wanted to do something in her memory. So, after about a year or so, the whole family decided to give us something like six hundred thousand and we started this hall in her memory -- Ruth Hellman Hall.

Morris: Is that going to replace this building?

Salkind: No. It's going to replace a recital hall that has already been demolished. Hopefully, we will have a new library, a small performance hall, more classrooms, more practice room.

Morris: It occurs to me, looking from the outside, that funding in the cultural area -- conservatories and museums and things like that -- that budgeting is a different matter than it is in the health, education, and welfare sector?

Resnick:* I think budgeting in any non-profit endeavor is a problem. It's the same kind of problem. Cultural institutions face the same kind of difficulties that a crisis center does or anything else, depending on the scale and size of it. The problem that we face, in addition to that, is that, unfortunately, in this society, cultural endeavors have taken a lower priority.

Morris: Is it true that many cultural organizations function on a deficit basis? That they have patrons that balance the budget, as it were, as opposed to health and welfare organizations which tend to have some public funding available?

* Paul Resnick, the Conservatory's director of administration and development. Ed.
Resnick: We have a small amount of public funding. We think of the deficit in terms, not necessarily of the difference between earned income and what we spend and everything we take in -- contributions, earned income, everything -- because it all ends up in the same place. Thinking that a patron is going to come along and balance your budget, I think that era is gone. There aren't that many institutions around any more that can depend on one person or a group of people to come in and make up the deficit at the end of the year. It's a real problem.

Morris: So that, as the musical maestro expands the program and the students increase, that necessarily requires seeking out new kinds of financial support.

Resnick: Even if the program doesn't increase, at this point, it requires seeking new kinds of financial support. We're caught in the same kinds of problems with increasing costs that any profit institution is. We can only raise our price so much. The tuition can only go up to a certain point or you start systematically excluding whole segments of the population. Just staying in place is a constant problem.

Morris: I was interested, particularly, in the story behind how a group decides to go to somebody like the San Francisco Foundation.

Resnick: That was before I got here.

Salkind: How we decide? That's relatively easy. You decide that you need funds and just go to all the local foundations that you know about. I knew John May, the executive director of the San Francisco Foundation at that time. So we started working together and we came up with a proposal. Our first one, I guess, was a five-year plan for development here. And we did it with a sort of consortium of foundations. They took the lead -- the San Francisco Foundation.

Morris: As I understand, they guaranteed the last hundred thousand dollars of the total amount that you were trying to raise?

Resnick: The last hundred and fifty.

Salkind: Yes. Then we got involved with the Van Loben Sels Foundation, the Zellerbach Family Fund, the Mary Crocker Trust, and Oakes Foundation, and then, of course, the National Endowment for the Arts.

Resnick: I think Milton is being a little bit modest in the business of just going to a foundation. When a foundation makes a grant, when they're basing it on an idea -- and to a large extent, I think, at that point it wasn't a proven idea --

Salkind: It was a gamble.

Resnick: When you make a grant like that, it's got to almost be totally based
Resnick: on faith in the individual that's going to do it, that's going to use the money. I think, if the success of the Conservatory in raising funds could be traced to any one thing, it's the fact that these foundations, both national and local, and individuals in this community, have placed faith in him [Salkind] and in his ability to use the money in a wise way, and to use it to make his convictions into a reality. Otherwise, you could pour money down a rathole all you want for good ideas. If nobody can implement them, it means nothing.

Musical Excellence and Community Service

Morris: That's the interesting combination. Could you recall what the original idea was as you presented it to them?

Salkind: You mean the five-year plan?

Morris: Yes.

Salkind: Well, it was really a plan based on developing the school in terms of quality and in terms of the number of students, new kinds of programs. The idea is also that you train young people who are going to become musicians, train them on the quality of musical excellence, but also, on what they can do for the community. My feelings has always been that we are not here simply to train virtuoso performers but to train people who are going to become useful to their society and meaningful to their community. I feel we can do both of these things simultaneously.

Morris: What kinds of things do you envision in the musicians being useful to the community?

Salkind: We have, for instance, now a large community service program. We send students out all over the community, to different parts of the city, giving concerts in parks, museums, county jails, hospitals, retirement homes. When we started this plan originally, we had students going to Hunter's Point and they were involved in the public schools — we called it a foster student program.

Morris: To encourage young minority musicians?

Salkind: A student would take a foster child, say, and was responsible for that child's musical education. We got a grant from the Rosenberg Foundation for that.

Morris: That's a delightful idea!
Salkind: Well, it was very difficult. It was delightful, too, but these things are very complicated. They're not quite so simple. Our students learned a great deal and that's what I mean by becoming sensitive to the community needs.

Morris: Did it also produce some interest in some black students in coming here?

Salkind: Yes, it did. We had students who did eventually come here.

Morris: Have you kept track of any of them?

Salkind: That's very hard because -- not hard to keep track of -- but most of the students in the low-income neighborhoods have very little family support and whatever they do, practically, must be done on their own. It's a very hard struggle.

Morris: Did your students get the children involved in musical activities in the classroom or did they go also to their homes.

Salkind: In the classrooms and our students took them to concerts, too. And they gave concerts there.

Staff and Students

Morris: So you had some prior experience with the local foundations before you got involved in the five-year plan?

Salkind: I guess we did. Not too much.

Resnick: Just Rosenberg.

Salkind: Then we've gotten involved in a Ford Foundation. We're getting a million dollars toward our endowment if we match that with two million.

Morris: That you raise out here?

Salkind: [To Resnick ] How far have we gotten?

Resnick: One million six hundred thousand. We only have about sixteen months left, but it probably will be extended. It's very difficult to raise endowment money these days. People aren't making large contributions now.

Morris: Have you noticed a drop-off in number of contributions, or size?

Resnick: Both. A lot of large contributions from individuals are in the form
Resnick: of securities. When the stock market is down, people don't give away securities because there's not that much of a tax advantage.

Morris: Or, if they do, you don't realize as much profit?

Resnick: The tax reduction for them is not as much and there's not as much incentive for them to give. Some of the problem is that we're not only trying to raise the endowment money, but we've raised another million dollars for the building program, in contributions from foundations and things like that. So we've been pretty much scouring the market.

Morris: Are you also involved in the community service part of the program, Paul, or is that separate from development?

Resnick: In a small school nothing is really separate from anything else. I'm less involved with that than I am with fund-raising and the administrative side.

Salkind: Paul, I just thought of your title -- director of administration. Paul is business manager, development director, public relations --

Morris: Were there other organizational changes after you became president?

Salkind: I created a dean. So we now have a president, a dean, a director of administration.

Morris: You're the director of administration?

Resnick: Yes. We've had a fairly good turnover here, and it's more a product of the changing dynamics of the organization. This school has grown a hell of a lot, both in the number of students and type of program and resources, and that requires different people. So there's been a gradual evolution of the staff. I've only been here three years.

Morris: There was this musical interest in San Francisco that hadn't a place to go? Where did the students come from?

Salkind: They come from all over. Most of them from the Northwest, from the South, from Colorado, New Mexico -- We're beginning to get some from the East -- like Minnesota.

Morris: Have I also heard that you have a number of exceptional musicians from the Far East?

Salkind: Yes. We have several from Korea, China --

Morris: How did you go about recruiting students from that part of the world?
Salkind: We didn't. But this is sort of a natural area for students from the East.

Morris: Catchment area is the term they use in health services. [Laughter.]

Salkind: Yes. But, I must say, all the conservatories seem to have a certain number of Korean students and Japanese students. This doesn't seem to be unusual.

Morris: Is there a higher level of musical interest among young people in Asia?

Salkind: Among the young people who can afford to study; they do very diligently and they're terribly conscientious.

Scholarships and Endowment

Morris: You mentioned that the tuition can only go up so much. Does that mean that there's also an effort to develop scholarship funds?

Resnick: Scholarship funds, in a sense, are offsets for the tuition. One of the things that is happening to private schools is that tuition is going up drastically. We have increased our tuition, not anywhere near as far as we could and we hope not to do that. We also award a substantial number of scholarships -- 65% of our students receive some kind of financial aid, whether it be from us, or the California State Scholarship Program, or from others. Those, in effect, reduce the revenue we get from tuition because that goes to pay their tuition.

Morris: I was thinking about it in the other aspect that's talked about a lot today, about scholarships so that minority students can --

Resnick: That's part of it but the net effect of scholarships is, in effect, to reduce what you actually net out of a tuition. In other words, if you give a student a scholarship -- whatever it is -- he uses that money and, in effect, you're saying: You don't have to pay tuition, or: You have to pay less tuition, or: Here's money. Pay your tuition.

Therefore, your tuition could be $5,000 a year but you're going to net less of it. And that's one of the problems. If you increase the tuition, you have to increase the scholarship budget and you don't get as much out of that increase as you think you do.

Morris: The Ford grant -- is that based on a portion of operating budget or is that, again, an endowment?

Salkind: Endowment.
Morris: Did you find when you went to the Ford people that you had easier access because of your previous experience with the local foundations?

Salkind: Yes. But the first thing the Ford Foundation -- or any major foundation -- will ask is: What are your local foundations doing for you? So we were in a pretty good position then. It's not so simple. You start negotiating with them over a long period of time and they come out here and see -- They're not about to give anybody a grant just on the basis of a proposal. I mean, they really look into you.

Before the Ford Foundation grant, we had gotten a big Rockefeller Foundation grant for scholarships, a Mellon Foundation grant, unrestricted -- three hundred thousand -- We'd pretty much covered the area.

Morris: It sounds like you have a pretty good batting average.

Resnick: We've had two -- actually three -- grants from Rockefeller: two scholarship grants and we have a grant now -- one's a scholarship grant now and also a grant to do joint programs at the Community Music Center.

Salkind: Another local foundation that has been very good to us has been the Skaggs Foundation.

Morris: They're over in the East Bay?

Salkind: A very fine foundation.

Morris: Have they a particular interest in musical affairs?

Salkind: That's one of their interests. I don't think it's their main interest but it is one of them. I think medicine is their main interest.

Morris: Will they come over and see what's going on?

Salkind: Oh, yes. They have been very conscientious and really have done a lot of their own homework. I went with them to one of the concerts that our students gave at an old-age home. They came to a new music ensemble concert. That makes us feel very good when they reflect that kind of interest.

Young Musicians' Growth

Morris: How did your students respond when you began programs like sending them out to do concerts in jails and the old folks home?
Salkind: They really find that a great experience. I've gone along a couple of times and it's very heart-rending to see what happens.

Morris: Is there a student organization that has some input into this kind of thing? Do the students themselves express any interest in places where they would like to play?

Salkind: Our community service program has a faculty member who's the director and a graduate student who's the assistant, and they work all these things out. We get calls from places and I'm sure the students indicate where they prefer going.

Morris: Had there been such a program before at the Conservatory?

Salkind: No, actually, there aren't any in any other conservatories like this one. Students do play in New York, but it's done on a different kind of basis. I think ours is more a part of the community.

Morris: What's your thinking on this? How did you happen to come up with this kind of a program?

Salkind: Partly, because I'm very interested in how a student develops as a total person, not just as a musician. I think that enhances that whole aspect. I'm very interested in maximizing the growth of young musicians and helping them to find out more about themselves. Sometimes -- I'm aware, even in my own case -- you get into a profession -- in music, say -- as a child, not perhaps because of your talent, but because this is a way of seeking approval from your family. I think students ought to know why they're doing something, whether they're gifted and talented and are pursuing it because they really love to do it or because they want approval of their family. And it makes a big difference. I think when you discover these things, it reflects in your art.

Morris: Taking music out to great varieties of places in the community, does this have a long-range effect on the size of audiences?

Salkind: I think so. I think we all have to feel needed. And I think students going into an old-age home, a retirement home, a hospital, feel they are needed when they do this kind of thing. I think that's an important feeling. I think it does help develop audiences.

Board Members' Interest

Morris: How about your board, in the development of both the program and of the funding? Are they active?

Salkind: Yes. They're very helpful. In the beginning they really hadn't been
Salkind: mobilized into thinking this way. They had a small conservatory and I think they thought it would sort of grow.

Morris: They hadn't really thought through how?

Salkind: No. Once they realized what growth really means and how a school develops, I think their interest was stimulated. I think we've got really one of the best boards in the city.

Morris: By and large, were they the same board members that were on when --

Salkind: Some, but not by and large.

Morris: Are they primarily knowledgeable about music and the musical community?

Salkind: Some of them are; some of them aren't. Some of them are interested in education and young people; some of them are interested by virtue of the fact that it's a good thing to do. I would like to think that they've all gotten interested because they have convictions about what a real conservatory ought to be.

Morris: Do you keep an eye out in the community for people who might make likely board members?

Salkind: Oh, I certainly do. We all do. We're looking all the time.

Morris: Is there considerable competition for the likely candidates?

Salkind: There is always competition for candidates who are wealthy and who are interested in the arts. But, actually, we're very interested in people who really feel convinced about the need for a conservatory, and not just to be on another board. Those are the people who will work the hardest.

Morris: Do you find that some of them are on two or three boards having to do with music?

Salkind: Opera, Symphony, Conservatory --

Morris: Does this add or detract?

Salkind: It detracts. I think it's very important to have at least two or three people on your board who are simply committed to your organization and not any other one. We do have some like that. Actually, we have, I think, at least four.

Resnick: That's not a bad percentage.

Salkind: This is their big thing -- their organization -- and they have said that they are not going to solicit funds for other organizations,
Salkind: even though they are members of other boards.

Morris: Do they come along on some of these negotiations with the foundations?

Salkind: Some do.

Resnick: Our chairman's been very active in that.

Salkind: He's one of the most committed and he's been very instrumental in some of the grants. Our vice-chairman now is a former ambassador and he's very committed to the Conservatory.

Special Needs

Morris: Which came first -- the program developments or the building?

Salkind: The program. I wouldn't consider building without a program. I don't really believe in that.

Morris: Music has special needs, doesn't it, in terms of the kinds of places you can -- ?

Salkind: We manage. We got all our programs through before we started this building. I mean, not through. We got them going, a lot of programs going.

Resnick: If you have a good program, you may be limited by buildings, but you can still do it in a bad facility. But a good facility is not going to make a good program.

Morris: I was wondering about the kind of faculty that it must take to do outstanding musical programs. These are usually performing artists themselves?

Salkind: Yes. Most of them are performing artists.

Morris: How do they fit into this business that you've got to have a program before you have a building?

Salkind: I think they agree.

Morris: Also, in the special needs of music, is the quality of the musical instruments a part of the kind of things you're raising money for? Does the conservatory provide the musical instruments?

Salkind: Sure. We have to supply the pianos and -- We don't supply instruments for the students; we lend a few -- we have a few good violins, we lend
Salkind: them out, or cellos. Most of the students have their own, except for pianos. But that's a big operation -- pianos are used all day long.

Morris: Do you find there's a difference in the kinds of things a private philanthropist will respond to?

Salkind: They're all different. Some like their names bandied about, and others don't. We've established -- how many -- three chairs?

Resnick: Yes.

Salkind: And some scholarships. Chairs are very important for us. Foundations really don't really give money for support. They want to give money for special projects and that's very hard for us because we need money to pay bills and to pay faculty.

Morris: And there's a limit to the number of projects you can design using the same faculty in different ways? So that, in a sense, foundations are one of the sources of funding.
3. OTHER CONCERNS

The reading I've done suggests that, in recent years prior to the current recession, there has been an increase in national and local foundation grants to music and other arts. Have you any clues as to why?

But grants in music and the arts are going down! The Ford Foundation allotment for the arts has gone down from fifteen million to three million.

Four.

In just this last year?

The corpus went from about three billion to two billion.

When they made their cuts, they took more away from the arts?

I don't think it was more away from the arts; I think it's been proportional cutbacks in everything. The Ford Foundation's involvement with music and the arts goes back many years. They had a very wide-ranging symphony program before they got involved with the conservatories -- they were giving cash reserve grants. They got involved with the conservatories five or six years ago.

They go through cycles. I think there's a feeling on the part of the foundations that the government is stepping in more now, doing more things. When the Ford Foundation was giving some of its large grants, the National Endowment for the Arts had no money. It's changed a little bit now and I guess they feel that their responsibility is somewhat taken care of. I don't think that is really a correct analysis, but that's what's happened.

What's your view of the kind of criteria that the National Endowment for the Arts has?

It's a government agency. Dealing with government agencies presents
Resnick: certain problems. I guess the National Endowment is certainly better in terms of bureaucracy than other parts of the government. But it's a much different program. The National Foundation for the Arts and the Humanities is very far from the Ford Foundation in terms of procedures.

Morris: In what way?

Resnick: It's public money. When you deal with public money, you're dealing with a different kind of thing. There's a lot more reporting -- a different kind of reporting. The criteria are somewhat arbitrary at times.

Morris: What kind of criteria?

Resnick: When you're dispensing a hundred and seventy million dollars a year, it's very difficult to evaluate particular projects and see what really is going on in them. So you have to be somewhat arbitrary and say: These are the kinds of things. If it's this -- and you call it this -- then we'll support it; if it isn't, then we won't.

It's difficult to give examples but government funding is a very, very peculiar kind of money. You just apply in a different way for government money than you do for private money.

Morris: It sounds as if, working with a local foundation, you can have more flexibility and more responsiveness to whatever it is that you want to do with your organization?

Resnick: I think, generally, that's true. It's easier to get to them. We've had some dealings, in the last several months, with the Irwin Foundation, in which they changed the terms of a very large grant they made to us because of some peculiar needs that we have right now. They showed a tremendous amount of flexibility in doing that. That kind of thing, I think, is really admirable. It's much harder to do that -- you almost can't do something like that with the government. They're not allowed to.

Morris: Do you generally find that there are things that have to be changed in the course of developing a new kind of musical program?

Salkind: Sure.

Resnick: You mean, in grants? Yes. It's a tribute to a foundation when they understand that and are willing to work with you in developing a program. The Skaggs Foundation, for example, is very good about working with you -- at least, they have been with us.

Morris: Is this during the course of the term of a grant that you find things --?
Resnick: The only grant we've ever had a major change in during the term of it has been from the Irwin Foundation.

Generally speaking, what amounts to reclassification of expenses -- where you spent more on this than you did on that -- most people don't raise too much question about that.

Morris: Having once established the fact that they think you're a well-run organization, they think that you know that you need to shift a person into this or that -- ?

Resnick: A foundation can't dictate how a school should be run any more than the board can tell Milton what kind of musicianship should be taught. Once that starts happening, you get into real problems. One of the real threats of government funding is at what point are they going to start telling the institutions how to use the money --

[Tape turned over.]

Morris: You were talking about the State Arts Commission.

Resnick: We've had two grants from them. They probably won't exist next year -- the State Arts Commission.

Morris: How come?

Resnick: They're not being funded.

Morris: Is that because of economic reasons or a policy decision?

Resnick: The governor and the powers-that-be in the legislature, at this point, don't seem to feel that that's the way to spend money, on cultural endeavors in this state. There have been several other proposals made, but, in terms of making grants next year, it's very unlikely that the State Arts Commission is going to have anything to do with anything.

Morris: If that's true, it was only around for a couple of years and didn't really have a chance to determine whether it would be a different kind of a thing than the federal granting agency.

You mentioned the difficulties of the current economy. What do you think the long-range implications are for funding that is secure for something like the Conservatory?

Resnick: It's going to be very tough for any kind of nonprofit institution in the next few years; it's not going to change too much. There's going to have to be more government aid to really help them survive.

Morris: Do you agree, Mr. Salkind?
Salkind: Absolutely.

Morris: That's an interesting kind of thing when, Paul says, the government grants involve different kinds of supervision and reporting.

Resnick: It's kind of a necessary evil. I can't fault them for that. It's difficult, but -- you have to be realistic about what your needs are and where you're going to get it, and there really aren't too many places that can provide the kind of money that's needed. It's going to have to come from the government. And it's going to be delicate working out a balance so there isn't too much control of what happens. I'm not sure anybody, at this point, really has the answer to all the problems.

Morris: So it's a continuing kind of a matter?

Resnick: It's going to get worse.

The Intensive Environment of a Conservatory.

Morris: Has there been any thought that the Conservatory become part of another organization? Maybe a university?

Salkind: Yes, there has been thought. We've had some negotiations, in the past, with the University of California at Berkeley. It never worked out. They started negotiating here before I was ever here, and then I had some too. But it seems not very feasible -- the distance --

Morris: Your point is that a conservatory is a very special kind of organization?

Salkind: The environment of the conservatory is highly intensive -- that is the most characteristic thing about a conservatory. The students are highly charged; they're terribly devoted to practicing -- sometimes too much so.

Morris: Do you find that there has to be a counseling program for -- I hate to use the word "artistic temperament."

Salkind: I think everybody needs counseling programs. [Laughter.] We do have one, and I think we're the only conservatory that does have this. It works very well -- nobody's forced to do anything. Our counselor makes herself available to students and students come in -- they drop in or make appointments -- when they have problems and usually it's a matter of someone just listening to them. That's often all they need. We often find that students simply need to talk to someone. They get
Salkind: so tied up with their instruments; they get tied up, obviously, with parents; and they don't have a clear perspective, as many of us don't.

Morris: That's very true. That's why I hesitated to use 'artistic temperament.' Do you think young musicians are more likely to get involved in -- ?

Salkind: I think, perhaps, more likely to get involved because, when you get into a conservatory, you already have to be good. This means you have to have had some skill on your instrument already, and, generally, it's at a fairly young age. I started when I was five or so. As I indicated before, you don't really know why you're doing something, except you kind of like it. By the time you get into a conservatory -- when you have a lot of skill, you've gotten some approval -- then you begin to have to focus on what's real for you, what's real for the future: Is this how you want spend the rest of your life? Does the kind of approval you got from your family and friends and relatives -- is that going to sustain you? Are you really good enough to forge your way into the world as a musician? I think, if you have that kind of concern, that kind of interest and talent, by and large, I think, you can find a way for yourself.

Morris: To make this your life?

Salkind: Right. And not necessarily as a performer. I think performing is one of those things -- performing, teaching, playing chamber music --

Morris: The role of the Conservatory in terms of the greater public's interest in music. Do you feel that this has shown an increase in recent years?

The Conservatory and the Community

Salkind: The interest of the public in the Conservatory? Yes, we've got a considerable amount of publicity. I think a lot more people are more aware of the fact that there is a conservatory. Once in a while, we still get people who don't know what a conservatory is. And, if they do know what it is, they certainly often don't know where it is. So we've had an educational problem to work out, too. We have to educate the public and that's one of the things we're doing.

Morris: Is there any particular reason as to why the Conservatory is in this particular location in San Francisco?

Salkind: Well, it used to be on Sacramento Street with two houses next to each other.

Morris: That had been the family home of one of the founders, hadn't it?
Salkind: Ada Clement. Then they ran out of space and they looked everywhere. When I came, there was a constant struggle about whether they should stay out here or whether they should go downtown. So they found this place and sort of remodeled it. They used to be an infant shelter.

Morris: That's marvelous. Yes, it's interesting the way the community goes: the infant shelter has disappeared from our community.

Developing Ideas

Morris: How many of these ideas that you've been telling me about, that you've put in practice here, had you had working out in your head before you decided to have a go at administration?

Salkind: None. I mean, I went to Juilliard myself, and I was a pianist, and I enjoyed going to school at Juilliard — living in New York. So, in my mind, I knew something about what good training was. But I never thought I would be in a position to articulate this kind of thing.

Morris: Did some of these ideas, in their inception, come from the board? Are they enough involved in the institution?

Salkind: Well, we discussed them — particularly, John Beckman, the chairman of our board. He and I talked a great deal about some of these ideas.

Morris: What's his background?

Salkind: He's done a lot of things. He's a rancher at the moment. He's been in investment; he's been in art collecting, in graphic arts; he's been in meteorological instruments — he's done many, many things. That's his piano there [pointing]. He plays piano.

Morris: Is it on loan to the Conservatory?

Salkind: Yes.

Morris: It's a handsome piece. Do you also find that you are also drawing on some of your economics training?

Salkind: Not really, because I wasn't an economist by bent.

Morris: That about covers my questions. You're very kind to take time from your busy day to tell us something of how the Conservatory has gone about developing its programs and finding funding for them. Thank you.
Notes from the Director of Administration

In an unrecorded phone conversation on May 3, 1975, to check a few questions about the financial side of the Conservatory, Paul Resnick commented that, in general, the income of the Conservatory breaks down into: earned revenues including tuition, a bit more than half; endowment income, 10%; foundation grants and contributions, 30%; as well as about 6% from government sources such as the National Endowment for the Arts.

The 1974 annual report indicates that in the contributions segment were gifts from 19 companies, including 9 banks, totaling about 2% of the operating budget. Business contacts in general have been found to be difficult to cultivate or develop into contributions.

As development director, Mr. Resnick, who has political science and MBA background, does the background work for seeking financial support, researching foundations, preparing lists and planning general contribution campaigns, which are then developed further by an informal committee of board leadership and the president.

Because good relationships with a number of foundations have resulted from previous successful applications, foundations are looked to a lot in developing additional plans for musical training. Mr. Resnick also pointed out that each year the Conservatory has applications to foundations in various stages of preparation, since maintaining the flow of funds is a continuous process. The board of directors is a focus for much of this planning, since many board members have contacts with potential donors.

[End of interview.]
Memorandum

To: Recent grantees of The San Francisco Foundation

From: Martin A. Paley, Executive Director

To enable ideas, talent, altruism, and public-spirited endeavors to develop and flourish in the Bay Area; that is our purpose, and our business. Are we successful? Are we reaching the right people? Is there more we can do? We would welcome your opinion.

Our list of questions is not very long, but please don't feel limited if you have something more to tell us. We want the Foundation to be sensitive to the needs of the people it serves — and those it should be serving. That's why your thoughts and comments will be of such value to us.

Thanks for your help.

June 7, 1974
1. Do you think the Foundation's funding decisions tend to be:
   a) too liberal?
   b) restricted by an "establishment" viewpoint?
   c) well balanced and attuned to needs?

2. Name worthwhile program areas you feel the Foundation has neglected:
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________

3. Name any areas you feel receive too much emphasis, and give your reasons:
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________

4. Do you think there should be more community participation in the grant-making process? If so, how and to what extent?
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________

5. As a grantee, do you feel some hesitation in asking the Foundation for help in preparing a proposal?
   __________________________________________

6. Do you find it unrealistic for foundations to provide seed money and require that an agency become self-sustaining, or acquire on-going funding from other sources after several years?
   __________________________________________

7. If possible, cite some examples where a foundation has been helpful to you/or failed to be of any real assistance:
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
8. Do you think The San Francisco Foundation could (or should) provide services in addition to funding programs with appropriate grants? If so, what type of service would be helpful to you? ____________________________

______________________________

______________________________

9. What more, in your opinion, can The San Francisco Foundation do to reach the people and programs who can most benefit from its grants? Can you help? ____________________________

______________________________

______________________________

______________________________

10. Would you be interested in hearing more about the Foundation's interests and activities, say, in a periodic newsletter? ____________________________

Please feel free to omit your name and organization if you wish. It would help, however, if you tell us the general nature of the service you give to the community: ____________________________

______________________________

Your name ____________________________

for__________________________________

Name of agency ____________________________

Date ____________________________
June 24, 1974

Mr. Martin Paley  
Executive Director  
The San Francisco Foundation  
425 California Street  
San Francisco, CA 94104

Dear Martin:

Enclosed are responses to some of the issues raised in your June 7, 1974 memorandum. We have omitted those questions on which we do not have strong views or lack enough information to form a reasonable judgement.

I look forward to seeing you in July.

Warmest regards,

Milton Salkind  
President
4- Community participation in the grant-making process is both appropriate and necessary for the San Francisco Foundation to be responsive to the diverse needs of the Bay Area. However, this does not mean that the distribution committee itself must or should represent every segment of the community. In order to foster community inputs and participation the Foundation might consider establishing panels which represent the various potential recipient constituencies. For instance, one such group might be composed of representatives of health care organizations (research groups, crisis clinics, hospitals, etc), another the City's neighborhood concerns, or another the arts community. These advisory panels would meet periodically to discuss the needs of the organizations or the communities they represent, and evaluate proposals being presented to the Foundation. Although this could be a worthwhile effort at community involvement, it has numerous pitfalls which must be avoided including: too much control of the grant-making process, creation of an added bureaucratic hurdle for grant seekers, the excessive fostering of narrow parochial viewpoints, and a politicization of the grant-making process. However, properly controlled and monitored advisory panels could be a valuable tool to make a community foundation representative of the community.

5- The Foundation can be of great assistance in helping grant seekers to define their goals and programs, and develop reasonable budgets and financial planning. This is particularly true of smaller organizations with little full-time staff. Too often, however, the Foundation can become an adversary rather than helper of grant-seekers.

6- It is somewhat unrealistic for the foundations to provide seed money with the expectation that programs will become self-sustaining particularly in a period in which philanthropic dollars are harder and harder to get. A community foundation has a special responsibility in this regard. Too often the "seed money only concept" encourages misguided programs and intellectual dishonesty. The community foundation should provide support and should rigorously evaluate seed money requests.

8- The San Francisco Foundation plays a critical role in the community as a non-government funding agency. It should not dissipate needed funds or energy on pursuits outside of its philanthropic purview.

9- See 4

10- A newsletter would help to explain the Foundation's programs and assist grant-seekers. However, it should not be undertaken with added staff or waste funds that could be dispersed in grants.
When A Community Foundation's Grant Helped Turn Music Into Dollars

- $1 million from The Ford Foundation.
- $800,000 from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.
- $300,000 from The William G. Irwin Charity Foundation.
- $181,000 from The Rockefeller Foundation.
- $100,000 from The Roscoe and Margaret Oakes Foundation.

That's just part of an impressive list of support received recently by the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, which, for years, had all but gone unnoticed by major sources of philanthropic support in the city and throughout the West.

And while there is considerably more financial aid from foundations and individuals these days—no small amount of it from nationally oriented sources—conservatory president Milton Salkind readily made one particular point in a discussion about that support with a reporter: It was the local community foundation that took the lead and made the initial grant that subsequently moved other foundations to act on behalf of the only accredited musical conservatory in the West.

Salkind knew that before he could even approach any foundations in the East with requests for financial support, he should have evidence of support from local foundations. "A grant of $150,000 for five years from The San Francisco Foundation was the one that provided the impetus to the other local foundations and to the ones in the East, too, to take a look at what was going on here," says Salkind, an internationally respected pianist who took over the conservatory reins about six years ago.

For more than 50 years, the San Francisco Conservatory had a very insular posture. As one board member notes, "The conservatory had always been a very fine school on a very small scale." When Salkind was hired, he brought with him a lot of fresh ideas about educating students, on the one hand, and the general public, on the other.

But there wasn't much money for scholarships or even adequate faculty salaries, let alone for promotion activities to publicize the conservatory. On top of all that, the facilities were crowded and badly in need of renovation. The performance hall, especially, was—and still is—a problem: it's too small for most concert activities.

"When my wife and I came here from the East," Salkind noted, "we found many people in the West didn't understand the concept of a conservatory. People know what a symphony is and they are willing to spend a lot of time raising money for that. They don't realize that it's really folly to support a symphony and an opera company if you don't support a conservatory." Salkind pointed to studies that show that more than 70 per cent of all symphony players and about 85 per cent of all opera stars are conservatory trained.

And so, with a wealth of fresh ideas about how the conservatory should serve its students and community and with the strong support and assistance of an active board chairman, John C. Beckman, Salkind introduced to his board and to the citizens of San Francisco the conservatory's "Five Year Plan." It calls for the raising of some $6.5 million. About 60 per cent of that total has been pledged to date.

The plan is to be concluded in 1976.

About one-third of the $6.5 million, Salkind hopes, will be raised from national sources. The Ford grant, one of the first from a large national foundation, was offered on a matching basis—$1 from Ford for every $2 raised from others. Pledges totaling $800,000 from trustees and their families, and the $300,000 grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, have been applied toward the matching share. The Kresge Foundation has donated $100,000 to the building fund drive.

But over $4 million is being sought from local sources and the San Francisco foundations are beginning to be heard from. So far grants for endowment and other purposes have been received from the van Loben Sells Foundation, The Zellerbach Family Fund, Harold and Doris Zellerbach Fund, The Mary A. Crocker Trust, Rosenberg Foundation, Eldorado Foundation, The Bothin Helping Fund, S. H. Cowell Foundation, Mortimer Fleishhacker Foundation as well as the Oakes and Irwin foundations, mentioned earlier.

Prominent individuals, too, have caught the grant-making spirit. In addition to the contributions and pledges from trustees, early figures indicate well over $100,000 in gifts from individuals.

But it was The San Francisco Foundation that took a leadership role on behalf of this community institution. And as most advocates of community foundations would say, "That's what we're here for."
INTERVIEW HISTORY

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   - Economic Dislocation: Negroes and the Shipyards
   - Josephine Duveneck's Focus on Self-Help and Housing

2. NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE, 1950 BEGINNINGS
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   - American Friends Service Committee Principles
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INTERVIEW HISTORY

This interview with Edwin P. Stephenson, better known as Red, provides insights into the dedication and patience of a remarkable organization, the Quakers' American Friends Service Committee, which has enjoyed a fruitful relationship with local and national foundations for many years.

In two conversations, recorded on 29 January and 3 March 1975, Stephenson outlines fourteen years of work at Neighborhood House in the black community of North Richmond after World War II. A tall rangy man with sandy hair and a touch of the South still in his voice, he speaks of his own and Quaker philosophy as well as some details of establishing a community organization, first with AFSC sponsorship and later as an independent agency under local leadership. He touches on the grim realities of life in North Richmond and some points of resistance he met in trying to help raise its quality of life, and also on the progression from chicken dinner fund-raising to finding a private benefactor and then reaching out for local foundation grants and later seeking national funding.

Throughout the 1960s and into the 1970s the ingenuity of programs created by Neighborhood House led to a succession of modest grants from the Rosenberg, San Francisco, and other local foundations. As a group, these grants received while Mr. Stephenson was executive director represent an era of encouraging the development of black leadership, which then enabled a black executive to succeed Mr. Stephenson.

At the time of the interviews, Mr. Stephenson was regional executive for Planned Parenthood-World Population in San Francisco. In 1975 he moved to Santa Rosa, north of the Bay Area, and went into the real estate business. He reviewed the edited transcript of the interviews, revising a few phrases and including his wife, Madeleine Stephenson, in discussions and decisions in the narrative. The thread of AFSC participation in the frontiers of social change in the Bay Area continues in interviews in this series with Ruth Chance, Josephine Duveneck, and Orville Luster.

Interviewer-Editor

20 July 1976
Regional Oral History Office
486 The Bancroft Library
University of California, Berkeley
[Date of Interview: 29 January 1975]

1. RICHMOND, CALIFORNIA – POSTWAR DISASTER AREA

Quaker Interest

Morris: You were telling me about the Bakers, the first people who actually lived there at Neighborhood House as the resident staff. You were then living in Berkeley and supervising the projects?

Stephenson: Yes. Well, what had happened was that the Bakers worked there for one year while I still worked with the Quakers. I had two years with the Quakers here, doing a lot of things, until we got Neighborhood House established. And then the Bakers worked there for one year before I resigned in order to go back to Cal and get my master's in social work, which took me two years. During the first year that I was at U.C. Berkeley they continued with the project. Then during the second year, there was no one living there, and a Mrs. William Chappell, better known as Ollie May (she still lives in the community), managed the place under the supervision of the guy who had replaced me with the Quakers. When I was looking around for a job as I was coming out of Cal, the Quakers asked me if I'd go out and take over the job.

I told them I didn't think North Richmond was a fit place for children to be growing up -- I never have felt that, still don't -- and that Madeleine, my wife, and I would not go out as resident directors, but I'd be willing to be there as a non-resident director, with the anticipation of trying to help people to obtain some of the same choices in life that we've enjoyed; but we were going to exercise our choice by not living in North Richmond with our kids.

I took over in the summer of '53 with a total annual budget of seventy-two hundred dollars, including my salary and all operating expenses.

Morris: Oh, boy.

Stephenson: So when we talk about a foundation's support in those days, it
Stephenson: wasn't heavy. If I'm not mistaken, that year -- I don't think there was any Rosenberg Foundation money; I think the three-year grant had run out. At least, it had been going for three years, and I don't remember that they extended it --

What the Quakers did was to say: Look, go out there for two years, and either lay the project down, or else find local people who are willing to pick it up and carry it on. We just don't feel as if, on a long haul, the Quakers should be running it. So if it's not a viable project, and if the community can't understand it as being a viable project, then we shouldn't be there. So your job is to try to get local support for it.

Morris: How had the Quakers, in the first place, decided that North Richmond was a community they wanted to work in?

Stephenson: Well, during the war, they had a regional office -- they still have a regional office here in San Francisco. And during the war, problems of Richmond had come to their attention, and they had sent a person -- a social worker -- to see what some of the problems were, and to find out whether or not there was anything that the Quakers should or could be doing. And it was out of that that they got acquainted with what was then developing as North Richmond.

Economic Dislocation: Negroes and the Shipyards

Morris: That's not really a separate governmental entity, is it? It's just a district of Richmond.

Stephenson: Actually, it is a very well-defined residential area in that it is blocked off from the rest of the city by a heavy industrial strip, and very limited in terms of its zoning for residents. So it's limited to those few blocks. But one-third of the population of North Richmond lives in the City of Richmond. The other two-thirds are outside the city limits, unless there's a --

Morris: In an unincorporated county area?

Stephenson: In an unincorporated county area.

Morris: Which complicates the problem of the residents finding out what they can do and getting anything done governmentally.

Stephenson: That's right. Not only that, but during the war and shortly thereafter, the area on Grove Street, which is one block beyond the city limits, became sort of the headquarters of much of the vice and crime in Northern California. It's one of the areas that the
Stephenson: Kefauver Committee -- remember the Kefauver Committee?

Morris: I do.

Stephenson: Well, it was one of the areas that he investigated during the days of his committee. It was a very, very active area during and shortly following the war. And of course, with the end of the war, Richmond really became an exceedingly depressed community. Maybe we ought to talk a bit in terms of what happened to the City of Richmond, because that relates to why North Richmond is there.

Back in 1941, the City of Richmond was a town of 23,000 people, of which less than five per cent were black. And in 1944, three years later, that city was a city of 108,000, of which seventeen per cent were black. Now, the additional 85,000 people that came into that city were marginal people out of the South. In other words, no one who had a real stake in an economic situation in the South was going to give it up to come out for, quote, "A good payin" job in California: that's a temporary kind of thing. So what you had were not only blacks, but also many marginal whites coming. And so what you had, for a large part, was a transplanted southern city.

Morris: In a semi-rural California community.

Stephenson: Well, it had been, but of course what the government did was to build those apartments, made out of two-by-three's, that were fire traps -- I mean, why we didn't have a major fire disaster in Richmond, God only knows.

Morris: Those were primarily on the Bay side, near the shipyards themselves?

Stephenson: That's right.

Morris: Weren't those all promptly demolished in 1945?

Stephenson: Well, not so promptly. Over a period of time. But also understand that the City of Richmond had a population of 108,000, and this includes children. It had an employment payroll in those shipyards of 100,000 people per day. So that Richmond was not a bedroom city. It was really importing workers from other parts of the Bay Area to come and work there. It had one of the largest payrolls in the Bay Area. So, here you've had this tremendous thing going on. Schools were on triple session.

I was in France, Germany, Poland, following World War II, in relief work. Richmond had the social disruptions similar to what was experienced in those countries. I felt as if it had been hit
Stephenson: by the war. The problems of the City of Richmond really should have been dealt with by our national government because it was a national crisis that had caused the problems. But Richmond was left to solve the problems with its own tax base, which I thought was patently unfair.

Morris: Yes, that does put it in quite a different perspective. Were there any other groups, besides the Quakers, interested in trying to help the people in Richmond or North Richmond at that time?

Stephenson: Well, sure. The Red Cross was there. A little YMCA had started. Many of the usual social agencies were there. I came in '48, and by that time, you see, their fortunes were down. I mean, the amount of money that was available for a YMCA or a Salvation Army or anyone else to do anything was minimum -- they just didn't have the money to cope. I mean, they were really still geared to a 23,000 population.

Morris: And most of those other 80,000 people who'd moved in during the war stayed there in Richmond?

Stephenson: That's right. In talking to some of the people of Richmond afterwards about it, I had the feeling that during the war they were very happy to have the shipyards and have the people come, with sort of the naive feeling that: Well, when there are no more jobs here, they'll go back where they came from.

Instead of going back where they came from, they found out that if they put a dime in the bus, that they could take any seat. They didn't have to go to the back seat. And then, you know -- we're talking about late forties, early fifties -- that they could walk into any place and get an ice cream soda. They could go into a theater and didn't have to go upstairs. They could sit anywhere in the theater, as long as they paid for the ticket.

And though the employment picture was not good -- if you'll remember, we had a depression in 1950, '48 to '50, -- in other words, the Korean War pulled us out of that depression, if you'll remember.

Morris: It is painful to remember that, yes.

Stephenson: Right? I mean, that's the history. In spite of that war, the newcomers were encouraging their relatives to come from the South. Because the South was depressed, too. The mechanization of our farms in the South, the enlarging of the farms by consolidating by large interests, meant that there was not the need for the labor. The Wagner Wage and Hour Law, in one stroke, revolutionized a lot of the work of the South. Though that law was passed in the mid-thirties, it set twenty-five cents per hour as the minimum wage; it came into the
Stephenson: South at a time when wages were running from twelve to seventeen cents per hour.

I know, for instance, in tobacco companies, which had been using large numbers of women to strip tobacco and to do various things in the factory at, as I say, twelve to seventeen cents -- when they were forced to pay a minimum of twenty-five cents, they started putting in machines. It became profitable then to use the machine, rather than use human labor. People were thrown out of work as a result of it. Population was increasing, jobs were decreasing, so they'd come west.

Josephine Duveneck's Focus on Self-Help and Housing

Morris: You said that you wouldn't have gotten involved in all of this if it hadn't been for Josephine Duveneck. Did you meet her out here?

Stephenson: Yes. She was one of the people on the Committee [American Friends Service Committee], who, when told about what was going on in Richmond, went over and took a look for herself; saw these people struggling, against all odds, to build houses for their families.

Let's go back and take a look at North Richmond and what was happening there for a moment. During the war, the only place that a black person was shown property to buy was in North Richmond. Now, he had the same kind of money. He had the same kind of job. He had the same kind of security and insecurity as the white people working in those shipyards.

And just like other people, just like the white people, living in those war houses -- they didn't like it. It was very different from anything they'd ever had before, and they wanted very much to get out. And as you know, the whole area from 23rd Street eastward started being built with single-family homes. These were being sold, but the blacks couldn't buy.

Morris: Were there restrictive covenants?

Stephenson: No. Real estate people wouldn't show them to blacks, or if they did, and the black went into the bank to get a loan, the bank would not approve. It was never disapproved on the basis of being black. I mean, after all, in America, you don't do it on the basis of color.

Morris: Not officially, no.

Stephenson: Right. But the fact was, the banks just didn't. I mean, you can go back and look at the record, and find out when the first person who
Stephenson: was black bought property any place in the City of Richmond, other than along the railroad tracks. There were few blacks who had been living in Richmond, prior to the war. As I said, about five percent of the total population. They were scattered here and yon, including North Richmond. A lot of them lived in North Richmond, even prior to World War II.

In fact, if you go back and talk to some of the blacks who lived there during those days, they resented very much the blacks coming from the South. Because prior to the blacks coming from the South, they had far more freedom and felt more accepted. A good illustration was that the blacks before the war could buy cemetery plots at Sunset Cemetery. But when the war came they refused to sell to blacks.

During the war a person could buy a lot in North Richmond, but he could not get a loan to build a house on it. Now, the question is: What kind of house do you build if you cannot get credit? What kind of house would you or I have if we could not get credit and had to pay -- not for renting it -- but we had to pay for the two-by-fours and the flooring and the cement and the pipes and the fixtures out of our payroll check each week?

Morris: You'd have to build it yourself?

Stephenson: Right. Number one, you build it yourself, and you don't put any money into labor. Second, during the war, building materials were rationed. You could only buy -- I'm not sure what it was. It was something like forty dollars worth at a time. It was a small amount.

Another thing is, you do a lot of scrounging. So they went to the dump, and they got what they could. Now, many of them were not carpenters. And by doing what they could -- they saved money by not putting in adequate foundations. As far as the city was concerned, as far as I can see, none of the building codes were enforced. They were actually ignored. If you talk to people in the city government in those days, it was: Well, they deserve to have some place to live. After all, they're helping us win the war. But when it's over, they're going to go back where they come from, and North Richmond will be bulldozed down. We'll just demolish it. It's no problem.

Now, what's going to happen to this man's labor, and love and sweat and concern that he's had in building his home?

Morris: And having built it, he's going to want to stay in it.

Stephenson: And if he has to move out, and they bulldoze it down, who's going to pay him for all that effort? None of this was ever thought of. I mean, we weren't concerned about people.
Stephenson: Well, Josephine was the one who got in and said: Well, look. The Quakers have been successful in a couple of self-help housing projects.

One was in the coal mining district, back during the Depression, in which they helped a group to build a coal-mining town with their own labor. They were involved in a similar kind of thing in South Philadelphia, working with a group.

And so they were saying this is a natural thing to do in North Richmond, because this is what the people are already doing. This is part and parcel of people helping each other and working with each other, and really, what they're needing is capital on the one hand and some technical help on the other. And there's even an industrialist who will help provide the capital; the Quakers ought to be able to provide the technical assistance.

Morris: Was the industrialist a Quaker?

Stephenson: No.

Morris: And was he ever taken up on his offer?

Stephenson: No.

Morris: That's interesting.

Stephenson: That was because of the report that I wrote to the Quakers, in which I indicated to them that the industrialist was a person who had heavy investments in Richmond, and that we were getting caught in the middle of a political situation in which we could easily become a pawn. And that's not where I wanted to be.

Morris: But you did feel it was worth staying in that community?

Stephenson: That's right. We did.

Morris: Now, is the procedure that you, as the person in the field, then discuss this with the board, or do you just send your report to Quaker --?

Stephenson: Well, it was with the local board, of which Josephine Duveneck was a member. She was one of the people I'd talk over things with, even before I'd write the report, and if I needed to see somebody in Richmond and couldn't get in otherwise, Josephine Duveneck had a way of seeing that doors opened up.

Morris: It's incredible the amount of territory she was covering in those years. All over the state, almost.

Stephenson: So she was one who gave guidance.
2. NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE, 1950 BEGINNINGS

Establishing Communication with North Richmond Residents

Stephenson: At the time when I was trying to develop some kind of communication with the community of North Richmond I talked with adults and set up a meeting of people at a little hut one night. Josephine Duveneck came all the way from Los Altos to go to that evening meeting in North Richmond.

And because I knew nothing about community organization, we had two, maybe three people in North Richmond. I was crushed.

Morris: That's how many came to that first meeting?

Stephenson: That's right. I mean, I was just completely crushed that I had induced Josephine to come all the way from Los Altos for a community meeting, and there're three people. And yet, she operated that evening as though they were the three most important people in North Richmond, and was not at all fazed. I mean, she was a good organizer. This is where it is.

Morris: Did those three people stay with you when you got funding and got a program going?

Stephenson: To a large degree. I'd never had any training in any of this. My background was in math and physics. At one time I worked on the cyclotron at the University of Michigan.

Morris: Did you?

Stephenson: So, you know, I'm not at all conversant in community organization. But when I'd come back to San Francisco and meet with the Committee, one of the things that I did was always talk as though there were people from North Richmond sitting in that audience with me. But I was sensitive enough to make the report in such a way that I would not be embarrassed about how I talked about them. After all, it was a we-they kind of approach for me in those days. As I said, I was a southern white guy, but I was really struggling at the time to find
Stephenson: a way of communicating that doesn't separate people, but pulls people together. And therefore, my reports were made as if I were also making them to a North Richmond audience.

Of course, later on, people from North Richmond did attend our Committee meetings. The Bakers were the ones who got that started. For instance, when they were the directors of Neighborhood House they'd never come to a meeting over here without bringing people from North Richmond with them.

American Friends Service Committee Principles

Morris: How did the AFSC board feel about that?

Stephenson: Oh, they were very excited about it. Very pleased, very accepting. This was one of the things they wanted, was more involvement and control by the people in North Richmond. See, the Quakers have had a history of starting things in such a way that people will take over so that the Quakers are no onger necessary, rather than building an empire.

Morris: Whence cometh this?

Stephenson: It's probably, I think, basic to their whole operation -- beginning with the way in which they worship. They were one of the first to recognize that women were equal with men, right in the worship services. The ministry was given by women as well as men, from the very beginnings of George Fox, in England, three hundred years ago.

Morris: Was it your idea or Josephine Duveneck's to go to Rosenberg for some money for that initial -- ?

Stephenson: Of course, I'd never heard of Rosenberg. [Laughs.]

Morris: As a budding community organizer, were you aware of foundations as a source of money?

Stephenson: I didn't know anything about foundations. You know, I come from a relatively poor -- I mean, I'd never heard of foundations and money, except for -- oh, I'd heard of Carnegie Foundation giving something to libraries. After all, I've been in some of the libraries that they'd given. And I knew something about the Rockefellers, but I was not aware of wealthy people setting aside their money, you know -- in terms of hundreds of foundations across the nation. I come from the back woods -- tobacco fields and timber of North Carolina. Not a very sophisticated background, I expect.
Stephenson: So Josephine Duveneck was one of the people. Of course, not only she. People were working in the regional office -- Steve Thréman, Russell Jorgenson and others had been dealing with foundations and had been getting money from them. Ninety percent of the funds for the Quakers come from non-Quaker sources.

Morris: Do they?

Stephenson: Yes. The Quakers are very, very adept at taking other people's money and making a reputation for themselves on it.

Morris: Or helping other people to see fruitful ways to --

Stephenson: You'd be amazed at the number of Jews, who are very strong in giving to Jewish organizations, who will turn around and give money to the Quakers on the basis that they want to be of help to non-Jews; that there's an obligation at that level as well, and they'll toss it to the Quakers.

Morris: Many Jews seem to have a strong philanthropic feeling; a conscious sense of obligation to the community.

Stephenson: And then, there are others. For instance, many sectarian relief programs oftentimes are self-centered and operate through their own local parish in a country. Even though they may not come and say: Look, you should join the parish in order to get our food. One way or another, there seems to be a recognition that if you are a regular attender there are a few extra things that come your way. The Quakers, for the most part, have never put relief services on this basis. In fact, one of the problems in Poland, where I worked for over a year --

Morris: That's a strong Catholic country, isn't it?

Stephenson: Oh, yes. And one of the criticisms that came from Polish people who got to know us was: Why don't you proselytize? Why don't you tell people who you are?

We were never abashed about telling who we were if we were asked. But we didn't feel that was why we were there -- we were not trying to make Quakers out of people. That's not the mission.

Morris: I don't mean this as boldly as it's going to sound, but why not?

Stephenson: Because I think it's very important for people to be a good Catholic, if they are Catholics. And I would hope that they would really become good Catholics.

I feel the same way in terms of other religions. They're good. What I want people to do is not to become -- sure, if they want to
Stephenson: become Quakers, the door's wide open. But I want people to live to the highest of their own values, whatever it is that they're seeking for themselves.

Morris: And that it's more important that the world's work be accomplished?

Stephenson: That's right. And it's more important for people to live to the highest level of what it is they are inspired by than it is in terms of what religion they adhere to.

Building a Youth Program

Social Activities and Adult Mores

Morris: Ruth Chance tells me that you're one of the few people that's ever been asked to come and meet with the Rosenberg board. Do you recall how that came about?

Stephenson: I remember when it happened, but I'm not sure what it was that inspired Ruth to suggest it. Did Ruth tell you about the first time we ever met?

Morris: No. I have had some sessions with her, though, and talked about the North Richmond projects in general. Red is an inspiration to us all, is the sense of the conversation.

Stephenson: I dearly love that woman. She's great. Well, let me go back.

When I went back out and met with some of the parents in North Richmond in 1953, it was at a time when there were gang fights going on in that community. Because it was an unincorporated area, people all the way from Vallejo to Oakland would meet in North Richmond to have their fights.

Morris: Oh, boy.

Stephenson: One of the reasons was that it was an area in which they could safely have their fights before the police arrived.

Morris: I can see that thinking, yes.

Stephenson: If you'll go back and look at the headlines in the Richmond Independent in 1953, you'll find nearly every week there was a headline related to some violence occurring in North Richmond. We had mothers who would walk their kids every morning to Verde School, and they would walk home with them.
Morris: This is walking with their younger children because of the teenage gang fights?

Stephenson: And the threats that were made -- even during the daylight. So the parents, when I talked with them, were concerned, wanted to know what to do about it -- by this time, we had helped to create a neighborhood council in North Richmond.

I'll never forget the time the council officers, that is, the president and his wife, helped me chaperone a dance at Neighborhood House. The next day, the only reason I guess he failed to be read out of the Baptist Church was that he was one of the largest financial contributors to the church.

Morris: Because they thought there shouldn't be dances at Neighborhood House?

Stephenson: Oh! My God! See, one of the dilemmas that we have is when you have a problem with youth, and the youth's solution to their problem is one which is considered to be taboo with the adults, right?

Morris: Right.

Stephenson: If the adults' approach to the youth is to be authoritarian, then the question is: Who do you work with?

I was working alone, now. I knew a little bit about community organization, enough to know that I should try to get these two together. And I did, to the degree that we had two youths go to the neighborhood council and present their problem and ask for assistance. I didn't go to the neighborhood council, you see. I mean, I was there. I was supporting it. But it was the youth who were going to the adults and saying: Look this is what we want and need.

And it was the adults who said: Fine, go ahead.

But when the good church people got hold of it, all hell broke loose. Which meant that I was placed in the position: Do I go ahead and work with the youth, or do I work with the adults?

Morris: How did you resolve that?

Stephenson: I worked with the youth.

Morris: Did it cost you any adult support?

Stephenson: Sure. It took ten years before Neighborhood House could be accepted by people in that community, as a result.

Morris: Oh, boy.
Stephenson: We had the Baptist minister for several weeks preaching sermons against Red Stephenson.

Morris: All this grew out of one dance at Neighborhood -- ?

Stephenson: Well, a whole series of things. I mean, I started saying to the teenagers: Come in Thursday afternoon, and let's plan what we're going to do Friday night.

So we'd sit down and we'd plan.

Morris: The parents objected to your keeping the kids off the streets?

Stephenson: Well, it was sinful to dance --

Morris: I'd forgotten, some Baptists disapprove of dancing.

Stephenson: I mean, I'm telling you, one of the ministers -- this was a Methodist minister -- went to the high school and opposed the girls wearing bloomers, which they did in gym in those days.

Morris: I remember.

Stephenson: And would not allow the high school girls in his church to wear bloomers when they were in gym class. That's the setting in which I was working.

Morris: That's really incredible for 1953.

Stephenson: Well, by working with the youth, we would make agreements and a few adults would come and help chaperone every night that we had a record dance. We had a curfew in those days, and we abided by the curfew. And we agreed that whenever the lights flicked, that this was the signal that people were to leave, and they were not to ask questions as to why. They would clear the house. I actually flipped those lights within ten minutes after we opened our doors because trouble was brewing that I knew that we could not handle.

Morris: This is trouble within the young people in the groups?

Stephenson: Yes. Usually a fight developing on the floor. I would not tolerate any fighting whatsoever. Anytime there was anything that was threatened, the lights flicked, and I expected the kids to help me clear the house. And if we had problems, then the next time we had our little meetings in the afternoon after school, we'd sit down and say: What happened? Who was it? Why?

And so they'd come back and say: Red, you didn't let us have
Stephenson: our party. You didn't do this. You didn't do that.

And I'd say: Look, these are the rules. If you're able to abide by them, and if you can get your friends to abide by them, this is what we're doing. If you can't abide by them, then I can't open the house.

Morris: How long did it take before they got the message?

Stephenson: Not too long. Too long, too. We had one boy that was killed, stabbed to death.

Morris: Oh, that's sad.

Stephenson: Usually after they left the building a fight would erupt and I would get into the street. Right along with others. I'd call the police.

Morris: I was wondering how you got along with them.

Stephenson: Oh, yes. I'd call the police, and then I'd get into the street. It was not uncommon for someone with a knife, or a two-by-four or a piece of iron to threaten me. But as long as I did not violate their code, the group protected me. So the only time that I ever felt -- I mean, in which my gut just sort of really turned over -- was once when I broke through a crowd, a guy who was doped, who had a pistol in his hand, turned it to me, right at my gut. And I knew then that all it took was a quiver of a muscle, and I was a dead duck.

The rest of it I could handle. That I couldn't. It was a time when I started taking a drink to relax. You know, I'd get home eleven to one o'clock and tense, and so I would have a beer or bourbon before I'd go to bed. I mean, there was no way I could live with it.

Rosenberg Funds for a Youth Director

Stephenson: Well, after doing this about a year, Seaton Manning, who used to be with the Urban League here -- I don't know if you know Seaton Manning?

Morris: By reputation.

Stephenson: Well, he's a black social worker, great guy. San Francisco State. He said to me one day: Red, when are you going to get a youth worker out there?
Stephenson: I said: Seaton [laughs], when I have the money, I'm going to.

He says: Look, if you go to the Rosenberg and ask for the money, I'll see that the Urban League backs you.

I said: Huh?

You know, we don't compete that way. Ordinarily, if we know a source of money in the community, we don't go and offer it to another agency. But so help me, this is what Seaton did. I said: If I got that kind of backing, sure.

So I went in, and I asked for funding of a youth worker. And so they gave me the money for one or two years for someone to work with me. It was during the days when Mrs. Ganyard was there, and it was very clear that this was not to be renewed. Mrs. Ganyard I don't think had ever given a second grant to any agency up to that point. So the board wanted to be very clear that they were not going to get involved in the continuation of the support of an agency they'd launch, and so: Though we're going to give it to you, this is it. Forget it. [Laughs.] Stay clear.

Well, when Ruth came in, I called up and asked for an appointment. She gave it to me. I later learned that she was very much interested in what the reports were, in terms of North Richmond, had heard a bit about me. She had read the minutes. It was very obvious that the board was very adamant about not renewing the grant. She knew enough about a struggling agency like ours to know very well that I couldn't keep funding it. And so she was very ill at ease as to how she was going to handle this. Because emotionally, it was the very kind of thing that she'd like Rosenberg -- she was just new, by the way.

Morris: That puts it in late 1958 or early '59. It sounds as if you went to make a get acquainted call.

Stephenson: Was it late '58 she came to Rosenberg?

Morris: Yes.

Stephenson: God, time did fly, didn't it? Yes, I guess I was there a couple of years by myself and then a couple of years with Calvin, and -- I guess that's right. Well, what happened was that when I came to see her, we started talking about what had happened, what some of the ideas were, what some of the problems were, and she and I just got along with each other. I mean, you know, it was just lucky.

Morris: I can believe it.

Stephenson: And I guess somewhere down the line, she wanted to know about the
Stephenson: youth program. And I said: Well, the board was very clear that I was not to come back for that. If it's to be continued, I've got to find money elsewhere.

   Well, it took her off the hook. But you have to learn to know when a person is saying no, if they really mean no, or if they're meaning, well, maybe, all right?

Morris: Yes.

Stephenson: I felt very clear that Rosenberg Foundation was very clear in saying no. This was really a no. And therefore, I would embarrass them and embarrass myself if I came back and asked them for something, when they'd already told me no. So you don't come back into that situation and ask for more money.

Morris: History reports that something changed.

Stephenson: But not for the youth program.

A Private Benefactor

Stephenson: What happened was that I was able, through a very dear friend in East Contra Costa county, to be introduced to a wealthy woman who saw me only because a mutual friend asked her to give me fifteen minutes of her time.

   I went out one day and had coffee with her, and she started asking me all kinds of questions and -- you know when you're making a sale -- I was making a sale. I mean, I knew I was making a sale.

Morris: You're a good fund-raiser.

Stephenson: Well, I'm a good fund-raiser for things that I believe in, right? And so I made the sale.

   But it was very obvious that she didn't want to buy right then; so she just sort of wiped me off by turning to me and saying: Look, Mr. Stephenson, why should I be interested in the problems over in the City of Richmond? In other words, forget it. She said: I mean, all that you're doing is all fine and good, but that's not me.

   This was out in the Danville area -- big home, swimming pool, horses, the works.

   And I turned to her and said: Look, as long as you're living
Stephenson: in an area in which blacks are not allowed to live -- or Negroes, in those days -- you've got as much responsibility for the problems of West Contra Costa county as the people who live in the City of Richmond.

And she sat up straight -- she had a very straight back, broad shoulders -- she said: Man, but you shoot straight. She says: Can I come to see you?

I said: The door's open.

Morris: Great. So she came out to North Richmond and talked to you on Truman Street?

Stephenson: She came out to North Richmond. It's very interesting.

The first time she called me up, she was ready to come out that day. And I said: But I've got -- I mean, I'm working alone. She wants to come down. And I said: I'm sorry, but I've got these meetings on today, and I just don't have time for you.

But, she says: You're asking me for money.

I said: I know, but I'm asking you for money to help me to do what I can do. I can't lay down what I'm doing. Can we set a mutually agreeable time?

Oh! she said.


Stephenson: So she set it up, and she was going to come out one morning at ten o'clock. I said fine. She wanted to know if she could bring someone. I said: Fine, I'll see that there are people that you can meet.

She said: Good.

So the morning on which she came out, I had four women of the community at Neighborhood House. Neighborhood House had a long room, the main room and we'd set up a table down at one end with these four women, and it was obvious there were a couple of other spaces for me and our guest. And they were there, they had the coffee all set out, and donuts.

And she came, and I met her at the door, and she looked in. It was very obvious what I had her set up for. And she looked at them, she looked at me, and she looked at them, and she looked back at me. And I thought at first she just might bolt. Then she threw back her
Stephenson: shoulders and marched herself in and sat down.

Morris: That's a marvelous description.

Stephenson: What happened was that the women would talk with me, and she would talk with me, but I couldn't get a real conversation between us all together. I excused myself to get more coffee from the kitchen and she and the women started talking about children and the ice was broken. She underwrote the deficit of that agency for the next three years.

Morris: Beautiful! Did she ever become comfortable with the women of the neighborhood.

Stephenson: No. What she did do was she invited my wife and myself out to have dinner at her home, and I went to Calvin Anderson, who was the youth worker at the time, and said: Calvin, I've got a real problem. I've got an invitation, but I know very well that you wouldn't be invited. What do I do?

He says: Red, she needs the exposure to you. You go.

I said: Okay. I said: I'll refuse to go if you feel uncomfortable about my going. I wouldn't go out to see her if it would bother him. So my wife and I went.

In another eighteen months, she had moved far enough that she invited one of our youth groups from Neighborhood House out to her home --

Morris: To swim in her pool?

Stephenson: To swim in her pool, and her husband cooked a barbecue for them. The next youth director -- Calvin left us to go to juvenile hall to work. And when Bill Bell came to work with us as Director of Youth Programs, she invited Bill and his girlfriend for dinner.

And the thing was that before she died, I could no longer ask her money.

Morris: How so?

Stephenson: Wealthy people have a real problem -- they never know whether people are spending time with them, and making much of them, because of their money or because of themselves as people.
3. SOME THOUGHTS ON PROGRESS AND CHANGE

Variety of Social Action Experience

Morris: I know you have an appointment. I have a list here of nine projects Neighborhood House did which involved Rosenberg Foundation grants and a couple of grants from the San Francisco Foundation -- that I'd like to ask you about when we meet again. [See illustration next page.]

Stephenson: That many -- whoosh!

Morris: You were there through 1965?

Stephenson: I was there even later. Let's see. I've been here for six years. What would that be?

Morris: 'Sixty-eight would be about when you came to Planned Parenthood-World Population.

Stephenson: I came here the first of February of '68. Then, for a year before that, which means during the year of '67, I worked as a consultant. So I was out there through '66.

Morris: That's a good, long time.

Stephenson: It seems to me that I was out there longer than that. What the hell --

Morris: Well, you did two men's work when you were there, at least.

Stephenson: I thought I was out there longer. I thought I was out there for fifteen years. Oh, well. That was long enough. It seemed like twenty-five.

Morris: If you include the years before you went back to Cal to get your master's --

Stephenson: Yes, if you did that. But I wasn't out there full-time in those days. During those days, I was getting things started in San

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Rosenberg Foundation</th>
<th>San Francisco Foundation</th>
<th>Others (partial list)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ad hoc funding by AFSC.</td>
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<td>1950</td>
<td>Three-year organi-</td>
<td>Grant to employ youth</td>
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<td>AFSC as sponsor.</td>
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<td>1954</td>
<td>Grant to employ youth</td>
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<td>Private benefactor under-</td>
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<td>worker.</td>
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<td>writes deficit for three</td>
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<td>1957</td>
<td>To establish study hall.</td>
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<td>years.</td>
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<td>1960</td>
<td>Three-year grant for</td>
<td>Grant from Watson Fund to improve race relations.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>manpower development,</td>
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<td>job upgrading.</td>
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<td>1961</td>
<td>Richmond Plan, voca-</td>
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<td>NIMH supported.</td>
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<td>Youth and adult</td>
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<td>leadership.</td>
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<td>1962</td>
<td>Tic-Toc cooperative</td>
<td>$500.00 for a bus.</td>
<td>Study halls for black</td>
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<td>nursery school.</td>
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<td>1963</td>
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<td>Ford Foundation funds</td>
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<td>expanded study hall pro-</td>
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<td>1964</td>
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<td>1965</td>
<td>Parent participa-</td>
<td>Community newspaper,</td>
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<td>1966</td>
<td>Small grant for</td>
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<td>1969</td>
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<td>$16,000 for youth</td>
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Stephenson: Francisco County Jail and mental hospitals and the Fullmore District and North Richmond and trying to help put together the State Federation of Civic Unity, and --

Morris: Is that the umbrella for the Council for Civic Unity?

Stephenson: Well, no. The Council got started here and was the only really strong one in the state. But then some of us tried to get a state-wide federation started, but we never could get it off the ground. Part of it was -- if I'm not mistaken -- that we never could get IRS to give us a tax-exempt status, which was one of the ways in which the federal government was able to keep cool many of the civil rights people in those days -- to block them from getting tax-exempt money.

Morris: In other words, they made a judgment as to what the political potential was of various groups?

Stephenson: Yes. In other words, if they were to say that this was a politically oriented group, well then they wouldn't get tax-exemption and, therefore, you couldn't raise money. It's very hard to raise non-tax-exempt money.

Morris: Yes, that affects your potential donors' taxes.

Stephenson: Now, do you know what year it was that I went to see the board?

Morris: I can double-check with Ruth. She did not put a date on it. I wonder if it would have been at the point where she was going to ask them to fund Neighborhood House again in spite of the fact that the record said they didn't want to.

Stephenson: I don't think I had an application before them at the time, although I'm not sure of that, because the objective that Ruth had was not going in and speaking to them for Neighborhood House. What we were really doing was talking about problems. I mean, after all, North Richmond was a microcosm of the city problems. Now, this was before the outbreak of violence all across the nation.

Morris: She may have asked you to come to one of the periodic backgrounder sessions that she had for the board.

Stephenson: That's right. This was no business meeting.

Morris: So that you were brought in as a resource person to talk with the board about how things looked to you from the field.

Stephenson: That's right.
Morris: Okay. I'd better depart now, or I'll be late for my next meeting, but if you could think about that, and I'll check with Ruth, and see if she can recall a specific date.

Stephenson: Maybe I can get my head together with her to see if I can put it together, if you would like to have more of that.

Morris: I would. She and I did not have time to get very much into this business of the kind of background discussions with and for the board members, which I think may be very interesting, in terms of the kinds of concerns they had as time went on. Okay.

Questions of Purpose

Stephenson: Along the same line: One of the questions that I raised with the Quakers at a time when Clark Kerr was chairman of the old Community Relations Committee was: What is the minimum input we have to make into a community such as North Richmond, in order to turn it around, from being a detriment to the welfare of children to the point where it enhances the welfare of children? And I remember Clark Kerr turning to me and saying: Red, what you really want to do is change society.

I've never been a service-oriented person. I mean, that's not where I am. In fact, one of the reasons why I went to North Richmond when I came out of Cal -- I had several offers here and there, but there was not another job offered to me in which they were willing to allow me, as part of my job description, to question why the service was needed for which they were hiring me. And that meant that I was being relegated to putting band-aids on something, rather than solving problems.

Morris: Was Clark Kerr's position that we didn't need to change things, we just needed to polish them up a little?

Stephenson: No, no. No, I think he was just sort of analyzing where I was, and verbalizing where I was. I think he was also expressing the fact that the Service Committee's not in a position to really change society. It's just, you know, where are you?

And so I remember talking with Gertrude Wilson, when she first came to Cal while I was there, about some of the problems of blacks migrating to the cities. I mean, after all, I'd been very close to North Richmond for three years before going into that school.

Morris: Marvelous background for then doing graduate study.
Stephenson: I thought so until I got there. [Laughs.]

Morris: Until you got back to UC?

Stephenson: Until I got to UC. I mean, that's not where the school was. The school was trying to develop two-year Freudians to do therapy for middle-class people.

Morris: [Laughs.]

Stephenson: I mean, I was trying to --

Morris: Yes, there's quite a difference!

Stephenson: And that's not where I was. I mean, I'm not a therapist.

Morris: Well, this whole business of legitimacy of change and how you do it and whether the change produces a better result or a worse situation I think is perhaps the most critical question that's come to the surface in the last ten years.

Stephenson: Right. And you see, one of the questions that I have, and one of the questions -- in fact, I even wrote about it to the new director of San Francisco Foundation, when he sent out letters to many people who'd received money from the San Francisco Foundation.* One of the problems that I really have is whether a voluntary agency, in a democratic society, should not attempt to make a change in society and, on a periodic basis, reevaluate that change. And if they have been successful in making change, then, theoretically, their program should change.

Morris: That would seem logical.

Stephenson: Right. But how many of us do that?

[Intercom buzzes.]

Morris: Your next appointment's here.

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*Brief questionnaire sent in summer, 1974, to recent applicants, both those who did and did not receive funding, asking for comments on how helpful the Foundation had been in the past and what suggestions applicants had for the future. See appendix to Salkind interview for sample.
Continuity of Foundation Support

Morris: What I'd like to do today is to pick up some of the points we mentioned last time.

You went to see Ruth Chance when she first came in as the new executive of Rosenberg in 1958. As I recall, you said that your sense was that the Rosenberg board had decided that they had made a sufficiency of grants to Neighborhood House, and your feeling was there weren't going to be any more. I wondered what change in events or circumstance or what process of discussion enabled you to develop projects on through the sixties that Rosenberg did feel positively enough about to make more grants to Neighborhood House?

Stephenson: The time I first met Ruth Chance -- well, let's go back. In 1950, if I remember it, they gave the three-year grant to start Neighborhood House, and that ran into '53. That was the original grant to get it launched.

The second grant was to provide a youth director, and that was done before Ruth Chance came. The youth director we got because Seaton Manning of the Urban League came and said: Red, when are you going to get someone to help you out there? And he would be willing to back me in an application if I'd go for the money. So I did, he did, and we got the money.

Then, near the time that money was running out -- and I don't know if that was a one-year grant or a two-year. It was a very short one, and I have an idea it may have been just a one-year, but it might have been two. It was given to us with the understanding that we were not to come back for any more money on that project. There was no indication that I shouldn't come back for any more money, period. It was just that that project was -- it was not a continuation, period.

So when I came in to Ruth Chance, she knew that this had been mandated from the board. She thought I was going to come in and ask for something that she knew she could not go back to the board
Stephenson: and get. Instead, we talked about the community, its problems, some ideas in terms of programming, and never once talked about a specific proposal. As I remember her saying later, — in fact, if I'm not mistaken, near the end of the conversation, she turned to me and asked me: How are you doing about the youth program?

And my reaction: Well, I'm going to resolve that somehow. I'm not sure yet how. But I wasn't annoyed at the fact that Rosenberg couldn't continue it. Well, I did get money to keep it going, and it is still continuing, as far as I know.

Morris: From where?

Stephenson: Schley Foundation.

Study Halls and Family Milieu

Stephenson: But then, later, what we did was to — and I see your note says '57 — although we had been dealing with the youth program, highlighting the delinquency problems and the gang warfare amongst the adolescents in that community, we began to recognize there were behavioral patterns coming out of earlier youth, and that there was a close correlation between failure in school and delinquency patterns.

Then we went and looked at the school system — because this was the first time that it had occurred to me as a social worker that I should be concerned about education. You keep these departmentalized in our society, right? You solve tuberculosis, but you don't solve people's health problems.

Morris: The conditions in which they live.

Stephenson: Right. The same thing is true of most of your health problems today. We try to solve a disease, and yet we have not developed a good health delivery system in our society for the masses of the people. We compartmentalize. And I think this is what I've done in my training: I was trained as a social worker, therefore I'd look at social conditions, and it never occurred to me that the school as an institution is related to social conditions. All of a sudden, I realized that the school was one of the major institutions affecting the lives of the youth of that community, and what it did or did not do affected what I needed to be doing at Neighborhood House.

I know this sounds old hat now, but twenty years ago that sounded
Stephenson: like a radical idea, that a person dealing with gang warfare or a person out involved with delinquency really should get himself involved in the school system. In studies that we ran -- we didn't make them; I didn't have that kind of capacity -- we found that the kids coming out of the Verde School in North Richmond were not equipped to deal with junior high school material. And yet, when I went and talked with the principal about this, the principal showed me documents from the University of California, studies that had been made of the school, which indicated that he was doing exceedingly well, given the social conditions from which his kids were coming.

The fact that they were not being moved to the point where they could handle junior high school work was not a criterion. The criterion was that given this kind of social background, you're doing very well with them for seven years. That is, kindergarten through sixth grade, this is all you can expect. That was the attitude of top level educators in our society, and I'm not so sure that it has changed a lot in the last twenty years.

Morris: In spite of all the time and effort we've put in on schools.

Stephenson: Yes.

Morris: Is this what then led you to come up with a study hall?

Stephenson: What led us to come up with the study hall was the homes -- you see, there's a lot that's happened in the black community that's different from other immigrant groups to America. Fundamentally, their ancestors came over in chains, whereas the rest of us, as immigrants, came over because our ancestors really wanted to come, and that's a very, very fundamental thing to begin with, right?

The second is that in many of the immigrant communities, you had a religious institution that put a high value on education. In the Jewish communities, the rabbis were educated. In the Catholic communities, the priests were educated. This was not true in the black communities. The churches did not put a high emphasis on education. The family was not putting a high emphasis on education because back in the thirties, the majority of the redcaps in the railway stations of Chicago had college degrees, and so there's been a history in the black community that an education is not a ticket to success; whereas, once again, in the white migrations if a guy whose father is working in the mines could get a college education, he was a success. He got employed.

And so we've got a whole history here that is different. So
Stephenson: when people come up and ask, why, the black people don't really put a tremendous emphasis on education and push their kids into it, there are some very good reasons as to why that has not been part of their culture. Because education has not meant the same kind of automatic success for them as it has for us.

Neighborhood House wanted to say -- once again, the homes now were not really adequate for study. A kid didn't have a private room of his own. If there was anybody in the house who wanted to look at TV, it disturbed the whole household. I don't know of any family out there which really just sort of cut off the TV in order to have an hour in which people could do quiet homework. There was none of that kind of thing that I knew of. And we decided that we had to, as Neighborhood House -- in other words, you had the home, which was not emphasizing education; you had the church, which was not emphasizing education; you had the school, which was not really pressing -- in fact, you go to the school and say: Why don't you provide homework? Why don't you assign homework kinds of things to them? For a large part, they were not doing that, and for very good reasons. They'd been frustrated in it. So here you had three institutions who were not doing anything.

Where I come from, much of my child's education came from things that were helped by the family, rather than by the teacher. The teacher may have given some guidelines in terms -- but it was our having communication with that teacher and with the child in helping him to work through what he had to do in one night in order to go the next day. And if it meant no more than sitting down and reading a book, we did. Even before a child is able to read, you have a picture book with a few words in it, and you go through it night after night before he goes to bed. So that there's a certain amount of stimulus. This was not done for the kids in North Richmond in those days.

Morris: When you took this to Ruth Chance, this was something that she thought was new direction.

Stephenson: Sure. I mean, at this point, it was a new idea, and they funded it.

Morris: Good.

Stephenson: And as far as I know, that, along with Reverend Nichols in Berkeley, began the first study halls in black communities of America.*

Morris: That's beautiful. That's Roy Nichols?

Stephenson: Yes. He did it about the same time we did it, I think completely independent of each other.

*See evaluation report of the first years of Neighborhood House Study Hall in Foundation Series papers.
Morris: That's interesting, that you came to the same conclusion.

**Educating Parents and the Community**

Morris: There seemed to be a number of grants, not only to Neighborhood House, but in other communities in California, for study hall kinds of things, and then they kind of petered out. Have you any thoughts as to what happened?

Stephenson: I don't know. I think, one, it's very hard to finance the study hall, and you have to be clear about why you're doing it. The reason why I was doing it was not so much in terms of coming in with a school substitute, but I was really trying to convey to, first, the parents in that community, that their schools were not doing an adequate job. Because the parents were not aware that the schools were doing an adequate job. The parents got upset because their kids got kicked out of junior high, or because they became a behavior problem at junior high, but they did not perceive that this was related to the fact that they were not doing the job over at Verde School. And I tried to demonstrate to the parents they were not getting the job done at Verde School, right?

Number two, the white people, who controlled the school system, did not see the need for doing a different kind of thing at Verde. The school system essentially was saying: We treat everybody alike. It was as if: What we do in Kensington, we do in Verde. And they used this. I mean, both of them were in the Richmond School -- let's see, at that time, Verde was in the San Pablo School District, but then it became part of the Richmond Unified District.

It was very interesting that you had a whole different social setting in Kensington than you do in North Richmond, but the school people were not willing to go back and revamp the program that related to the community. I'll give you an illustration. The kids had their own language.

Morris: Any kids in a school?

Stephenson: Well, in North Richmond, at any rate, there was their own language that they had, right? But when they came to school, that language was not grammatical; it's not good. What we're learning now is that we should really come back and try to treat the teaching of grammatical English, and the King's English, like teaching them a second language. And not downgrade what they're learning in the street, and at the home. Because essentially, they do not have a high self-esteem of who they are in the street and the home when they come to the school,
Stephenson: and the teachers are saying --

Morris: That's not our language.

Stephenson: That's not what you should be doing. Right? What I'm saying is this is a good illustration of the difference in an educational process. So I was trying to say this to the parents, and I was trying to say it to the school people, as well as the people who control the schools -- and therefore, we recruited our tutors from the white middle-class. These are the people who usually are volunteers and et cetera.

And it was out of our tutors that we were able to get three people who ran for the school board and another person who managed a fourth person's campaign. One of the reasons for it was that they really became aware of what was happening, and the relationship, then, between that inadequate school and the social problems that were emerging in the City of Richmond.

Morris: Did any of them get elected?

Stephenson: Yes. At one time, three of them controlled the school board.

Morris: And they'd all come to an interest in the schools from tutoring? Stephenson: Through the tutoring program.

Morris: That's fantastic.

Stephenson: Now, they were already interested in education, otherwise they wouldn't have come in as tutors. I don't mean the whole thing was there, but I am saying this, that they got an education about the school system by what they observed in that study hall.

Morris: That's one of the questions that I have in general: What kinds of people emerged in the different programs Neighborhood House did, as leaders? Did some of these other programs come up from suggestions from your board members at Neighborhood House and students in the program?

Stephenson: Let's see. The summer project that we had that was an interracial project grew out of some board members. What happened was that, during the late forties, the early fifties, there had been an interracial summer camp program in the City of Richmond. If I'm not mistaken, it was an ecumenical-type -- I think the Jewish Community Center was really the leadership in it, and then somehow or other, it fell apart. Some of the board members, who had been supportive of that, raised questions with me about it. My reaction is that I wouldn't touch it with a ten-foot pole unless I could do a top-
Stephenson: quality job.

We were able to get some money. I think that was Schley money, Schley Foundation. And we funded a program that was so beautiful that we had the assemblyman's child in it; we had a judge's child in it; we had lawyers' children in it, and we went to some of the top families in that community and got their children in it. And they knew, when they signed up, that this was Neighborhood House and that North Richmond kids were going to be there.

Morris: Was this an in-town kind of camping program?

Stephenson: Oh, yes. It was in-town. We used one of the schools, and it was a beautiful thing. And, I mean, we really hit it. That was really one of the programs that came out with board members participating, suggesting and helping all the way through with it. In fact, it was out of that that one of the board members was able to get a bus company that was then in Alameda County to let us have a bus for the summer for a dollar-a-year rental.

Morris: Who negotiated that?

Stephenson: Jean Knox, Assemblyman Knox's wife.

Self-Image and Job Preparation

Morris: Then, the next grant I came across was for job upgrading and manpower.

Stephenson: That one was a joint grant with Rosenberg and Lucie Stern Fund. This was when we found out that eighty-five percent of the young men of that community, eighteen to twenty-one years of age, were out of school and unemployed. There was no way in which we could really do anything about delinquency without doing something about employment.

We had gone to business people, and we could not get a hearing with them. We went to the Employment Service, and tried to get them to cooperate with us by giving some kind of preferential treatment somehow to our young men, and once again, we got nowhere.

Morris: This was before there were any federal programs for young blacks?

Stephenson: Oh, yes; oh, yes. So what we did was to say that we needed the opportunity of going to a company and saying: If you wanted to hire one of our guys for a week, we'll reimburse you for one-half of his wages.
Stephenson: It was the first of the -- it's like on-the-job training programs kind of thing. So we actually paid companies money to hire our guys.

Morris: And did that make a difference in the kind of reception you got?

Stephenson: Well, yes. We got a few more openings than we did otherwise. We still had to do a lot of arm-twisting in starting up the program. And it was not nearly enough to really meet our needs. It wasn't the kind of jobs -- and what would happen is that we'd get a guy on the job, and then three days later, he'd blow it, or on Saturday he gets his paycheck and he gets drunk over the weekend and Monday he's not on the job. So that it was constant --

Morris: Turnover.

Stephenson: Oh, man! So we had problems. We provided a psychiatric social worker -- this is Everett Beane, who's a trained psychiatric social worker that had been with the Urban League in Michigan in some programs -- because we found that for us just to get the job, without, once again, being involved with the social milieu in which these young men were living was inadequate, very inadequate.

Not only that, but we found that many of them couldn't get the job because they couldn't fill out an application form. They literally could not read well enough to fill out an application. We started having rap sessions, and we found that their perception of themselves was very derogatory. I remember one tape I listened to that Everett made in one of their rap sessions, in which, had I not known who they were, I would have thought that they were the most red-necked southerners talking about blacks.

Morris: This is a bunch of black kids talking about themselves?

Stephenson: These are black adolescents, or I'd say eighteen to twenty-two years of age, in that general range, who were talking about themselves. They had really absorbed society's perception of themselves. Ain't no way you'll get good workers out of that.

So what we had to do is to go back and try to find ways, then, in which we could upgrade their own self-esteem. We started trying to find film that might emphasize the importance of blacks. You know where we found them?

Morris: I'd be interested.

Stephenson: We got them from the U.S. Information Service for films to go overseas -- there was nothing in this country that was directed towards the American market that related to upgrading of blacks in our society,
Stephenson: But we were selling overseas what blacks had done. Okay?

Morris: Very ironic.

Stephenson: And that's what we were finding. So we got them. I mean, we got one on Lena Horne, or we got one that talked about the history of black scientists, et cetera. We showed these and talked with them about blacks, and we gave them a history of blacks that they'd never heard of before.

We tried to get books about blacks out of the public library. We couldn't find them. There were none -- nothing! Then, we started taking a look at the text books. You're starting off with the Dick and Jane stories. I mean, who relates to these? Then you realize that they've never seen anything in print that really related to who they were. They'd never seen anything on film that really related to who they were. They never saw anything on TV that really related to who they were. Nothing!

Morris: At what point in here did you take these narratives back to Ruth, and she decided you should talk to her board?

Stephenson: Oh, I don't know. What year did we talk to the board? I only did that once. I think that was in the early sixties, wasn't it, that I got in to talk with -- late fifties, maybe.

Morris: Yes, so it was as the community consciousness of the blacks' problems and troubles began to --

Stephenson: I think it was after that. It may have been after I went to Brandeis. See, I was at Brandeis in the year '63-'64. I took a year off and went back. And it may have been after I came back from that, although I don't remember -- it was early sixties. I'm pretty sure. She just asked me to come and -- it was sort of an orientation. It was not presentation of a proposal we had currently in front of them. It was really in terms of talking about the social conditions.
5. INTERACTION WITH THE WIDER COMMUNITY

Civil Rights in the 1960s

Stephenson: One of the things I had done in the early sixties was that, following the sit-ins that started off in Greensboro, North Carolina I was asked to speak to the Rotary Club in Richmond. And I remember my wife was helping me to write it. She scratched out one comment, and I thought about it a good while, and I put it back in. Essentially, I said to the group that whenever the civil rights movement hit the boys that I was working with in North Richmond, there would not be any sit-ins because the guys that I worked with dealt with each other -- violence, that they'd been taking out their hostility on each other, that they could do things to each other, and if they were caught, they'd be given a misdemeanor, or it might be a jail. If they did the same thing to a white man, it meant San Quentin for them. Sure.

Morris: I'd like to get back to this. I wonder what you recall about the response of the board at Rosenberg when you talked with them.

Stephenson: Gee, that's a hard one to remember. I can't even remember much about what I said to them, really. They were attentive. They asked good questions, but I can't tell you specifically what questions. I remember some of them, I thought, were more receptive than others. The ones who were not, I felt, were the ones who were not necessarily asking the questions, but the ones who were receptive were asking questions to draw more out. I really can't remember, specifically.

Morris: It was a long time ago.

Stephenson: Also, my memory is not that kind of memory. I can remember more in terms of ideas, conceptual kinds of things, than I can specifics.

Morris: Well, those are beautiful. Going back to your other point: when were you aware that the civil rights movement was beginning to catch hold in Richmond, with the Neighborhood House young people?

Stephenson: It really didn't hit there until I'd say '65, '66. After I came back from Brandeis -- it was in '64 at any rate, I remember we had an outbreak of violence. Oh, I know. It was after the job upgrading pro-
Stephenson: gram had gotten funded by the Labor Department, and we were trying to get the thing renewed.

I operate with an open book. I just talk with the teenagers. They knew where the money was coming from. The community knew where it was coming from. The Labor Department got upset with me a couple of times because the congressman would call them and say: What's happening to that contract for Neighborhood House?

And Labor Department people would come to me and say: Pull the horses off, man. This is no way to do business, putting pressures in that way.

My reaction is, look, I'm working in a community who knows this. They helped elect that man, and they're the ones. [Laughs.]

I don't have to do it. I mean, that was part of my way of operating in the community, was helping them to understand something about the democratic process. At one time in North Richmond, we estimated that 90 percent of the eligible voters in that community were registered to vote and, year after year after year, we had 85 or 90 percent of the eligible voters going to the polls.

Voter Registration and Political Pressures

Morris: That is a remarkable record. Had Neighborhood House ever done a voter registration project?

Stephenson: No. Neighborhood House never did it. But Neighborhood House cooperated with community groups who were doing it for the City of Richmond. We urged them to come in and do North Richmond, and we helped them to find the volunteers in that community, to find the places of cooperation in that community. We knew the community well enough that we could help.

In other words, for my money, you can't isolate North Richmond from the ongoing political processes, and so what we did was to integrate with them. So the voter registration would go right on into that community.

Morris: Was this when George Miller, Jr. was representing Contra Costa County?
Stephenson: He was state senator, and John Knox was elected to the Assembly.*

In fact, during that time, one of the first black people ran for the city council. I was asked if I would attend breakfast meetings or strategy meetings related to his election, and I really got scored by black leadership of the community because I refused to support him.

They said: Look man, you're really letting us down—essentially, I'd been urging them to get involved in the democratic process, et cetera. And so when they did that, and then I stayed back and stood on the sidelines, they didn't like it. My reaction was that I could not take sides in partisan politics.

I lived in Alameda county, and I was very active politically in Alameda county, but when I went into Contra Costa county, I went there as an employee of Neighborhood House, and there was no way in which I could take sides without involving Neighborhood House, and it was not proper for Neighborhood House to take sides. But the tensions were so great sometimes that at one of our own board meetings, I thought we were going to have a fistfight between two board members. These were two whites.

Morris: Was this related in any way to the board agenda?

Stephenson: Nope. Except, one of our board members had become a campaign manager of some candidate—sheriff or something; I'm not sure what it was—and in the paper, to identify him, he had indicated that he was a member of the board of directors of Neighborhood House, and one of the other board members accused him of using Neighborhood as a political—

Morris: Football?

Stephenson: And his reaction was that all he was doing was identifying himself, which was factual, and it did not imply that Neighborhood House was supporting him. It was very intense.

I had gone to the board members at one time because in the voter registration in that community, better than 90 percent of them are registered Democrats.

Morris: This is the blacks?

*George Miller, Jr. served one term in the state assembly, was elected to the state senate in 1950, and died in office, January 1, 1969. John T. Knox was elected at a special election, November 8, 1960, and was chairman of the Committee on Local Government in 1970. Ed.
Stephenson: The black community, and 90 percent of them registered Democratic when they registered. One board member came to me and said: Red, you know as well as I know that they're never going to get anywhere unless they split their registration.

In other words, as long as the blacks were all in the Democratic Party, then the Democratic Party doesn't have to give them anything because that's where they are. Okay?

Morris: Good point.

Stephenson: On the other hand, the Republicans don't have to offer them anything because they know they aren't going to get any votes from them anyway. He was a Republican, and he was out trying to help the Republicans to get the black vote. He was wanting me to go out and really encourage people to register Republican.

Morris: How did the black community feel about this?

Stephenson: I don't know. I didn't ever talk with them about it.

Morris: You stayed out of it.

Stephenson: I mean, I was strictly non-partisan. Neither the Democrats nor the Republicans believed it because when you get down to partisan politics, either you're for me, or you're agin'me, and they never would have believed -- because they knew that I was really active politically. There was no question about that. We'd hold candidates' meetings in the community, but we invited all the candidates. We did the kind of thing the League of Women Voters would do, and we gave everybody an opportunity to speak.

I told this board member that if he'd go to the board and get the board to take a stand --

Morris: On a candidate?

Stephenson: On Neighborhood House urging black people to register Republican, that I would accept that from the board, but I would not accept it from an individual board member. Okay. He happened also to be on the United Crusade and at that point the local Community Chest had joined the United Crusade of the Bay Area.

He was one of the Richmond representatives to United Crusade over here, and so when our budget came up for hearings at the Crusade, he questioned whether the statements coming out of Neighborhood House were accurate because he had been into North Richmond on several occasions, and Neighborhood House was closed on several
Stephenson: nights during the week. Which was true. I mean, after all, there were only two of us working, and we worked three nights a week, and I refused to allow staff to work more than three nights a week.

Morris: When they were carrying a program during the day, too?

Stephenson: Well, yes, but all I'm saying is from a policy point of view — and this was not always true. I mean, in San Francisco, for instance, community centers would hire people with the understanding that night is when you work, or late afternoon. That is, after school and into the evening, and so five days a week you work from three to eight or three to ten kind of thing. Well, I just refused to allow it. I mean, I made a policy that three nights a week is all that a person is scheduled. Now, occasionally, you get something coming up so that you do, but regular schedule meant that instead of him being out there by himself on one night and I'm out there by myself another night, it was scheduled so that we worked together, and it was closed the rest of the time.

What I'm saying is, this guy, from our board, who's on the board itself, comes in and undercuts us at the United Crusade level.

Independence from AFSC, 1955

Morris: Were there any black people on your board then, or now?

Stephenson: Oh, yes. See, the thing got started under the auspices of the Quakers here. In doing so, we created an advisory committee that was made up of people living in North Richmond and supporters in the broader community. So that one-third of the people on the advisory committee were North Richmond, and the rest of them were outside of North Richmond, including a couple of black professional people who lived in Richmond.

So that when I went out to work in '53, I went out there to do it with the Quakers, and they asked me to either lay it down for them, or get the local community to support it. Quakers don't usually go in and run that kind of program for a long period of time. It's just not their policy. So at the end of the first year, I was able to get the advisory committee to consider incorporating, and by the middle of my second year they had done so. They came back to the Quakers and said: Okay, but we're going to need your financial support.

So the Quakers agreed to providing them with a certain amount of money on a dropping-off basis for about three years, as I remember it.
Stephenson: In about July of that year, I guess what they were going to do was to officially take control of it as of January first, say, 1955. I'm not sure of the date, but any rate, when that advisory committee met first after our incorporation papers, so that they were not an advisory committee any longer but a board of directors, and the budget was being transferred to them, the first item on their agenda was my resignation.

Morris: I see. Were you expecting this.

Stephenson: No. I mean, I'd planned it, but they were not expecting it.

Morris: Was this an official resignation?

Stephenson: For my money, it was the only proper thing to do. I mean, the thing had been run by the Quakers, and I had been employed by the Quakers to be there. I did not feel as if this group should just assume or be caught with -- if they didn't like me, feel as if they had to keep me. And so I just put in my resignation.

Morris: What was the response to this?

Stephenson: The reaction was: Ye gods, man. I mean, we did this because we liked what you were doing, and we want to be supportive of what you're doing there. Under no circumstances do we want to take on the responsibility of finding a director, or anything else. I mean, we like what you're doing.

I said: Fine, then let's negotiate for the salary. At that time, I think I was making with the Quakers about $4,500 a year. In other words, I had a $7,200 budget, as I told you earlier.

So they said: Well, what are you suggesting?

I said: Well, I'd like $6,000 per annum. Well, in those days, that wasn't a lot of money, but in Richmond there were only two other executives of community chest agencies that were making $6,000 or more. So it sounded like a big sum, that this young upstart would come in and ask for that kind of money.

They said: Fine.

And I said: Well, now this means that this is what we're getting from the Quakers, and this is the amount then that is going to have to be raised. You're going to have to raise it now.

Oh. So that was the next item of business, then, as to how you raise the man's salary.
Morriss: Or having raised it, how do you come up with it?

Stephenson: So they went to work.

Morriss: How active was the board in fund-raising for the organization?

Stephenson: Well, let's put it this way. All of them did -- oh, I shouldn't say all of them, but there were all kinds of things they did. For instance, the main fund-raising affair for a large part was the cooking of chicken dinners. It was done primarily by people in North Richmond, although some of the women who were from outside would come in and give them some help.

The bulk of the work was really carried on by local people and that was the main fund-raising event for us. Board members helped us in terms of publicity and getting into the paper, use of their names, this kind of thing. But you have to remember that with this kind of board -- one, we did not have the representation of power that is usually found on such boards.

Morriss: This is new kinds of people in leadership?

Stephenson: Yes, for a large part. We had people like the city librarian, who is not a powerhouse at this point. He's a top professional. He's recognized as a professional. We did have Jim Kenney, who was the supervisor from that district, but once again, Jim was an elected official, and not necessarily a power. We had -- [pauses] blocking on names now -- a black lawyer, George Carroll, who is now a judge. I'd say there was only one person in that whole group who in those days could give us a hundred dollars without really hurting. They were not moneyed people, and they didn't have cocktail parties and rub elbows with moneyed people.

Director's Personal Growth

Morriss: I was thinking of it, again, in terms of their consciousness of foundations as a source of money. Did Ruth Chance come over and meet with the whole board to find out their ideas about a proposal?

Stephenson: No. Mrs. Ganyard came over once before she resigned from Rosenberg, and she came out to see the project, not the board. We had people from North Richmond there to meet her. Ruth never met with the board. She came over on a couple of occasions, once again, to look at the project. She was very much interested in meeting some of the youth who were involved. She went out on some of the work sites, where
Stephenson: the youth were working. She was able to communicate and talk with the youth.

I did not involve board members to come and actually participate when I would come to San Francisco for such hearings, until -- let's see, after I'd been to Brandeis. I mean, it was in the last few years that I took it on myself to bring other people with me. To the United Crusade hearings, we did. In other words, that was a board, because they were oriented --

Morris: It was one board talking to another.

Stephenson: That's right. It was all volunteers kind of thing. So in that one, people would come, but it was part of my own growth, in terms of involving and using -- for a large part, Neighborhood House was really an ego trip of Red Stephenson. You have to recognize this. I know this sounds crass, but it was, and I'm not apologetic for that because there was not enough money in it to justify a person working out there for the money. Therefore, if he wasn't on some kind of an ego trip, there wasn't --

[Tape turned over.]

Stephenson: What was I saying just then? Oh, about my ego.

Morris: You were saying it was an ego trip.

Stephenson: Yes. You see, the thing is that the only way in which you get this kind of thing done is with somebody who has sort of arrogance or a strong ego that would go in and tolerate this kind of thing.

Morris: It's also called dedication. In 1950, we didn't talk about ego trips, did we?

Stephenson: No, I guess we didn't, but you see, I never thought of it in terms of dedication because for a large part it was something I had to do.

Morris: In what sense?

Stephenson: In the sense that I had a strong commitment to do something about black-white relationships in America, and I was frustrated to know how to get hold of it, how to tackle it, what to do to deal with it. I'd had this thing -- you know, it's very interesting as to what's happened in the civil rights movement to some degree for a long time. The white southerner who gets converted, it's near about like a religion to him to deal in this whole area of black-white relations.

I remember in the meeting I was asked to attend in Berkeley,
Stephenson: shortly after I came here, when Governor Warren called a conference on unemployment, back in 1949.* This was before the Korean War. A group was going to get together to see whether or not we could push through such a radical idea as a fair employment practice commission for the State of California.

Morris: This is a preliminary planning for the conference?

Stephenson: For the conference, in which we would talk about an FEPC recommendation getting through that conference. We met in Berkeley, and there was only one person in that group that had not been born and raised in the South.

Morris: What kind of reception did you have at the conference to this recommendation?

Stephenson: Not very good. It was before its time.

Morris: You said earlier that you had a sense that there would be violence coming when the civil rights movement worked its way west. What kind of impact did that have on the Neighborhood House activities and in the neighborhood around it?

Stephenson: Okay. One of the reasons I'm saying this is that -- and this was six months before Cambridge, Maryland, broke loose, and that was the first community in which violence took place that was related to the civil rights movement.

Morris: Did you make this comment because you'd been back there to see some of those sit-ins, or was it out of your own personal reasoning as a southerner and a Quaker?

Stephenson: No. It was related to the fact that here you were getting young college students who have a stake in our society who are willing to do a sit-in in a non-violent way, and they were much more oriented to doing a non-violent approach, and I knew about Martin Luther King in Alabama. In fact, I had helped organize a busload of people -- I won't say a bus. It was eight people, maybe it was, in a VW bus that went down -- interracial group that did the courageous thing of driving interracially across the southern states into Alabama to support Martin Luther King in the first marches in Mobile and Montgomery, Alabama. I helped organize that and was very tempted to go, but didn't feel that I could leave Neighborhood House for that long. Maybe I should have.

* See Bancroft Library interviews with Dean Ewald T. Grether, who chaired this conference, and Merrell F. Small, who staffed it. Ed.
Stephenson: But at any rate, I'd been in touch with the movement. All I'm saying is, when you get the kind of fervor that was there, translated into the young men that I was working with, there was no way in which you were going to contain them to sit down and turn the other cheek. It was going to be violent, and I said to the Rotary Club that I predict that there's going to be bloodshed in the streets of America.

I had two people in that meeting who were so upset with me that they could hardly speak to me. I finally got their cards, and a week or two, or a few days later, I was able to go over and see them with one board member and one staff member, who was black, and sat down, and they became two of the first people to hire young men out of Neighborhood House.

Morris: So you made some converts.

Stephenson: Sure, but at first, it really upset people. But you see, I was aware of it.

Persistent Suspicions

Stephenson: Did I tell you the last time you were here that before Neighborhood House was created --

Morris: You were telling me what Richmond was like.

Stephenson: Did I tell you about the meeting I had with the manager of Bank of America and Ford Motor Company and Standard Oil Company?

Morris: No.

Stephenson: Well, the guy who was manager of the Bank of America at that time was really a very decent human being. He later had a stroke, and has since died. During the days that I was going in and out of North Richmond, I'd drop in at the bank, and he'd see me.

He would sometimes call me over and we'd sit down at his desk and chat, and he was rather bewildered at these changes in Richmond. I guess I had another perspective on it from anybody else that he talked to had. As I said, I found him to be a very open kind of person. So he, through the Chamber of Commerce man, arranged for a luncheon one day, in which the manager of Standard Oil, the Mechanic's Bank, which is locally owned, the publisher of the newspaper, manager of Ford, before it moved out of the city -- I mean,
Stephenson: these are the power people, okay?

Now, we sat down and started talking about what I felt needed to be done in North Richmond, and essentially it was a community center in the sense of a pulling together, trying to find ways of helping the people there to really improve the lot of North Richmond and working through the people, in terms of using the energies that they already were putting into building the homes and building that community, but had not gotten any help, and some additional help was obviously needed. And they asked all kinds of questions.

Well, I'm enough of a salesman to know when I'm making a sale, and it was obvious that I was making a sale. I mean, I was answering questions in such a way that they felt their questions were answered, and in the middle of this, they stopped and started talking about golf. I was fatally wounded. I mean — so five, ten minutes later, the manager of Bank of America, who seemed to be a little bit embarrassed at what was going on, said: Well, boys, what kind of answer are you going to give Mr. Stephenson?

One of them turned to me and said: Look, Mr. Stephenson, you know as well as we know that what you are proposing will attract Negroes to Richmond like honey attracts flies. If you can figure out some way in which we can get rid of them, you can have all the money you want.

Morris: That direct?

Stephenson: It was that direct. And about in those words. Now, we went ahead and created Neighborhood House. I went back to school for two years. About three years later I come back to work full-time in that community, and so the police followed my movements. A Baptist minister, black, preached about my political affiliations. And the question I'd ask people when this would come up is that I was not aware that they had so much respect for what the Communists offered, because I didn't.

Morris: Are you saying that the matter of whether you were a Communist was raised?

Stephenson: Yes. Not overtly. It was sort of quietly, you know. For instance, I tried to get a guy in North Richmond who worked with the Navy to be on the board of Neighborhood House. He never would come, and finally, when I got to know him — because he was a very able man; he became a real leader in that community — the reason for it was that the Navy told him that he should be careful because of my political affiliations — this was the McCarthy period, remember. So while it was not overt, what I'm saying is the question I'd raise.
Stephenson: with people is, given the fact that this is a Judeo-Christian society, why didn't someone raise a question about which church I came from, rather than which political party?

Morris: That's curious, the way such attitudes affect things.
6. NATIONAL INTEREST: FORD FOUNDATION AND NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MENTAL HEALTH

**Seeking to Define Urban Needs**

**Morris:** Going ahead a couple of years, at what point did the Ford Foundation come in on some of your Neighborhood House projects?

**Stephenson:** Ford is a little longer story. Ford Foundation goes back to the days when we first created Neighborhood House, and the Bakers would come to San Francisco and make a report to our Community Relations Committee, of which Clark Kerr was chairman.

**Morris:** Is this our UC Clark Kerr?

**Stephenson:** This is the former president of the university. This is when he was still heading up the Institute of Industrial Relations, before he became provost.

As I listened to the Bakers make their reports on the community one night, I became terribly frustrated, because here we were, feeling as if we were doing a hell of a lot. This was one of the big projects, and we'd really knocked ourselves out to get this kind of thing in. I mean, this was really one of the big things going. It was one of the highlights of the local Quaker social service programs, and as I listened to their reports, I felt the inadequacy of it in relationship to what was needed in that community.

The question I asked, as I told you last time, was whether there was any way in which we could make or determine what would have to be done with that community to change from being a place that is a detriment for children to be raised in to the point where it would be a creative place for children. And Clark Kerr says: Red, it seems to me that what you're really trying to do is change society.

And I said: Well, if that's what it takes in order to make the North Richmond change, then I am.

Well, this bugged me. So that even though I went back to school, part of my motivation in going back to school was related
Stephenson: How do you change communities like that in our society? And I remember trying to write papers, and Gertrude Wilson (she'd been very much involved in the settlements in Chicago, I was very delighted she came in) and I had some long discussions about how you really change this kind of thing.

So when I went into Neighborhood House -- well, before going there, I knew that Ford had finally gotten started. In fact, I helped write some proposals related to Ford Foundation; although they were not funded then, they were later funded by another organization for some farm work in Visalia and Tulare County that the Quakers ran for many, many years. The more I worked at this thing, the more I realized --

Morris: This was while Ford was still out here? Didn't they have a think tank in Pasadena in the early '50s?

Stephenson: Yes, they had a think tank here, but this was after they started their grant-making operations.

Collaboration with UC Survey Research Center

So Charles Glock, who headed up the Survey Research Center and is now the chairman of the department of sociology at UC Berkeley, had been one of the work-campers in North Richmond one Saturday, in which he and a gal who became his wife painted a bathroom in one of the little shacks in North Richmond --

Morris: [Laughs.] He told me that story. I think that's a lovely beginning to a married life.*

Stephenson: Well, I went over and had lunch one day with Charlie and said: Charlie, these are some of my ideas. I need some help with it. What would it take in order to get a proposal put together?

He said: It takes expertise, time, and money.

I said: Okay, how much of which? Well, he thought that between us we could get the expertise from some other people on campus that would be working with us. I said: Fine. How much time?

I'm not sure what he told me, but I said: Cut it in half. I'm too impatient.

*See interview with Professor Glock in this volume.
Morris: [Laughs.] I need it now.

Stephenson: Yes. Money? I said: Okay, tell me.

        So he did. I said: Okay, if I get our board to give me the
        summer off to work on the project, can we cut that in half?

        So what we did was to sit down and work out a proposal. We
        got the thing put together. What we came up with was a proposal
        that really was in two parts. One was what we called the program
        end of it, and the other one was the research end. We made the
        proposal that the research would be an independent grant to the
        Survey Research Center that would be given dependent on what --

Morris: The program being funded?

Stephenson: Program, right. The program was in two parts. One is what do you
        do in North Richmond? And the other is what you do in order to de-
        velop the linkage to the broader community so that what you do in
        North Richmond has some outlets, because you can't do it all in
        North Richmond. I mean, you've got to have some friends on the
        outside.

        Well, Ralph Kramer, who is now at UC Berkeley, was then head-
        ing up the Community Welfare Council, and he and I worked very closely
        together.

Morris: In Richmond?

Stephenson: In Richmond. At that time, it was just a West Contra Costa County
        Community Welfare Council. And Ralph and I worked very closely to-
        gether. We got one of his sub-committees to do a study in North
        Richmond. I would be able to get adults in North Richmond to come in
        and serve on committees, which was a very unusual thing for a council
        to have people from a community such as that. You know, all that
        kind of sophisticated committees. Anyway, as I said, he and I worked
        beautifully together. We helped organize neighborhood councils to-
        gether because I had one going in North Richmond. I felt as if I had
        to have other neighborhood councils in order to --

Morris: Feed back to each other.

Stephenson: And he agreed. In fact, he and I wrote the proposal. We got him
        money to get a staff person to help create other neighborhood councils
        and et cetera. So what I'm saying is that Ralph and I just worked --
        just like this. So I invited him to come in on the writing of it, and
        he says: I'm going back for my PhD. I just don't have time. Going
        for that kind of thing is pie in the sky.

        I said: Fine.
Morris: This was a couple of hundred thousand dollars you were talking about, wasn't it?

Stephenson: Oh, it was more than that. It was more like a million. This was like a million-dollar kind of thing that were talking about.

Morris: This is the whole, "If you could, all the things you would do in the community?"

Stephenson: You betcha. You betcha. It was a big one.

Morris: Oh, my.

Stephenson: So when we got the thing put together, we went to Ralph and said: Okay, Ralph. This thing really should not go in as a Neighborhood House proposal. It should go in as a Community Welfare Council proposal with Neighborhood House under sub-contract to the Council.

He said: Great! If you've got something to hand to me, I don't mind -- you know.

So we said: Fine. So we went to Ford with it, and very interestingly, a former colleague of mine was a consultant for Ford. And he came to my house one night and talked and told me all the reasons as to why I would not get the contract.

Morris: This was somebody you'd worked with in the Quakers?

Stephenson: No, this was somebody I'd gone back to school with.

Oakland Great Cities Project, 1962-65

Stephenson: It so happened, that after Ford turned us down, the City of Oakland was given a Ford grant.

Morris: On the Great Cities, the school improvement project.

Stephenson: On the Great Cities. That first grant came out of the Great Cities program, in which what they were proposing had most of the elements that we had included in our proposal, up in North Richmond, and Charles --

Morris: This is something that I've always wondered about.

Stephenson: Right. And Charles Glock came to me and said: Red, I've been asked to head up the research for the Great Cities program in Oakland.
Stephenson: And I said: Great!

He says: But their ideas are yours.

I said: That doesn't matter. This thing is bigger than any one person. If you can do it -- you know.

He said: Well, I told them that it was Red's project, and if Red goes with the project, I'll do the research. Otherwise, count me out.

Morris: Good for him.

Stephenson: And he says: I think we can get this thing funded through NIMH. I've already made some contacts there, and they have shown interest.

I said: Fine. So we did. We did finally get part of it funded from NIMH, and that's a whole 'nother story. But in the process of Ford turning it down, two things happened. One, I got acquainted with Dyke Brown and David Hunter, and one day Hunter came out to the Coast. I think our application was still pending, or it had been turned down and I'd gone back to them to see if we could save part of it. [Knock at the door, tape interruption.] -- anyway, David Hunter said that Dyke Brown wanted him to bring me to New York and offer me a job.

Morris: With Ford?

Stephenson: With Ford, at the national office.

Morris: What did you say?

Stephenson: My wife and I considered their offer for forty-eight hours and then rejected it.

Morris: I see. What was the thinking on putting that kind of money into Oakland rather than Richmond, where all this groundwork had been done?

Stephenson: Richmond was not a great city. They didn't feel as if anything that they did in Richmond would have an impact nationally, whereas if they could have done something Oakland, it would have had an impact.

Morris: You say: If they could have -- Is the general consensus that the Oakland project was not a success?

Stephenson: That's my -- I'm not sure what the general consensus -- I guess to a large degree it is who you talk with, but I have questions about it.
Evaluating Study Halls and Involving Administrators and School Boards

Stephenson: The other thing was that I was able to salvage a hundred thousand dollars for the study hall program, and we were able to carry a fairly large project -- with some evaluation of it through the University of California School of Education people. We tried to get them involved in taking a look at what needed to be done.

Morris: Yes, I have noted there that there was a conference on study halls. Was that part of this project?

Stephenson: Yes. That was Ford money. That was a study hall study. You know, one of the things that I found in going to the schools was that I would meet with school administrators, and I'd try to talk about what's happening with the black students -- or the Negro in those days -- in your schools, and their reaction was: Well, we just don't see color.

And you go into a classroom, and it's well-integrated because they would assign students on an alphabetical basis to the seats. You go into the athletic teams, and they were integrated. Anything that the school sponsored, it would be integrated. But you go into the lunchroom, and you have kids sitting in duets, in triads and quartets, and they would all be segregated.

Morris: One color.

Stephenson: Right. And there'd be occasional groups, here, yon, in which there would be a breakthrough. You take a look in the afternoon as they're coming out of school, and once again these little groupings would all be segregated. The school was very proud of their team, it was well-integrated, and yet at the end of a successful basketball game, the black team members and their girl friends and supporters would go to one drive-in, and the whites would go to another place.

So some of us at Neighborhood House really tried to figure out: how can we get school people really facing up to some of these problems? And we decided there had to be a very prestige-ful kind of program. What we ended up with was going to the University Extension and asking them if they'd put it on, and they said they'd put it on if they had the money. So I said: Fine. How much, and what?

We set aside five thousand dollars for the project. We were able to get Dyke Brown as the guest speaker, and we got an anthropologist out of Southern California -- I can't remember who it was. We got Evilio Grillo out of Oakland, who is a very bright, able, articulate --

Morris: Very.
Stephenson: We held it up at Healdsburg at the Hexagon House, and we held it during the middle of the week so that the administrators had to get clearing from their schools to be out of the city, rather than on a week-end, when they could slip off to this kind of thing and nobody would know it.

Morris: So that they'd have to take some word back as to what they'd experienced?

Stephenson: That's right. And we limited this thing to superintendents and -- I'm not sure, but I think it was really very top-level people. By the time we got this thing moving, I was getting telephone calls from San Francisco schools and others on this side of the bay, who became very irritated that this was being pulled off without their being invited, which is exactly what I was hoping for. I was hoping it would be the kind of thing that people wanted to get into.

Essentially, we got them there and hit them, but hit them hard, and then had a chance for them to open up, and I had people saying to each other: Look we've been going to conferences together for the last fifteen years, and I never realized that you had some of the same problems that we have.

In other words, at the professional conferences they hadn't been talking about black-white problems in their schools. It was the first of that [pounds fist for emphasis] kind of thing that I know that happened.

Morris: That's fantastic.

Stephenson: And then, the next one we did was to follow that up with a similar conference, in which we invited -- I think the first one we invited principals and superintendents, and the second one we invited superintendents and school board people, because I remember Carol Sibley was one of the people who went to this other one.*

Morris: You said David Hunter was part of this. Dyke Brown, I know, is now running the Athenian School in Walnut Creek. Did David Hunter spend some time out here, too?

Stephenson: Well, Dave was working as a staff person under Dyke in Ford, before

*Member of the Berkeley school board, 1961-71, during which time the 12,000-student district was integrated, kindergarten through high school. Ed.
Stephenson: he went to the Stern Fund. He traveled all over the country, including coming out here to talk with people who were applying for funds.

Morris: Did the Stern Fund have an office here in San Francisco?

Stephenson: No, no.

Morris: This name has come up several times, and I would like to identify him.

Stephenson: There was what was called the Stern Family Fund, and David went to work for them. Then there became a split within the family, and some of them pulled out their money. So the Stern Family Fund is smaller now, but still active. They used to be in New Orleans, then they moved to New York. But they've given a lot of money away in California. In fact, he even has his board meetings here in San Francisco sometimes. He doesn't have an office here.

Morris: Are there any family roots in California?

Stephenson: No, it's just a matter that there are some very imaginative, creative, way-out kind of things that David Hunter is interested in and willing to fund here. He is one great person.
Encouraging and Keeping Local Leadership

Morris: Before I forget, I did want to ask you about the grant that gave Neighborhood House enough money so that it could make its own kinds of grants to the community.

Stephenson: One of the problems that we've had is little groups in our society -- who are not sophisticated enough to go to the regular foundations to get money, and even if they did, oftentimes don't have the capacity to do an adequate accounting of their funds; and yet, many of us who are sophisticated enough to write the kinds of proposals don't necessarily have the contact with people who are in the most need of the services.

Morris: Or see things the way they do, as to how the services might be provided?

Stephenson: That's right. And what I was trying for was to come up with a mechanism by which we could strengthen the indigenous organizations in low-income communities with the resources that are on the outside, without the outside controlling or directing those institutions.

I had proposed at one time that a foundation might set up a sort of California foundation, in which they would invest money, and for which we would work out a system by which communities such as a Hunter's Point, one of the farm communities in Tulare County -- in other words, I was thinking of three or four small communities, to try it out, appointing representatives to this board. And then the groups in these neighborhoods would have certain guidelines by which they could apply for the funds. It never has been picked up.

But nevertheless, Rosenberg allowed us with one of their grants -- I'm not sure how much money was involved; not a heck of a lot -- to try this out in North Richmond. It was really with very mixed success, I must say. But there was one little group, for instance, that had a couple of people who had, on a volunteer basis, been working with a church group. They were doing things with these kids after school during the week, in their home, like crafts, because they were con-
Stephenson: Concerned women who knew these young kids didn't have very much to do, and they loved it.

Well now, how do you take that and make it something else? So we put a guideline on it that you had to have at least two churches -- maybe we put three, I can't remember -- of different denominations working together. So that we would not accept an application out of one church. If we did, the whole money would be absorbed in the church very fast. And so we said that you had to work with somebody in another denomination before you'd be eligible as a church, or it had to be two or three other kinds of community groups.

What we did was to set up a group in that community who screened the applications. They made recommendations, then, to Neighborhood House, as to which ones were to get the money. As the beginning, it was not tight enough and one group, for instance, got money to establish a black library, and the money disappeared before the library could ever get any books in. What I'm saying is, that we didn't put the controls on it as tight as we should.

I still think there's a lot of merit to what we were talking about because there are a lot of people who had some great ideas in that community. I remember one woman, for instance, who finished high school at the age of sixty-four.

Morris: Good for her!

Stephenson: Who, had she lived twenty years later, would have been a powerhouse in this nation. I mean, a most articulate, able, bright woman, and I remember before we started with some of the job-upgrading things that we did, that she was pushing awfully hard for me to help establish sort of home industries, and came to San Francisco and tried to find out what could be done to get the garment industry to home industry into North Richmond.

Morris: Did she talk to any Chinese ladies who work in some of those --

Stephenson: No. But part of the problem was -- you know, there were a lot of unreal kinds of things to it. But what I'm saying is that this is a woman with a great deal of drive, with concern, but there were no resources at this point to really put the thing together anywhere anyhow.

Morris: To help her learn how to do bigger and better --?

Stephenson: Yes.

Morris: Is this the kind of thing foundations like Glide and Vanguard have also been moving toward?
Stephenson: Well, yes, I think they certainly are giving money to groups that the other foundations would never touch, for various reasons, but I don't see any of them really setting up a mechanism in which in a neighborhood --

At the neighborhood level, are you setting it up in such a way that you say to that neighborhood: Here is $50,000 for the next five years. You come back to us with some guidelines as to how you're going to use it. And, in terms of the group that has the control of it -- not using it itself, but how are you going to spread it out to other organizations, to the indigenous organizations in this group? So you can see what happens to that neighborhood, in terms of where they would put their money.

Morris: Very interesting idea.

Stephenson: They haven't done this.

Morris: We've talked about Rosenberg at some length. I haven't asked you about John May and the San Francisco Foundation. Did they come through on different kinds of proposals? Does John ask different questions?

Stephenson: For a long time, John didn't give money outside of San Francisco.

Morris: Well, their assets were not too large until the late sixties.

Stephenson: That's right. Now, he gave us money at one time, if I'm not mistaken, for a neighborhood park that people were building. The neighborhood council went to the school board and wanted ground, acreage there, set aside as a park, and they went in and did a tremendous job -- all volunteer labor, except that the guy who really put it together finally died of a heart attack -- not because of that work; he had a bad heart. But he had a lot of leadership in putting that thing together, and after he died, nobody else really had it as their project.

This is, once again, what happens in all society. In other words, you have an individual who has something and can make it go, if he can get a little resources to go along with him, but then, if the indi

Morris: It never happens.

Stephenson: That's right. You've got to have that leadership. Another thing that was happening to us in North Richmond on that score was that the people who had the leadership in the community also oftentimes would have the capacity to get a better job or more stable job and therefore would be more mobile upward and move out.
Stephenson: In the fifteen years that I was out there, I know of only one family who moved into the community by choice. Everybody else came there because they couldn't afford to go anywhere else. That's no way to build a community. And it meant that the leadership that we worked with kept moving out on us all the time.

Morris: So that you were successful in developing leadership, but it went on to other things.

Stephenson: That's right.

Morris: As you yourself have gone on to other things.

Stephenson: But also, it means that you really do not develop a community in the sense of you and I thinking about a community, because when people move into our community, oftentimes they are already or have the potential for being a leader. Whereas, in North Richmond, you'd never get that.

Accomplishment and Compromise

Morris: Would you say that in your fourteen years you did demonstrate some of the things that you had hoped for when you began there?

Stephenson: No. I don't think yet that anybody that I've been able to see in this country has really put together, conceptually or in practice, the total integration of building a neighborhood. In order to get things done in our society, if you try to take on the whole world, you begin to water down your efforts, and therefore, in order to do something, you've got to be able to pinpoint. So that you come in and you say: Well, gee, here's a problem of housing, and therefore, we've got to deal with housing.

And so what do we get? We get public housing, right? So when we get the public housing, we find that our policies, the very basis on which we've made the compromises to get the public housing, has created a homogeneous community, which is all low-income. You have the same problem in that housing that you had in North Richmond, because we set an income level for anybody living there. And therefore, if they get an income above that, we force them out. So that the policies related to housing may be good in terms of getting society to say: Okay, we need to subsidize it for low-income families. But the society says: By damn we're not going to subsidize it for $20,000-a-year people.

Then people come back and say: If you go and subsidize housing, look what you get. I can name you one problem right after another problem that we create when we attempt to solve this kind of thing.
Stephenson: Such as, at the moment, we are now coming in and plugging for more money to give to the unemployed so that we can create jobs, and yet we are saying on the other hand: They should be paying more for their food stamps. So the very person that you're giving the job to you take the money away from because you're not subsidizing --

Morris: By charging more for his food.

Stephenson: Or saying to him: You're no longer eligible for a child-care center. Who are you kidding? And the child-care people are not involved with creating subsidized housing, and the people who are trying to promote a better health program are not involved in child-care centers.

Morris: Why did you decide to leave Neighborhood House? Was it difficult to depart after all those years?

Stephenson: It was past time for me to leave. Yes, it was hard -- I left my heart with the people of North Richmond.

**Prevention or Band-aids for Society's Ills**

Morris: Is there anything that foundations, particularly on the local level, could do that they haven't yet?

Stephenson: Yes. One of the questions I've raised with Mr. Paley, at San Francisco Foundation (he sent out a questionnaire some months ago asking former people who'd received money from them to give them some reactions to where they'd spent the money and et cetera, et cetera) -- I didn't feel as if I wanted to get into all that, but I was raising some questions as to whether or not it's time for foundations to set aside part of their resources to try to raise the issues and sharpen the issues that relate to the causes of the problems. So that they can get involved in what I'd refer to as preventive work, rather than wait until the problem arises, and then come in and try to put on a little band-aid.

I think I'd be very frustrated in continuing the band-aid approach. The foundations now are getting to the size and having the resources that they might be able to do -- [sighs] thinking through and getting some leadership on where this nation should be going. I don't see much of that, except I think the Ford came as near to it as anyone in trying for it, in the concept that they had regarding the Great Cities programs.

Morris: And yet, when Ford tried it on a very large scale, they seem to have run up against resistance in government.
Stephenson: Now, I think part of it is that Ford has not been able to help us to really understand what the issues are. Let's take the one now at the moment in terms of the inflation. Who in the hell, really, is — and I was in a meeting the other day, and they were talking about all kinds of things, including government spending, and when people talked about government spending, they really were talking about HEW, and I finally came up and said: Well, you talk about government spending, except $95 billion of our government money is military. What affect does this have?

Well, that's a sacred cow. When people talk about the high cost of government, it's really in terms of the welfare and the health programs and the things that are really going out to people. It's not in terms of the money that we're giving to Lockheed to keep them alive.

Morris: That's been called the biggest welfare recipient in the country.

Stephenson: All right. And all I'm saying is that at some point, we ought to take some looks at this. I mean, I'd like to see foundations really get in and help us with these kinds of issues.

Morris: In other words, you think that if foundations in any area, or as a group, took this approach, then it might then have an influence on public policy, in the governmental sense?

Stephenson: I hope so. I don't think you're going to have much affect on Washington unless you can come back at the local levels and help some of us at this point on the complexity — what we're doing is making our campaigns, and the people who will get elected in 1976 for a large part will be those who will oversimplify the problem. And the person who comes back and tries to help educate us will not get elected.

Part of that is that you have a constituency out here that has not been involved in talking about society's problems in a conceptual kind of way.

Morris: It's easier to talk about golf, as the businessmen's group did.

Stephenson: I know, very easy to talk about golf.

Morris: We've come to the end of the tape.

Stephenson: I'm afraid that we're talking too much about me and society, rather than the foundations.
Morris: I think foundations are quite interested in individuals and society. Thank you for the interview.

[End of interview.]
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The career of Caroline Moore Charles in community affairs represents the broad range of contributions that have been made to American life by women in volunteer leadership. This oral history touches on her youth in the then-small Valley town of Stockton, student days at Stanford, experience in the League of Women Voters and other organizations, and focuses on the twenty-five years (1948-1975) she spent on the board of the Rosenberg Foundation.

Mrs. Charles's comments begin with the years of the strong influence of Charles de Young Elkus, Sr., in developing the Foundation's early capacity to seek out likely organizations in need of funds for the welfare of children and youth and continue with some of the theories and activities concerning the young that proliferated in the 1950s. By the 1960s, her remarks indicate, this small California foundation began to be recognized nationally as a pacesetter in responding to emerging issues in this area of social concern. A well-built, handsome woman, Mrs. Charles described these experiences with wit and vigor.

Organization has been her major interest in the many activities she has undertaken: how to start a group, varieties of boards of directors, the kinds of internal strengths and weaknesses that occur, relations between board and staff. Drawing on her own experience as a Stanford trustee, a member of the board of the Public Broadcasting System, and in setting up and advising a variety of service auxiliaries and youth groups, she presents valuable insights into how decisions are made, with or without controversy. This kind of understanding, of course, is basic to evaluating the potential of applicants of foundation grants.

Throughout the interview, Mrs. Charles returns to her belief that the best grants are often of small amounts, enabling trustees to feel a personal satisfaction that the grant really makes a difference and providing a means of access to accomplishment and recognition for unsophisticated and aspiring organizations.

This interview was recorded in three sessions, October 1 and 16 and November 11, 1974, at the Charles's home on Russian Hill overlooking San Francisco Bay. Mrs. Charles would meet the interviewer in the gracious off-white and persimmon living room, with its touches of oriental art. Recording would begin, accompanied by coffee, about ten o'clock in the morning. By that hour Mrs. Charles would usually have been to a meeting and attended to a number of matters by telephone. When the transcript of the interview was ready for review, Mrs. Charles was recovering from serious illness. She did read it,
with the assistance of her husband, attorney Allan Charles; each made minor revisions in wording and corrected spelling of a few names. It is hoped that further interviews will be recorded later to document Mrs. Charles's work as a trustee of Stanford University and in public broadcasting.

Interviewer-Editor

28 July 1976
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Vice President, Board of Trustees, Stanford University, Stanford, California
Board of Directors, World Affairs Council of Northern California, San Francisco
President, Rosenberg Foundation, San Francisco
Vice President, Board of Directors, California Theater Foundation (ACT)
Board of Directors, National Council on Alcoholism, San Francisco Council
Board of Directors, Auxiliary to San Francisco General Hospital
Honorary Member, Junior League of San Francisco

Clubs:
Town and Country Club, San Francisco
Century Club, San Francisco

Formerly:
Lecturer in Community Service, Mills College 1949-59
President, League of Women Voters of San Francisco 1948-50
Member, Defense Advisory Comm. on Women in the Services, Washington, D.C. 1961-64
Secretary, Advisory Board of Health, San Francisco 1958-64
President, Edgewood Orphanage 1960-64
President, Katherine Delmar Burke School, San Francisco 1965-69

Born: Caroline Moore, Stockton, California
Stockton High School, 1923; Stanford University, B.A. Mathematics, 1927.
Cap and Gown Honor Society, Stanford since 1926
President, Chi Omega Social Sorority, Stanford, 1927.

Married: Allan Earle Charles, Stanford B.A., 1925; J.D., 1927
(S.F. Law Firm - Lillick, Wheat, Adams and Charles)

Two daughters: Jean (Mrs. Andrew D'Anneo) Stanford B.A., 1952
one daughter, four sons, San Francisco

Nini (Mrs. Michael McCon) Stanford, 1955
three sons: (San Francisco)
[Date of Interview: 1 October 1974]

1. FAMILY AND CHILDHOOD

Stockton Early Settlers

Morris: We'd like to start with the background of your own interest in philanthropic and civic activities. When did you get started in this?

Charles: It certainly wasn't a family tradition, by any means, because my family—as you know, I was born in Stockton and so were my parents. And their parents had come across the plains. They arrived in Stockton in about 1850.

Morris: Did they? Right in the beginning of California statehood.

Charles: Yes, and also of Stockton.

My mother and father were extremely good people and extremely fond of each other. There were four children, of whom I was the eldest—three girls and finally a son.

I don't know how my parents managed not to make us feel inadequate as persons, because they thought of the boy so much. We used to hear it all the time, you know, about how they're going to have a boy. I had two maiden aunts on my mother's side—her name was Yardley—and they used to talk all the time about that boy that was going to come. And yet, I don't think it ever affected me or my two youngest sisters with a feeling that there was anything inadequate about us. So something must have been more tactful than they realized about that. I don't know that we want to go into this too much, except to say that my mother hadn't even finished high school. And that was because her mother was an invalid.

I don't know whether my grandmother was a real invalid, or whether it was just bearing all those children. She was still of the generation where you just had one child after another, and she lost two or three children by death. I think a great many of those women retreated into a kind of invalidism. It must have been to protect themselves.
Morris: It must have been hard on them.

Charles: Yes, I think so. So my mother was the oldest living girl. I think there had been another girl who had died some years before.

My mother was born in 1876, which always interested me as a significant American date, you know. Then she left high school and stayed home to run the household. She was a great deal like my grandfather in temperament. He was a very dominating, tough man. I didn't know him well. He was alive during my early years, but I didn't have time to listen to him. I mean, he would have told us all about coming across the plains and those early days if anybody would have listened. That's the way children are, of course.

Mother, as I say, had stayed home from school and had become the head of the household, really, as far as the domestic side of it went, and my grandmother was just a silent, little, hunched woman whom I remember very distinctly. She outlived my grandfather by several years, but I can't even remember hearing her put two words together, or talk at all.

My two maiden aunts, with whom she lived, were devoted to her, and those two aunts continued their education. It was really my Aunt Emma who decided that I should go to Stanford. I was a very bright child, and Aunt Emma had heard of this college, you see, that was just starting. Of course, it was in 1923 that I went off to college, and Stanford had started in 1891. Aunt Emma had always sort of hoped she could go there, but it was not within the realm of possibility, because it wasn't the way my grandfather would have thought.

Morris: He didn't think that women needed an education?

Charles: I don't believe he would have thought of it. But the two aunts were quite independent. My Aunt Emma was the more timid one of the two, and Bess, who was the youngest, was the ornery one, who did as she darned pleased anyway. She went to normal school. Remember that word?

Morris: I do. I've wondered why teacher training was considered 'normal' school.

Charles: I doubt if 'normal' had anything to do with normal as we think of it. I don't know what it means, but Bess did take off and become a schoolteacher; she went and taught. Her first teaching was in a small town near Stockton. Banta was the name of it—a little, tiny place. She lived in a household just the way they did in the early days, and ultimately came back into the Stockton school system.
Charles: But what I really wanted to say was that the idea of community work was not something that either branch of my family would have ever thought of at all.

My father would never have thought of being a councilman, or whatever you have, in Stockton. He just didn't think that way, and neither did my mother, really. But the thing that interests me, looking back, and that I don't really understand, is that my mother's family was very much closer to us in typical style. Mother's two sisters, my aunts, and my grandmother were part of our daily lives. My father's sister, Grace, lived in Stockton; she was married to a man named Frank Viebrock. They had a son and a daughter. I never knew my father's parents. They were not educated people. But it's kind of interesting: they had very high standards of and respect for education, which, of course, was true of the whole of America. The feeling was that education was the way people were going to improve themselves.

Everybody knew everybody in Stockton. Although my parents didn't move in a social world in Stockton, they were considered solid citizens of the town.

Aspirations and Attitudes

Charles: But it was Aunt Emma's inspiration that I should go to Stanford. I had, you know, a straight A record in high school.

Morris: And you majored in math?

Charles: Math, yes.

Morris: That's pretty remarkable.

Charles: Not really, because I'm convinced that math is just a gift. You look at things mathematically, you understand how numbers relate to each other, and so I never thought anything very much of being able to do mathematics, because I just knew how to do it.

Morris: Were there many women in the advanced math classes?

Charles: There were two other women; this is high school now, I'm talking about--two other girls who were both good at mathematics, and with both of them, too, it was a natural thing that they knew. One of them got into Stanford at the same time I did. I don't know where she is now; I haven't seen or even heard of her for years. The other girl came from a very social family, a very beautiful girl, but there
Charles: was an element of irresponsibility in her nature, and I don't know where she went to college. She wasn't particularly interested in going to Stanford. She might have gone down to UC. I really don't remember what happened to her, either.

I remember an incident in a chemistry class, where I had a poor young professor—I said 'poor' in the sense of pathetic; I used to feel sorry for my teachers and professors if they didn't know how to deal with women. A lot of them didn't you know. You just had the feeling they were completely at sea in dealing with a woman student, and in this class he had us all go to the blackboard and gave us a chemistry problem, which was an equation, and which I just did. I mean, it was, to me, very simple, and I finished it, and I turned my back to the board.

This young man said: Miss Moore, if you would face the board and do your problem, instead of trying to see what the other people have done, it would be much better.

And I stepped aside, and my eyes filled with tears, of course, and I said: But my problem is done.

He nearly died. Really, you know, I couldn't get angry at him, because I realized that he just had no idea how to treat a bright woman student—maybe he knew better how to treat a young man. I think he might have. But he saw that I had done it, and it was done correctly, and he was really lost. He didn't know what to do.

In any case, I did apply to Stanford, and I can remember just praying that if I could get into Stanford, I would never ask for anything else again. That would be, you know, the acme of everything. And so I was admitted and—

Morris: It must have been a great satisfaction.

Charles: College made a great change in my life, of course. It isn't so necessary now, but in those days it was particularly important for a girl like me from a very limited experience and a really bourgeois family.

My father loved to read, and read all the time, but he was undiscriminating in his reading. My reading is not unlike that, because I am a person who just has to read all the time. There's certain reading I have to do, and I always do, and then there's some reading I just do because I read rapidly. That all came, I'm sure, from my father. So I don't need any speed-reading courses. I learned that myself, and perhaps from observing him.

My mother adored my father, but I would get scolded, you know: Caroline Moore, are you reading?
Charles: It was the worst thing I could do. Then, when I got older and got sassy, I'd say: Well, you don't say anything when Dad reads. You just talk to me like that.

I mean, immediately [laughs] we got going thoroughly. I am very grateful that she was a tough-minded lady, because she didn't have the education to cope with children, but she had the spirit and the sense of decency, and it was a very good thing because I was a terribly strong-minded girl.

None of my sisters were as strong and tough-minded as I was, but all of us were part of the next generation. We were going to break away, you know. But my sister Maureen--oh, I treated her so terribly. She was my next sister, and she was only a year and a half younger. The family would never have understood any of that as the kind of sibling rivalry that became later just a topic of common conversation, you know. My mother thought I was the meanest person she ever knew. I'd as soon knock Maureen down as look at her, because I didn't want to be followed around everywhere; I was trailed everywhere, even when I got a little older. Maureen just wanted to do everything I did. That's perfectly natural, but I didn't wish to be accompanied by somebody every place I went.

Morris: That's also perfectly natural.

Charles: Oh, perfectly. But my father never entered these rows. He was a darling man, and never allowed himself to get mixed up in a great deal of the battling that went on in my family, because my mother and my aunts were at swords' points most of the time—for no particular reason, except as an exercise. I've always felt (and when I look back at it, I made up my mind then, watching this) that I would never allow myself or anybody else to live in that kind of climate, because most of the fights were completely uncalled for—just battles over who said what, or anything. I think it was because there wasn't enough to do in a small town like Stockton.

Even though there was nothing to do, nobody in my family got involved in good works in the sense that women use their energies for now, and did when I first came to San Francisco, too. I mean, it was moving to the city that got me started.
2. STUDENT YEARS AT STANFORD

Freshman Traumas

Morris: When you got to Stanford, did this cause you to think about yourself and what kind of goals you might have as an individual?

Charles: I don't know, because I didn't know myself at that point, really. I didn't know what I was. I knew I was very bright and that I had gotten into Stanford, which was quite an accomplishment. When I walked into the dean of women's office and said I was Caroline Moore, Miss Yost, who was the dean of women, said: Come girls. Here's Caroline Moore. We've all got to have a look at her.

And I turned bright red, because I blush very easily. It turned out that my Methodist minister had written that I was as pure as the driven snow, and they wanted to see somebody like that. Now, I was unsophisticated, so that I didn't know how funny that was. I knew later that it was awfully funny, but at that time, I wasn't quite sure how to take this attention. I really didn't know enough about myself. It took me many years to find what I could do and couldn't do and wanted to do. I didn't decide that in college, by any means.

But at Stanford I had several fortunate aspects of preparation for what was going to happen. For instance, they had sororities there, and I had no credentials. Nobody wrote a letter to a sorority and asked that they look me up, because I just didn't know people in Stockton who did that sort of thing.

Sororities never had a strong hold at Stanford and, of course, as you know, they're eliminated now. Rushing took a whole year. They went through several experiments at Stanford about how best to deal with sororities. I should have started with this: there were only five hundred women at Stanford. Mrs. Stanford had announced right at the opening that she didn't really want women at Stanford. Then, later, she just simply announced as an edict, which she did
Charles: frequently—and which the then board of trustees accepted—that there would be no more than five hundred women at Stanford.

By the time I got to Stanford in 1923, there must have been about two thousand men, maybe, and five hundred women. So it was a marvelous experience for anybody, even as green a freshman as I was. I mean, you just had all the attention you could possibly handle.

Morris: What fun!

Charles: Well, it was; except, as I say, I was just very unsophisticated. I just didn't have what my own children would have, coming from a city as they did, going to Stanford, too; although I am glad to say that both my daughters are quite simple and realistic in their outlook on life. They don't care much about social life, and they're both—I'm a little bit prejudiced about them, I think.

Morris: Well, their mother should be.

Charles: [Laughs] In any case, I was not offended when I wasn't heavily rushed by the Kappas and the Pi Phis and the sororities that were generally considered the most important. Finally, somebody invited me to come to the Chi Omegas, and I went, and that was nice; and they asked me to join, and that was nice. I was glad to have a chance to join—I had watched in Roble Hall the terrible, traumatic experiences of some of the girls, who had come down with instructions from their mothers that they were to join the Kappas or Pi Phis, or else. And it was just a terrible tragedy.

I really have never forgotten about it, and I was very much in favor of the sororities being removed when the time finally came that they were. It seemed to me that it was hard enough to get into Stanford, without having the feeling that you went through another test, whose values you didn't understand, because you didn't know why you would be chosen. I had no idea why, and I don't know yet why, the Chi Omegas were nice enough to invite me to join, because I was still really a very unsophisticated kind of a young woman.

During the first two years I continued to be a very good student and got lower division honors, as they called it, and then went into math as my major, because in those years that's the way you did. Your first two years were what they called 'lower division,' which was general courses, and then you went into your major.
Allan Charles

Charles: By that time, I had met Allan Charles. I met him when I was a sophomore.

Morris: Did you?

Charles: He was in my Italian class. It's hard to explain why either one of us would show up in an Italian class, but I was--

Morris: Were languages then the trauma that they are to many students in the seventies?

Charles: I don't know exactly what you mean.

Morris: Many students nowadays have great difficulty with foreign languages, and the expectations do not seem to be as high as they were a generation ago.

Charles: Well, we had, neither Al nor I--well, I'm not speaking for him now; I didn't even know him--but neither one of us had any aspirations as to language, though I minored in French, because my mother had been very anxious about that. She thought that any lady-like person should speak French.

Well, we never had a teacher in all my years at Stanford who spoke French, except Professor Anderson in the last year. Those teachers at Stanford in those days were not real French people. They were exactly the same kind of a teacher I'd had in high school, who'd learned French somewhere and spoke, I imagine, with a terrible accent. I would say very little French was taught or learned at any point. We had, I think probably, a very poor language department at Stanford--perhaps elsewhere, too.

Morris: Was Allan Charles involved in campus affairs?

Charles: No. Al was a senior, and I was a sophomore. He was about to go into law. At Stanford, you took your four-year undergraduate and then two years of law to get a degree. Stanford happened to give a degree in two years, whereas at Harvard it was three years.

The reason I mention that is because Al won a scholarship to Harvard, and went off to Harvard for a year; but his mother was a widow, and they were really not well-off as far as money was concerned. He felt that he must come back to Stanford for his last year, when he could get his J.D., which was what he did. So he did not stay and graduate from Harvard Law School, in order to get one year ahead so he could go to work, which was what he wanted to do, and get off of his mother's financial obligations. So that's what he did.
Charles: I think Italian was just—I don't know. I must ask Al sometime why. I don't know exactly why he went into that Italian class. I went into it to fill in three units. I was taking some French, of course, and math—always plenty of math—and maybe some chemistry. I don't remember what I was taking. Well, we had all these required things. You had very little extra units to fill.

But I elected to take Italian, and that class started out, apparently, with the belief that it was going to be what they called a 'pipe' course in those days, and so it was filled with football players. Madame Staufe was the professor. She was a huge woman who wore a cape, and she came dramatically into the class. And the first thing she called the roll, and she called: Mr. Biagini; Mr. Prinsinzano And then she got to the football players: Mr. Nevers (Ernie Nevers was the big football player of that year); and it was a whole series, practically the whole football team. Well, they disappeared in two days, because Madame Staufe made it very clear that this was going to be no easy course.

Morris: She was going to teach Italian.

Charles: Yes. And they weren't about to study Italian. They'd heard you could get through without, and they all disappeared. You always had the first week or two, you know, to withdraw from a class.

So Mr. Charles (Mr. Char-les) and Miss Moore were about the only American names, so to speak, in the class, you see.

After about a week in the class, one of the older girls in my sorority said to me: There's a man in your class who wants to take you out to a dance, and I advise you to go.

I didn't like the girl who told me that much—and she said: His name is Allan Charles, and he's a very distinguished person around here. He's got a block 8, he's a track man, and he's on the men's council—and I don't know what all.

I said okay, I would go. The dance was at the Phi Psi house, and it was a gathering of a very distinguished group of men who were in an honor fraternity of some kind, you see.

Well, it was up the hill. Al came over for me and said: I could have gotten a ride for us up the hill, but I thought we'd rather walk.

I looked at my high-heeled shoes, which we were wearing in those days, and I thought: This is it. I'll go out tonight, but I'll never go out with a man like this again who has no more sense.
Charles: So we walked, and the roads were gravel, and it was a very uncomfortable walk, and I thought anybody should have known better than that. In any case, [laughs] we had some ups and downs and quarrels and one thing or another, but eventually we were married a year after I graduated. We were married in 1928.

Organizational Ability and Awards

Charles: As I got to be a senior, I realized that I had some organizational abilities. I didn't know that about myself. I also realized—I don't know that I enunciated this, but I realized that I was really interested in people, with whom I had been very shy always in my earlier life. I never felt secure, partly, I think, because of my mother's timidity.

My mother really had no friends. She didn't know how to make friends, because her dominant nature just overcame—she had to dominate friends just the way she did her family and children. And it really made her—the only reason she didn't have a lonely life was because we were related to half the town. So she had the security that these were her cousins, but she had no life such as we all live here, with friends to dinner; the only people we ever had to dinner were cousins and relatives and that sort of thing. I may have adopted some of that, but in college I began to see that I could get some things done.

I was elected president of the sorority, and then I was elected to Cap and Gown, which is the women's honor society, like Mortarboard. I could not understand that. I didn't think that I deserved that. I could not think what I'd done that made it necessary to elect me to that, because they only elected ten women a year. I still don't know, but I must have done something right there.

Anyway, that was nice.

Morris: Did that give you a feeling of confidence?

Charles: Well, somewhat. But I think I have to say for myself that I have never gone around expecting honors. I never have; I've been totally surprised. When I was invited on the board of trustees of Stanford, I absolutely couldn't believe it. When I was invited on the Rosenberg Foundation, I couldn't understand it. I think lots of people eat their hearts out because they see something they want and don't know how to get it. I have never conceived of myself that way.
Charles: My upbringing made me a responsible person. When I said I was going to do something, I've always done it and tried to do it better than anybody else had ever done it, just because I think that's the way you ought to do anything. I remember learning early in my community life that you never have a second chance. If you were putting on a party, or when I was president of the League of Women Voters, you had to do your best with whatever the event was; because when the event was over, that was all. It was done. And that made a very great impression on me very early in my community life. So that I always felt that whatever I did, I would throw my whole self into it for the time, because I wouldn't have a chance to change it if I didn't throw in my whole self.

I never wanted to say: Well, if I'd really tried, I could have done that. I didn't want to fool myself that way. So that I've been fortunate in not expecting anything as far as honors or general community respect are concerned.

Morris: It's been more the satisfaction of doing the job as best you can--

Charles: Of doing it. Yes. And then I'm pleased if I'm honored. That's nice, although it embarrasses me a little bit. I don't like it as much. I don't feel as comfortable about it as I do about doing the job.

I learned early, too, that sometimes you don't get honored for the things you did do. You'll get honored for something else, and something you did that you just killed yourself for, nobody even knows about it. And that evens itself up, too. So that you don't go around regretting that you didn't get honored for thus and so, because you already got honored for thus and something else that you didn't really deserve. [laughs] So I don't have any regrets about that sort of thing.
3. BEGINNING A COMMUNITY CAREER: SAN FRANCISCO LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS, 1936-1950

Pros and Cons of Labor Issues

Morris: Was the League of Women Voters the first organization that you got deeply involved in?

Charles: Well, not really. It was the one that brought me out of my domesticity, I'd say. It would have been about 1935, because I was married in '28 and I didn't feel comfortable about getting out of my house until both my children were in school.

We didn't really have money enough for me to do much, because Al started practice in his law firm in 1929, and the bottom fell out of everything. It really didn't hurt us any, because we didn't have anything. It's a marvelous thing. If you have nothing to lose, you have no regrets. We didn't have anything. Al was earning seventy-five dollars a month in the law office. Now, you know, they pay everybody a thousand a month, no matter what they're doing, even the office boy [laughs].

Well, even with inflation, we didn't get anything like that. We started with seventy-five and maybe got up to a hundred. Absolutely amazing. And, of course, we didn't suffer, because both our families were well able to help us equip our little apartment in San Francisco with anything we really needed--well, we lived in an extremely modest way. Both Al and I have a lot of respect for living within your means; we try very hard to do that. Neither of us places great value on material things. We like things to be nice if we can afford them, but I don't have to--I can remember Al's mother saying that she never saw another young woman who could walk right by all the shops without even stopping to look. At that time I didn't have any money to buy any clothes, so why should I torture myself and so on?

Now, where was I?
Morris: You said that the League was the first organization that you had been—

Charles: Oh, yes. I had a friend from college days—she'd been a sorority sister of mine, then was practicing as a woman doctor in San Francisco, and her husband was a lawyer for the Longshoremen's Union and others of the left wing.

Morris: They were just getting warmed up, too.

Charles: Well, they were just beginning those strikes, you see. That's when they had those terrible strikes in San Francisco, very bloody waterfront strikes, and my husband's firm was in admiralty law, on the other side of everything. They represented all the shipping companies and all of that.

I had never really thought about my politics, or what my attitudes were. I just accepted being a middle-class, probably Republican, person who just took things as they were; but Frances, my friend, said to me: Look, Caroline, you've got to come into the League of Women Voters because I need someone to argue against me.

She was in sympathy, you see, with the strikers, and she said: There aren't enough conservatives in the League, and they need people who are going to argue on the other side.

At that time I had lots of arguments coming from Al, who is much more conservative than I am and has remained so, though he's been marvelous to me in never striving to get me to accept his opinions. Oh, every once in a while, he'll get himself in a very irritable state when I'm on the other side, but mostly I've been quite amazed at his ability to let me follow my own head.

The thing I really learned from that experience was what the arguments were on the other side, which I didn't know—didn't know anything about them. That was Harry Bridges, you see, who was the longshoremen's leader, and those people. So it must have been between '35 and '40.

Morris: I think the general strike was in 1934.

Charles: Well, then I must have known a little bit at that point, although I didn't, really.

The first thing I really got into was the Campfire Girls. Somebody had persuaded me to get on the board of the Campfire Girls.

Morris: As a Bluebird leader for your daughters?
Charles: No. And then, somebody was working on me to be a Girl Scout leader, and I did a little Girl Scout leading, but that wasn't my dish of tea. I really didn't enjoy it very much.

I worked in the League of Women Voters, you see, a long time before I was elected president. I was elected president in '48, and I was president from '48 to '50. I have always said, and I firmly believe, that the greatest thing that happened to me—and, I think, that could happen to any young person—was the opportunity to work in the League. You learn a lot about the realities of life; I have great respect for the San Francisco League.

I'm not at all sure that they were as far off to the left as Frances thought they were. I suspect the group in which she was working, that particular group, was probably composed of people whose natural sympathy was with the striker, because I always found the League was remarkably fair in presenting all sides. I certainly learned how to be fair.

I've always had pleasure in my community work because I've always had an instinct about being able to do what I do, and being able to watch what I do all the time. Not only am I acting, but I'm seeing the situation from the side.

Morris: That's pretty unusual, isn't it?

Charles: I think it is unusual. I didn't know that it was unusual, but one time I mentioned about my memories of my childhood being so—composed of that dual feeling of being in it, and yet observing how it was. And somebody said to me that that isn't—I thought that was common, and apparently it wasn't.

When I was asked to teach at Mills College, as I did for ten years, Mrs. McLaughlin said to me: I told them that you could do that, because you have the ability not only to do things, but to see what you are doing.

I was pleased that she thought it was so. It makes things much more interesting to me to see what the situation is, and to see how each thing affects a total situation. I think it's been valuable to me in the things that I have done.
Charles: I met Mrs. McLaughlin in a curious way. We had moved several times, and we ended up, when the children were about five and seven years old, in a flat on Union Street that happened to be across the street from Mrs. McLaughlin's grandchildren.

Morris: Were they the same ages as your children?

Charles: Yes. And so I became very well acquainted with Jean Doolittle, who was Mrs. McLaughlin's only daughter. And in the meantime—as I said in my introduction to her memoir*—she and my husband became acquainted because Ray Lyman Wilbur had asked Al to be on the board of the Institute of Pacific Relations. Mrs. McLaughlin was extremely active, you see, in that group. So he knew her well, and he would come home and say to me: This woman is remarkable.

She would also turn up across the street, visiting her daughter, you see. So we got acquainted. Then I was beginning to do some work in the League of Women Voters, and she was staunch, you know, just a pillar of the League, and so our acquaintance developed that way.

Morris: Were there other women of your age that she befriended, as she did you?

Charles: Oh, yes. She befriended a great many women of my contemporaries. People adored Mrs. McLaughlin; she had a retinue of people who just adored her. And they should, you know. She was tremendously good. She was always interested in you. When she talked to you, you never had that feeling she was wandering off mentally, thinking about something else. She was interested in your problems. When she saw you, she remembered the thing you'd said last time, or what the last thing was that you were concerned with. I think all the young women around her were anxious to be the primary one that she was really interested in.

I had no idea that I was the primary one. I think I was, because later people said to me—I remember Dorothy Rogers said: I wish Mrs. McLaughlin felt about me the way she feels about you.

I was absolutely amazed about that. I've always been independent, so that Mrs. McLaughlin's and my conversations were really quite

Charles: interesting. She'd call me up at eight o'clock in the morning—that was when she always made her phone calls. I've gotten into that habit myself; otherwise you never get out of the house, if you spend all morning on the phone and you have things to do. But she'd say to me: Now, Caroline, I am very worried about—something the League was about to undertake, or whatever it might be.

And I would say: Well, now, Mrs. McLaughlin, I think that there's something that you may not know about this.

So then I would explain, and she would say suddenly: I'm dead wrong. Okay. Let's go on to the next thing.

I mean, she really was a marvelous person.

And then her daughter Jean and I were good friends, because Jean had no especial interest in these community things; except I shouldn't, perhaps, make that so definite, because Jean is such a good person, but she had a very busy home life. She had three children, but her husband was much more demanding than Al, in that he liked to go off hunting, or he'd go up—he wanted Jean to go with him, you see, on these things. So she really couldn't settle down to doing the kinds of things those of us were whose husbands were fully occupied downtown or somewhere else during the day.

Jean and I are exactly the same age, too; we were both born in October of 1905. So we felt kind of an affinity. Mrs. McLaughlin adored her daughter and her grandchildren, but Jean's interests were so different from her mother's, you see, that if she wanted to talk about what was going on in the community or anything else, she would call me or some of her other close friends. I think we suited each other somehow, you know. She liked my independence, because I never tried to please her. I just tried to do what I thought was right, and we didn't ever have any differences because she respected that, too—that need of doing your own thinking and doing what you could.

Of course, she was just a tremendous example to all of us young people, of courage and straight thinking and dignity and just a whole lot of qualities that we all really wanted to have. She always dressed well and took great care of her appearance, so that no matter how old she got, she always looked like somebody, you know.

Morris: Very distinguished?

Charles: Oh, yes. Very much so.

Morris: Did she ever tell you, or do you have any theories, about how she managed to do the things she did? I know of her only through her memoir, and how she kept up with all those organizations—
Charles: Because she had money. Her household was completely run and staffed. She had no husband. Nobody could place any demands on her but herself, but she conceived what she should do for her grandchildren and her daughter.

Her domestic situation, you see, was completely taken care of by her sister. She lived with her sister, Henrietta Moffat, and Henrietta’s province was the house and the hiring of the cooks and the maids. They always had a couple of maids and a Chinese cook. So that was one reason why she was completely free to do—and she used to have a driver for her car. She had really started that right out of college, I think. And, of course, her husband died when she was very young.

Morris: They were only married a short time?

Charles: Yes, a very short time. Her money came from the family.

Morris: Her family?

Charles: Yes. Her family. When she got older, she worried about money, and I used to talk to her very severely.

I would say: Mrs. McLaughlin, you really must not be driving your car—because I would have glimpsed her driving down the middle of the street, talking, paying no attention. And she would say: Yes, but then I’ll just have to give up the car.

Then I said: But where’s your driver? You always had a driver.

She said: Well, now, Caroline, I really can’t afford that.

I said: Will you please tell me what you’re talking about?

And she said: Well, I want to be able to leave my family something.

I told her it wasn’t necessary. Her daughter’s husband was an extremely successful man. There was no problem about money anywhere in that family. But she did as many older people do, and began to get conservative and keep herself a little bit tighter. But she never was an extravagant person. She just lived comfortably and was able to do the things she wanted to do, like going to school every summer.
[Short pause to turn tape]

Organizational Frustration

Morris: What were the primary concerns of the League that you were involved in?

Charles: I have to say that I think, in looking back on it, that my interest—I'm extremely interested in organization of anything. I know how to organize. I hate to see it sloppily done. So that, rather than my interests being topical, I would be more likely to be looking at the structure of the League and how it could be better operated.

Morris: When you were going on the board, and as president, wasn't the League going through quite a reorganization statewide?

Charles: Oh—they were having a very hard time. They'd been slipping badly, and Mrs. McLaughlin and I were worried. There was a woman who wanted badly to be president of the League, and was elected president.

She was a pathetic figure, in a way. Both Mrs. McLaughlin and I had that feeling about her, but she was such a bad organizer that I didn't have patience with her. Mrs. McLaughlin did, being an older woman looking at the situation.

This woman wouldn't permit anybody to help her. I would say to her: Look, now, if you do this this way, it would (organizationally, you see) be better.

She would say no. And I finally realized that I was so frustrated that I would have to get out of the League.

Mrs. McLaughlin called me up and she said: Now, you go out to the beach, and you talk to the waves.

She was really a great person. She wanted me to go out there, if I was angry, and shout at the waves and not shout at anybody else, because, of course, she had the long view, which was that it wouldn't do anybody any good for me to try to destroy my—as it turned out—predecessors.

But I thought, when I did resign, that I was losing all opportunity to be president; that was the one thing that I ever really wanted—to be president of the League, which I must say was a very modest wish, considering some of the other things that have happened to me, which I never thought of at all; but I respected the League, you know.
Charles: I thought I would love to be president. And I thought if I were just 
president, I would know how I would get more members, because the 
League had fallen to a very low--

Morris: You mean the League in San Francisco?

Charles: Yes, the San Francisco League. To a low ebb in membership. And 
there was no excuse for it, although we learned one thing, which I 
think is very important, and which has been useful—a great many 
things that I learned in the League have been useful to me in other 
organizations. One was my perception that most organizations have 
a level of membership which holds true for them pretty well.

Some organizations are not ever going to be big membership 
organizations. For instance, San Francisco Planning and Urban 
Renewal Association [SPUR] is like that. They demand of their 
members a little more knowledge than just joining the Federation of 
Women's clubs, or some of those, where they require little of you. 
Of course, the League's particularly bad in that respect, in the 
sense that they really expect you to work. So if you join, you're 
going to have to contribute something one way or another.

I have another philosophy—which I also learned from observation—
that in any organization you can name, it's a comparative handful of 
people who do the work; it always is—who do the hard work of making 
it run. I have never resented that. I have always been one of the 
people doing the hard work, because I enjoy it—not because anybody 
makes me do it, but because I like to do it.

So I was terribly frustrated that year. That was in '47, I 
think. But when my predecessor's year was over, the nominating 
committee came to me and asked me if I would be president. And I 
was thrilled, because I really hadn't expected—I really thought I 
was lost as far as the League was concerned. I'd have to find some 
other way to satisfy myself.

Morris: Now that's interesting. You thought that you had done as much as 
you could in the League?

Charles: No. I thought, as much as I would be permitted to do—that's what I 
meant. It would have been very awkward—how can I say that? I have 
to be a little more specific about that, and I'm not sure that I've 
examined the whole thing.

I had been working in the League from, I would say, 1936 to 
1948. I'd been in the League a long time, and I didn't think the 
place for me was to go back again to the bottom and work my way up. 
I thought I might belong to something else. But when I got off the 
board, and resigned, I just felt that I had--
Morris: You'd burned your bridges.

Charles: Yes. I'd left. See, I am a person who—and it's evident when you look at my history in organizations—when I'm through, I'm through. Not in anger or anything else, but I think that dead hand of the past is just something that drives people crazy.

When I just got off the Rosenberg Foundation in January, I quit. That was it. I don't interfere with anything they do, and I really don't want to know. If any of them want to tell me, I'm delighted to hear, but I'm not hanging on, as lots of people do; my interests are elsewhere. I've got a lot of other things to do.

I see now, looking back on it, that that was my general attitude with the League. When I felt there was no place for me, I decided I'd better get out and see what else I could do somewhere else, and forget about the League. It was a terrible disappointment to me, because I happen to enjoy doing only what involves the mind.
4. VARIETIES OF COMMUNITY EFFORT

Volunteer Service: Motivation, Rewards, and Hazards

Charles: I can't get into these busy organizations, where you really aren't thinking, you know. They just drive me crazy.

Morris: The bandage-folding and benefit parties--

Charles: Yes. And, yet, as Mrs. McLaughlin used to say when I got into the business of organizing auxiliaries, which I'll tell you about in a minute, she'd say to me: Well, I suppose you do need to provide people with things to do.

I said I absolutely believe that.

My attitude toward volunteer work is not that it's the be-all and end-all of life. There are a lot of people for whom it isn't suited, and the whole business about whether you should be taking somebody else's job is to me not completely valid. I think it needs further discussion.

But I do believe that people need the chance to do something for others. I think part of what a human being needs is the chance to go and serve in a hospital or in the slums or wherever it may be, because we don't live a healthy life without that sense of having really provided our talents to people who couldn't earn them, or deserve them in any way. I believe this, very strongly.

Morris: Is an aspect of that that volunteer work quite often helps people know themselves better and understand themselves?

Charles: Well, sometimes, you see, they may not even understand themselves. I mean, there are a great many people who go through life without ever understanding themselves. But I think it's the responsibility of people who are more thoughtful and given to introspection to some
extent, and observation, as much as possible to make it easy for people to live rewarding lives, even though they may not know why they do it, or what they do. Certainly, with all these auxiliaries that I've organized and watched people participate in, there are hundreds of people who just feel completely themselves when they're giving service in a hospital or somewhere else; but if you sat them down and asked them why, they don't know why.

Morris: Mrs. McLaughlin spoke of the auxiliaries as a new social tool. What did she mean by that?

Charles: Yes. Well, one thing that made her interesting was this philosophical bent in her mind. She observed what everybody did, and then put it into a philosophical context. The way I happened to get into auxiliaries in a major way was when I was elected to the Stanford Board of Trustees, which was later, in 1954. Before I talk about that I'll go back a bit.

I've often said to Leslie Luttgens, who is going through that phase in her life now, that a lot of things happen all at once to you, and you have to be sure you don't get unbalanced by it, because society sees that you're liked by somebody and then they want you, you know.

So you get a whole little spate of honors, so to speak, happening to you.

Morris: And also demands for your time.

Charles: Well, demands, but those aren't so difficult to deal with as are the honors that come, you know. They want you to be on important boards and important things, and you have to be careful that you don't get your head turned. That's what. You see, you have to keep your feet and realize those things don't continue happening. They just happened from about '48 to about '54—it was a long period there.

Morris: After you had gone through the chairs in the League of Women Voters?

Charles: After I was elected president of the League, these things started to happen, in '48. It was also in '48 that I was elected to the Rosenberg Foundation. And I had been on the executive committee of the Community Chest, where I don't think they'd ever had a woman before. Not very many, anyway. Just one thing after another, in the seats of the mighty, so to speak.

I have too much Stockton in me to allow myself to become overwhelmed by this; I mean, I have to sit down and think: Who am I, and what can I do to justify all this? It was just a series—really much like Leslie has been asked to do this last year or two. But these things don't last, and you have to have enough in you to keep you going during the periods that they don't last.
Stanford Board of Trustees, 1954

Charles: But, in any case, I got out of the League after two years as president and, at some point along in there, I was elected honorary member of the Junior League of San Francisco, and I was making speeches constantly and advising the Junior League on various things. Then, in 1954, I was absolutely astounded when Lloyd Dinkelspiel called and asked if he could come call on me. I said: What would you call on me for?

He said: Well, I just want to come see you.

And so I said: Well, I'll come down to your office. I don't want you to have to come out here.

This was very typical of me to have done that. He didn't like that much, but that's the way we left it.

Well, he was asking me to join the board of trustees of Stanford, and I said: I can't. I mean, I don't understand this.

And he said: They would have my head if I didn't ask you. You're the person in San Francisco who has accomplished the most, as far as Stanford is concerned.

I had never really done any work to speak of in the Stanford organizations themselves, though I think I had been on the Stanford Alumni Board for a while.

Morris: I have been evolving a theory that a distinguished alumna in turn sheds luster on the educational institution.

Charles: Well, I guess it goes both ways, you know. But I hadn't worked my way up through Stanford channels, is what I mean. So that it surprised me, because I knew there were a lot of people who'd done a lot of legwork—but that isn't what they want on the board of trustees. They want people who've had a wide experience, which I was then, at that time, beginning to have.

Morris: Had they had a woman as a trustee?

Charles: Yes. They had one, May Goodan, whose brother is Norman Chandler. They had elected May some ten years before, and they loved May because she didn't interfere with anything; but she's a lovely woman, just lovely. She and I were great friends.

By not interfering, I mean May just had a great deal of dignified restraint about the way she did things, but she had her opinions and so forth. She was so kind to me when I came on that board.
Charles: Another woman came on the board at the same time, because they were expanding the board to include some alumni trustees, whose terms would be shorter.

I was elected for ten years, and the alumni trustee was elected for five. There were five alumni trustees that they brought on. Well, it didn't work at all. The alumni trustees became very resentful of the fact that they were second class. They called themselves 'second class trustees', which nobody meant, but the minute you gave them a different term from anybody else, you practically guaranteed--

Morris: Did it make a difference in their status?

Charles: No. It didn't make any difference in how they were viewed. It made a difference in how they viewed themselves, which, after all, is the most important thing—self-esteem. They just had a feeling that somehow they'd been dragged in to represent the alumni and didn't have the same position that the rest of us did who had been elected directly.

So the board became very upset about that after a few years, and it penetrated, and they changed the system, which now is a much better system, where they are now actually nominated by the alumni association. At that time, they were elected by the board of trustees itself, you see.

Morris: As a self-perpetuating--

Charles: Well, the board of trustees is self-perpetuating, but they didn't release to anybody else the job of selecting who the alumni trustees would be. They would ask the alumni association to give them ten names, and they would pick two or three from those ten, and they would then come on for a short term rather than a long term. It was guaranteed to cause trouble, and it did cause trouble. And now the present system we have is very good. It really works well. We get some fascinating young trustees as a result.

Morris: There were three of you women, then, at that time.

Charles: Yes, for a while. That's right. Then I was put on the nominating committee several years later. Judge Homer Spence, who's now dead, was the chairman of the nominating committee, and he said to me: Caroline, I want to talk to you about something serious, and I want you to pay attention to this. If you allow any one of these women to go off the board without being replaced by a woman, you will never get another woman on. The men don't want it. They don't know they don't want it, but they don't want it.
Charles: Well, this is exactly what happened, because very shortly, one of the women decided to go off. She was from Los Angeles. And the men said: Now, you know we really need a man down there from Los Angeles. So we really shouldn't get another woman.

Well, I didn't fight about that because I am not such a feminist that I can't figure that we hadn't had awfully good luck with the women that we'd gotten, and maybe we'd get a better man trustee.

But that's exactly what happened then; they never could make that seat available to a woman again. They weren't willing to do it. Homer knew what he was talking about, exactly.

Morris: Were you conscious, sitting on the board, that the men trustees didn't pay that much attention to your ideas?

Charles: No. Because I don't permit myself to be on a board where they don't pay attention to my ideas, and they soon realized that, and we've always gotten along fine. I try to know what I'm talking about. All this I learned in the League of Women Voters. For the first year or two I didn't do much talking, but as soon as I found out what was going on and where I thought certain things weren't taken into consideration, I would speak up at the board, and the men listened to me.

I've always had a happy relationship on that board, with all those men. They don't always agree with me, but they respect me, and I've been chairman of some of their most important committees. They never had a woman chairman before, for anything. I've been treated well by the men, and I never felt that it was a handicap to be a woman on that board.

May Goodan and I were very different. I loved May dearly for respecting my kind of a person, because she was not apt to get into situations on the board unless she just felt very strongly. Even then, she'd be satisfied to just say it and then forget it; but if I were dissatisfied with a situation, I would try to keep an eye on the situation, and change it if I possibly could.

Morris: Keep working at it--?

Charles: Keep working at it without making--one of the first rules on any board, whether you're a man or a woman, is not to make yourself so obnoxious that nobody wants to work with you. There's a way to keep hammering at things in a perfectly good-natured, good-humored--good humor is the whole secret of the thing. You can get quite a lot done that way, if you don't have to be unpleasant about it.
Unifying Influence of Hospital Auxiliaries

Charles: So, as soon as I got on the board, Lloyd Dinkelspiel put me on a small committee to see what was to be done about Stanford Hospital in San Francisco, which was a great sore thumb around there. They wanted to build a hospital down in Palo Alto on the campus, and a med school. So, anyway, one of the things that I did was to help them form an auxiliary at the hospital.

Morris: Here in San Francisco?

Charles: In San Francisco. That was really my first big organization job of that sort. And, of course, it was so successful—we opened like Venus, springing from the head of whoever's head she sprang from, complete with four hundred members the day we announced it.

I have some theories about organization, which bore fruit, which was that I started with a small committee. I just said to them: For six months, we're not announcing ourselves or anything. We could keep enlarging this committee in a quiet way, bringing in other people, but we're going to get our feet on the ground first, and find out how an auxiliary can work—whether the doctors will allow them to work—before we announce that we have this.

So by the time we announced that we had an auxiliary, we had four hundred members, had places for all our volunteers. Leslie Lutgens turned up in San Francisco just about that time, and became my chairman of volunteers. So I knew, because she's a very well-organized person, that that would be taken care of.

Morris: Had she had previous hospital auxiliary experience?

Charles: Well, her husband's a doctor. So she knew about hospitals and she'd been in the League of Women Voters in Rochester. I think that's where they came from.

No, I directed everything. I'm really terrible about things like that. I mean, if I'm going to do it, then I've got to have it go the way I think it ought to go, and be done the way I want it. And Leslie was marvelous about working that way.

But then, you know, the minute you make a success of anything, then you're just in demand, and I was invited to organize this and that and the other thing. My hardest problem then was to make sure that they understood that I wasn't going to stay in it. I would organize it for them, but they were going to have to carry on.

We have some successful things that came out of that and some that have just limped along and never gotten anywhere.
Morris: Your primary interest in starting the auxiliary was to develop a base of support for a new building?

Charles: No. The hospital in San Francisco and the medical school were in such an unsettled state because the decision to move it had finally been made (and although the men were doubtful, it proved to be a good thing). This had upset the doctors--some of them--terribly, and there was just this great pulling and hauling. The thing that seemed to me needed to be done was to see if we could unify something in that hospital--unify the doctors; you never had a meeting when they weren't screaming and yelling.

Really, their behavior always amazed me. I suppose, being a lawyer's wife, where you don't yell, you just quietly get things done, you know [laughs], it surprised me that the doctors didn't know any of those elementary facts. I guess plenty of them do, but--oh, the terrible anger over this thing. I thought if we could get the women working together and giving help inside the hospital that it would be just a healthy situation, and it proved to be entirely that.

The women all joined--I didn't separate doctors' wives from lay people at all, which is much the best way to do it--and really had a marvelous experience with that thing. And when the hospital finally did move down to Palo Alto and when the Presbyterian church came in to take over the buildings in San Francisco, they had that unified body of volunteers. That's what kept it together for a little while. There were those women, all working together for the good of the hospital, and they accepted the change in--

Morris: From being Stanford Hospital to being Presbyterian Hospital.

Charles: Yes. Because they were working for the hospital. They weren't concerned with all the rows and fights, and people didn't understand that. But the thing that always really delighted me happened later. They had a system whereby they sent out a ballot to the members, to elect their officers; and about four years after I was president, somebody called me and said: Would you be willing to allow your name to go on the ballot as a member of the nominating committee?

That was the one committee that had choices; you voted for two out of four, you see. And the others were all white ballot--just somebody for president and a single slate. This person who asked me said: Of course, Mrs. Charles, you'd just win hands down.

But nobody knew me any more, and I lost hands down. I loved that. Oh, they hated to break that to me, and I said: Oh, I am so happy--because I had, as I always do, gotten clear out of it when I got out of it--clear out. I just went on to other things that I wanted to do.
Charles: And nobody knew me, particularly, or cared whether I was in there or not. There was a whole new group. Well, that's what you want. I mean, things must go on, and you have to leave them so that they can go on to being what they are.

Building Organizational Strength

Morris: Part of the problem of organizing is to develop a cadre of continuing leadership?

Charles: Well, it is if you can. You can't always, and I have never put too much stock in it, because my observation is that leadership emerges, really, if it's going to, and if it doesn't, there's very little you can do. You can get somebody to promise you that they'll be the next president, and then they'll decide they don't want to be, or their husband moves, or something happens. I've never put great emphasis on that notion of selecting who's going to succeed.

My emphasis in organizing is the organizational strength in itself—how many people you can structure on the way down as chairman of subcommittees, to learn more about this, that, or the other thing. That's where the survival is, down in the ranks. Really, you can find leaders, and leaders are very uneven. You get a good one, you get a weak one, but a good organization can survive that. They'll have a year of a bad leader, and things'll go bad, and then somebody'll get an idea of who it ought to be, and they'll put somebody in and it'll go.

So that I don't worry very much about that. I think of the inner strength, of how you can get these people and give them something to do, not always with an object of being the next president, but being somebody who knows all about running the gift shop, or supervising the volunteers in various departments, or whatever the needs are. You have to structure it so that there is a hierarchy of people interested in each different aspect of it, and that's where the strength is. I have always felt that.

I've never worried very much about the next president; the main thing is to get out—I had a lovely young woman come to see me one day, who was being forced out of her organization, which she had founded. I said: Just get out gracefully.

Because it was ten years old. She'd been there too long. Nobody—society won't tolerate you being in that long. And you'd better get out yourself and not have people force you out, because that's painful. You may be the best person in the world, but people won't stand for it.
Morris: I have heard that theory expounded by other women whose leadership in community organizations I admire. It doesn't seem to be generally accepted in the political sphere.

Charles: No, it's not. And that's why you get, I think, so many difficulties in this political sphere.

On the other hand, I believe that such things as a board of trustees really can't profit with too short terms because there's too much to learn about a university, for instance. You have to absorb it; you can't sit down and study it, because what you're learning is how people behave in the board, how the professors act, where the lines of power are. Those things you don't learn in a minute, nor do you learn them by reading them somewhere. You learn them by observing.

I've been very much in favor of the long terms on the Stanford board. Now I'm completing my twentieth year, and I go out next year because I'll be seventy and we do have, which we did not have—when I came on the Stanford board, there was no age limit, and you never saw so many old men in your life as there were on that board. Of course, they looked awfully old to me, because twenty years ago I was much younger and would've thought that somebody my age was fit to be pushed off the cliff, you know.

But there is a limit, of course. Homer Spence spoke to me and he said: Caroline, I'm going to be seventy this year, and I am going to put in a new by-law because it affects me, and then nobody can say that I didn't live up to it myself. He said: I wouldn't have been able to do it before, because I wasn't seventy myself. But it forces me off along with everybody else.

Well, the way we did that at Stanford was to agree that you retire at seventy, but that any emeriti could always come to a meeting and vote. Now, at first they did, but now we almost never see an emeritus.

Morris: That's an interesting device.

Charles: Well, it eased the situation a bit. And a few people did continue to come, but I don't intend to ever go after next year because I just think things go better.

And I am always so busy. I expect to be very busy, as long as I am alive and active. One thing I was saying to Leslie the other day was that it really pays to keep certain things in your life where you work at the lower level, rather than the top level, because nobody can take that away from you.
Charles: With this bicentennial thing, I'm just trying to help them get out of an organizational situation that they've got to get out of. I have declined to have any job at all on the thing once we get it on the road. Well, one of the young men, who was here today, wants to be the head. I'm delighted. He's not taking anything away from me at all.

I'm kind of a dominating force in a committee, as I well know, because I get impatient with people not facing the job they have to do and then figuring out how they're going to do it the best. So that I am always working in a few things where I'm not the head of it all, but sort of working in the vineyard for it. And with me, it mostly takes the form of stepping into situations where people call me and say: Will you help?

Morris: We hit a snag?

Charles: Yes. You know--something's wrong.

Morris: That's often called troubleshooting.

Charles: Yes. And then I go in and see what I can do to help them. Some people you can't help [laughs], unfortunately. But you can't afford to get to a place where your ego or something in you is dependent upon important jobs. Otherwise, there's no satisfaction in it, really, because you don't fool yourself very long about that—that you only like it because you happen to be the top person in it. The main thing is, you must like it because you like doing that, and you believe in the thing that you're doing.

Other Directions: The Housing Authority and Public Television

Charles: I have been willing to work in quite a variety of things because I believe in the good health of the community, and that it's dependent on community effort in many directions. Otherwise, you just don't have a democracy, and you won't have one very long if you don't have citizen groups working in a variety of things. So I have done things—for instance, I was on the housing authority, and ended up being chairman of it. And I got off that to be chairman of KQED.

Now, I was put on the housing authority by political appointment, because the mayor, who was John Shelley at that time, decided he was going to appoint me to something [laughs].

Morris: It was you he wanted?
Charles: Yes, that's right. And so he said to somebody: I wonder if Mrs. Charles would be interested in the housing authority.

Well, I'm interested in any form of organization. I'm interested in helping people as they need it and, of course, you'd never find a place where they needed it more than in the housing authority. But it had never been a particular field of mine and I didn't intend to become an expert on housing, because I felt that my job—the staff is expert on housing; my job is people.

That is the thing I've been learning ever since I got out of college—how to be most helpful to people, individuals, and to try to perceive what their problems are and how the organizational situation that relates to them either helps or prevents them in any form of self-realization. I had a very interesting time in the housing authority, enjoyed the experience.

I think, myself, that there's going to have to be another way to house people who can't afford housing, because this scheme is defunct, won't work. I don't know who's going to come up with a creative idea, but there's going to have to be one. I didn't mean to leave a sinking ship, but the fact is that after I got into KQED, about ten years ago, on the board, I became interested in public television.

It really became very important to me to try to combat the efforts to silence public television. And there were many, because a great many people don't want the kind of thing that public television does in contrast to commercial television. I mean particularly in freedom of political comment and that sort of thing.

We went through three years in Washington—two with the Nixon administration—when I thought public television was dead. I mean, I just thought we couldn't save it. If it hadn't been for Watergate, we wouldn't have saved it. I think Nixon had really planned how he was going to destroy it, and he would have been able to do it. There were eight of us fighting that battle from all over the country. We'd been pulled together (I won't go into that long story)—so that I have, and had, more of a passion about freedom of information and the necessity of it, and the fact that I see a role for myself in it, than I have, for instance, about public housing—because I think it's a necessity, but we don't know how to do it.

Now, why should these housing developments turn into slums overnight? Society's just got to face it—they're not really doing what they think they're doing. They're really, by and large, dangerous, dirty places for people to have to live. And the evident reason is that the federal government doesn't appropriate enough for maintenance. That lack was built into the original bill for public housing, which guaranteed that no money would be appropriated for
Charles: maintenance. The buildings would be built, and the rent would provide the maintenance. But the rents were so low, that you couldn't do it.

Aren't we getting close to our deadline? It's 12:25.

Morris: Yes. Just about there. The Foundation, then, was just one of many recognitions of your abilities that came to you at the same time.

Charles: That's very true. I apologize; you shouldn't have let me get so far off.

Morris: That's quite all right. Your perceptions of these other activities are very valuable.
5. EARLY EXPERIENCE ON THE ROSENBERG FOUNDATION BOARD

Charlie Elkus [Charles de Young Elkus, Sr.]

Charles: I might say a few words about the Foundation.

It was Charlie Elkus who invited me to come onto the board of the Foundation. I was then president of the League. I only knew Charlie slightly. He was a lawyer, and my husband was a lawyer, and he knew my husband quite well, though Al is much younger than Charlie. Actually, Charlie Elkus had put Al on the Public Welfare Commission.

Charlie was a great power in San Francisco in many, many ways, and he was the Foundation; I simply say that. He was the Foundation, as I soon learned after I got onto the board. He was an extraordinary man; the whole town respected him. He was like all extraordinary people. He was opinionated about the things he was opinionated about, but he was a basically good person. You might not agree with his opinion, but you had to agree with him as a fine, great man. Of course, Leslie Ganyard was there as executive when I came in, and Leslie had also been personally selected by Charlie, who, as you know, drew the will for the establishing of the Foundation.

Morris: He had been Max Rosenberg's personal attorney?

Charles: Yes. Now, Ruth Chance thinks that the board was still in the process of being enlarged when I came on, and I don't know about that.

Morris: It was already nine.*

*Rosenberg Foundation, 1937-1946 lists five board members for 1936-40, with Charles Elkus added in 1938. A sixth board member was added in 1941, a seventh in 1943, and two more (to arrive at the final nine) in 1946. By 1945, Louise Rosenberg Bransten was the only original member remaining on the board, and the only relative of the founder. Ed.
Charles: It was nine people. It may have been eight, three years before. But in my day it was nine, and that's the way we kept it.

Morris: In other words, it was already nine when you came on the board.

Charles: Yes, I believe so. The point is that we revised our by-laws quite frequently to accommodate our opinions—[laughs] oh, I would say to accommodate Charlie's opinions, because he was a very wise man and knew exactly what he was doing.

Morris: What was it that he was opinionated about? What was his view of what he thought should be done?

Charles: For instance, he believed that when you gave money, you gave it to a person, not to an organization. So that when you were asked for money to support this or that activity, it behooved you to know who was going to carry it out, because the activity could be worthwhile, but without competent leadership it wouldn't work. And, so, that was what we always looked for; and when Mrs. Ganyard brought in proposals, we always were told who were the persons proposed to lead whatever this particular thing might be.

I think Charlie was quite right about that. He was very firm about that. He also had people up and down the state who he thought were without fault and could always lead something successful. So that the Foundation tended to view with great optimism any project that was selected by somebody like, for instance, Karl Holton, who was the head of the Youth Authority. Charlie just thought he was the greatest man, and he was a fine man. Anything that came in under his wing was something we really ought to do.

We had an interesting board at that time. I think all of them had probably been hand-picked by Charlie. For instance, Ward Mailliard was on. Now, you couldn't imagine a more different man from Charlie Elkus. Ward was old San Francisco successful businessman and had many of the traits of a successful businessman—rather arbitrary statements of this, that, and the other thing. Every now and then he would propose something that wasn't strictly within our limits, but Charlie would then recommend that we do that. Charlie dominated the board, and none of us were prepared to really fight with him, because there was nothing wrong with what he wanted to do or not do, and he would make a concession.

We had a very strong Catholic on the board who was really very close to the archdiocese. And occasionally we ran into problems about proposals that were close to Catholic interests.

Morris: Would that have been Edward Parsons?
Charles: No—that was Bishop Parsons, of course. Parsons was the Episcopal church. He was a grand old man, just a marvelous person with great—well, as the Episcopalians do, he believed in society’s dignity. It wasn’t like some of our preachers now, who go way off to the left in their sympathies. That wouldn’t have been Bishop Parson’s way, but he still was very concerned with the human individual, and how things would affect the individual, in whatever you did.

Who else was on the board?

Morris: Monroe Deutsch, from UC.

Charles: Yes. He was on for a while; and, of course, he was a great man. Charlie really picked very important figures. I’m glad to have you mention that, because I hadn’t thought about that. But every board member did represent something very important.

Morris: And there was Paul Edwards.

Charles: Yes. Paul, you see, had been president of the board of trustees at Stanford. I think he was president at that time. He also was the editor of the News. Each person in his own right was a very distinguished person who had accomplished a great deal.

Morris: And Charlotte Mack.

Charles: Well, Charlotte was before me. I never knew Charlotte.

Morris: I see. She’d gone off the board by the time you went on.

Why don’t we stop here for today?

[Date of Interview: 16 October 1974]

Morris: When we finished last time, we were talking about some of the people on the board when you joined the Rosenberg Foundation.

Just after I turned off the machine, you commented that it was very interesting how the board worked together. That might be a good place to start.

Charles: Well, looking back at that board, I don’t think I had the slightest idea at the time what a truly distinguished board it was. As I mentioned, it was composed of the president of the Stanford board of trustees, the provost of the University of California, several distinguished businessmen, and Ellie Sloss, who was a Fleishhacker and who is a perfectly lovely woman and a very unusual person.
Charles: We were really in the company of the kind of lay people who I think are needed to make community organizations work. And sometimes we forget about that. I just wanted to say as a generalization that I've become very uneasy when I see too many people who are professionals in the social welfare business getting onto the boards of directors of community organizations. I don't mean that I have any prejudice against fine people who are professionals in that field, but I think that the theory of lay boards really necessitates that the board not be professionally involved in the thing that you're doing; otherwise you don't get that kind of detached perspective on the job that comes from people who really don't know anything about it professionally or theoretically, but who are viewing society as they see it, and with their ideas for improvement.

And that certainly was a distinguished board in that respect.

Development of Public Compassion

Charles: Also, in thinking of being invited to join the Rosenberg Foundation, it was really the first taste I had had of any kind of organized philanthropy. My family was (I think I used this before) a typical bourgeois family, if we ever use that word in this country. They were responsible, decent people, but neither my mother nor my father had ever heard of such a thing, or thought of such a thing. In those days, around 1915, you had some advanced people like Mrs. McLaughlin, for instance, who was already thinking about philanthropy. But she, after all, lived in a city, while we lived in Stockton, which was still a very small town.

I was thinking this morning that, in my lifetime, tremendous changes have taken place in the attitudes of people toward the needs of the underprivileged, as we now call them. You had a lot of private compassion in those days. For instance, my mother always took in any tramp (and we had tramps in those days) who came to the back door. Mother always gave them a meal on the back porch and allowed them to do something—if they wanted to—around the garden to earn it; my father would have responded the same way whenever he had the opportunity, because they were decent, kind people.

But the development of public compassion is the thing that I think has been the great development of this century, almost. It really began with the Roosevelt era—not Teddy, of course, but FDR—because, in the first place, a great many people got hurt in that depression who had thought they were secure. I think it was the first time that a lot of people ever realized that being poor or out of work was not your personal fault—could not be your fault—although
Charles: That was the conventional wisdom of the time—that it was always the fault of this lazy fellow, even these tramps that came along that my mother would help. You never did get into a discussion about it; my parents just fed him and did what was necessary out of kindness.

Morris: Are you thinking, then, that the governmental statement of public compassion through some of Roosevelt's legislation stimulated private thinking?

Charles: Yes. I think that while there had been private giving, and the foundations had begun earlier—of course, the Rosenberg Foundation had made its first grants in 1935—they were hardly organized.

Morris: That's right; it was a very beginning thing.

Charles: Yes. I think the Roosevelt legislation stimulated a different kind of thinking, which still isn't in the bones and blood of everybody, but is much more widespread than ever before, I think, in the history of the world. Certainly, in the history of the generations that followed the Victorian Age, when the British—and the whole business-industrial revolution is really what I'm thinking of—people really viewed human beings (and have, I guess, since the beginning of the world) as a tool for the successful person to use to make his own way.

I think the Rosenberg Foundation could be an example, among others, of the change in thinking and an attempt, in an organized way, to bring it about. I also think that a great balance is acquired when the board of directors of such an institution is composed of people who do not regularly think along those Victorian lines and act on concern for other people—strangers. Their observation of what is needed will be a little different and sometimes will be quite unusual in seeing what could be done in ways that certain people, professionally-trained in social welfare, hadn't even thought of, because we have always thought of ourselves as an innovative foundation.

Prestigious Directors for a New Organization

Charles: Now, I did want to say something about Leslie Ganyard—

Morris: Yes, I hoped you would.

Charles: Because she was the director when I came on. And also I started to say something about Charlie Elkus; and, of course, there was Louise Rosenberg, whose last name I have forgotten—

Morris: Bransten.
Charles: Bransten. She was on, although I never saw her at a board meeting. She was listed as one of the board. You may have a list there of who the others were--

Morris: I do. Was she living in San Francisco at that time?

Charles: She moved to New York sometime along the way, but came out here occasionally, because I remember, oddly enough, being invited to a party at her house, not because of the Rosenberg Foundation at all, but because of some political cause that she was supporting. I don't remember how I happened to be invited.

In those days, it was quite unusual to find a great many blacks at the party; it was what you would call a very liberal party. There was nothing wrong with it at all, except that in those days it was rather unusual to have a mixture of races and people of all kinds at parties, and it made quite an impression on me.

Morris: How did she strike you as a person?

Charles: Oh, she seemed like a perfectly nice, liberal-minded person. I remember somebody was playing the piano, and it was a gay evening. I mean, nothing wrong with it--everybody was having a good time. And I didn't get to know her at all.

Morris: Was there some question about her suitability as a Rosenberg board member?

Charles: This was '48 and '49 and '50. I can't remember exactly what the state of the country was in searching out Communists at that point, but shortly after I came on the board we received word that we were going to be investigated by the California un-American activities committee.*

Morris: Hugh Burns was the chairman of it?

Charles: Yes, that's right.

The reason was partly for some of our grants in the Valley, but also because they discovered Louise Rosenberg's name on the board of directors.

*Joint legislative "Fact-finding Committee on Un-American Activities."
Charles: So the board had a very serious discussion of this, and Charlie had a solution for it which was, we felt, the proper thing to do. He proposed that he go visit Louise or phone her—I don't remember whether he did it by a visit—and explain to her that she never had attended a board meeting for many, many years, and also frankly explain to her that it was awkward for us, because of her acquaintance with people who were thought politically questionable.

We felt that if she were a participating member of our board, that might have been something else, but since she was really only there for sentimental reasons as the sole surviving Rosenberg (she was a niece of Max's)—

She objected, Charlie said, a little bit, when he later reported. She did object, but she ultimately saw that it was the right thing to do. So that was about all there was to that. We wrote off some letters. Our board was simply marvelous about it. It didn't bother anybody, really. We just answered anything anybody wanted to ask us.

Morris: Did the legislative committee take any action toward the Foundation?

Charles: Well, not about us, but they came into the office. They didn't investigate each board member. I am sure they talked to whomever was the staff person at the time, and I can't remember if it was Leslie or—

Morris: If it was '48 or '49, it would have been Leslie Ganyard.

Charles: Leslie. We were all in agreement that we would answer any questions that anybody wanted to ask us in an absolutely straightforward way. We didn't try to deny things if we had a bad press in—I don't think we ever did in San Francisco, but we did down in the Valley; some of the farm journals and one thing or another were making invidious remarks about the Foundation.

We did what I think is what you have to do in those instances. You have to examine what you're doing, and if it's creditable, and you believe in it, then you have to continue doing it, and not get in any peripheral arguments, because that's where you lose everything, frankly. That's the way I've learned, from some of those experiences that I've been involved in.

You really gain very little by getting into an argument. You can hold your self-respect if you simply continue—examine what you're doing, of course, and then do what you believe is right. Our policy for so long had been the whole problem of dealing with minorities and people underprivileged in our society, that we weren't going to stop doing. There wasn't a single person on the board who wanted us to. We've always had good board—.
Morris: The Burns Committee, as such, didn't really alarm the Foundation?

Charles: Well, they didn't do anything. I think we may have been cited in some of their meetings—mentioned—and I think we got listed somewhere, maybe as a subversive organization. I'm not sure. We really have to check that out and see; maybe Ruth Chance knows.

But, to go back to Charlie. He personally chose everyone on that board. He watched the League of Women Voters like a hawk. When he thought there was somebody promising, which was where I fell in—he came and invited me to join the board. When those things happen, you never realize what a nice honor it is until you've had a chance to taste it a little bit and see what you're into.

It was an extremely nice thing to have happen and, of course, the distinguished composition of the board made it also a very pleasant thing. He had also selected Leslie Ganyard from the League of Women Voters, to be the first executive director.

Morris: Now, that's interesting—that he would draw a board member and a staff person from the same organization.

Charles: Well, she was the staff person for the League. At the time he chose her, she was employed as the League staff. You know, the League of Women Voters was never heavily staffed, by any means, but you usually had one person, and that's what Leslie was doing at that time.

Morris: For the state office?

Charles: No, I think it was for the San Francisco office. Yes, because Leslie Ganyard had some very good friends, like Maude Sutton, and older people; Mrs. McLaughlin knew Leslie quite well, had known her well in her position as—but I could be corrected on that.

But Charlie chose her, and she was the perfect person for what was needed for the Foundation at that time, because Leslie was a very pragmatic, good-humored, compassionate person. A hard worker, who went up and down the Valley looking for things. We had to ask people to apply, because nobody knew who we were.

Morris: That, really, I think is the most striking fact, looking back from the seventies.

Charles: Yes. It really is; when I was first there we even thought of a couple of devices. In fact, I think it was more than several years because it was after I was invited onto the Stanford Board of Trustees in '54.
Charles: We used to have a big joke, and I think I mentioned this earlier, about how Stanford got its trustees from Rosenberg. Shortly after Dick Guggenheim came on the Rosenberg board [1950], he was put on the Stanford board. Then Parmer Fuller, who was only on our board for a year or two [1954-1960] was elected to the Stanford board, too. Paul Edwards, of course, was president of the board of trustees at Stanford.

Morris: At the same time he was--

Charles: Yes, I think so, at the same time.

Morris: Who was president of Stanford at that time?

Charles: Probably Wally Sterling; he came in in the early fifties.

Morris: How did Dr. Sterling come to think so highly of Rosenberg?

Charles: Well, only that I think it was just something that he knew about, and he knew we had a lot of board members in common with the Rosenberg Foundation. And later, when Ruth Chance was brought in--when did she come in?


Charles: Yes. She was well-known at Stanford because she had been working down there for Carl Spaeth. Well, Wally has always felt close to the Rosenberg Foundation, I think.

Now, wait a minute. I had another train of thought I wanted to follow.

Morris: Charlie Elkus had picked people all the way through the--

Charles: He hand-picked them, yes. When it was getting to be time for a new board member, Charlie, in the end, really made the decision as to who it should be. There never was any disagreement about it; he selected very distinguished people. And for an infant foundation, he had the kind of people on there who made it strong, because of their own personal status, you know.

I once explained to a friend of mine, and horrified him a bit, I think, my thesis that organizations have to have a pretty good conception of themselves to know what kind of board members they need at any given time. For instance, if you were going on the board of the Rosenberg Foundation earlier than I did, much earlier, then you needed people who brought distinction in themselves, because it was so new that it helped for people to look at it and say: Well, it has Ward Mailliard on it, and Paul Edwards, the provost at UC.
Morris: I've never heard of Mr. Mailliard in the philanthropic connection before. I wonder how Charlie Elkus talked him into going on--

Charles: Well, because Charlie, I think, knew him as an individual and respected his ability, both as representing old San Francisco and as a successful and highly respected businessman. He just didn't want his boards filled up with do-gooders who weren't known for looking cold-nosed—Ward Mailliard used to say about me that I was cold-nosed (and that was a great compliment in his mind) because I examined any requests that came before us without getting sentimental about what the request was. I wanted to see whether it was financially viable and all of that sort of thing, and I would question them.

I had a very interesting experience with Ward Mailliard, who was a really fine man. He was a very close friend of Harold McKinnon's, who was very close to the Catholic church here. It was a good thing, of course, to have a Catholic on that board because being Jewish money and having several Jewish members of the board and several Protestant members, we might have tended not to have a Catholic member on there; but we've tried consciously to continue to have a member of each group.

Confronting Controversy: The Institute of Pacific Relations and KQED

Charles: One day, we had an application for some funds for a Catholic priest who was thought to be connected with men attacking, in the press and anywhere else, people in San Francisco of some distinction as possible Reds or Communists. The comments were very outspoken, and without any basis. At the moment, they were attacking a man named Brayton Wilbur, of whom I was very fond, as I am still of his widow and his family.

So at the board meeting, since I am always outspoken (perhaps ought to be less so, but I guess I can't help it by now), I said: This man, who's applying for this money, is the same man who has been writing these articles and letters in the newspapers about people. And I said: A very good example is Brayton Wilbur.

Brayton's business was import-export from Asia, you see. These were days where you were beginning--I've forgotten when it began.

Morris: There was the loyalty oath trouble at the University of California, which came to a head in 1950 and '51. And in '52, there were the Army–McCarthy hearings.
Charles: It was all part of the scene, wasn't it? But I said: I can't bring myself to give any money to a person who does this sort of thing habitually.

So that afternoon, I had a phone call from Ward Mailliard, and Ward said to me: Caroline, would you come over to my house for a cocktail? I'm going to have the president of the University of San Francisco over because I want you to talk to him about what you were telling us today at the board. I think it's very important that he know about it.

You know, that was really a marvelous thing for him to do. When I got over to Ward's, here was Father—whose name I don't remember now, but the president of the University of San Francisco at that time. Ward was the kind of a man who knew everybody. He was really a lovely man; he was unique.

So he said to me: Now, you tell Father about this man and what he's been doing and your own attitudes toward him.

I did, and Father (whatever his name was at that time) said to me: Mrs. Charles, I want to tell you something. We have a good answer for our church member who's doing this sort of thing. If he's going to charge guilt by association, he's going to have to include me, because Brayton Wilbur and I are on the board of the Institute of Pacific Relations together.

Morris: Was the Institute submitting this proposal?

Charles: No. No, no. The Institute of Pacific Relations was a group that Ray Lyman Wilbur had started in order to further relationships between the East--Asia--and the U.S. It became a target for attack as to its complexion and was really terribly denigrated.

Morris: Whether or not it was Communist-connected?

Charles: Yes. It had had both some internal problems and external problems, but when it was started it was one of the most distinguished boards in San Francisco. Ray Lyman Wilbur had started it, and this Father had a list of the early board members, and one of them was himself, from the Institute, and another one was maybe Ward; I don't remember.

Now, whether that was the basis for Brayton Wilbur being attacked—or maybe it was the World Affairs Council. See, the World Affairs Council was an outgrowth of the Institute of Pacific Relations.

Morris: Ah, I wondered about that.

Charles: It was put together by Mrs. McLaughlin and a whole group shortly—and those dates, too, we have to get hold of.
Charles: But, in any case, you know, it was a lovely meeting, and I'm afraid that the poor Catholic priest who had submitted this request was not here very much longer. I mean, it seemed to me he disappeared from the scene.

Morris: That's an interesting technique that Mr. Mailliard used—to bring together people who were concerned, but from different points of view, to resolve a situation.

Charles: Oh, marvelous, yes. There was no question about it: he knew that I had the facts with which to raise the issue and he also knew the church wouldn't want that.

The Catholic church has been such a marvelous friend to me, personally, and I think they've done such remarkable things in liberal ways in the last twenty or thirty years, you know—

Morris: The 'worker priest' kind of approach?

Charles: Yes. Not only that, but the integration—when you go over to USF, where I have an appointment at four o'clock this afternoon, you'll find that the racial composition of their student body is probably more responsive to affirmative action than any student body anywhere around here. Maybe even more than San Francisco State; I'm not sure about it.

And also the priests that I know, who have been kind to me and asked me to do things for them, are men of very concerned, humanitarian outlook. So that I don't mean any reflection on the church at all, and I never did, because this particular man who was doing this attacking was just doing it on his own. And he did need to be silenced, I felt.

Thinking about that, I was thinking about my tendency (I've always had it, and I'm sure I always will)—if something has to be done that isn't pleasant, I feel that I had better do it because I couldn't ask somebody else to do something that has difficult overtones for them. I felt that, in my own self-esteem, or whatever word we might want to use, that was strong enough to stand whatever repercussions there might be.

Just as in that instance: I didn't ask somebody else to raise my points about this Father who was making the attack; I felt that I had to do it myself. Since that time, I have quite frequently, I think, stepped out of line to defend something, and had people say to me: Don't do that. I mean, you'll become a target—and all of this sort of thing. That seems to inspire me to do it even more. I'm not a martyr, you know, because that's never the way it affects me, but I do have the feeling that if these things have to be done, you've got to be as willing to do them yourself, as to persuade somebody else to do it.
Morris: It sounds as if you operate on the theory that if there is an unpleasant situation, it's better to move in and air it out early, rather than let it ride and see if it'll solve itself.

Charles: Yes. I think that's a pretty good summary. I think I have a great deal of confidence in the truth prevailing, but you can't do anything about the truth prevailing if nobody knows what it is, nor can you do anything about it if it isn't out in the open sufficiently for people to see what issues are. So I have always tried to do that.

It's one reason why I'm involved now in the strike at KQED—of course, I'd have to be, as chairman of the board. I realized when I first took over that we were trying to operate the station with a union contract in relation to engineering that simply wasn't tenable, that I felt the previous administration had agreed to because they were afraid of a strike.

Morris: I've heard that point.

Charles: Bill Osterhaus, for whom I have the greatest respect as manager, and I both recognized that when this contract came up for renewal we were going to have to take a position. And, do you know, the thing that pleases me is that there hasn't been a single defection from the board. Every board member realizes what the real issue is, because the major part of the issue is that the kind of a contract that the engineers want will make it impossible for us to hire any minorities for six or eight years in the engineering department. And we're under pressure from the federal government on equal opportunity; and even if we weren't, we believe in it, because we can't just say that the minorities should have all the low jobs, and that everybody else gets—so that's the very real issue that we're facing. But, in any case, I always tend to get myself—and I'm glad my mother isn't alive to shake her head about my tendencies. [Laughs]

Balance and Variety of Attitudes

Morris: Going back to Ward Mailliard a minute, I wonder if his knowledge of the political scene—'political' in the sense of how you get things done—was an aspect of his effectiveness as a Rosenberg trustee.

Charles: Oh, I think so. It wasn't so much getting things done as being sophisticated about what you might be getting into—if you had, for instance, an issue that verged on the political. And Charlie Elkus was extremely knowledgeable politically, too, in a very sophisticated way.
Charles: It wasn't politics with Ward, so much, you know. His son, Bill, of course, has, as you know just retired as congressman--

Morris: I believe Ward Mailliard was a leading member of finance committees for various candidates.

Charles: Oh, yes. That's right. He would function politically that way. That is, he himself would not be in office. This was the distinction I was trying to make, yes. But, oh, yes, that's right. He exerted a great influence as a Republican.

I don't know whether Charlie was a Republican or not. I wouldn't be surprised if perhaps he was a Democrat, because Charlie would have wanted to see that board completely balanced as to its attitudes.

Morris: Democrats were quite rare--

Charles: They were rare, and I'm not sure whether Charlie was or not, and we'd have to find that out. Anyway, it's not very important. But, yes, Ward's sophistication was a great addition to that board. And his ability to move around among many different kinds of people and the respect that he had, everywhere--he was a very respected businessman.

It was a really interesting mixture with Monroe Deutsch's academic background and his concerns. It was a nice mixture to have them all on there when the loyalty oath controversy came along. It gave a point of observation with a mixed body of opinion. That is, I think all of us would have been in sympathy with the resistance to the oath, and certainly supported Deutsch's position. Nevertheless, it was being discussed--here we were in a little group of eight or nine of us--in a milieu where each of us brought some different attitudes toward it. It certainly was a learning process for me.

My whole life has been a learning process. And, you know, one of the things that irritates me the most is that here I am having my sixty-ninth birthday tomorrow, and I'm still having to learn and reject things that I have thought one way about and realize that some new point of view has come along that I'm going to have to take into consideration. I expect as long as I live that'll be true, because I am convinced that your personality is simply the result of attitudes toward things. That is, it doesn't stay the same way, because you keep having to face different things, but your attitude makes you face the thing you have to face in a similar way.
6. DEVELOPING GRANTING POLICIES

Leslie Ganyard, 1948-1958

Morris: In those first years that you were on the Rosenberg board, what do you recall as being the most interesting and challenging kinds of program proposals for funding?

Charles: Well, Leslie Ganyard, of course, was roving up and down the Valley, and we were getting very interesting projects. She was certainly an ideal person for the job at that time, because people always felt as if they could talk to her. She was a very sophisticated kind of a person in a way.

She had been a typical college girl. I think she certainly belonged to Prytanean and may have been president of it at one time, and was very active on the campus. Her personality was the result and the continuation of the interests an eager college person would have, you know--she became enthusiastic about things.

You know, one of the hardest things that an executive has to do in any organization, but certainly in a foundation, is to see his or her favorite projects rejected by the board, and this is very painful. And it happens every board meeting, and should happen, because you really don't want to operate an executive-run group. Many of the very large foundations are almost exclusively operated by their staff, because it's almost impossible for the boards to get to know that much about anything. But we've always felt at the Rosenberg Foundation, and taken pride in the fact, that we were able to learn about the projects which we were asked to contribute to, to be able to make a reasonable decision about it.

Morris: In those early days, up through the sixties, the board was able to look at every single proposal that came in?
Charles: No, no. Never. And I should speak about that aspect of the way we run our business. Our executive director screens the projects. So it is true that you could have missed something. Later on, I think after Ruth Chance came in, some of the board suggested that we receive a summary of all applications at the same time that we got projects which had been developed for our reading—usually, you know, each project would maybe take six or seven pages of description, written description, on it by the executive—

Morris: Of the applicant organization?

Charles: Oh, no. Well, yes, but the proposing person was asked to submit everything they could on maybe a single page. There would have been long interviews by our executive director.

We had a policy, which became tighter as time went on, and I think correctly so, that those who wanted grants from Rosenberg should not approach the Foundation through the board. A lot of people, of course, think that's a shortcut for everything, but we didn't like that then, and we all tried to avoid it; but it wasn't completely adhered to until later on. I think we've done better with that later on, after we were developed.

You see, all those years, we were developing policy, trying to figure out how we worked and how we thought we ought to work. Of course, with Charlie's absence, it changed. It became more of a real board, in the sense that we all then participated in policy-making. We mostly bowed to Charlie's ideas, and correctly so. He was really a great man.

Morris: You mentioned his belief that the board should have a strong concept of itself and what it wanted to do. What was it that he felt, as the leader of the board—?

Charles: That's right. It was his belief that we should be doing innovative work, probably in areas that were not conventional areas, and that we know who was going to carry out the work. It was his belief that, in the end, we were making the grant to that person, and that no matter how good the idea was, if there wasn't somebody who was going to make it work, it wouldn't work; and, of course, we've had that proved many times. I think he was correct.

However, we never have insisted, and never did in those days, that the person be named to us. That was one of the things the executive was supposed to find out: did the group know who was going to run this for them, and if so—

Morris: How did Leslie find out where to go up and down the Valley? Did she ask some personal acquaintances there?
Charles: Well, let me see if I can trace it down. It's too bad we don't have any memoirs of Leslie's.

Morris: Yes. I'm trying to reconstruct her influence by asking people like you.

Charles: Yes. Leslie and I were good friends, but I can't say that I ever got right down to brass tacks about exactly how she did it. I'm sure one thing led to another. We would examine certain fields. For instance, Charlie was deeply interested in Karl Holton and his juvenile justice programs throughout the state. So she would follow those. I don't know where the chief interest in the migrants came from.

Morris: Florence Wyckoff is a name that crops up--

Charles: Yes. Florence Wyckoff could well have been a contemporary of Leslie's at UC. I think it might be a good plan to ask Florence.* She's very bright. She's down in Watsonville; in fact, I may have her number some place. She could, in a few words, give us some information about Leslie.

Leslie was really a big woman on campus, as they used to say, and she had many acquaintances. I think she just made use of all her connections and information, once she ascertained the kind of thing that Charlie was interested in the Foundation doing, which was innovation, touching fields that perhaps hadn't even been touched before, making little grants that might do somebody some good.

Health Care and Rural Communities

Charles: At that time, and still when I left the Foundation, we had for some years taken the position that we wouldn't do medical grants, because we felt there was a good deal of money available for such projects. Well, you see, everything changed when all these federal programs came in, with a lot of money to put into certain aspects of things, such as health and medical care—or medical research, I guess, is what I'd better use. We decided that we not only shouldn't be spending our money that way because there was money available, but also we didn't have the knowledge on our board to decide whether we should be doing--

*See interview with Mrs. Wyckoff in this series.
Charles: Malcolm Watts, I think, was the first doctor who ever was put on our board, and that was ten years ago, probably [1962-1974]. Malcolm was a great help to us. He was an ideal personality—never promoted his own interests, but he would be able to select some little grant for, for instance, diabetic children or something of that sort that wasn't really research, because we wanted to stay out of the pure research field and be dealing with human needs and how we could do the most for them.

Morris: Health care, rather than basic research.

Charles: Well, yes. Or even identification. For instance, there was a great concern about valley fever in the San Joaquin Valley; I don't know whether anybody ever identified, really, what it was. When I got this facial paralysis, which scared everybody to death, including me (I didn't know what the future was, and neither did my doctors), one of the things they wanted to try to find out was whether I might have valley fever, since I came from the San Joaquin Valley. They never found out what it was, but it was a very active thing.

I don't know where our papers are on that, but we did finance some studies of valley fever, or whatever was affecting the children of the migrants there—

Morris: That was the connection with children and youth.

Charles: That was the connection, yes. We were also interested in the education and improvement of those migrant children. One very special interest of Charlie Elkus's, which hardly ever came in to the Foundation, was American Indians. When we made grants later to Indian groups, it was not because they were Indians, but because of our old interest in trying to accept applications that act on the welfare of neglected areas, with a great deal of emphasis on our work down in the Valley, but also in urban communities.

Morris: It seems as if there was more interest, or more grants made, in the Valley and mountain communities in the fifties than there has been in more recent years.

Charles: Oh, that's very true, yes.

**Urban Pressures and Youth**

Charles: This change just about coincided with the time that Ruth Chance came in as executive director. I think you should read, if you haven't read it, the introduction to last year's annual report [1973] of the
Charles: Rosenberg Foundation.* Have you seen that?
Morris: Yes.

Charles: The beginning of it was a collaboration of Ruth's and mine. She wrote it and I edited it. Between us, we finally turned it into what we wanted. It's a pretty good description of the change of emphasis toward concern with the urban scene, which was, of course, moving very rapidly. When you really take a look at it, which I hadn't thought about before, the fact that more and more young people were trying to come to the cities and leaving the country—this has been a long, traditional transition of American life. I shouldn't even say American life; I guess the Romans were talking about it.

Morris: Really?

Charles: Oh, yes. There are some marvelous Latin comments on why people want to get to the city. I can't quote them for you now, and I maybe can't even find them, but it's been a historic way for young people to move.

We began to feel, under Ruth's direction—Ruth brought a great many things to our attention that really were marvelous—that the needs of these people crowded into cities, not only kids on their own, but families that think they're coming to the promised land and really can't even find a way to live—that we should put more and more emphasis on that.

Morris: That annual report points out that the roots of the Foundation's interest and support do go way back to the transient youth study that was commissioned by the Governor's Advisory Committee on Children and Youth in the forties.

Charles: Oh, yes. That's right. One of the most amazing things that we have done is that we were a great source of funds for these state-wide studies.

There was no other foundation for anybody to go to but Rosenberg for these things. The other foundations were primarily proprietary in the sense that they were family-oriented foundations; they really didn't want to do anything unconventional. The San Francisco Foundation wasn't organized til '38; we helped them get started, you know. I always tease them about that because now, of course, they've got a lot more money than we do.

*See appendix.
Charles: And so, when people wanted to make studies on abortion or transient youth or any of the things that nobody really wanted to talk about very much in the 1940s, they would come to us, and we would fund it.

Morris: Did the board discuss at all the implications of a private foundation making grants to the state government?

Charles: Yes. We often discussed that. We've often talked about making grants to the city, which we have done. Actually, one of our newest policies was that we were probably not going to continue funding, say, the education establishment.

[Tape turned over]

Charles: We thought perhaps some of the more innovative ideas might be going to have to come from organizations working on the fringes of education, rather than--

Morris: Outside of institutions?

Charles: Yes. Outside of the traditional institutions, and so we put money into that.

**Invited Applications and Obese Budgets**

Charles: One thing I started to say earlier was that at one point—I would imagine it was in the middle fifties—we were still trying to invite the kind of applications that we wanted. It seems incredible now, because we're so swamped.

We were trying to think of ways to invite applications that would be creative and unusual, and we decided to invite each of the colleges around here to create an application for us in something they thought was important. I believe it was in the field of education, and we were terribly disappointed in that. It taught us a good lesson, which is that you can't stimulate creativity. It just has to be there before it can come to you in any kind of viable form. We were very disappointed. We decided that we probably would not try that again. As it turned out, we really didn't need to, because applications began increasing spontaneously.

Morris: There were, over the years, it seems to me, a number of different approaches to the emotional problems of youngsters.

Charles: Yes.
Morris: Now, was this something that emerged with the years, or were there people on the board who felt this was particularly important?

Charles: No, I really have to say that I believe that when we leave Charlie's era (because Charlie had ideas of his own about where he thought the emphasis ought to be)—as we emerged from that era, we became increasingly—I don't really think the word 'dependent' is quite right, although it's partly right—dependent on our staff director to bring us the most forward-looking things that she thought (it was 'she' since it would apply both to Leslie and Ruth) were where we ought to be putting our money, our hopes of developing cures for things or extending good ideas, that sort of thing.

Ruth, of course, has put a tremendous mark, all to the good, on the Foundation. She's a little different type of person than Leslie Ganyard, and she was exactly the kind of person that we needed. Ruth is an intellectual and a philosopher, and Leslie Ganyard was a more practical, down-to-earth person. Both of them are extremely compassionate and at the same time hard-headed, or cold-nosed, or whatever we want to call it, about their review of applications. They didn't let anybody come in with phony aspects to whatever it is. They just got everybody right down to brass tacks. Of course, Ruth scares people to death, always has, among her applicants. They have to go back and keep thinning out their desires more and more, and that's good exercise for them.

Morris: For the grantee.

Charles: For the grantee, yes.

Morris: Working with a foundation executive, preliminary to submitting a proposal, sharpens up the applicant's perception?

Charles: Oh, my, yes. And also sharpens up their consciences as to what they really need to do their job, and how they can do it in the most economical and effective way. Nobody's trying to prevent them from being effective, but you get a lot of fat in a lot of these proposals. Ruth just recognized it in a minute. Most of the good foundations' executives try very hard to do that.

I was speaking to a group just two or three weeks ago about funding, and I became argumentative with one young woman who said: Well, if you apply to the federal government, you want to make it double what you really need.

And I said: Well, in my view, that hurts you more than it does anybody else, because then you don't force yourself to ask for exactly what you know you need, rather than gambling on it being reduced somewhere along the line, irrationally.
Charles: Perhaps the federal government—we know that these grants have been, some of them, very loosely given, and administered, too. We all have examples of that sort of thing. Of course, a small foundation like ours simply cannot afford to have its money being spent lavishly or without due consideration.

1950s: Interagency Approach to Multi-Problem Families

Morris: When I mentioned emotionally disturbed children, I was thinking of that 1955-7 grant in San Mateo County, done by Community Research Associates. It was an interagency approach to the multi-problem family, and later there was some continuation in San Francisco.

Charles: Oh, yes. That's right.

Morris: I believe they had done an evaluation study of the Foundation; their report is called "New Adventures in Foundation Giving."*

Charles: Well, they might have. Within the Foundation, that San Mateo project was a very controversial thing. The only thing that carried it was that Charlie was still alive; do you know when he died?

Morris: The early 1960s, because he was still president when Ruth Chance came to the Foundation.

Charles: Yes. That's exactly right. Well, Charlie became very enamored of that idea and Roy Sorenson, who had come on the board—and do you have the date when Roy came on?

Morris: I have him there in 1951.

Charles: Oh, was it that early? That surprises me.

Morris: Wasn't he a consultant to Community Research Associates?

Charles: Yes, he was. That's right. It all tied up together, because Charlie and Roy sort of worked out the details of putting an enormous amount of money in this thing—for us, an enormous amount. It was a four-year commitment—

Morris: Over a half a million dollars.

Charles: Yes, exactly. It was about a hundred thousand a year, if not a little more. This was not what the board was used to, and we were quite uneasy about it. I think Ruth was there, though, when that happened.

Morris: She came in in the middle, before a grant was made for a modified version of the plan in the San Francisco Welfare Department.

Charles: Well, Leslie Ganyard was uneasy about it, too. As a matter of fact, it really only confirmed our feeling (I use the word collectively, of the Foundation board) that our most effective grants were small ones, because we put a lot of money into this. It was a theory about all—or let's say ninety-five percent—of the welfare problems coming from twenty or fifteen percent of the people, and that if we put enough money into it, this Community Research Associates group could identify who these families were, and thereby reduce—because we also knew at that time that people, if it was a whole family, were apt to go to a number of different places to get help, so that they accumulated—of course, none of them ever accumulated enough to do themselves any good. But that was an unsatisfying experience for all of us.

Morris: Was it primarily the high cost of it that made people uneasy?

Charles: Well, we didn't like the cost, but what bothered us was that we couldn't see anything coming out of it. A lot of theory and research. We are used, and have always been used, to measuring our grants in the concrete, humanitarian results that we get, and also the information they bring to make it possible for other people to do the same thing in other places.

Lots of our grants have resulted in publications, little pamphlets, that tell people how to do things; they can be used all over the country. I think that we valued our contribution more when it was that kind of result, than we did in a major scientific study of something. We just didn't think that was our function, and we also didn't think that we had the money to do that sort of thing.

You know, that took so much of what we had to grant that it cut down very much on little things that would come in. Some of the best grants we have made have been five thousand, ten thousand dollars for some thing to be completed, or to be done in a peripheral way.

*Individuals in Need Vs. Broad Social Theory*

Morris: In other reading I have done, just after World War II there seems to have been quite a lot of interest in the business community in taking a scientific look at planning and doing long-range studies. Did any of the businessmen on the board talk about this point and were they for or against it?
Charles: The interesting thing to me, if I were to make a generalization about businessmen on the board, would be that their primary interests were almost uniformly in the effect on individuals that our grants would have, not in philosophical ways of going at it. That would be more the social worker's idea, you see: how you could look at it broadly. Businessmen might look at business that way, but the satisfaction they get, and got, from being on the Rosenberg board was being able to think of individuals they had helped and that that method could be used elsewhere; that would be satisfying.

They wouldn't want to do a study, I don't believe, that separated them from the realities of human distress and how to alleviate it. In a way, I think that most businessmen that I know in most of my organizations and boards infinitely prefer seeing the results of what they do right there before them, seeing that you've helped somebody. And the desire to do it is not inspired by big, broad efforts.

Morris: World view kind of thing.

Charles: Yes. Or even community views. It's inspired by the fact that here's a little group of people that just can't make it. If something we did could help them, and not be just temporary help, but give them fundamental help, I think this is where you would get your best support.

Morris: In other words, in general, businessmen respond to the contrasts in the kinds of things the Foundation is doing, the way they're different from the way a business runs.

Charles: Exactly. I think so. They want--

Morris: There isn't much feedback between business and philanthropy?

Charles: Yes. I would make that statement in this way: what they respond to is the personal satisfaction of philanthropy. Businessmen, of course, are very valuable on the Rosenberg board because they have high standards of fiscal responsibility, and this you need; we need to have that in everything we do, and they're very good at that. But they don't get the personal satisfaction from that.

I think, when you're working in philanthropy, if you aren't getting some personal satisfaction from what you do, those hours are very wasted, because what else do you get? You don't get anything else. And unless you can say with some pride that you did this, that or the other thing, it's not worth it to you.

For instance, Ward Mailliard was extremely interested in the Audubon Society and his family had long-time Marin County connections. I suspect that we financed a number of bird sanctuaries and retreats over in Marin County. I can't remember exactly when or which ones
Charles: they were (we'd have to ask Ruth about that), but when Ward would come in with one of his Audubon proposals, you really could not fit it into the type of thing we thought we were doing, which was really welfare, you see. And that is in the most limited sense—the sense of improving the human condition, which, of course, is what we want to do. But we didn't think of it as is now very common, in the ecological way of preserving the environment, that sort of thing.

Morris: Environmental projects as such are still out of Rosenberg's territory?

Charles: Yes. What we could justify would be, for instance, if the Audubon Society were going to run a school where children could learn more about birds, or whatever it might be.

Morris: I think of the blue heron ranch up there, that so many school groups visit.

Charles: Well, that's right. But it sort of snuck in under the rails, you know. It really wasn't exactly what we thought we were for, nor what Charlie thought; but Charlie was very fond of Ward, and if Ward came in with this—and he knew of Ward's great affection for Audubon—we would all sort of smile when that came along. We knew we were going to do it, although we might have a hard time fitting into the idea of what we thought, generally, that we were doing. And, of course, we should. Those are all part of the human condition—very necessary to a well-rounded human life; but we were looking at it a little differently then.

Evaluating Grant Results

Charles: I think one of the things that might be interesting to do—and maybe before you and I have our next session I ought to sit down with Ruth and talk about it—is to see whether our deviations from policy in Foundation grants have actually become a pattern. We've gone into the cultural world and the ecological world, and all of these other things that were more remote to what we thought was our major preoccupation in those early days, which was really education and welfare, I would say.

Now, we took it as being to the welfare of young children—as you know, our purpose was always that (and I don't know that we used the word 'young') children and youth—and we've stuck with that, but our emphasis has changed from time to time. Some of the things that have been dragged in by the heels to fit that have been exceedingly worthwhile things to do. They would tell you something if we would have the patience to look at them.
Charles: For instance, we had this proposition from a young fellow, a teacher, who was, I presume, at the end of his wits as to how to interest a class of boys—maybe boys and girls—just in plain, old, studying and learning. And they were difficult children. He didn't know what to do. I don't know whether he, himself, was a flyer or whether he had friends over in the little flying school over there. Well, he worked out a scheme whereby these children who had done well in their work that week were then taken on a plane flight every Friday, or something of the sort. Well, of course, it just worked like a charm. Everything they did was attached, I presume, as best they could, to the whole idea of flying and instruction.

Well, it was an expensive thing for us to do, but we were all very taken with it because we saw that it gave that little impulse--

Morris: The carrot rather than the stick.

Charles: Yes. I think maybe one of the things we ought to do in the Foundation, if anybody had time, would be to try to analyze some of these off-beat things that we did, to get some generalizations that might--

Morris: That's a fascinating idea. In reading through your annual reports, I have wondered what happens to the results, in terms of the Foundation cumulative record and also in terms of disseminating information to others working in the same grant field.

Charles: We've had very bad luck in trying to assess our old grants. We've hired people to do it, and we've tried to review them, and it's a very, very hard thing to do. A great deal depends on the person who's doing the reviewing. A great deal depends on what our original intention was, and if that didn't work out, what did come out of it.

It takes some imagination to analyze. I think, as a matter of fact, this isn't the only organization that I've worked in where it seems impossible to make any assessment of whether you've done anything good or not. I was president for some years of the Edgewood orphanage, which is not an orphanage, but actually a home for disturbed children.

Morris: That's an interesting evolution, too.

Charles: It had to be, because, you see, there aren't many orphans any more; what you're getting are single-parent kids and that sort of thing. We tried a number of experiments over the years, after we quit the traditional one of simply making ourselves available to the government; that was what a lot of these orphanages did when they began running out of orphans—they made themselves available to other agencies.

Morris: To the county placement services?
Charles: Yes. Then the county wouldn't pay you the cost, even though it was less than their own costs in their own buildings. They would set the fees by legislative action. Well, we don't want to get into all that.

Anyway, at Edgewood we did our level best to evaluate whether a new program was working or not. I was talking to them the other day, and they were just shaking their heads at how very difficult it is. It requires actual following up of people, and I don't know whether you can do it in less than ten or fifteen years, you know. It may be that you won't know whether you did any good if you don't--

Morris: It could be that you might be able to posit, 'in five years we had thus and so kind of results,' and then maybe--the problem always is the follow-up. Who's going to bring it up ten years later?

Charles: And who's going to find those people? The kind of people we're talking about there? Probably in many of our Rosenberg projects are people who are not easy to find. They're people who move a great deal. I really think we could learn something about ourselves that would be very valuable to us if we took a look at our grants over the years, not so much to see how much glory they reflected on the Foundation, but to see whether anything really innovative had developed that could be made use of elsewhere that was overlooked at the time. I don't think we've taken a look in quite that way.

That's a very hard thing to do, because times change, and the areas where society needs help change, and you have to meet those needs as they come along. It may be that what you did twenty years ago--it's probably quite true--wouldn't apply at the present time. So maybe it would be a lot of wasted energy. Maybe you just have to continue moving forward in as creative a way as possible.

Morris: There's also the theory that institutions tend to get into a rut, and that grants for innovative projects are a useful way of keeping the juices flowing, as it were.

Charles: Yes.

Morris: Whether or not they add anything to the overall knowledge--

Charles: To the social scene?

Morris: Yes.

Charles: Well, I think there's something in that.
7. SATISFACTIONS AND HAZARDS OF BOARD MEMBERSHIP

Responding to Individual Proposals

Charles: I think you cannot get away from, as I have said repeatedly, the satisfactions that must be gained for your board members, because if they aren't getting a sense of contributing to the welfare of humanity from what they do, there is absolutely no point for them to do it. This is true whether you're a businessman, or just a lay person like myself, or whatever you may do.

Morris: Other than the feeling that they are working with like-minded and able people on a topic of common interest?

Charles: Yes. Of course, it's very satisfying to be working with people you like and whose minds you like, and with whom you like to exchange ideas; but it has to be deeper than that, and it cannot be, I don't think—and maybe there'd be arguments here with other people—a matter of board members' individual interests.

We've tried, and I've mentioned this earlier, to see that the board members really use their executive director as the filter for the things to come for consideration, because if each board member becomes a transmission agent for areas in which he or she is interested, then immediately your board becomes a trade-off situation. So that you say: I will support so-and-so's project on something that doesn't interest me at all if—you know, it's the old logrolling thing—they will support me.

Now, I've always admired the Rosenberg Foundation for this. Despite little lapses here and there—and nobody got hurt by them at all—it never became a pattern for us. So that even though Ward Mailliard would introduce the Audubon Society, it never became a feeling of the board that each one of us would then come in with something of ours and expect it to be—in fact, I have always been absolutely determined that I myself will never bring in anything that would benefit anything I was interested in.
Charles: If they wanted to come to Rosenberg with a proposal, they had to come in some other way. They would have to come through Ruth Chance's belief that this was something the Foundation might want to do, and through her research. So that I would never appear at all. And I don't mean appear. I really wouldn't be in the picture, as far as the reason why it's coming into the Rosenberg Foundation.

So, when people call me, I would say to them: It will hurt you, not help you, for me to be involved in this. If you want to go and see Mrs. Chance, or follow the procedure, which is to call and ask if you may submit something, or if you can come see her first, or whatever you want to do, you do it.

I refuse to have my special interests become—it's so dangerous to do. You only have to do it once or twice (I suppose we all have to experiment with these things, even though we know that they don't work. Every once in a while, you'll weaken and say: Well, maybe, all right) and it becomes to me a very serious embarrassment.

Morris: Has this ever been a problem with the board as a whole? Among the nine of you there's quite a collection of experience and membership on various boards and committees.

Charles: It's really worked out, I think, extremely well. I think that the board members are all careful about that. If something comes in that has to do with something that you're on the board of, then you just say: I won't vote on this.

Well, it's all right to say you won't vote, but we've just had this recent discussion in the city government here, as to what special interests are, and we don't want to be so careful about it that, as the mayor says, we'll lose all of our most valuable people that way. You don't want to have to do that; on the other hand, it is true that, even if you don't vote, you can be a very powerful force in the discussion. You really have to, I think, almost absent yourself from the meeting itself to see that it gets the kind of discussion it needs. People aren't always careful about that, and I think they should be. I think that Rosenberg has come out extremely well in maintaining a sort of unified situation there, of a whole board trying to review together what the director has researched.

New board members sometimes have to learn not to do that—not to go behind the director. You'll read a proposal, and then you'll think: Well, I know something about that. I'll call Joe Doaks, and see what he has to say.

There's nothing so distressing to your executive director as to have you show up with a bit of information that she didn't have. I've always been very careful about that.
Charles: What I've always done—if I would get Ruth's book of applications and I'd come on one that I felt I knew a little more about, or knew somebody who did, then I would call Ruth and say to Ruth: Have you checked with so-and-so?

She's delighted to have a chance to do that without being confronted in a board meeting with my saying: Well, I checked with Joe Doaks, and he told me--.

People do those things. I spend a great deal of time advising youthful members of different organizations that they really should watch themselves, not to embarrass the staff members, whatever it might be. Stanford board of trustees or any other board. It simply doesn't do to confront somebody at a meeting with something that you could have taken up with him or her privately, before.

Now, some people won't respond and don't realize that you're doing them a big favor by doing that. Sometimes you may need to bring it out and let it make its point. But you shouldn't be doing it constantly, because you'd make yourself so unpopular on the board; it's very interesting that any board as a whole resents seeing anybody embarrassed. So that the person who raises the embarrassing issue is the one who become unpopular, not the person who was going to be--

Morris: Leaving something undone--?

Charles: Yes, right. And you have to be very careful about that if you're going to maintain your position in the board of confidence and thoughtfulness, too. After all, if we're all involved in human--

Morris: Good manners is--

Charles: Yes, exactly. It is involved in our human contacts. They've got to be conducted in a way that we can be proud of, and certainly not be ashamed of, anyway.

Knowledge of Community Networks

Morris: How do you define the area in which board members can bring their knowledge and experience with various community agencies or social issues into--

Charles: The Foundation?

Morris: Yes.
Charles: I think that's a highly specialized situation. It seems to me that in relation to myself on the Foundation board, the most valuable thing that I would bring is a broad experience in how community organizations work and a sense of when they're in trouble, or when they're doing something that won't work, because of my own general experience—not in any given organization. For instance, I would read an application with a proposed organization that, from my experience, I thought wouldn't work. And then I would say to Ruth: I'm going to raise, at the board, the issue of how this thing is organized, and perhaps you will ask them some questions, as to whether there isn't a better way to do this. Or something of that sort.

So that I consider that my specialized knowledge is in the whole field of the community and the interrelationships, both of organizations with each other and internal relationships within an organization. You realize that sometimes an application may embody an idea which perhaps ought to be followed through, but what effect is this going to have on a couple of other organizations that think they're doing the same thing?

You see, if you cut yourself off—if you're going to live in the organization world, then you've got to be sure that you live in it sufficiently to gain the sense of the network of organizations that comprise our modern communities. It's as if you had a lot of town meetings, so that almost any organization meeting is a town meeting, because it touches on other aspects of the community; and the person who has some experience in a great many different aspects of the community is going to be helpful to the overall situation.

Ruth has said to me: You have the mind of a generalist, and those people are hard to find. Which I took as a compliment, because I do try to see things in the broad—I don't want to get too impassioned about a single issue or a single organization—that's why I've never been a one-organization person. There are some very valuable people who are one-organization people, but those people may not be fitted at all to be on a board of a foundation. Because of the way their minds work, they can't escape the relationship of whatever you propose to do to the thing they are principally interested in.

I think that during the time that I was on the Rosenberg Foundation we did an extremely good job of having people on the board who were, in the best sense of the word, what I might call 'lay generalists.' They didn't come out of any of the kinds of things that we've served, although they would serve on a board here and there and have the experience. They had enough experience that they weren't wed to relating everything to the one thing that to them was important. We need those people, but there are certain places they don't belong.
Morris: Let me ask you for a 'for instance' on this. Going back to Roy Sorensen: he was a consultant to Community Research Associates on this series of projects on the multi-problem family, which began in the late forties. And then, in 1951, he became a member of the Rosenberg board. I guess that would still be Charlie Elkus--?

Charles: Oh, Charlie adored Roy, just adored Roy.

Morris: Did that cause any problems, either with the continuing of the grants or with Roy?

Charles: Yes, I believe so. I have always worried about whether or not social workers belong on the board of a foundation like Rosenberg. I'll make that as a generalization because, right now, I believe there are several people in that category on the board. For instance, there is a social worker, and he's very good. I haven't worked with him long enough to know if he can restrain his impulses, because one of the impulses that social workers have is a conviction that the lay people don't know anything about this field.

That was one of the things that made Roy very difficult for me to work with. I liked Roy. We were friends, but I felt myself being constantly manipulated into a decision that I was not going to make, and I would ultimately get my back up and not do it. I didn't like that feeling. I would say that it would have occurred to no other board member to try to get the other fellow to change; he wouldn't have felt that he had that much knowledge, but the people whose professions are in the fields that we work in tend to believe that they know more than anybody else does about the whole field, and where this emphasis ought to be and that--

[Phone interruption]

Time for a Woman President: 1961

Morris: Did this continue to be a problem when Mr. Sorensen was president of the board, from 1957 to 1961?

Charles: Yes, because--well, then, I'll have to tell you that little story, too. There were nine on the board and they revolved the presidency around among the men, as if the women were not there.

Morris: Oh, dear.

Charles: So, after about ten years, when I saw that this was what they were doing, I began getting myself really annoyed about it because there couldn't be a more competent person than Ellie Sloss. She's on the
Charles: Mills board of trustees—president of their alumni association. She's a person of great competence, and the idea that without even saying anything to anybody they just—

So I called up Dick Guggenheim; I'm a very good friend of Dick's. He's a very fine man, and I'm extremely fond of him. They were casting about for a president, somebody who hadn't already been president, because we didn't really have any terms. I must tell you about that, too, because we just followed Charlie's pattern. We just eliminated terms.

We'd decided we'd have three-year terms on the board. Let me say that, because it involves the presidency. I think Charlie continued being president during the entire time that he was there, almost. We would come to a board meeting and Charlie would say: Well, I see that three people's terms expire this year (on this three-year term business)—now, is this the way we really want to run this Foundation?

He'd say: Nobody knows enough to be retired off this board.

Morris: In just three years?

Charles: In three years. Or, we may have attempted to insert 'retiring after two terms' or something like that. Well, we eliminated all of that, and it always used to make me laugh, because every year we'd say: Well, so-and-so's term's coming up. We can't have that.

So we just would rescind all the things in the by-laws that had anything to do with people's terms. So that meant that pretty soon we would get—I don't have the dates when all this happened. You have to look back and see when Ellie Sloss was president, because that will tell you.

Morris: She was president from 1961 to 1963.

Charles: In the early sixties. Well, that was when I reached the end of my patience with this thing. Because everybody on the board had already been president about then, I guess. Nobody ever had to get off. And so they didn't know exactly who to make president. Dick Guggenheim was the chairman of the nominating committee. So I called Dick and I said: Dick, you have the perfect candidate for president—Ellie Sloss. I want to say that I think the way you've been conducting this board, just simply revolving that presidency around with no consideration for a woman is—I can't understand it.

Well, Dick and I had quite a hilarious exchange, and he said to me: Then you will want to be president, too.
Charles: And I said: We're not talking about that right now (because Dick and I are like brother and sister; we're really friends). And I said: All I'm talking about is Ellie Sloss, and she's qualified.

Well, I finally got to them and they nominated Ellie for president and, of course, she was a fine president. Well, then later they went through some of the same thing in regard to my presidency, but Ruth was the person who really worked on that.

Morris: I would have thought that at the level of the people on the board there would be less of this business of 'a woman's role is in the home' than there is, maybe, in society in general. Is that a valid observation?

Charles: No. I consider that men are men wherever they're operating. They operate in exactly the same way. There are certain things they think women can't do, and you have to prove over and over again that you can do these things. You have to do them better than anybody else does, or they don't really do it. I don't think that our Foundation board was very much different from men in society in general.

Charlie was a great supporter of women being participants in the board. Now, the question of a woman being president never arose while he was alive. I would have been interested as to what his theory about that would have been, because I got into a little trouble with Charlie once; and, fortunately, as I think I've said to you before, I always have one part of me that can stand aside and see what's happening. And so I can be amused by things that might cause a sort of traumatic experience [laughs].

Communication and Personal Relations

Charles: Leslie Ganyard—as I said to you earlier, the executive becomes very upset when what they recommend is rejected, and they have to learn how to conceal it. It's more painful with some things than others, and it just depends on whether their heart has become really seriously involved with something that they're proposing.

So in this case we evidently had had a little spell of rejecting some of Leslie's things. And one day she called me up in tears (or perhaps we were together) and she said: I just can't stand this. I'm just having all my favorite things rejected.

I said: Well, why don't you stop making a recommendation? Why don't you just say, 'these are the points in favor, and these are the points against, and the board should make up its own mind.' I said I
Charles: thought that would ease her feelings—because it had a personal element in it, her feelings did, that they were rejecting her as well as what she was recommending.

So she thought that was a good idea. So she brings over the agenda to Charlie, who went over everything. He never allowed it to be sent out till he had reviewed it. We don't do that anymore; the president doesn't see the agenda any earlier than anybody else does, which I think is correct.

But at that time he reviewed it. So he said to Leslie, as she reported to me: What does this mean, you're not making a recommendation?

She said: Well, Caroline suggested that I not do it, because I've been bothered by it not being accepted.

And he said: I'll just speak to Caroline Charles.

So he called me up and he just said: You just stay out of this. I don't wish you to become—

Well, he had no business saying that to me, as a board member. And, after all, every board member can have whatever conversation he or she wants with the executive. In my view, this is the health of the organization, when it has lines of communication coming from everybody in it. But I was so amused by Charlie's indignation, that I said: Absolutely, Charlie. Whatever you want.

One thing in my organizational life is that I'm not going to argue or create issues with people whom I generally admire, whom I think have pretty good judgment in everything that they do, because all I'd do is just cause an upheaval over what is really a personal matter. I didn't see any reason to say to Charlie, for instance: You have no business telling me what I can or can't do.

I never do that sort of thing; I try to use what intelligence I have in dealing with these problems that seem to get to be a little personal.

So I just said: Charlie, that's fine. I'm perfectly willing to do that.

Leslie and I talked about it and I said: Leslie, Charlie employed you, and you go right ahead and do this.

And this is only a technicality, because it didn't change the content of what she did, at all. It only meant that she again exposed herself to rejection—and she got rejected plenty of times from then on, too. The board has always been very independent, and sometimes
Charles: some little thing will come up in an application that strikes somebody as revealing something that perhaps isn't quite what we want to give the money to, or something like that. We have tried, and we do, I would think, almost always have a pretty unanimous vote on things. Whether this is changing now, I don't know. But that's what we tried to do—to talk out our questions, and sometimes put it over for more information.

But, anyway, Charlie was of his generation in regard to women. He thought that we ought to be on there, and we ought to be putting our money and our minds into making decisions, but I doubt very much if he would have thought a woman ought to be president. I don't know that, for sure.

Now, he had many women friends of great ability in San Francisco. Some of them, I thought, were not of as great ability as Charlie thought, but he thought they should be on boards and had a contribution to make.

I think that perhaps women are more likely to speak up in an organization—on a board—when they think it's important to consider another way of doing things.

[New tape begins]

Morris: You felt that none of the men would be willing to speak up?

Charles: They wouldn't have started, but they were agreeable once it had got started, by me in the first instance, and by Ruth Chance. You see, Ruth's style of working was really quite different from Leslie Ganyard's. Leslie had been brought in the Foundation as staff by a very strong person, namely Charlie Elkus. And she worked for Charlie.

Now, it wasn't that she asked that it be that way, but she knew the realities, and the realities were that she was working for Charlie. I can't think of a person who I know—he would be a benevolent despot in that situation.

Morris: It sounds like it, but like a very able one.

Charles: Very—he had wide knowledge and he made the Foundation what it is. He and Leslie together. Leslie was the perfect arm for him to go out and investigate around the countryside and so forth.
Responsibility to Staff: Leslie Ganyard Retires

Morris: How did it happen that the board decided to find a new director?

Charles: Because we had passed, some years before, a rule that sixty-five would be the retirement age. I knew that this was going to be very painful for Leslie, because you don't feel like sixty-five. I don't feel like sixty-nine. You just don't feel that way.

I decided that my function, at least one function, was to stay close to the executive when it was time for her to retire and try to help her through this period without yielding on the fact that it had to be done; because the suggestion you'd always get from anybody in that position is: Well, I could stay on another year or two years.

Well, the minute you do that—I think it has to be done. I, myself, really believe so. Now, I'm lucky, because the retirement age at Stanford is seventy, which will mean that next year will be my retirement from the board of trustees. And, you know, you don't feel any different, but you just have to—I'm a realist, so that it won't make any difference as far as I'm concerned; I must capitulate to that rule.

Ruth and Leslie are both realists, of course, but Leslie—oh, my, she was very upset by having to retire. She felt that it was a reflection on her by the board, and I kept telling her—I just felt that she ought to have somebody to talk to about all this, and so she'd pour out to me how she felt. And I would just say: But, Leslie, it just has to be. These rules are good for everybody.

Morris: With all her experience and acquaintances, did she not use those skills in some other way?

Charles: Well, there's hardly any way to do it. I mean, Ruth is up against the same thing right now. There's no organized way to make use of all the abilities that you've developed.

For instance, John May retired and he was immediately invited by Bill Hewlett to reorganize his family foundation.

Morris: Which is, in a way, about where the San Francisco Foundation was twenty-five years ago.

Charles: That's right. When it started. I have just hoped that a similar kind of thing would be presented to Ruth.

But we were talking about Leslie's retirement. The first thing that I did was to tell the board that they had to have some kind of a party for Leslie Ganyard. They didn't agree at all, and Charlie and
Charles: I had a great to-do over that; but I said: It is absolutely essential. You will regret it very much if you don't do it. She's been here too long; she's given too much. We don't have to have a big party.

Morris: You thought there should be a ceremonial--

Charles: I thought there had to be a ceremonial something, and we had to give her a little present. Well, the men finally got overruled by me and we had a nice dinner at the St. Francis and gave her a silver dish or something—which the board very carefully paid for, because we were careful not to use Foundation funds for that sort of thing. But I knew that it would just wound Leslie Ganyard to the quick if she were not able to say to her friends that something had been done to recognize her.

But, anyway, the thing that's so sad, you see, is that she became pretty disabled. She had arthritis anyway, and the minute she lost the compulsion to be down there every day working, you could see her getting more and more crippled up. I've seen this happen frequently. It's very sad.

Morris: That really is.

Charles: She had a brother with whom she lived. Her husband had died first, and then her brother, but it seems to me that this all happened quite quickly.

Morris: Was she a widow when she was employed?

Charles: No, she wasn't. And I think that probably her husband was still alive when she left. I'm not positive about that, but I've forgotten whether he had some small business or something. Leslie was the real wage-earner in the family. Of course, the salaries we paid in those days were just ridiculous and the retirement pay was just incredibly low.

Ruth Chance

Charles: We finally got the board to make some kind of cost-of-living raise--I was determined that Ruth should not be treated that way. So, again, I started this great battle at this retirement. This time, Ruth got involved in the battle, because she made up her mind she wasn't going to have anything done and I made up my mind she was.

Morris: That's marvelous. Somebody who doesn't like having things done for them in contact with someone who likes doing things for people.

Charles: Well, it's not quite as simple as that. There's a certain pride involved in this for the Foundation. If you let a person go, who has done such things as Ruth Chance has for the community, without any recognition at all--it was my belief that it should be something done for all the people to whom she'd given grants, not a social occasion. So we had the party that way.

You know, organizations have their noblesse oblige. That's what I'm really thinking of. I just don't think that an organization like the Rosenberg--and what it had come to be, really, under Ruth's direction--could not say thank you. We left one phase behind when Ruth came in--and that was our sort of small, country phase--and really developed into something that was then known all over the country. I mean, everybody knew the kinds of things Rosenberg did, the style with which they did them, and the capacities of Ruth. It would have been a very awkward thing to have no expression of our appreciation.

I think Ruth knows that, although we had some strong arguments over the party at the time. Our friendship is strong enough that it was untouched by our disagreements.
Charles: But it was kind of amusing, because they were young people who had had the training, as I say, in the big foundations, where everything is parcelled out, and the board member really only gets to anything much later on.

Morris: Could you say a little bit more about what Ruth has meant to the community?

Charles: Oh, my, yes. You see, because she approached the work of the Foundation as a philosophical as well as a practical thing, she saw what she was doing all the time. So she was able to make it work in a way that you can't do if you just aren't looking at the total objective that you may have. Ruth's objective was always to try to understand what the world was doing, what the times were doing, and where a small foundation could fit in places where nobody else would pick it up. Ruth had grasped immediately the somewhat fumbling ideas of the Foundation, of its role.

Ruth, because of her personality and her extreme insight, has been able to make friends with every single person she's ever interviewed, whether she rejected them or not. And whether she absolutely put them through the mill on their budget or anything else, she's been able to do that and divorce it entirely from any feeling of personal friction. It was always on the basis of what is the best way for them to do what they wanted to do, and the most economical way. That's what the Foundation wanted and so Ruth would spend endless hours, and people are just crazy about her, you know—just adore her. It's meant a tremendous amount to the Foundation to have her.

Morris: That's the sense I've always had.

Charles: Yes. She has even had many breakfasts with people from the East who were here and realized that was probably the best time to see her. And probably dinners, too. And then lunches. Along the lines of perhaps getting to know a little more about her—or Ruth and I—when I was president, we would have lunch, once or twice a month, working on what was coming before the board, and what policies we needed to enunciate, and so forth.

She has tremendous intellectual ability combined with her feeling sense. Ruth is really a total person, which is hard to acquire in this life, and which is what we're all struggling to do: somehow to bring our intelligence and our emotions and our perceptions all together at once, and be able to respond and act upon what we see. And Ruth has certainly brought that to a high sense of development.
Morris: Would you have been involved in the selection process by which Ruth joined the Foundation?

Charles: I wasn't involved in the selection process. I think Charlie had appointed a selection committee, but he, again, made the choice. We had people applying, but nothing like we had applying when Ruth retired; we had hundreds and hundreds of applications for that job.

Anyway, it really was in Charlie's hands. He heard about Ruth, who was working for Carl Spaeth, I believe, on a Ford Foundation grant down at Stanford, and felt she was the right person. No one had any contrary feelings about her. And so Ruth was brought in.

Morris: Did the board have some discussions about what kinds of qualities they were looking for and what direction--?

Charles: Oh, yes. We went through the usual things—I think we very much wanted another woman. We did not want to lose our ability to be close to the so-called grassroots, both in the Valley and in the city. We wanted to try to get someone whose personality would make it possible to be close and for people to talk to.

The most important single thing, I believe, is that when someone comes to see your staff person in the office, they feel completely comfortable about talking to her or him.

Morris: People that I talked with tell me that Ruth Chance never sits behind her desk—that she's out there beside the desk.

Charles: Yes. Well, I don't know how Leslie did it, but in any case, they both had the same effect in making people feel they were really being heard. We've been extremely lucky, because I think we have a fine young man now, who's doing much the same thing.

We really wanted to preserve our simplicity, because among the applicants we had--

Morris: In 1958?

Charles: No, the last two years—for Ruth's successor. Among the applicants we had high-powered people who had gotten their training in some of the eastern foundations, and they thought our Foundation was much too informal, and they were going to—[laughs] and, of course, the thing they said that absolutely ruined their application was that they were going to straighten up the Rosenberg Foundation and make it into a real foundation. Nobody on the board wanted this, and so they just got lost, right then.

Morris: [Laughs] Oh, dear.
Defending Applications: Innovations in Military Counseling and Housing

Charles: The other thing about Ruth is that she is fearless in defending her position on her applications. She will just go after the board when they decide they're not going to do something that she thinks they ought to do. She organizes her battles as if she were in court, arguing.

Ben Duniway has had the most enjoyment, I think, of anybody of teasing Ruth. Ben's quite a tease and he would like to tease her about her legal positions, and it's really--

Morris: Her briefs?

Charles: Yes. That's right. Well, that's exactly right. Ben has always had a nice relationship with Ruth. Whoever is the president, Ruth's policy was to remain very close to that person, to be sure she saw them. She'd go to his office or wherever with her stuff that she wanted to talk over and get ready for each meeting. And, of course, the meetings come awfully fast when you meet once a month. You just practically are either preparing for one or getting over one all the time. You never have any rest from it.

But Ruth, you know--she's really a giant in her abilities and her selectivities, her wisdom in being able to realize what is coming and what we ought to be doing to try to help it. And the way she would bring things into the Foundation that were very hard for some of the Foundation members to swallow.

For instance, she had an application for a grant to a group that was advising draftees on what they could do to explore their situation with a view to getting out. You remember, early in the Vietnam war those young people were desperate. Ruth felt that this was an absolutely legitimate thing for the Foundation to do. But she ran into complete opposition on the part of the most conservative business members of our board. They thought it wasn't patriotic or loyal, or we just shouldn't be mixed into it.

This was painful to Ruth, but she was so courageous about things--she would have known, as I knew, that she couldn't get that through the board. But she was perfectly willing to try it and argue for it and do the best she could. It's what kept us in the forefront of the foundations that are making creative grants.

Morris: Does a proposal like the draft alternatives produce a hot and heavy debate amongst the board members?

Charles: Well, the board is a very sophisticated board. So that you don't get beyond the realms of courtesy and consideration. And your views are expressed very quietly. So you don't get into what you might call 'hot and heavy' debate, in the sense of emotion--
Morris: Lengthy might be a better word—

Charles: And not so lengthy, because you get your members—they would express very flat-footedly what they thought, and you knew it. For instance, our doctor, Malcolm Watts, was very much opposed to these draft things, and he only had to say it once or twice for you to know that there was no argument with Malcolm about that. And we have tried on the board—when I was chairman, of course, I became more conscious of what I was trying to do.

What I want to do with a board is to try to keep it, no matter how disparate it is, together, to keep the opportunities open for discussion and support of differing points of view, but to recognize the moment when, if you allow anything to get rammed through, it will destroy the board and the board's self-confidence. That I don't intend to be a party to, because you can't—a board is an entity, and it's a very—I'm not thinking of the word I want, but it has to be in balance, and it's easily unbalanced. And if you start losing members on account of their position never being understood, or their being cajoled into something they don't believe in, I can't tolerate that, and I don't approve of it.

Morris: What about an issue like community development? There were a number of grants in this area in the fifties, and I wondered if that would be one that caused the board debate?

Charles: No, I don't think the philosophy of it bothered the board at all, but specific applications would have areas in them we thought—some different members of the board would think were not possible to accomplish, or perhaps not appropriate for us to do, or something of that sort.

Community development grants, actually, Gabrielle, in that sense, would have been attached to the welfare of children and youth, or something, because that is not one of our regular fields, you see. Those applications—can you think of a specific one?

Morris: They looked to me as if they came out of the interest in migrant children and families. There was a series that was first sponsored by the American Friends Service Committee, that began as self-help projects for homebuilding.

Charles: Oh, well, that was something else. Yes. You were thinking of those grants where the man had invented a new way to build migrant homes.

Morris: Yes. The point that struck me was that he wanted to help them improve their housing and felt that this would give them—
Charles: That I remember well, and it didn't cause any hot and heavy debate. The reason that it was even supported was because his idea and methods of construction were such that nobody had—it was a real invention of his, the way to go at it.

Morris: That's a point I hadn't understood.

Charles: We liked to sponsor innovative things. So we thought if we could demonstrate that this method of housing built better housing for the migrants to live in, then we would try it on a small scale, and if somebody else wanted to pick it up, that would be fine.

But the basis, the thing you have to look for when you're reading about any of our grants, is: what is the tenuous connection with children and youth? That's the only reason that we would do anything that was as much of a departure as that. We wouldn't want anybody to think that we were in the development of housing field. That wouldn't be our field at all. We only saw that nobody was even making it possible for this young man to build these things, and we thought they ought to be given a try. Now, I don't know what ultimately happened, either, about that.* But it seems to me Ruth has told me that they've gone on—he's gone on, and been—

Morris: It was the fact that it was a young man—?

Charles: No, not the young man. That the purpose was to house children, including their families, you see, of the migrants, who were so badly housed—that this might be a solution to a problem that hadn't been solved.

Morris: And thereby improve the whole family's feeling about itself?

Charles: Yes. The whole family relationships and the children and everything. That would be the only reason we would to that kind of thing.

New Organizations in the Valley

Morris: Then, several years later, there was a Center for Community Development that received a grant; their interest seemed to be in helping low income and minority groups learn to speak for themselves in relation to public services and the like.

*See Ruth Chance interview in this series.
Charles: Where—here?

Morris: I believe it was down in the Valley. Other people were doing some organizing of agricultural workers. Was this while Robert DiGiorgio was on the Rosenberg board?

Charles: I think he was earlier [1957-61].

Morris: His company was then in agriculture. I wondered if this would have caused him problems on your board?

Charles: Bob was very good on the board. We all appreciated him because we didn't know what his reactions would be, but since this was where we always worked, we were not going to stop working there. And Bob took a very detached point of view.

Now, this community development thing—we had some very serious questions raised with us, in which some of the landowners each took a board member to persuade to get out of the migrant business. The man who called me was Carl Wente, a very fine old man. I had worked with Carl in other things, and he said: Mrs. Charles, I just have a strong feeling that you don't know what you're doing down in the Valley.

I said: Well, tell me what leads you to this belief.

He told me about some grant that we had made that caused somebody to join the union or something of that sort, and I said: Well, Mr. Wente, that grant was not at all for that reason, because our only purpose is to make things better for the children down there.

We had underwritten health centers, and community development—I just don't recall what that is—and schools, better schools for them. And I said: We're not interested in unions.

They may well have been saying down in the Valley that the Rosenberg Foundation was encouraging unions. I think this preceded the two unions that are down there now.

Morris: Yes. There was a farmworkers' organizing committee that at that point was not yet connected to the Teamsters or the AFL or César Chávez. Ernesto Galarza was working with them.

Charles: Oh, yes. It was said all over the Valley by the far right and by some of the newspapers in Bakersfield that the Rosenberg Foundation was a well-known left-wing organization that was trying to destroy the fine relationship between the growers and the workers.

But the point is that I don't think you ever convince anybody in those arguments, you know. I just said: Mr. Wente, I am sure that we do know what we're doing. If it's being called something else down
Charles: there, I'm sorry about that, but we think it's very important that these children be properly fed and housed and that their health needs be taken care of better than they ever have been before.

[Date of Interview: 11 November 1974]

Input from Experience with Other Organizations

Morris: I thought today we might tie in some of your other activities. How has your work with other organizations been helpful to your work with the Rosenberg Foundation, and vice versa?

Charles: I think it's been tremendously helpful. I occasionally have people say to me that when they're appointed to some very important thing, then they'll get out of everything else. I think you should do exactly the opposite, because I think that ability to cross-fertilize things, to know what somebody else is doing and what other organizations are doing, is very helpful. Now, it has to be used, that information, in different ways. That remark was made to me when I was asked to join the Stanford board in '54, but I found it immensely important to maintain those contacts that I had with the numerous other organizations that I've always worked with in one way or another. In fact, during all of that period, I was president of Edgewood orphanage, and then I was president of the Burke School and worked in organizing auxiliaries.

That always worried Mrs. McLaughlin a great deal; she didn't think it was an intellectual enough enterprise for me, because auxiliaries were not part of her generation's life, you know. I tried to explain to her that it was a tremendously important outlet for people who really wanted to do something constructive, and didn't know how, and were not going to be doing it in a way that we might consider to be intellectual. What they really wanted to do was to give service in an organized way.

Well, she ultimately agreed with that, and somewhere in her biography she refers to the fact that it probably was a very useful thing to do. I must have organized about a dozen auxiliaries in that period right in there, because you'd organize one, and it was successful, and then somebody would want you to come. And then the main job was how to get out of running their auxiliary for them.

So, in any case, I've found it extremely useful to have the inside information that I had about what other organizations were doing.

Morris: Did it provide any insight into how organizations worked that was useful in evaluating some of the Rosenberg proposals?
Charles: Well, yes. It would. I would say that in an organization like the Foundation, and maybe you could use it with Stanford, too, where you have a very highly qualified executive director. Because at the university, of course, the president of the university is in that position of being the executive director of what goes on, and the trustees sit as policy makers; but you make better policy when you know more of what's going on.

In the Foundation, particularly, where you have a very small group—nine persons—and a very competent executive director, the main thing is not to get in her way—to make it possible for the executive director to get things done. So that it is very important just not to get into too much detail, investigative detail. I guess you could put it that way.

Morris: As a board member?

Charles: As a board person, because you simply interfere with the work of the person that you've hired to do that. And you embarrass them. And those things don't make for the smooth working of the institution.

Working with Young Adults

Morris: How about youth groups? Several people have commented particularly on your skill in working with youth groups.

Charles: It isn't so much working with youth groups as it is working with young people.

Morris: Could we take this back to Mills and your lectureship there?

Charles: Oh. Yes, I'd forgotten about that. That also happened in those years. You know, from '48 to '58, I'm surprised I kept my sanity, but I had a marvelous time. [Laughs] I didn't even know I had a problem.

But that's true; I'd forgotten about that. I started teaching at Mills and stayed there for ten years, teaching twice a week. I like young people very much, and I think they like me. We get along fine. Mostly because I try to be honest in what I say. I don't think that I know all the answers to everything. In fact, I have to say that (and maybe I've said it before) I think my life has been a learning experience for me. I've just kept on learning things that I didn't really know before.

We had, I think, some happy experiences at Mills College.
Morris: Weren't you lecturing on the involvement of women in the community?

Charles: Yes. We changed the title of the course several times, but I think maybe 'Community Service' might have been the title.

The classes were always small, there was plenty of time for individual understanding between me and the students. The first thing, though, that I had to make clear, and that took a little doing that first year—and once you did that, then it was known—was that I was not easy. There were going to be examinations, and they were expected to know the answers, and so on.

My first semester, when I gave the midterm, the papers I received were universally so bad, so poor, that I rejected them all. A couple of the students started to cry, and we had a great to-do. But I said to them: You know the difference. You take lots of courses. This isn't a course to just roll through without doing any of your homework or understanding exactly what we are doing.

And we understood each other.

Morris: What department was this in?

Charles: Education. I don't think they had a sociology department at Mills then. I'm not sure about that; I haven't followed closely.

They were really very good to me there, because I had my own hours and my own standards; and once they knew that I had standards—they saw the outline of my course and knew that I exacted something from the students and probably heard from the students that I did—we all got along fine. Because I think that young people—I've always had the theory, and always found it to be true, that if you are honest with them, they will measure up to what you want from them. That is, honesty from them and good intentions.

So that a lot of my relationships with young people have been more informal than what you might call 'working with youth groups.'

Morris: That's a good distinction.

Charles: For instance, one of the things I'm doing now is this Rockefeller Foundation thing—I won't go on too long, except to say that the Foundation put a little money in it to start. I think maybe five hundred dollars.

Morris: Rosenberg?

Charles: Yes, Rosenberg did. Because the Rockefeller Foundation wanted some local support in order to get this thing going. In fact, it's completely predicated on local support. The arrangement is that it's
Charles: about eight corporation leaders and about eight ghetto kids. The object was to work out a way that they could be of mutual benefit. I was sort of a—I don't know what—ombudsman, or something.

I certainly wasn't able to contribute, because the—have I talked about this before?

Morris: No, you haven't, but it's been referred to by other people. I'd like to hear more.

Charles: Well, I don't want to use up our precious time on the Foundation; but, in any case, the ultimate arrangement, which has now worked for more than two years, is that the executives of the different corporations—and the ones that are presently in it are Bank of America, Bob DiGiorgio's company (DiGiorgio financial company), the telephone company, and the Fireman's Fund insurance company—well, I've forgotten, but I could get the list.

Morris: To use a current expression, that group has quite a lot of clout.

Charles: It does. Oh, it's a real thing. It's real. For instance, Tom Clausen, the president of Bank of America, has really been almost the guiding force of this group. Bob DiGiorgio's been extremely helpful. Well, a lot of the men have. But during that first year, when somebody had to really hold that together, it was Tom Clausen who did that. And we had to learn how to get along with these ghetto kids, who were pretty rough.

We met on a first weekend—

Morris: A retreat kind of thing?

Charles: A retreat. And they said: We don't trust you businessmen. They all said that. And: We don't know what you want; and: You break your promises; and—you know. Well, it was really a fascinating weekend to watch them. They actually turned pale, the businessmen did. They hadn't heard very much talk like that.

And the young people—you know, they call themselves 'the youth'—they have an idea in their own minds that youth goes up to about thirty-five. They don't mean what we mean by youth.

Morris: That's an interesting concept.

Charles: Well, they say when the Russians talk about youth, they mean thirty-five is maybe the cutoff point.

These young people, some of them are the same ones who were in the original group, and some are new ones. They've substituted. When one person leaves, they would—
Morris: Did the Rosenberg Foundation grant assist in selecting which young people or which organizations would compose--

Charles: No. When Rockefeller young people came to San Francisco to set up this group, they visited the Foundations here and asked for suggestions of who to select. They talked to San Francisco and Rosenberg, and I don't know who else they talked to, but that was the way they found their young people--through the local foundations.

Morris: That's interesting.

Charles: And then, Brooks Walker, Jr., is also in this group; he's president of the U.S. Leasing Corporation. I think he's on the board of the San Francisco Foundation, too. They may have made a small grant. It was an organization grant.

It was a very loose kind of a thing--at the beginning it was almost too vague to get a handle on at a meeting. They did finally write a proposal. You might talk to Ruth Chance about it. She'll get quite excited about it because it didn't conform quite to her idea of what a proposal ought to be. I stayed strictly away from the whole thing, and I've forgotten how it ultimately turned out; but it was for some organizational purpose.

The businessmen almost immediately assessed themselves several thousand dollars a year to make that thing run, and eventually they got an office; they paid a salary to one of the young people to be the secretary of the operation.

Morris: That's a new idea, too, isn't it?

Charles: Oh, it's all new. I think it's very interesting, very experimental.

Morris: Does it have a name?

Charles: It's called Resource Exchange. The businessmen did this on the basis that the money they put in is really operational money. Their method--and the reason they call it Resource Exchange is that they would try to look for material they had that would be useful to this group.

Suppose a company was moving. When Metropolitan moved, somebody'd call up and get all their typewriters or furniture or something that these kids could use. Then the kids have a warehouse, and when somebody needs equipment, they come to them. So that's why they call themselves Resource Exchange. They're kind of a center for the acquisition of stuff which is probably useless to the corporations or the institutions, but means a lot to somebody starting up an operation.
Charles: It's been extremely successful. The Rockefeller Foundation—this is John D., III—started this in about six or seven cities. I think the only concept they had was some kind of a partnership between the really top business people and the top ghetto kids who had made their way—hadn't left, but had achieved some success within their own groups to be self-supporting or self-sufficient in one way or another. And I think this one has survived in the most interesting way.

We meet once a month for breakfast at seven-thirty in the morning, all year 'round. Sometimes the young people furnish the breakfast, and sometimes—for instance, our next meeting will be next Monday morning at seven-thirty at Fireman's Fund. Sometimes the telephone company does, sometimes the Bank of America does. They take turns, and then the kids do it, too, which is very nice.

But my role has been one of, really, conferring with the youngsters. If they think something's going wrong, they'll call me and say: Can we come see you? What do you think is the problem?

Occasionally I'll get hold of them and tell them that they're much too hard on the businessmen. Because they occasionally make a power play when they want to get something—for instance, they'd love to have that group take a stand on valid issues. Well, it would be the death of the group if you had to do that, because the businessmen might be completely on the other side of whatever issue the young people thought was important. But the personal relationships between them mean that the businessmen are willing to give in and assist in things and areas where they might not be willing to go on record as supporting it on a political basis.

I just said: Now, you kids don't want to destroy a very delicate relationship you have by your inability to understand these businessmen and how they function and what they can take from you.

Because, really, they'd get very rough, you know, and press. We had a couple of kids who left it because they said: Well, if we can't get what we want, we won't stay.

And I said: Well, I think that's fine, too.

This is a delicate thing to do. For instance, they take advantage, and should, of their coming to know somebody like Tom Clausen or Bob DiGiorgio, and they will go to them on the outside and say: We have a project. Would you help us? Outside of Resource Exchange. They never would know them otherwise. Or they'll come to me and review with me what the foundation resources are in the community that they might tackle.
Charles: I just had a visit from a young group in the Mission who are trying to give information to Mission residents about where they might go for this, that, or the other thing. One of them is a young student at Boalt Hall who wants to give legal information; what it is, really, is an attack on a language problem, because so many of the people in the Mission don't speak English. And unless there's a place where they can go to get what they want in Spanish, they're helpless. So the young lawyer—he's going to graduate this year, I believe—and the young woman who runs this information center (I don't know exactly what they call it) came over to see me. And I said to them: Are you prepared now, to go after money? Do you know what you do yourself—what you want the money for?

Well, it had never occurred to them that they needed to know these things, and I just made a list for them—a little sheet of paper that clearly laid out what they did; that they ought to understand what kinds of services they proposed to provide, and where people could help; and separated them into different categories. So that if somebody would want to help with the legal end of it—

Morris: They could identify it—

Charles: They could identify it and identify the cause—

Well, this young lawyer said to me: Well, now, that's a new idea.

This is why I love to help these young people, because a lot of these things that are old to us are brand new to them. They don't understand they need to be organized if they're going to go out for money. You can't just take a shot at some rich person and bring 'em down. If you're going to raise money, then you've got to be an organized effort and you have to be prepared with the materials that'll be needed. So, anyway—

Expectations of Support

Morris: Sitting on the Rosenberg board, could you identify where in time these new ideas began to develop, in leadership?

Charles: Yes. I called Ruth early this morning because I wanted to get a little better perspective on the sweep of things. You know, it's hard for me. [Laughs] I'm not far enough away yet from the whole thing. After all, I did just leave Rosenberg in January and I haven't yet got the perspective, as I have, for instance, on the League of Women Voters. I know what a developmental thing they've gone through, because I'm separated from it enough to see.
Charles: The thing I wanted to clarify in my mind, and which was really very satisfying to me in my brief talk with Ruth (because I had lost the dates, which you have, you see; I came on in '48, and Ruth came in in '58. So Leslie Ganyard was there the first ten years that I was on the board), was that it gave me an opportunity to see what a tremendous thing Leslie Ganyard did for the Foundation because of her pragmatic approach.

In Leslie's day, the problems were different from the problems which really were beginning when Ruth came in, in '58 and the beginning of the sixties. Leslie's job, which she did to perfection, was to get out, travelling up and down the state. She was getting acquainted with people who were doing things. I think that there was still a hangover from the old, lady bountiful days, where the people to whom we gave money were immensely pleased to get the money. Whereas Ruth came just at the beginning of the era which now continues, when people thought they deserved money for the things that they wanted to do and were not afraid to ask and be very aggressive about it. There couldn't have been a better person than Ruth to interpret what they wanted, to bring it to the board in a fashion that wouldn't offend us because we hadn't been exposed yet to these very aggressive methods, and make it possible for us to be comfortable in giving money to entirely different kinds of groups.

During that first ten years when I was on there, we were not really spending all the money we had to spend, even though it's no great sum. Interest on fourteen or fifteen million dollars may be $700,000 or $600,000 a year, which is small. But, still, we weren't spending all that. So we were accumulating a surplus and we needed to know how to spend that. Because we had a policy, that perhaps was unwritten, that we did not intend to accumulate more money. We intended to spend the legitimate interest on our investments, and we also didn't want to put the Foundation out of business by overspending--

Morris: And going into the capital fund?

Charles: And going into the capital. We had no intention of doing that. That wasn't a problem to us, that ten years. It was during that time that we, one year (and I think I may have mentioned this earlier), tried to initiate or invite applications from--

Morris: From the educational--

Charles: From the educational world. We got around to, I guess, four or five universities. I've forgotten now. Mills, Stanford, and so forth. I wanted to clear up with Ruth this morning when that happened, because it was before she came in. It was all over when she came in, but it was a very disappointing experience. Some people weren't ready to apply for any money for anything. And we would get applications that
Charles: were obviously just made up because they knew there was some money somewhere. Nobody was being dishonest, but they just weren't within our fields of interest.

And so we decided that was an experiment that didn't work. I think we gave some money.

Morris: That's interesting in relation to the study that was done by Mabel Ellsworth in 1948.

Charles: Yes.

Morris: She commented that from the material she had gone through, the projects which seemed to be best were ones that really came out of a felt need in the requesting organization.

Charles: Oh, yes. Spontaneously, yes. There's no doubt about that. We tried initiating and it didn't work. And, of course, there was no need to try again, because about the time Ruth came in we began to be flooded with applications. This wasn't because of Ruth's arrival, because nobody knew Ruth. She came out of the law school down at Stanford, where she'd been doing some work. She wasn't known, really, very much in the welfare field. If it had been twenty years later and she was known as she is known now, it would have been perfectly natural that we would have had that response.

Awareness and Regulation of Foundations

Morris: Are you saying that, in those post-World War II years, there were things going on in society that brought this flood--?

Charles: What I'm saying is that, beginning about in the early sixties, people began to understand what foundations were for, and so they began to know enough about going after money for themselves. People became bolder about coming in, as they should be. But they would have been hesitant to come into a foundation earlier, really. I don't think people generally understood foundations.

The big foundations were just beginning to come out here to the West and make grants. And, of course, for those first years, we were the only foundation that made the kind of grant that we made, and which I think is our peculiar distinction. And that is small grants, so to speak. I can't remember a grant for more than fifty thousand.

Morris: Yes. You said that you thought that many of the Rosenberg's best grants had been in the five and ten thousand dollar range. That was very striking.
Charles: That's right. Fifty thousand and under. And, of course, we were in a different boat from the big foundations, as far as the supply of money; more could be done with little grants, but, on the other hand, people were very earnest about it. They would see something they could do in remedial education or welfare—as you know, we were much interested in the Valley and the migrant workers.

Then, also, another change took place at that time, which I wanted to check with Ruth this morning; because, for once, I decided I'd better give a little thought before you got here as to what I might say to you [laughs]. Because I've been bad. You were prepared, and I'm not.

Morris: My function is to say: In 1962, this happened.

Charles: Remind me. But the requests and the grants began to be more urban, you see. Previously, they'd been in the country, rural. And, in fact, one of the things that we have done only recently in the last two or three years was to try to stimulate more grants from rural areas. Because we realized—Ruth would go on her visits. She always kept that up. And when we were looking for a new executive, the one thing we absolutely insisted on was that it be a person who would be comfortable about leaving his desk and going out. So he'd be out of the office, maybe, a couple of days a week.

Morris: And also someone either familiar with or open to rural communities?

Charles: That's right. We feel it's the most neglected area, as far as what can be done to help people in small ways. And it's really interesting. When you get into it, you would be surprised to learn of the many opportunities and advantages there were in a city—not that you have to be so naive about it, but in a city compared to what you find in a very small town. And I'm talking about towns way up in the northern part of the state or in the southern part of the state, and not semi-big towns, like Stockton or Sacramento or those cities, but the small—

Morris: You're thinking of places like Placerville and Auburn?

Charles: Yes. They really could use help, and they don't have--

Morris: Going back to when these urban grants began to multiply, or people became bolder, as you said, were there any organizations you recall that particularly spearheaded some of these more innovative kinds of requests?

Charles: During Charlie Elkus's period, as long as he was in the Foundation, he had certain things that he was particularly interested in. One was Karl Holton and the juvenile justice commission—it wasn't called that then.
Morris: Karl Holton was director of the Youth Authority.

Charles: That's exactly right, and that was his thing. Anything that came through him, we took a very serious look at, and usually did, because it would be some unusual way of taking care of those problems. And those were not, of course--well, it's hard to say 'urban' or 'rural.' Usually the children in trouble had come from some urban area, I think, even though the institutions themselves might be in rural areas. It was really dealing with the problems of growing up.

Morris: Did the board have much discussion of the propriety of a private foundation giving grants to a state agency?

Charles: Well, we went through that discussion. I don't know. Ruth would know better than I whether that actually began when she came, but I don't believe so.

Morris: Those grants go back quite a ways. The transient youth study was begun in 1946, and then the older girl and the law in 1957.* Many of those reports seem to be still very sound.

Charles: We discussed that whole area, and our justification always remained that it had to be something that hadn't been done before. But we discovered that legally we could make grants to state agencies, as I understand it.

Morris: The political aspect wasn't--

Charles: Wasn't an issue. We didn't think of it as an issue.

Morris: I guess what I'm doing is thinking back from the concern that's come up recently--foundations, I gather, are prohibited from political--

Charles: Yes. That's a complete change, and that was a change in the law. But there were no such laws at the time that we were making these grants. In fact, foundations were hardly regulated, I think, at all.

There were many, many foundations that didn't observe what you might call sound, charitable principles. We didn't really know any around here, but we knew that they existed throughout the country--a way for people to get their money put away in a so-called profitable

*These studies were made under the guidance of statewide committees appointed by the chairman of the California Youth Committee, founded in 1942 to advise the governor and later renamed the Governor's Advisory Committee on Children and Youth.
Charles: way, or at least without being taxed; and then, occasionally, it went to the members of the family. These kinds of abuses of the purpose of foundations had gone on quite a while and were really what led up to these new laws in the seventies.

Following those laws is costly for foundations like ours, in the sense that we have to have additional personnel and a good deal of additional work and reports. We also have to pay a tax ourselves, now, to the federal government, which was not true before. Yet, most of us who worked hard in a legitimate foundation operation really welcomed those laws. We were not the people who protested them, except that we just didn't want the additional work. But we did know that there were people who needed such laws if they were not going to bring down public obloquy and criticism on the foundations.

Some Continuity of Grantee Relationships

Morris: How about the minority community? The Mexican-Americans seem to have been a special interest of the Foundation long before this became a popular cause.

Charles: Yes. Because we were concerned with the migrants and they were mostly Mexican-American. We didn't actively move toward minorities as a special case.

We tried to take—but the fact is, of course, that all of our grants came to the office, to the executive director. And as time went on, we had repeated board actions about what kinds of things she could reject in the office. We always had a list in the front of the book of what had been rejected, and whenever she didn't have a clear policy, then she would bring it, and we would reject it.

For instance, we have never given money for scholarships or any individual—for a person doing individual research. We would just decline that out of hand, because we considered that our purposes were for projects, demonstrations that benefited a number of people. We were not thinking of benefiting a single person who was trying to get his degree or something of that sort. That has not been considered the purpose of the Foundation, and I doubt if it ever would be.

Morris: There also seems to have been continuing response to the needs of the Negro community. Do you recall the series of projects with Neighborhood House in North Richmond?

Charles: Oh, yes. That's right. And I did get off that subject. Planned Parenthood we had a long relationship with. We have had relationships
Charles: with the Girl Scouts and the Campfire Girls. And most of the schools, once they knew that they would not be eliminated, would come in to us with creative things, and the departments of education when they were trying to teach something that was a departure.

But when the executive director would discover an organization that seemed to come up with creative ideas as demonstrations, we would take very serious looks at those things and develop, sometimes, quite a consistent relationship with them; and I think that the Neighborhood House is one that is a good example.

I think the most interesting things that we did were often just kind of little, freakish ideas that somebody would have of a way to do something. And sometimes a sponsorship would turn up something very unusual. But we were always trying to see that we went toward young people. So that we restricted our grants always to youth, although youth—the age—just varied up and down all the time. It gave us a huge field. A lot of the things that we did would have to do with parents, but because they were involved with their children, we wanted to do it.

Morris: In terms of strengthening the family unit and relationships.

Charles: Yes; right.

Young Applicants

Morris: Has the board ever discussed, as a matter of policy, how they feel about youth expanding into the twenty-five to thirty-five age bracket?

Charles: No. It's never been discussed in there, at least while Ruth was there. I don't know what Kirke is doing now, or whether they are seeing the age rising. This was really an idea that came to me from this Resource Exchange.

I think the reason it came is because these young people from the ghetto are not all that young. They're along in their twenties somewhere, and as they stay with us, they get toward thirty, you see, and still call themselves the youth. But I don't think that Rosenberg has thought about that.

Morris: Another phase of Rosenberg grants (maybe it comes into sharper focus in the annual reports) is the grants to the counterculture, the alternative services. Those seemed to peak in 1969, '70, and '71.

Charles: That's right. And when those began coming in to us, Ruth was the first to realize (Ruth and I spend a great deal of time on the telephone,
Charles: arguing; if I say that Ruth began to realize, she'll say: I couldn't have done it if the board had not begun to realize. And we then get into that sort of thing)--Ruth began to see, and the board was not unwilling to see with her; but she was the one who saw that we were going to be dealing with young applicants, that weren't going to always—

Morris: The applicants themselves were young people, rather than the traditional model of a group of older people saying: We must do something for the youth in this—?

Charles: Sponsoring organization, yes. Absolutely. It was a change, because these people were in their mid-twenties.

Depends on what you mean by youth; we would be interested in encouraging requests from very much younger people, in the teens, for instance, who might have discovered something. But I don't think that this has ever developed into anything, because the older people, through whom they would have to work, would probably not understand what it was we were trying to do—which was to get them to stimulate the young, but then try to give them the major responsibility for doing whatever was done. But when they got along in their twenties, there were a great many things coming to us from groups of young people with new ideas, you know—the street people, and that sort of thing.

Morris: I made a list from the 1969 annual report of grants that seemed to me, by their titles, to be in this category as much as anything else. It was close to twenty-five per cent of the dollar total of grants made that year.

Charles: I believe you, yes.

Morris: There was the Youth Resource Center, and a mobile learning center with junior college students as teachers. There was an in-community school, the Switchboard, Hospitality House, Youth Art Gallery, Glide Foundation Project for Unwed Mothers, the Chinese Streetworker, West Oakland Legal Switchboard, Black Arts Music, a cross-cultural family center involving a toy bank.

Charles: But I don't know whether you can make that generalization about all of those, because as I listen—for instance, the tutoring projects were still supervised by a professor, somewhere along the line, in San Francisco State College at that time.

We had to find somebody to receive our grant. That was one of the problems we began running into around that time, too—to whom we would give the grant, who was considered responsible and established. By our own rules, we had to give it to an institution.
Accountability

Morris: This is before the accounting requirements of the federal government?

Charles: Yes. These were our own rules that we required of ourselves because we had to account for our money and where it went and how it was spent, and so forth. We always wanted a responsible institution or even—I'm trying to remember if we ever did give it to a bank—but somebody who was used to accounting, and would give us the information that we needed, that it was properly spent.

It was tremendously to our advantage that Ruth had her legal training; that was very helpful to us. She viewed the problems in giving money away as a lawyer would look at them, as to accountability and so on. I think if you ever interviewed our accountants, you'd find that they got instructed by Ruth, rather than the other way around. [Laughs] She didn't always like the way they went at it, and she'd make them do it all over again and do it another way.

Morris: Oh, marvelous. I wanted to ask you about the people in charge of minding the capital. How did they respond when you did reach the years when you wanted to go into capital to make all the grants you wanted to?

Charles: Well, we never went deeply into capital. I don't know, you'd have to get the facts on that. It was never our intention to do that to any great extent. We had the feeling, as the requests got more numerous, that we never wanted to be in a position of underspending our income. So that we always said we would rather take the risk of overspending and going into capital, than of underspending and having money leftover.

Now, the new laws, as I understand it, make it possible for you to stretch it over two or three years. So you might go considerably over in one, and then you could go under it the next year or so. And that would not be considered accumulating your money. I'm not a lawyer, so I can't always make the right statements about that.

Board Studies Community Programs and Attitudes

Charles: You see, our board divided itself into small committees. We had a finance committee and a nominating committee, of course, and occasionally we would appoint a board member or two to some special project that had come in not fully developed, and where the executive director would feel that she could use help from a couple of members of the board.
Morris: Could you think of a couple of instances of that?

Charles: Well, let me see if I can. Recently, we were beginning to try to change our program a little, in order to do several large things rather than so many small ones, because we began to realize that we didn't have the personnel in the office to follow so many small projects.

[Tape turned over]

Charles: One of the things we became very much interested in was this child abuse program, which we had begun in a very small way. Ruth Chance discovered this remarkable woman, Mrs. Davoran, who had really become an authority on child abuse, and it became evident that it could be one of the things that we might select as a field from which we would welcome applications. We asked a couple of board members to look into that, and to look into what was being done out at the San Francisco General Hospital, and so forth.

We have only occasionally asked the board members to look into a program. Our board—I've always respected them for that—have tried to stay quite free of inspiring applications or being responsible for them in any way.

Morris: The child abuse problem is curious. It has seemed to be in the background, a factor in a number of concerns about young children, but for so long people seemed to avoid looking at it as an issue in its own right.

Charles: I think that's quite true, and that was true for a good many years. For instance, the first thing we did in that field, I believe, was in Santa Barbara, where somebody had the idea of a telephone service, where you could call if you were about to abuse your child and let somebody talk you out of it. It seemed to work very well, and I thought it was, myself, quite an insightful thing, that most people really don't want to do things like that, but they get absolutely exasperated.

Morris: I remember it coming up as a point in a couple of research papers on child care in the mid-fifties, but then when the child care proposals were written, they didn't talk about child abuse any more.

Charles: No, I know that. But, as you well know, things like that are faddish. There are probably thousands of things that need to be done, but something sort of catches the public eye, or some particular case makes people sensitive to it. For instance, did you read yesterday or the day before, where some poor young woman had killed her child? The poor woman. She had a three-year-old. She had this infant. She was pregnant with another one, and I guess she didn't know what to do.
Charles: I don't know what kind of a person she was, but the approach is very different now. It's much more compassionate. I guess we talked about that last time--about the change in public attitudes. That's been an enormous change, I think, of compassion toward people we would have thought of as criminals.

And there was something my husband and I were talking about this morning, while we were reading the paper; it was the fact that students have taken up alcohol again, so it said in the paper.

Morris: Yes. That was a very startling thing.

Charles: And it was interesting to me, because most people of my generation--most men, particularly--think that's a very harmless and proper way, if you want to be wild, to be wild.

Morris: It's part of the 'coming of age' thing?

Charles: Yes. And I said to Al: We think of the drugs as something for which we ought to have a cure, that it's inspired by some lack in people that we ought to be able to analyze and do something about. But alcohol, except as the society worries about alcoholism in adults--when young people do this as part of their college libertarian ideas, it's not quite looked upon in the same way, and maybe it should be. I don't know. Maybe if somebody can't control his drinking--

Observations on Decision-making by Committees

Morris: Since we have your husband on stage, I wanted to ask you how he felt about the great involvement of time your work has taken over the years, and how you work that out as husband and wife.

Charles: Well, he has always been awful good about it, although sometimes he's gotten very irritated, and he'll say to me, when I start giving orders, that this is not the League of Women Voters. [Laughter] But that was years ago, and he's always been generous about the things that I have gotten involved in, and where I've had some recognition, you know. He's really been quite wonderful about that.

We have been fortunate in that he's been an extremely successful and well-recognized lawyer. His ability is something that he doesn't have to be embarrassed about, and which has made him one of the top lawyers in town. So that we haven't had that feeling that I was taking anything away from him in my involvement in voluntary organizations. And the other thing was, and he finally would laugh with me--I would laugh at him first--he dislikes these community things. He does them, but they annoy him.
Morris: They do?

Charles: Because they take too much time, you see. He has something else he thinks he'd better do--and not only thinks, he probably does have something legal he ought to be doing. He'll go to a lunch, you know, for some charitable organization, and find this conversation to no end, as he would say, to no point, going on and on and on, when he ought to be back in his office doing something else, and resents it very much. He doesn't like to go and have to hear long speeches on things when they could send him a paper and let him read it. [Laughs] That's his idea.

Morris: How about things like his service on the BART board? Didn't that involve a fair amount of technical and business matters?

Charles: Well, that was something quite different. He enjoyed that very much. Al is not--I really think, although he's a marvelously patient man as a husband and a father, he doesn't have the patience to listen to a lot of nonsense that you have to listen to when you work in these organizations. You have to find out people's attitudes about things and come to understand why they have them, and come to understand how you can--and Al really doesn't like that aspect of community service at all.

He enjoyed BART because it was dealing with something that he believed to be terribly important that the city get started doing. He really enjoyed his associations, but he got terribly impatient about it and frustrated because things didn't always go the way he wanted them to go. That he would like and would tolerate, but--now, he's on two or three boards right now. He's on the International Institute board, which he started out on twenty years ago.

Morris: Did he?

Charles: And then they asked him back on it. Well, he just gets absolutely wild (I don't really pay any attention to him), and then I say to him: I believe that there is enough community work to be done that each of us can find something that we enjoy. I see no reason to come home so frustrated that you--

And so he's bad. He'll go on a board and then maybe not go to several meetings. He doesn't do it conscientiously. He's conscientious as a person, but he doesn't get the sheer pleasure that I get, for instance, out of just watching how people behave on boards.

Morris: The process of community decision-making?

Charles: Yes. How it's done and how you can deal with certain kinds of people and can help to get the right answers, or at least what seem to you to be the right answers, by a little better understanding of how those particular people work than--
Morris: Somebody made the comment that quite often on a board or a committee there are a lot of points of agreement between people who think they dislike each other. Have you found that, too?

Charles: Yes. I think that's quite true. One of the things that I have always done (I did it first unconsciously, and now I'm able to do it much more consciously) was to try not to make my comments early, but try to begin to see where the agreement might lie. So that at some point, I could say to the group: Now, it seems to me that we are generally willing to recognize that this, that, and the other thing; and the only thing we really have yet to discuss is something else.

And, of course, this is very helpful if you have somebody—I'm chairman of a committee right now for Public Broadcasting Service, and there's a station manager from Philadelphia whom I like to have at every meeting because he's very gifted in that respect. He doesn't talk much until suddenly he will say: It seems to me that we have certain agreements, and I would like to move thus and so. He's very good at this.

It's very hard for the chairman to do that, because it's much better if the committee itself participates sufficiently so that somebody on the committee can make such a proposal and make the motion. The chairman can't make a motion, you see. So that when you recognize that you have somebody, I must say that it's a very nice feeling. I know that this man will always do this. He probably doesn't know himself that he does that, you know.

Morris: Have you ever discussed it with him?

Charles: I never discussed it. I don't want to make him self-conscious about it.

Morris: That's a good point.

Charles: I think it's much better for him. He does it naturally, and it's extremely helpful to everybody, because he senses the areas of agreement. Sometimes we get in a rough discussion, where there seems to be a lot of dissension, but if you can pick out two or three areas and move ahead on those, sometimes the other things will disappear. Most people want to get along and want to arrive at a conclusion that's fair.

I think that to do successful community work, you have to believe in people and want to get along with them and want solutions to be reached. If you don't have that willingness, you won't really enjoy it. I don't really mean to apply this only to my husband, because he is such a good person, and has been such a marvelous husband, but he really is very impatient. When you're working, you just have to sit
Charles: around and listen to a lot of stuff before you can really start pulling out what it is, and where they're going to agree.

Now, of course, a lawyer's training is very different from that. He's got to prepare a case for which he's an advocate, and he's going to be using—unless he's convincing a jury, he doesn't really need to get the agreement of all these people in a discussion, as you need to in a committee. Even when you're trying a case before a jury, you want their agreement, but they're not entering into it every minute, you know. They're just listening.

Morris: And you can make your whole case—

Charles: Yes, that's right. And, of course, in groups you just can't do this. I was advising some new young people, who've just come onto the Stanford board—they came to see me, to know what the best procedure was, and I said: If you disagree with something that is being proposed at the board, if you can possibly let the person who's responsible for the motion or the action that is going to be taken—if you can let him know in advance of the meeting that you want to object, he will respond much better and be much more helpful to you than if you suddenly burst out in the meeting and say: I don't agree with you at all. Because you throw that person off his rudder; but if he knows in advance that he's got some objection—

What happened the last time when I recommended this to the young people—they did what I told them to do, and at the meeting the next day, this person withdrew that motion, because he saw that he was going to have too much dissension.

Morris: He had been advised beforehand?

Charles: Yes. And he had the privilege of withdrawing it without somebody forcing him to have to do that. You don't get along well by embarrassing people. That's the last thing in the world you should ever do, if you can possibly avoid it.

Morris: Is this particularly a problem or a caution in groups where you've got a generation gap? In other words, an older group and a younger—?

Charles: Well, it's only a caution to the young ones. They don't understand it at all. They love a good confrontation. It's very hard for them to understand that the group process is really a way to arrive at a consensus. It is not a way to force your own opinion—in fact, you can't force your own opinion. That's the trouble. You alienate half the people there when you do that.

This is hard, and I'm always taking my young people aside in Resource Exchange, you know, and saying: Now if you want to make that point, I suggest you do it another way—that you talk to a couple of people in advance and make your preparation.
Charles: Of course, that isn't as exciting; but, on the other hand, they don't always lose. I mean, they will almost always lose when they're doing it as an ego trip—you know, I love some of those expressions. They're so marvelous.

Morris: Very vivid.

Women as Presidents

Morris: Could we talk a little bit about your work as president of the Rosenberg board?

Charles: Yes.

Morris: When you worked to have Ellie Sloss become president, didn't somebody say: That means you're going to want to be president, too.

Charles: Yes. [Laughter]

Morris: How did you feel when that did come to pass?

Charles: Well, Ruth has been remarkable. Her idea of her job as executive director was to be involved in everything that went on, not in an offensive way but in a constructive way.

Morris: Including things like the board—

Charles: Like who was to be the president and all of those things. And she said to me: Caroline, you should be president of this board.

    I said: I certainly should be. There's absolutely no doubt about it.

    And she said: Well, I think you will be now.

    I had been vice president, you see, and it would have been logical, except that I was a woman, that I would be the next one. Ruth knew that, and Ruth said: It's not going to be that way, and I don't think that's what they want to do.

    Well, fortunately, Ruth sat in on some of the nominating committee meetings, and she expressed this idea. Maybe they would have, anyway; I don't know. I'm not confident about that. I had been on there an
Charles: awful long time, and I finally said to myself: I'm not going to get off until they make me president, because I think it's a reflection on womankind [laughs].

Al said to me: Well, I think you could do it--like that.

And I said: What do you mean? You know very well I could do it.

Well, he likes to tease me, because he knew that would inflame my comments. But, in any case, it seemed to work quite smoothly. I don't think it would have if Ruth hadn't been there.

Morris: Everybody on the board seems to have been quite in support of Ruth as executive. If they had no problem with a woman executive, why were they reluctant to have a woman president?

Charles: Oh, no, no. That's very different, very different--the executive. That is something that has, I think, run ahead of the officers in voluntary organizations. It seems to me that women have been accepted in the posture of being executives or operational management earlier than they have been as president. Even now, certain organizations would not consider having a woman president.

You wouldn't want a woman president at Stanford, although I was terribly pleased because I was asked to be one of the vice-presidents about five years ago. About two years ago, the president of the university came to me and said that he and his wife were going to be out of the country, and he would like me to be acting president of the university while he was gone. Well, you could have knocked me over with a feather.

Morris: How marvelous.

Charles: I was very pleased about that.

Morris: That would be a good way of testing the water.

Charles: Oh, no. There was nothing--you couldn't do any harm, anyway. I mean, you're so bound in by all the conventions that have gone before that it would be almost impossible for the president of anything, including probably the President of this country (although we just saw an example where he did an awful lot of damage); but it's very hard for the president of an established institution to do any real harm. You're so bound in by all the things that have gone before and all of the people you have to consult.

I think the reason women don't attain to these positions is more because of some sensitivity on the part of the institution that it might downgrade the institution itself because they had a woman president. I don't know that Mills has ever had a woman president of their board of trustees.
Morris: But you did get to be president of the Rosenberg board.

Charles: Yes, that's right.

Morris: And when you assumed that position, did you feel any negative vibrations?

Charles: Oh, not a bit. No, not a bit. It was just almost like an oversight. As it had been with Ellie, several years previously. It was just—they never thought of it. And once they had, and she was a very good president, then it went back to the men.

The men want these things, you must remember that, too. We always revolved the presidency and, since we didn't have any established rules about how many terms you could serve on the board, it was possible for every man on the board to be president. If there was a man on the board who had not been president, this was what he wanted. So there wasn't going to be a woman put in as president when there was a man who could be.

Morris: Even though you'd been there longer?

Charles: Oh, yes. But I was going to have to get off sooner or later, and I was vice-president under Ben Dunlavy; so it seemed to me that if I didn't become president then, I would have to get off and forget the whole thing, you know.

Refining the Foundation's Goals

Morris: Were there some goals that you set for yourself?

Charles: Well, I always try to set goals when I become the president or chairman of anything by trying to understand the purposes of the organization, and then what, in a year, you could do. Now, we have a customary three-year term, but you couldn't really look at it as what you could do in the next three years.

Well, my goals were extremely well set without my assistance, actually, because the Foundation was at a point when it was going to lose its executive director. I didn't have to be retired for age, because we don't have any age limit on the directors; but Ruth was going to be sixty-five within a year or two, and we had to start some orderly process of looking for a successor for her.

Secondly, during the previous—I suppose you could say as long as ten years—all of us on the board had become extremely aware that somehow we had to limit our program so that our meager staff, which
Charles: nobody really wanted to enlarge, could carry it. It was not because we didn't want to give our executive director help, but because we wanted to be a small, unified group. At least for myself I express it this way, and I think this was shared by the board. It might not have been expressed in the same way; we know that the large foundations, the big eastern foundations, were not able to have--

Morris: You say 'big eastern,' rather than 'big national.'

Charles: I do, don't I?

Morris: Yes, you do.

Charles: [Laughs] But I'm a westerner, and have been--

Morris: I'm a New Englander, originally, and it's very interesting to be now a westerner and hear this.

Charles: Well, we have to fight for our rights, sometimes, Gabrielle. I find that in everything I do with the East, I have to every once in a while stand on my rights as a westerner, because they don't even know there's any country out here, mostly, even now.

But, in any case, the large foundations were so staffed that no one person on the staff reviewed all the applications, and could say: This, of all the things we've been asked to do, we think is the best. Or: This is the one we should look at.

Now, one of the things that we have liked in the Rosenberg Foundation has been having a single person, whose mind and intentions we respected, able to bring to us, at a meeting, eight or ten applications out of, say, maybe forty or thirty or however many, that in her mind were the best that we could do within the framework of what we wanted to do. We didn't want to give that up. And we felt that any kind of assistance that she might have couldn't meet Ruth Chance's own idea of the kind of help that she needed.

We spent a lot of time talking about this—to decide what kind of help we could give her that would make her job any easier, because she had a very strong feeling that she wanted to see for herself the thing that was being asked for, to interview for herself the various—because Ruth used a very interesting system, which I thought was like getting a fix on things, from my training as a mathematician. It was like getting a fix on something from many different points of view, and this is what Ruth would do. She would not use just the people who had been noted on the application as references. She herself, in most fields, would know who the people were who ought to know about this thing. Or if they didn't, that in itself would be significant. So she would get her fix on it, but she didn't want anybody else getting that.
Charles: Now, there's a great deal of merit to that position, because if you need confidential information it has to go to you, because the person you're talking to trusts you. So, if your assistant calls and says: Would you please give me--you know--

Morris: Tell me what you think of so-and-so?

Charles: Yes. They'll be extremely cautious, because your assistant is not the person they know, yet. Now, maybe you could develop that as you went along.

So that it looked to us--and those three years of mine were really spent in an attempt to see how we could rearrange our program, our objectives, so that we could give our executive fewer things to consider, so she wouldn't get a hundred applications a month, or something of that sort, which was impossible for her to review. Very early on the board, although I don't know if we ever had a motion on that, decided that they did not want to establish a staff.

There was another issue, too, aside from the convenience or the wishes of the staff, which was the cost. In a small foundation, where you only have $600,000 a year to spend, if you spent a hundred thousand on staffing up, and that meant larger offices and more secretaries--all the supporting stuff--we felt that we would be using more of our money than was prudent, money we wanted to spend on grants.

The one thing that struck everybody with horror, I think, was the idea that we might go out of existence. We could have decided to just spend ourselves out of existence. Well, I think nobody could stand that. And that's because of our personal self-esteem, you see, and that of the Foundation, which had made its place as probably one of the only foundations that considered little projects that would change something, you know, in a small way. Ruth certainly led the way—as we did, ten or twenty years ago, for that sort of thing.

The San Francisco Foundation does a good deal of that now, which is marvelous, and there are a number of small foundations that have come up to do that. Nobody else does that sort of thing except the small foundations, because the big ones don't do that. We've learned that occasionally one of the big foundations will come in and pick up a project that we'd started in a small way.

Morris: Yes, Ruth has commented on that.

Charles: And then drown it in money. We would have to go pick up the thing again, after they had pulled out, because we would be very sensitive to the fact that some little group that was doing some experimental work simply couldn't handle any more money.
Morris: If a project grows too fast, the people running it lose control of it and what they're doing?

Charles: Yes. They don't have enough personnel to run it right. They don't have accounting procedures—I don't mean financial, but—

Morris: Operational.

Charles: Yes, operational. They are totally unable to handle it, and the whole thing disappears. We had one or two operations like that where we went back and picked up after the big foundation that had come in and given them several hundred thousand dollars, which they didn't even have any idea how to spend. I believe those days are gone, you see, now, for the moment. The great, big grants that used to sometimes destroy the thing they wanted to help are disappearing now. The government made a great many of those grants, and some of the big foundations did.

But, in any case, we did resolve early in my presidency that we wanted to continue as we were, as far as the operation of the Foundation went, but that in some way we were going to have to devise a method to make it possible for a single staff person plus an executive assistant, who is not really operating in the selection of grants—

Morris: Betty Boutelle has more of an informational function?

Charles: Oh, yes, indeed. She does a very good job, and we're very lucky to have her, but we don't have two experts. That's the point. There's no argument; if Ruth or Kirke decide that this is the one to go, Betty is not going to say: I don't think it should be.

If you had a second person of the same stature, you might have that. In any case, we could be wrong, but that was what we decided.

Morris: Did you discuss this concept with board members from other local foundations, to the effect of: If we cut down here, can you move into some of the area that we used to make grants to?

Charles: What happened, actually, was that we didn't have to carry on those discussions, because in the last ten years the San Francisco Foundation and some of the smaller foundations who worked together, had a little group that met together and were interested and able to pick up some of the kinds of grants that we had previously been the only ones who had taken an interest in.

We also knew that not infrequently the executive of Rosenberg would get together with San Francisco or van Loben Sels or Zellerbach, and they'd all three put a little money into something. They would do this.
Charles: Our training as board members would be that the board wouldn't get into that kind of dealing. That would all be done between the executives. We would never say to the president of the San Francisco Foundation—I would not say to the president: Let's get together on something.

That would be, really, an invasion of what we considered was a responsibility of the professional director.

So we didn't need to do that. I think that the thing we needed to do first was to accept the fact, and Doctor Malcolm Watts was the one who convinced us that we needed to limit our scope.

I put him in charge of future planning, or some name of that sort, which was a committee to start with. We would have, maybe, one extra meeting a month, which would be the future planning committee. Finally, I made a number of changes to accommodate what I was perceiving: that the whole board really wanted to be in on it, and that we shouldn't try to arrive at a decision with a five-man committee bringing their recommendations in to four other members of the board. It was ridiculous. So we worked as a committee of the whole, so everybody could put in his two cents' worth.

Morris: That's an interesting comment that all of the board members felt that they wished to be involved in that.

Charles: Oh, my, yes. We have always had that kind of a board. It's really quite remarkable. I would say that maybe once or twice in the history of the Foundation we had board members who didn't, and they never stayed very long. Because what keeps you interested is your own willingness to be involved in the decisions. We were making some enormously important decisions in those three years. One was trying to interview and discover a new executive, and the other one was trying to preserve the values of the Foundation. In the meantime curtailing the—

Morris: Coping with the realities.

Charles: Yes. And that was very difficult to do, because our openness had been one of our great advantages, and people loved to come in and be able to talk to our executive director. So it was a long, hard row to hoe.

We finally ended up in a compromise, deciding early that we would perhaps try to select three fields in relation to that that we could, again, limit. For instance, we decided we would want to take applications related to child abuse; that is limited by its very name.

Morris: It would also keep a toehold with your earlier, long-standing interest in the juvenile justice system.
Charles: Yes. We wanted to—and Ruth had always hoped we would—be open to people whom we'd worked with over some period of years, like the Pacific—what's the name of that school down in Pasadena?

Morris: Oaks.

Charles: Oaks, yes. That Ruth felt did immensely creative work. And also, though, we did not eliminate, completely, very unusual things in the field of children and youth, whether it was education or welfare or whatever it might be that might come to the attention of the directors. I think we're operating along that same way now.

Morris: It sounds like you picked the best of a number of options.

Charles: [laughs] Well, we did. We combined them all together, in the end.

Departure

Charles: But, you know, I have one rule for myself that I've observed ever since I've been in community work, and that is that when I get out, I get out—clear out. I don't ask to see the minutes any more, so I have no idea what the Rosenberg Foundation has recently been doing. Nor do I call back and say: What did you do this month?

I just think those people who do are terrible. I don't like to have people do it to me—

Morris: I should think the temptation might be irresistible when you've invested years of your time.

Charles: Well, no, it's not. Unless you're just not busy. And I am very busy, and I always make an absolute point of finding something else in which I will interest myself deeply. So that I don't have to discipline myself to say that I won't do it. I don't have any time to do it.

I will go off the Stanford board next October; I'll be seventy, and we have a seventy rule, you know, in the board. They won't hear from me again, except as there may be something they want. I don't want to continue defending points that I thought were important when I was there, you know. And it would be foolish to have any such rule at the Rosenberg Foundation.

All my life in community work, the people I've appreciated have been those who would do their job as president, or the top, and then remove themselves so that they aren't looking over your shoulder. When you come in as the next president, and you've got somebody to whom you have to explain everything you do, it's a terrible burden.
Charles: Because, in the meantime, you are explaining it to your board, and keeping them informed. So I've always done that.

I really do not know what's been going on. Ruth keeps in a little closer touch, and is very pleased, and thinks we made a very good choice when we chose. There have been new members elected to the board.

Selecting Board Members

Morris: What are the kinds of things that you look for, over the years, in a board member?

Charles: Oh, at Rosenberg?

Morris: At Rosenberg, yes. Would it be the same kinds of things that make a good board member in any kind of a community--?

Charles: No. Well, I have always thought that when you're trying to strengthen or maintain the strength of an organization, you need to make several decisions about what kind of an organization it is.

For instance, there are certain organizations that are very valuable for young board members, inexperienced board members, because they can't do too much damage, and they can learn a lot about how a board is run. I probably shouldn't give examples of that sort of thing, but I will only say that I learned a great deal about such things in the Campfire Girls. That was one of the first boards I ever went on. I was delighted to have the experience, but we didn't have an enormous budget, and our responsibilities were not of the sort that are so heavy, as they are in a foundation.

Morris: Doesn't Campfire Girls put a good deal of effort into training its leadership? Their board leadership, as well as their group leaders.

Charles: Well, they may now. This was many years ago, and I came on just green, I think. I think I'd been a Girl Scout leader, as a matter of fact, and somebody invited me to join. You know the way these things are—a friendship, and somebody knows you.

I learned a lot on there, but I think there are certain kinds of things that must have experienced board members. University boards and foundation boards, I think, need—I would almost use the word 'sophistication' about the way a community works, and how money needs to be watched over--

Morris: Closely.
Charles: Yes, that's right. And some sense about—because people can be incredibly naïve. I was succeeded on a city commission here in San Francisco by a woman who asked if she could come and talk to me, after she'd gone on in my place.

We were talking about various things that took place, and she mentioned some issue that was coming before her, and I said: Well, if you feel as ill-informed as that you must abstain.

She said: What's that?

I said: That means you must not vote.

She said: But I thought you had to vote, either yes or no.

And I said: Well, of course not. You don't have to vote, and you must decide that if you really aren't well-enough informed that you're not going to vote. Now, you can't do that very often, or you don't belong on that board or any board.

Well, you know, you ought to have people on these major boards who at least know a few of the elementary rules of procedure, and what their rights are and are not, and all of that sort of thing. But that [laughs] really overwhelmed me because, believe me, that particular commission is one where you better know how to abstain, and abstain every now and then, when they get you into deep water.

When you get in city commissions, of course, there's so much politics in everything. And if you begin to have a hunch that this is a political issue, not the simple issue that it appears, then you better not vote. At least, that's my rule; and, boy, it doesn't happen to me twice. Next time I will know, because I would begin more and more frequently to recognize the political issues that come before me.

Morris: Or study up on the particular issue to find out what all of this could be.

Charles: Well, that's exactly right. Whenever I make what I consider to be a mistake, I always take a great deal of time to find out what happened—to me, not to anybody else. Why did I make that mistake? What gaps were there in my information that I should have had before I made the decision? Or what did I fail to know about the board or the purposes—?

To me, that kind of exploration of yourself is not wasted, because you always learn something that applies to other situations, where you just fail to do something that had to be done.

Morris: So that, in terms of the Rosenberg board, you're constantly keeping an eye out in other organizations for who might be a likely person?
Charles: Oh, yes. When you're looking for a board member—I believe, the purpose of the Rosenberg Foundation being what it is, that you really need people who know something about the inner workings of the community. We actually are supposed to be a state-wide foundation, but—I don't know what the statistics are as to the location of our grants, to tell you the truth.

[New tape begins]

Morris: So you try to select some board members who know the state-wide picture, as well as the Bay Area?

Charles: Yes. But I really think what you're doing in putting members onto an established board is filling the gaps of knowledge, experience, personality, and now race, which was never an issue before. We'd really never thought about it at all until the last five or eight years.

Morris: Is this the issue known as 'representation'?

Charles: I wouldn't like to call it that, because I believe that anybody put on a board of this sort, or a university board, should be a person who is willing to speak for himself or herself, and that he doesn't—even though, for instance, in the university we have alumni trustees, they are not there to speak for the alumni. They're there to speak for the total welfare of the university.

We don't want to have that kind of representative government; I've always thought that our representatives in Congress should have the courage to still be speaking for what they believe in, and not necessarily going back to the constituency, unless they think the constituency knows the issues, and enough about them.

Morris: What would happen, for example, if there was a young Mexican-American or Asian on the Rosenberg board—would their idea about what's good for the Foundation or the community be different from other members of the board?

Charles: Well, you see, one of the things that you hope to do, and one of the things that we have accomplished at KQED, about which I'm very proud—when I went in as chairman, we also elected nine minority members.

We had a few on, but we wanted to complete the job of making it reflect the composition of KQED's listening audience, which is nine counties, and which is about one-third minority. This strike has demonstrated, better than anything I've ever seen, the fact that those minorities have become members of the board. Because they have all supported management's position on the strike, and this, to me, is very gratifying.
Charles: It's a very hard thing to accomplish, because a great many of the minority people are uncertain about what their role is, and get into trouble, too. Because their constituents would like to insist that they vote on every issue as it reacts on that minority. But the good board members, and I believe more and more we are seeing them, are going to vote as to what is good for your job, whatever it may be for the organization.

Herman Gallegos came on the Rosenberg board just about a year before I went off. Herman is a very sophisticated man; he is also on the KQED board. And he can be accused, and is accused, by his racial group, of not doing or doing, or what he ought to do, or that sort of thing; but he's well able to deal with this in a pretty diplomatic way. He has to be diplomatic about it.

But in this strike, of course, the principle that was at issue was a restrictive contract on the part of the engineers that made it impossible for us to employ minorities as engineers. They all knew that. Our minorities all knew that section of the engineers' contract—we had decided we wouldn't accept that for renewing that contract, and that's what started the whole thing.

Progress and Change

Morris: That raises an interesting question. Have you, as a member of the white establishment, ever felt that other members of that white establishment objected to your activities or your views on either the Foundation or the other organizations?

Charles: No. I'm amazed about that. I'm sure that I would be, by anyone who was very far to the right; I would be personally, because I am not part of the right, and I don't like those positions. But it seems clear to me that I am not rejected on the basis that I have crazy sympathies, too liberal, or anything of that sort. I really believe that to be true.

Morris: Or that the Foundation is in territory where it shouldn't be, in its grants?

Charles: I don't have any feeling that that is said. Now, the only time that the Foundation was heavily criticized was in the field of left-Communist action, supporting Communist organizations, which were somewhat casually designated, down in the Valley, during our work with the migrant laborers.

And we withstood that. Our board members were excellent. That was at a time when we had on the board real establishment men. In
Charles: fact, the establishment at that time was the establishment; now it really isn't as much. I mean, there were pretty hard-core establishment people—but some of them, I think, were in the process of changing themselves.

There are now what are probably considered establishment men in this Resource Exchange. Very willing to listen to what the kids have to say, and to try to compromise on some of the issues that bother them the most—that sort of thing.

They got started on the National Association of Businessmen, and they really were absolutely unwilling to listen to anything good about them.

Morris: The young half of this group?

Charles: Yes. Because they were in charge of what they called the NAB group of jobs. They would organize the businessmen, and then get jobs for the unemployed kids. And according to the kids, those jobs were just a bunch of phonies. Well, the jobs weren't phonies, but the selection was all pre-made of who was going to get the jobs, because they didn't want trouble-makers, and they had their methods, according to the kids.

Well, that still isn't fully resolved, but certainly the kids had something to talk about, but they weren't going to listen to anything good, at all.

Morris: I wonder if this is in the area of social change? This is one of the phrases I find in foundation literature, and also that foundations like to be on the edge of innovation. I'm unclear about the difference between the leading edge and social change.

Charles: Well, you know, the foundations were viewed with great suspicion in the sixties, when people became aware, through the foundations' own literature—Congress became aware—that they considered themselves on the cutting edge of social change, as they say; and Congress decided they weren't going to have the foundations telling us what we ought to do. That became a very bitter pill.

I have to say that when we made our grants, we were not trying to create social change. We were trying to make something easier for certain groups in the community, without really giving much thought that we might be leading the way for the community to be easier on this group or that group. That was not what was voiced in our meetings.

Morris: Or shift the position of that group in the total society?

Charles: Yes. Now, Bill Roth—are you going to interview Bill?

Morris: Yes.
Charles: Good, because Bill likes to talk about the counterculture, and his belief that it should be strengthened and given a chance to make itself felt. And perhaps if the board had—but that's one of the advantages of what I have expressed earlier, that I believe boards of this sort, who get close to the operation of the foundation without running it, but who, say, meet monthly (rather than quarterly or semiannually and then just rush through a whole group of things)—we were very much involved in every grant we made, in the sense that we knew what it was doing. Being lay people who were not professional social workers, we didn't think about whether we were creating social change or not. We were trying to look at the crisis in society that needed help, and the people in society who needed help, and maybe we could do this.

Now, of course, we were creating social change, if that was what we wanted to talk about. It wasn't that anybody concealed it from themselves, either; I don't mean that at all. But we weren't walking around in the grand manner, saying that we were working for social change. We were talking about how to use the money at our disposal for improving certain areas of society where people—because we always have been concerned with groups of people—needed better opportunities, or better living conditions, or something else.

Morris: When it began to be considered in Congress, and in the various publications on the subject, that in total these kinds of 'cutting edge' activities could result in major changes in society, did the board have any feeling that they should draw back?

Charles: Oh, never. That kind of generalization wouldn't bother the board. What bothers the board is when they're directly accused in a special case of doing something that is deleterious to maintaining society as it is. I doubt if that would really have bothered the kind of people then on the board either, though we never chose them for that reason. But we have not been dedicated to wholesale change.

I think that a lot of people are not conscious of saying that they want to maintain things as they are (this whole country's dedicated to progress, though it hates change. It likes progress, you know. I've said that before); but I think there are some groups who have been warned by sociologists that if they aren't careful, they'll create social change, which will make it bad for them.

We've never had people on the board who ever talked that way or thought that way. We have dealt with what has come before us as a specific, where you saw groups of underprivileged children—

Morris: On a case-by-case—

Charles: Yes. Absolutely case-by-case, and we haven't really added it up. Now, Ruth would have been not so much conscious of that as she would have
Charles: been of whole movements, like she saw the street people coming and believed that we could improve their condition. But they were coming, not because of anything we could do. We couldn't keep them away. All we could do would be to ameliorate the situation in some way and observe it.

Morris: And observe that it was a large number of people.

Charles: Yes, a movement. I think we did lead the way for other foundations, particularly in the area of realizing that only the young people themselves--because the old-time social workers were really not equipped to deal with--and didn't want to--these new things that came along. They would draw back. We only had one or two. Traveler's Aid was something that we gave a great many grants to because it seemed to--and did, of course--see these people pouring in, and their condition.

Morris: Your observation was that social workers generally were not comfortable moving into this new area. Would that apply also to education and health, do you suppose?

Charles: Oh, I think so. I think at first the old-timers--nobody wants to change the way they do things--would say: Oh, these people are terrible. You can't help them.

Well, that wasn't our business. Our business was to find out how we could help them. At least, that's the way Ruth Chance saw it, and brought to us opportunities to do that. And the thing that was important for us was that it wouldn't be a terribly expensive thing we were being asked to do. Maybe $25,000, or even less, to do something unusual to help, you see.

Morris: It just occurred to me: that's not dissimilar to the Gold Rush idea of the grubstake.

Charles: Yes, yes. Well, I think you're quite right. That's very interesting. Of course, it had to all be spent on what they asked for. Think of the kinds of things we do, for example: we build housing, a little bit of housing, you know? We discovered an architect who knew something about building housing for migrants better, and so we gave him a little money. The board was awfully good about those things.

I think I should stop.

Morris: I know you have another appointment. I think the only thing I haven't done is given you a chance to wind up with what you feel were the successes, and failures if there were any, of your tenure on the board.
Charles: Well, there were plenty of those; but let me think about that further, and then you can use a little piece of tape sometime, if you have a little piece left on there.

Morris: All right. Fine, good.

[End of Interview]

[A serious heart attack in 1975 prevented Mrs. Charles from completing her summary of her foundation experience, but further interviews are planned at a later date to record an account of her other activities, including the Stanford University board of trustees and public broadcasting policy-making.]

Interviewer-Editor: Gabrielle Morris
Transcriber: Bob McCargar
Final Typist: Judy Johnson
THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Since 1935, when the Rosenberg Foundation was established, California has grown from a population of seven million to nearly twenty-one million. Its rural character has given way to urban concentrations. The State is the scene of vast technological advances. Its unique combination of Spanish-background, Asian, black and white peoples with their varied heritages and the flooding of youth into the State makes California especially conscious of rising aspirations which now encircle the world.

During the three years that have elapsed since the issuance of a traditional Rosenberg Foundation Report, the staff and board have been assessing these social changes (as well as the administrative requirements of the Tax Reform Act of 1969) and their effects on our granting program. In 1972 we arrived at some new policies which still retain our traditional limitation of funding only within California and for the well-being of children and youth.

The new policies recognize that current knowledge emphasizes two periods which are particularly significant in youthful lives: the earliest years, and those of adolescence— an uncertain length of time in which the young person attempts within the strong currents of today's swift changes to become an adult. Applications accepted by the Foundation are presently limited to programs which meet certain criteria and relate to these two stages of development.

Although the Foundation has always been interested in "innovative" programs, artificial, contrived or unnecessary innovation has no appeal for the board of directors. Applications of traditional agencies attempting to break out of obsolete practices to meet new circumstances or to make fresh approaches to older but unsolved problems are welcomed where they come within the new guidelines. But the Foundation also recognizes the legitimacy of supporting new institutions where these alternative forms have better access to a clientele or offer an approach which merits demonstration.

During the 1960's and into the 1970's the Foundation's board and staff have worked together to try to sense the kinds of changes which were taking place because of the upsurge of youth in the country's population. Granting procedures were modified to give a more hospitable entry to our young applicants. We particularly wanted to help those who had begun to help themselves, and we hoped to be their partners as they learned to handle both financing and programs responsibly.
Many of these projects are happy ones — exuberant and full of hope. But the eloquent essay which constitutes the main portion of this 1973 Report is concerned with a serious social problem from which society often chooses to avert its eyes. Today’s young transient — in California and throughout the country — comes frequently from a background which is spare both financially and emotionally. He (for the large majority is male) typically does not have the education or the skills or work experience to compete in a tight labor market. He is often a veteran. Street life ages him prematurely (as the photographs show). His health, the possibility of his living within the law are in jeopardy. Since several of our grants are attempting to deal with this problem, we decided to take a further step and invite two gifted young people — one a graceful writer with a scholarly as well as working knowledge of his subject, and the other a young artist in photography — to produce a photographic essay delineating the young transients’ situation. We are deeply grateful to our young collaborators for their excellent study.

Foundations with their limited money cannot hope to solve a problem as extensive and severe as that of the young transient. But small pilot programs such as those described in the essay can begin the network of services needed both regionally and nationally to move toward more comprehensive solutions. We hope this essay can be one factor in starting discussions among foundations and government agencies which will result in cooperative efforts to recognize the plight and the promise of these young transients.

As I leave the presidency and the board I want to acknowledge with affection and respect the stimulation and growth which came from board and staff discussions as the Foundation sought to allocate its money wisely, guided by the many advisers to whom we are indebted. Foundations exist to help people of vision and competence put their plans into effect more easily. Among the best recollections of these past three years are the conviction and ardor which young people brought to their work.

Since my own retirement from the board coincides with that of Ruth Chance, our executive director for the past fifteen years, it is only fitting that I express on behalf of the board our realization of what her stewardship has meant to the Rosenberg Foundation and to all of those who have been recipients of her wisdom and courage in this world of foundation operation.

CAROLINE M. CHARLES
(MRS. ALLAN E. CHARLES)
Arabella Martinez

THE SPANISH SPEAKING UNITY COUNCIL, INC.,
AND BAY AREA FOUNDATIONS

An Interview Conducted by
Gabrielle Morris
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INTERVIEW HISTORY

Arabella Martinez was interviewed in order to obtain an overview of one urban Mexican-American community's experience with local grant-making foundations. Ms. Martinez was selected because several community-service professionals described the Spanish Speaking Unity Council of Oakland as a notably successful grassroots organization and Ms. Martinez as an energetic, able, and intelligent staff person who was significant to the Council in its formative years.

An informal conversation was recorded on May 7, 1975, touching on her childhood, education, and early sense of responsibility to her Mexican-American heritage; some of the high spots of establishing councils of chicano organizations in Oakland and elsewhere, with the support and encouragement of the Ford Foundation through the Southwest Council of La Raza, as well as friendly advice and occasional grants from some Bay Area foundations. Most notable in this interview was Ms. Martinez' affection for and dedication to her people, her sense of obligation to her older mentors, and her commitment to seek out and train younger men and women of talent to share in community leadership.

Upon reading the transcript of the interview in the spring of 1975, it was decided that this casual discussion omitted a number of significant aspects of the founding of the Spanish Speaking Unity Council and its early years. Wishing to avoid possible misinterpretation of the material in the transcript, and also to include the Mexican-American community in this study of organized philanthropy and the variety of communities it serves, it was agreed that the tape and transcript would be eliminated and a written narrative would be prepared to replace it.

In consultation with Evelio Grillo, who gave philosophical and organizational encouragement to the Council's development, and Henry Mestre, in 1976 the Council's executive director, Ms. Martinez prepared the following manuscript in just a few weeks. Although the editor regrets the loss of the lively, anecdotal, though brief interview, the present article is a sensitive and thorough piece of work. One hopes it will be the basis for a future full history of the Council.

Gabrielle Morris
Project Director

27 April 1976
Regional Oral History Office
The Bancroft Library
University of California, Berkeley
INTRODUCTION

This paper was prepared in response to a request from the Bancroft Library of the University of California, Berkeley, for a contribution to a research study on the "development, direction, accomplishments, and goals of selected foundations in the Bay Area." In keeping with the focus of this paper, it should be noted that the Spanish Speaking Unity Council has not had extensive relationships with local foundations. With the exception of a grant from the Eldridge Foundation of San Francisco, it has never been a recipient of local financial support. However, it has supported the grant requests of other chicoan organizations and those have received favorable attention from the San Francisco Foundation. Most of its contracts with foundations have been with out-of-state foundations, especially with the Ford Foundation. Therefore, the emphasis of this article will be on the history and development of the Spanish Speaking Unity Council. Whenever appropriate, reference will be made to the roles of the local foundations.

ANTECEDENTS OF THE SPANISH SPEAKING UNITY COUNCIL

The Spanish Speaking Unity Council was organized in 1964 under the name of the Mexican-American Unity Council. Initially, its purpose was to foster communication and unity among the many different Mexican-American groups in Alameda County.

The groups which joined the Unity Council were very different from each other in their interests, organizational structure and capacity, and history. The traditional organizations like Club Guadalajara, Club Social y Cultural Mexicano and Organización Mexicana y Comité Pro-Fiestas Patrias had been formed in the early 1950s. Celebration and preservation of Mexican social, cultural and sporting traditions was the focus of their activity. Self-help and mutual assistance was an integral part of the purposes of these organizations. Activities of this type can be traced back to the 1920's. Orden Fraternal Hijos de Puerto Rico was formed also in the early 1950's for the same purposes as the Mexican organizations.

Other groups which participated in the initial organization and development of the Unity Council were the American G.I. Forum, the Community Services Organization (CSO) and the Mexican-American Political Association (MAPA). These were second generation organizations and their focus was on the social, political and economic improvement of the problems that plagued la raza. Nevertheless, the tradition of self-help and mutual assistance was maintained by these organizations.

Up until the formation of the Community Service Organization all community efforts had been indigenous and self supporting. This pattern changed with the involvement of the Industrial Areas Foundation from Chicago in the organization
and development of the CSO. Support was for the development of a state-wide mechanism to articulate the needs of the Spanish speaking, but much of the impetus came from Oakland. Significantly, the first foundation support was from out of state and for the most part that pattern continues today.

From the above organizations came the leadership for the Spanish Speaking Unity Council. Such stalwarts as James Delgadillo, Dominga Velasco, Paul DeAlva, Amalia Corona, Edward Reyes, Elvira Rose, Javier Macias, Roberto Holguin, Ralph Vega, Bert Corona, Henry Rodriguez, Rosemary Escobar, Fred Castro, Ignacio Balli, Caesar Mendez, Josephine Jimenez and numerous others formed the human foundation for the Unity Council. On their shoulders stands a new generation of organizations, programs and leaders. Evelio Grillo, A black who spoke Spanish and who understood the culture, gave philosophical and organizational direction to the Unity Council, as he had to the Community Service Organization.

In passing, it is significant to note that the John Hay Whitney Foundation, through its Opportunity Fellow Program, financed the graduate education, in turn, of Evelio Grillo, Herman Gallegos, Ralph Vega, and of Arabella Martinez. Herman is mentioned later in this paper.

THE BEGINNING YEARS - 1964-1968

When the Spanish Speaking Unity Council was formed the country was in the midst of a social revolution and the civil rights movement was in full force. That year two significant pieces of legislation, the Civil Rights Act and the Economic Opportunity Act, were passed. Taking its cue from the valiant struggle of the black community, the Mexican-American community began reorganizing itself to participate in the new age of social and economic opportunity.

During its first years the Spanish Speaking Unity Council served as a communication link for the Spanish speaking population and the non-Spanish speaking peoples of Oakland and Alameda County. It was an advocate for more participation by Mexican-Americans in the problem-solving and decision-making processes of the city and county and for a share of the resources which the federal government was allocating to the area for the Spanish speaking. Its major interests were focused on the employment and education needs of la raza.

At first, the Unity Council's efforts were limited as there were no outside financial resources, but it did succeed in making the Oakland community aware of the Spanish speaking community. And it did secure some resources for programs and services for the people. The payoff was long in coming but in 1966 the State of California's Department of Employment established an employment outreach office with one bilingual staff member, Margaret Murillo. The office was located in a house on 35th Avenue which was the headquarters of the Community Service Organization and the original meeting place for the Spanish Speaking Unity Council. The property was owned by St. Elizabeth's Parish and it was loaned by Father Oliver Lynch to the CSO for its use without cost.
Later in 1966, the City of Oakland, after securing a grant from HEW with the help of the community, established the first Latin-American Library in the country on Fruitvale Avenue. Rosemary Escobar was instrumental in its development and was hired as one of its first staff members. At about the same time an information and referral service was funded by the Oakland Economic Development Council. The sponsoring organization for the program was the East Bay Spanish Speaking Citizens Foundation, a spinoff corporation of the Spanish Speaking Unity Council. Josephine Jimenez was the guiding spirit of the Foundation from 1966 to 1970. Another project funded by the Oakland Economic Development Council was an English As A Second Language project, known as Educación Para Adelantar (EPA). Originally, it was under the sponsorship of the Peralta Colleges and was housed in the East Bay Skills Center. A year later it was moved to the Holy Redeemer College campus on Golf Links Road and was under the sponsorship of the Redemptorist Order of California until 1970. The Unity Council did serve as the policy advisory committee for EPA and did have considerable influence with respect to program and staffing.

In June 1967, the Spanish Speaking Unity Council changed its name from the Mexican American Unity Council and incorporated as a nonprofit corporation under the laws of the State of California. The name change was in keeping with the belief that the Council should be more inclusive and representative of the Spanish surname population. Since that time the Unity Council has counted Puerto Ricans, Filipinos and Peruvians as members. The Council received its federal tax exemption certificate in 1968.

The year of 1967 marked the Unity Council's entry into program operations, a shift from its primary role as advocate. The program was an on-the-job training project for students graduating from EPA. Joe Coto was in charge of this project as well as of EPA. He was the Unity Council's first paid staff member. Under his leadership EPA secured a number of Neighborhood Youth Corps slots and the first summer youth work experience program was initiated. Herman 'Bud' Serna served as coordinator of the OJT project. Coto later became the first Mexican-American elected to the Oakland City Council, of which he is presently a member.

Unfortunately, the guidelines allowing nonprofit sponsors for OJT were revoked by the State of California in early 1968, leaving the Unity Council without a program. That experience taught the Council several lessons. The first lesson was that the Council needed to be an adaptable organism in order to survive policy and political changes and that adaptability required diversification of program and sources of funding. A second lesson was the need for flexible resources for program and resource development activities. However, not until after the Unity Council received its first grant from the Southwest Council of La Raza (now called the National Council of La Raza) were these lessons put into practice.

Throughout these beginning years, as far as the author knows, there was no attempt to secure resources from local foundations either by the Unity Council or any other raza organization. In retrospect, there seems not to have been a consciousness in the community about local foundations, or if there was, local foundations were not seen as potential resources for the raza community.
THE GROWING YEARS - 1968-1971

The year of 1968 was a significant year for the country's second largest minority group. For the first time in history, a major foundation, the Ford Foundation, was convinced by Herman Gallegos, Dr. Ernesto Galarza, and Dr. Julian Zamora of the needs of the Mexican-American population and decided to support a Southwest community development effort. In addition, the Ford Foundation decided to fund a legal services program for Mexican-Americans. The Southwest Council of La Raza [SWCLR] and the Mexican-American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF) were the two legal instrumentalities established to implement those programs. Herman Gallegos, long active in the movement for social and economic justice and a former State Chairman of the Community Service Organization, was named the first executive director of the SWCLR. Mario Obledo, an attorney from Texas, became the first chief counsel for MALDEF.

One of the objectives of the SWCLR was to support 'barrio' community efforts in various parts of the Southwest. The theory was that there was considerable community improvement activity and leadership in the barrios. With these as a basis, it was reasonable to anticipate that direct financial and technical assistance to grantees, and in turn to barrio organizations, would stimulate further community improvement activity and leadership development. Additionally, it was anticipated that support from SWCLR would lead to interest on the part of other funding resources.

In the Bay Area, two organizations were selected, the Unity Council and the Mission Development Council of San Francisco. Each of these councils received a grant of $50,000. To manage these resources, both organizations formed a joint administrative unit, La Raza Unida (not the political party), and shared the cost of the fund raiser/administrator and secretary. Selected as fund raiser/administrator was Arabella Martinez. Ms. Martinez had conceived the idea of a unity council in Oakland, was one of the Unity Council's founders and its first chairperson. She provided the staff work for preparing the Unity Council's proposal to the SWCLR. Ms. Martinez was a graduate of the University of California, Graduate School of Social Welfare and had been the executive director of a community action agency in the Livermore/Amador Valley. Reina Cañas was selected as the secretary.

The program officially started in mid-January 1969. An office was established in the San Francisco Mission district. The East Bay Spanish Speaking Citizens Foundation provided space in its facilities on Fruitvale Avenue in Oakland when needed.

In keeping with the purposes of the first SWCLR grant, eight to ten barrio organizations were funded and a leadership training program was instituted in Oakland. The barrio development program included educational and youth projects, neighborhood community organization, an information/referral service and a newspaper. Unfortunately, many of these projects ended once the funds were expended as the organizations were unable to procure other resources. Two organizations, the Frente Foundation and the Filipino Community of the East Bay, did secure other funds and have ongoing programs today. The leadership training program was also a failure. These failures provided the Council with additional lessons. The first lesson was to concentrate resources dedicated to program. A second
lesson was that formal leadership training programs were not as effective as the informal, one-to-one training provided by doing and working together.

The second major program thrust of 1969 was a joint project with the Mission Development Council (of San Francisco) to secure resources from the United Bay Area Crusade (now the United Way of the Bay Area) for the support of raza organizations and their programs. Unbelievable as it may seem, not one Spanish speaking organization in the five Bay Area counties covered by UBAC had ever been funded by the Crusade and there was not one raza representative either on the board of directors or board of trustees. The project mobilized Raza groups from throughout the Bay Area and provided the example for other minority groups and Chicano groups throughout the Southwest.

Reception to this community organization effort was negative, but through force of circumstance, it eventually succeeded. Twelve raza organizations were funded in July of 1970 and the doors were opened to participation in the problem-solving and decision-making processes of the United Way. Maria Salazar, who later became the executive director of the East Bay Spanish Speaking Citizens Foundation, was hired to coordinate this project. The Eldridge Foundation grant of $1500 was received in early 1970 to maintain the effort. One of the beneficial results of the United Way campaign was that a relationship was initiated with John Way of the San Francisco Foundation.

In addition to the above community development activities, a considerable amount of time was devoted to reorganizing the Unity Council into a cohesively-structured organization. This effort resulted in an extremely stable and highly sophisticated board of directors which is one of the reasons the Unity Council has been so successful.

In 1970 the program direction of the Unity Council changed to conform to the Ford Foundation's call for 'hard' programs in the fields of housing and economic development as opposed to 'soft' programs of community organization and social services. This change in emphasis was due in part to the 1969 Tax Reform Act which set forth the concept of 'expenditure responsibility,' making grantors responsible and liable for the actions of its grantees and sub-grantees. More importantly, within the Ford Foundation a new strategy for dealing with depressed urban and rural areas began to evolve. This new strategy was formalized in the concept of 'community development corporations.' As defined by the Ford Foundation, a CDC "displays strong and sophisticated leadership, balanced comprehensive programming, and a capacity to engage in concentrated economic development through large scale projects."

The Unity Council responded enthusiastically to the new program direction, having recognized that good solid program builds power, credibility and authority long before that concept was articulated in the Ford Foundation's policy paper on CDCs. "Another basic characteristic is that a CDC engages in both social and economic projects and seeks to demonstrate how these two types of programming

reinforce and depend upon each other. Economic projects such as commercial and housing development bring in jobs, income, and capital; they improve the physical environment and enlarge the sense of growth and opportunity within the community. By operating a variety of education, training, and other social programs, the CDC not only meets critical needs for social services but also builds power, credibility, and authority. Such power and credibility, in turn, are necessary to command respect critical in reaching community decisions on matters necessary to the success of economic development programs (such as zoning changes, family displacement, and property condemnation)."*

The change in program direction released funds from the barrio organizations for program and resource development and allowed the Unity Council and the Mission Development Council to concentrate on their respective communities. With the separation of the two councils, Arabella Martinez and Reina Cenas became full time staff members of the Spanish Speaking Unity Council.

In 1970 the Unity Council initiated its housing development and educational programs. These new initiatives were made possible by several new grants. The SWCLFR granted, in addition to its $47,500 for administration and community development, another $31,960 for housing development. And the first grant from the United Bay Area Crusade in the amount of $10,850 was for a feasibility study of an industrialized housing system. Ramon Rodriguez was hired as the housing coordinator and Vera Marquez Buncrot was hired as housing assistant.

The educational program was made possible through two grants from the U.S. Department of Labor through the Oakland Public Schools in the amount of $38,000, and through the City of Oakland in the amount of $2,000. These funds were for the operation of a Neighborhood Youth Corps program for 250 youths. These grants were significant for the chicano youth of Oakland, as very few of them had participated in previous Neighborhood Youth Corps programs. In 1969 only 89 chicanos had been enrolled in the program. Since that time the Unity Council has operated a youth work experience program every summer.

The severe educational problems faced by the Spanish speaking peoples, as evidenced by the low educational attainment level of the population as a whole and the abnormally high dropout rate, had been a continuing concern of the Raza community and the Unity Council. In 1969 there had been an explosive student walkout because of the frustration with the Oakland schools' failure to address the needs of the Spanish speaking students. With the hiring of a new superintendent, the late Dr. Marcus Foster, the Unity Council took the initiative to meet with him and ask for his support in addressing the problems of the lack of Spanish speaking personnel at all levels of the school system and the lack of programs for the Spanish speaking students. His positive response along with the NYC experience led to the establishment of the education component in the fall of 1970 and the hiring of Henry Mestre as the community development/education specialist.

* Ibid.
Throughout the early fall, the Unity Council's staff refined its educational and housing strategies. By October, a set of objectives addressing the educational needs of the Spanish speaking had been prepared and presented to Dr. Foster and to the Board of Education. The district made its initial response in late December, outlining a series of measures to achieve the objectives and establishing a timetable for action. This effort proved very successful, as more Spanish surname personnel were hired and federal funds were secured for a bilingual education, preschool and adult education programs. Other community education efforts were supported with facilities and supplies by the district itself. In addition, the project led to the development of a strong relationship with the school district itself, providing opportunity for direct involvement in the district's problem-solving and decision-making processes.

In housing, a housing strategy was laid out to build a low and moderate income rental housing project. The land search began in Oakland, but given the unavailability of reasonably priced land and a new federal housing policy encouraging the building of such projects in the suburbs, the land search switched to Southern Alameda County. By October a site had been located on Gading Road in Hayward. A feasibility application was submitted to the Department of Housing and Urban Development and it was approved in December. From that point the development of Casitas of Hayward, Inc., began in earnest.

The validity of the concept of balanced programming was most evident in the operation of the Unity Council's educational and housing efforts. Immediate results and credibility were yielded from the summer work experience and educational advocacy programs and these provided time for the housing program to get underway.

In late 1970, preparation began for assuming complete program and fiscal responsibility for the Educación Para Adelantar (EPA) project. A shift in national policy placed control of manpower (CEP) funds in the hands of city and county governments instead of the community action agencies. While the City of Oakland prepared itself to absorb the CEP program, some of the monies were channeled to the State Department of Vocational Education which made a grant of $156,400 to the Unity Council. EPA's program continued to emphasize training for monolinguals but it was expanded to prepare bilingual high school dropouts for the General Education Development examination. A more suitable location was found for EPA, and so it was moved to the Old Laney College building on East 10th Street. Later it was moved to facilities purchased to house it on Fruitvale Avenue.

With the assumption of the EPA project, manpower development became the third component of the Unity Council's program. A fourth program component was added in April, 1971, with the hiring of Oscar Perez as the Economic Development Specialist. Funds for this component were included in the SWCLR's grant for housing which was increased and its purposes expanded to include economic development. The initiation of this program component was at the suggestion of the Ford Foundation and the SWCLR, demonstrating the role of the availability of money in program development.

As with the housing staff, Mr. Perez was sent for a training course in his field. Upon his return, he set forth a three point strategy for economic development as follows: 1) loan packaging and technical assistance for small businesses; 2) development of financing mechanisms to funnel capital for business ventures; and
3) the development of Unity Council owned businesses which eventually would generate resources to support some of the work of the Council. By the end of 1971 the first objective was fully implemented and exploration had started on the second and third objectives.

The year of 1971 was one of reaping the benefits of previous efforts. The Spanish Speaking Unity Council along with four other raza groups (the East Bay Spanish Speaking Citizens Foundation, the United Council of Spanish Speaking Organizations in Richmond, the Organization for Business, Education and Community Advancement/Arriba Juntos and one other) were admitted to full membership in the United Bay Area Crusade. In addition, several special projects were funded including the Frente Foundation's Educational Guidance Center. The Unity Council was refunded for $21,700. Also, the Unity Council was refunded by the Department of Labor through the Oakland Unified School District for a Neighborhood Youth Corps program to serve 429 youths, a considerable increase over previous years.

Late in 1971, the Unity Council finally received final feasibility approval for its housing project and a HUD 106 seed grant, but firm commitment was delayed until mid-summer of 1972. Fortunately, the Charles E. Merrill Trust, located in New York, through the good offices of one of the vice presidents of Safeway, made a venture capital grant for housing and economic development. These funds were put to work in the housing project prior to firm commitment.

The close of 1971 saw the Unity Council's current program components in full operation. The foundation for becoming a full-fledged community development corporation had been laid. A track record of performance and program and fiscal accountability had been established both with the community and the grantors. The obligations which the Council had accepted in 1969 for increasing from other sources the resources granted by SWCLR for the community had been met.

INSTITUTIONALIZATION - 1972-1975

With its reputation established, the Unity Council decided to expand its Board of Directors to include from three to five individual members. The rationale for this decision was the desire to include distinguished Chicanos and non-Spanish speaking individuals who could provide technical assistance and community connections and who had been supportive of the Unity Council's efforts. Since that time several Anglo businessmen from Clorox Corporation, Kaiser Industries and Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company and a distinguished Black minister have served as directors.

The expansion of the board was consistent with the Unity Council's efforts to reach out to the larger community. Initially, in 1970 an advisory task force of businessmen had been established which had included representatives from Crocker National Bank, Kaiser Industries, Pacific Gas and Electric Company, Safeway Stores and the Oakland Tribune. Additionally, the Unity Council sent representatives to numerous community boards, committees and ad hoc groups working to solve community problems. Significant among those groups were the UBAC committees which proposed major changes in the governance structure of
the Crusade which were later implemented, and the Oakland Schools' Master Plan Citizens Committee which provided an opportunity for citizen contribution to the problem-solving and decision-making processes of the public school system. It is significant that Henry Mestre, presently the Executive Director of the Unity Council, was for several years the continuing moderator of the Master Plan Citizens Committee.

With respect to program, the Unity Council continued and expanded its activities in all its various components. With the securing of firm commitment from HUD for the FHA 136, a sixty-one unit rental housing project in Hayward, later called Casitas of Hayward, Inc., great amounts of energy were channeled into its financing, construction and leasing. Also, the Unity Council participated in a home ownership counseling program sponsored by the San Francisco Development Fund with funds from the Ford Foundation and five hundred housing units from HUD. This program resulted in approximately ninety Raza families purchasing their own homes. Other housing development projects were explored and a site in Warm Springs was optioned for another 236 project. However, in January of 1973, a housing moratorium was declared by the federal government and subsequent housing legislation, Section 8 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, proved unworkable. These two policies of the federal government virtually scuttled the Unity Council's housing component, with the exception of overseeing the management of Casitas. Now, there are some new housing program possibilities and these are being explored, and so it is possible that the Unity Council will be active in the housing field once again.

Fortunately, just as the housing moratorium hit, the Unity Council was negotiating for a grant from the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (EDA) to build a community resources center on Fruitvale Avenue. Initial discussions had been held in late 1971 but, because of changes in federal policy, they were held in abeyance until December 1972. In the Spring of 1973 the EDA made a grant of $406,200 with the provision that the Unity Council must secure another $270,000. This condition spawned a search for a lender who would adhere to EDA guidelines that did not permit a lien or a first deed of trust against the building. After considerable negotiations, EDA agreed to a waiver of the condition, making it possible for the Ford Foundation to loan $325,000, an increase over the original projected loan because of inflation. As a result of the extended negotiations, the Unity Council had to purchase property it had optioned or lose it, and also, it had incurred other developmental costs. Fortunately, the Unity Council had the Charles E. Merrill Trust venture capital fund which had accumulated interest. More importantly, the Ford Foundation allowed the Council to apply some of its grant monies and, in addition, advanced the last quarter's grant payment for the purchase of the land. This situation is an example of the Ford Foundation's great creativity and active support of its grantees. Also, it illustrates the great need for flexible grant monies.

The community resources center, now called the Spanish Speaking Unity Council Building, is symbolic of the great growth and development of the Spanish speaking community and the Fruitvale community which the Unity Council helped to initiate and encourage. In 1964 there was not one single social service or governmental agency located in the Fruitvale area, and certainly, no funded Spanish speaking community agencies. Within the walls of the Spanish Speaking Unity Council Building, eight social service and governmental agencies are housed, including the Latin American Library, the East Bay Spanish Speaking Citizens Foundation, the Frente Foundation's Educational Guidance Center, a unit of the State of California's Depart-
ment of Employment, a unit of the Family Planning Agency of Alameda County, the Centro Salud Mental, a unit of the Peralta Community College System, and of course, the Unity Council. Additional agencies are expected to lease space in the near future.

The economic development program of the Council became a major priority in 1972. Demand for loan packaging and technical assistance exceeded staff resources and so it was necessary to hire and train another economic development specialist, Berchman's Rivera. Major reasons for the increased load were the support provided to the Casitas housing project and the repackaging of an application for a federal savings and loan association.

Support for Casitas was an extremely important community economic development activity, as it guaranteed that the economic benefits generated by this real estate venture would redound to minority, and especially raza, subcontractors. As a result of the packaging and technical assistance provided the subcontractors, over sixty percent of the construction funds were subcontracted to minority firms. An important side effect of this policy was that affirmative action with respect to employment seemed to have taken care of itself.

Other community economic development activities included the provision of technical assistance for a proposed shopping center and a new facility for one of the community agencies and the establishment of the Industria y Comercio Local Development Corporation, a financing mechanism for fixed assets chartered by the Small Business Administration. By far the most complex and time consuming was the development and establishment of the City Center Federal Savings and Loan Association located on Broadway in the heart of downtown Oakland. After considerable work and negotiations with the Federal Home Loan Bank Board, a charter was granted in December, 1973, and City Center opened its doors in March, 1974. By November, 1974, the Association was operating in the black and began retiring its initial debt, much to the astonishment of officials of the Federal Home Loan Bank Board. The debt was retired by the fall of 1975 and the Association turned a profit for the year ending 1975. It now has $3,400,000 in savings and has loaned approximately $10,000,000 through one of the Federal Home Loan Bank Board's loan purchase programs. Most exciting, it has applied to establish a branch office, the smallest association ever to do so.

Educational programming had been a high priority for the Unity Council, but that has diminished over time as program resources, other than those from the Department of Labor for the summer work experience program, were almost impossible to secure. The reason for this fact is that most federal monies are channeled through the state and local educational agencies. Foundation resources, for the most part, seem to go to institutions of higher education. It is important to mention here that the Unity Council did assist three raza organizations to secure resources for educational activities from the San Francisco Foundation. In one case the Unity Council prepared a proposal and in the other two cases telephone calls of support were made to John May by the Unity Council's Executive Director. The three organizations which received support were the Latin American Saturday School, Frente Foundation's Educational Guidance Center and an adult bilingual program in Hayward.

The summer work experience program for youth is still being sponsored by the Council. Some changes have occurred in the program's orientation because of federal
policy and funding regulations. There is now a manpower orientation rather than an educational one. Although the changes have required adaptability on the part of the Council, the most important fact is that the program has continued and over 1,400 young people have been provided with a valuable experience. In addition to the continuance of the summer work experience program, the Unity Council has continued its advocacy function, although it is somewhat attenuated because of ascendency of the other program priorities, and also because there are other organizations working in this field.

During the years between 1972 and 1974, manpower programming began to require more attention. The Department of Labor provided the Unity Council with a program development grant resulting in the initiation in 1973 of a pre-committed jobs program with major employers in Oakland, including the Clorox Corporation, Pacific Telephone & Telegraph Company and Safeway Stores. Throughout this period of time major policy and funding changes were initiated and implemented by the federal government and the City of Oakland's Manpower Department placed stringent new requirements on manpower program operators. The capacity of the Unity Council to adapt to these changes and requirements was strained to its limits but survived them. Leadership for the manpower component was vested in Henry Mestre and later in the Manpower Coordinator, Robert Macias.

The pre-committed jobs program was divided into two phases. The second phase was an experiment in economic development for the Council. By contracting directly with employers for training of Spanish surname employees, it was hoped that a sufficient cash flow would be generated to support a large scale training program. Unfortunately, the economy turned sour and it was impossible to convince employers to participate in the face of employee layoffs. However, it was a valuable experience for the individuals who were trained and placed on jobs. For the Unity Council it was an experience in creative programming.

Other efforts to diversify the funding of EPA were initiated and resulted in the funding of instructional time by both the Feralta College System through Laney College and the Oakland Unified School District. Senior Citizens Aides have also provided much needed manpower for EPA. As part of the Council's effort to rationalize the Unity Council's manpower efforts, all employment training, job placement and work experience components, including the summer work experience program for youth, were merged under the EPA umbrella. That merger required the channeling of Ford Foundation flexible monies to support some of the non-CETA staff activities being implemented by EPA staff.

In February of 1974, the Ford Foundation, along with the several federal agencies, most notably the Department of Labor, invited a number of governmental bodies and several community development corporations, including the Unity Council, to a conference on the Supported Work Program. The supported work program was an employment project for ex-drug addicts in New York City which seemed to have been very successful in the rehabilitation of addicts. The upshot of the conference was that the Ford Foundation, the Department of Labor and the other federal agencies planned to establish a national demonstration of this program. Proposals for the planning grants were invited from the group of agencies attending the conference. The Unity Council submitted a proposal and was one of twenty agencies funded for planning grants. In the spring of 1975, it was one of thirteen agencies and the only non-profit sponsor selected to establish one of the demonstration programs.
Thus far, the program seems to be achieving its stated goals. There are now plans to increase the number of enrollees and to include mothers on welfare who may be motivated to enter the world of work.

The supported work program was established under a different corporate structure, the Peralta Services Corporation. The strategy of establishing additional corporations as a way of shielding the corpus of the Unity Council from undue corporate weight and potential legal and financial problems has seemed to be effective for the Council. In the case of Peralta Services Corporation, it is such a massive program with a budget projected for this year of over $1,000,000, that it was thought it might engulf the Unity Council and divert it from its other priorities and projects.

Throughout the period of 1972-1975, the Unity Council continued to be an advocate for the Spanish speaking community; to provide technical assistance to other community groups; to participate in numerous community improvement efforts; to refine and expand its programs; and to develop human resources and to secure funds for the community. These activities were supported by grants from the SWCLR which were phased out in September of 1972 and replaced with direct grants from the Ford Foundation and by grants from the United Way of the Bay Area. For the most part these grants were for central staff and general overhead for planning, program and resource development, technical assistance and advocacy services, community relations and management support. In contrast to most governmental and foundation grants, these general grants provide flexibility to develop a wide range of programs and to adapt to changing circumstances. Such flexibility is essential if the complex problems of the inner city and of minorities are to be addressed effectively. Restrictive grants limit the growth potential of minority organizations to specific programs.

Grants for central staff and general overhead are important, but equally as important is for an organization to be able to plan ahead. This capacity is almost non-existent for most non-profit organizations because of their year-to-year funding. The Unity Council has been somewhat more fortunate in this regard as in 1973, the Ford Foundation began making two-year grants to selected community development corporations, a practice which more funding bodies should adopt.

CONCLUSION

Eleven years have passed since that first dinner meeting was held at La Cueva on Poothill Boulevard and 66th Avenue and it was agreed that a unity council was needed. Much has happened since that historic meeting. The Unity Council has achieved national recognition and has gained credibility, power and authority within its own community and the Bay Area. None of this would have been possible without the active support of the Spanish speaking community, and especially of the member organizations, their representatives to the general membership and the members of the board of directors of the Unity Council. Although it is hazardous to single out individuals, it is essential that some of them be named as they selflessly gave of their time, energy and wisdom.

James Delgadillo, a giant of a man, who served as the chairperson of the
Unity Council for many years, provided the basic leadership, political knowledge, strength, and superior insight in the beginning and growing years of the Council. Literally, he gave years of his life to the development of the community and to training of its present leadership. Another chairperson, Isidoro Calderon, guided the Council through part of its growing stage and through most of its institutionalization stage. His personal integrity is widely recognized so that any organization with which he is involved automatically is imbued with credibility and authority. His high moral principles and refined sensibilities provided a standard for the Unity Council and gave strength and spirit to the staff. Elvira Rose, the present chairperson, has labored long and hard in the vineyard and, now, has put her great experience and knowledge to work for the Council. She serves as a model of perseverance and dedication for the community and the staff.

Other past and present Unity Council elected officials who deserve special recognition are Dominga Velasco, Olive Carpizo, Edward Reyes, Joe Coto and David Way. Each of them has made a unique contribution and together they provided leadership and credibility.

As mentioned above, none of what has been related about the Council's activities and success could have happened without the active support of the Spanish speaking community, but neither could it have happened without the active involvement of the Ford Foundation. Not only has the Council received substantial funding and technical assistance, but also, it has been inspired to be creative and to take on new programs. The personal interest evinced by the program officer, Siobhan Oppenheimer-Nicolau, has been one of the reasons for the success of the Council. She has been extremely accessible and responsive, bending over backwards to be of assistance. Other Ford Foundation personnel and officers who have been staunch in their support of the Council have been vice president Mitchell Sviridoff and David Carlson who administered the initial housing grants to the Unity Council.

In closing, it should be said that much which is of importance to the story of the growth and development of the Unity Council and the Spanish speaking community, of necessity, could not be included in this one paper. However, one thing more should be said, and that is about the role which Evelio Grillo has played in the growth and development of the Raza community and the Council. In short, he has been no less than the intellectual genius behind the scenes. Several generations of people have been nurtured by his incredible vision, his understanding of community and organization and his great humanity.

The foundation of the Spanish Speaking Unity Council has been laid and told, but there is still much community work to be done. To quote the present executive director, Henry Mestre: "Our growth and our accomplishments have resulted in recognition by our grantors, our own community and the community-at-large. With that recognition came resources and additional responsibility; the responsibility of remaining responsive to our community's needs."

Arabella Martinez
May, 1976
Ira DeVoyd Hall, Jr.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES: TURNING IDEAS INTO ACTION

An Interview Conducted by
Gabrielle Morris

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INTERVIEW HISTORY

When Ira Hall was appointed to the Distribution Committee of the San Francisco Foundation in 1971, he was its youngest trustee ever and the first black to join the board of directors of a leading Bay Area foundation. This interview was recorded on 4 November 1974 in a small study room in the library of the Stanford Business School where Mr. Hall had recently returned to undertake the master of business administration-juris doctor program. Of medium build and aquiline features, wearing slacks and a plaid shirt, he seemed to have points he wished to make in addition to willingly discussing the interviewer's questions.

Still under thirty at the time of the interview, Mr. Hall speaks candidly and with conviction of equity in representation and allocation of resources, which he sees as critical to foundations and other institutions in the mid-1970s. Wryly he notes that his addition to the Distribution Committee markedly lowered the average financial worth of the trustees as well as their average age.

From a rich variety of experience in engineering and community service, he comments that he continues to find able problem-solvers and articulate spokesmen in humble places. These observations lead him to assert the logic of including persons from the broad range of society in policy-making positions not only in foundations but in other significant institutions.

In February, 1976, Mr. Hall met with the interviewer to discuss minor but careful revisions he had made in the first half of the transcript, delegating the other half to the interviewer. Shortly thereafter he completed his graduate work and left for New York City to accept a position with a leading investment banking firm, in which his ideals and energy should find continued scope.

Intervener-Editor

15 July 1976
Regional Oral History Office
486 The Bancroft Library
University of California, Berkeley
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

STANFORD —

President Richard W. Lyman of Stanford reported today his appointment of Stanford Trustee Ira DeVoyd Hall Jr. to the Distribution Committee of the San Francisco Foundation.

Hall, who resides in East Palo Alto, is a member of the Stanford Class of 1966. He succeeds fellow Trustee William Hewlett as a member of the committee.

Hall has been executive director of the Stanford Mid-Peninsula Urban Coalition since 1968. Before that he was on the corporate marketing staff of Hewlett-Packard Co. in Palo Alto.

While at Stanford he was president of his Class and participated in many student organizations, including the Stanford Glee Club and the Stanford Band. He also was a volunteer fund raiser for the student-run Heritage Fund.

Since he graduated from the University he has been active in alumni affairs, especially in various fund-raising activities. He was elected to the trustees by alumni in 1970.

A partial list of his extensive community activities includes: vice president of the Ushirika Development Corp.; commissioner of the Community Redevelopment Committee of the San Mateo Urban Renewal Agency; board member of the Family Service Association; and financial development officer and planning committee member of Nairobi College.

Hall is married to the former Carole Foster, a member of the Stanford Class of ’68. In announcing the appointment, President Lyman stated, "Mr. Hall has indicated his willingness to serve, which pleases me greatly, since I have found him to be a most thoughtful, sympathetic, and at the same time realistic person, with concerns for the good of the community and a knowledge of many of our most urgent problems in the Bay Area that bodes well for his service on the Distribution Committee."

Members of the Distribution Committee of the San Francisco Foundation are chosen for their knowledge of and experience in philanthropy in San Francisco and elsewhere.

Each of the following institutions names an appointment to the Distribution Committee: the Trustee Banks, the president of the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce, the president of the University of California, the president of Stanford University, the president of the League of Women Voters of San Francisco, the president of the United Bay Area Crusade, and the Chief Judge, Ninth Judicial Circuit of the U.S. Court of Appeals.

The San Francisco Foundation, now in its 23rd year of distinguished philanthropic service to the community, has been experiencing the greatest period of growth in its history. During 1970 the foundation’s distributions totaled $2.5 million.
[Date of Interview: 4 November 1974]

1. BEGINNINGS: OKLAHOMA CITY AND STANFORD

Morris: Why don't we start with the background of your own involvement in community affairs?

Hall: Well, I started, actually, when I was very young, in Oklahoma City. My parents were very active in community affairs of all sorts, ranging from school associations to NAACP to Urban League to civic functions -- the symphony and theater guilds and a wide range of other activities. So I always grew up thinking that it was just one of the things you do -- you go to school, you go to work, and you do work in community activities.

I became active in the youth adjuncts to these organizations when I was in junior high school and high school. When I came to Stanford, I was somewhat active in tutorial programs and various activities in the East Palo Alto community that recruited for volunteers at Stanford.

Morris: In other words, there was a volunteer program for Stanford students, in East Palo Alto?

Hall: Yes. It was not very well organized, but occasionally projects would come up and people would contact dormitories and solicit volunteers.

Morris: From the community?

Hall: People from the community would come to Stanford and solicit volunteers for tutorial projects and the like. After I graduated from Stanford, I remained in the Palo Alto area and was active with local organizations --

Morris: When was this?

Hall: I was in the class of '66.

Morris: And you majored in engineering?
Hall: Yes. Electrical engineering.

Morris: How did you happen to go with Hewlett-Packard?

Hall: I became familiar with the company through several avenues. I'd used several Hewlett-Packard instruments while I was a student, in the electrical engineering labs. Also, I was president of my class, and we sponsored several meet the alumni activities.

During that period of time I met the heads of several electronics companies here on the Peninsula. I was impressed by Bill Hewlett, co-founder and president. He extended an opportunity to continue our conversation over at Hewlett-Packard sometime, and I took him up on it. I went over, mentioned I was interested in marketing; he arranged for me to see some people in marketing, and the end result was getting several job offers, one of which I accepted.

Morris: You got several job offers from Hewlett-Packard?

Hall: From different places within Hewlett-Packard.

Morris: When you were class president, was there much student activism at Stanford?

Hall: There was some activism at the time, although it escalated to a much greater extent in later years. In 1966, there were a few demonstrations, but they never resulted in mass arrests or physical damage, the two usual avenues to newspaper coverage. It's not the seriousness of your intent, it's whether or not you break windows. So there was little press coverage of the kind of student concern that existed then.

Morris: Was it the anti-war concern that was apparent at many colleges, or was it concern for racial injustice?

Hall: Primarily anti-war concern. Three or so years earlier, there was concern about racial injustice. There was more concern about the injustice in the South than the injustice in San Francisco, or Palo Alto, for that matter, but there were organizations which sought volunteers to go to Selma, and to go spend the summer in the South.

Morris: Did you participate in that?

Hall: Not directly. My economic situation dictated that I work at the highest-paying job possible during the summers and school years.

Even so, the job that I accepted, with an encyclopedia company, required that I go into Arkansas. There I was arrested because someone had committed a murder. The victim was white and it was thought that the person committing the murder was black. Being black and from out of town, I was their choice, first choice. I was shocked and dismayed, not thinking they could possibly be serious, but they were totally
Hall: serious, as I later discovered. They were not looking for anybody else; it was all over as far as they were concerned.

Morris: Oh, boy. In other words, if they had a suspect, that took care of it?

Hall: That took care of it. And they took pride in their record. They asked me if I knew how many unsolved interracial murders they'd had in the history of Texarkana, and I said: No. They replied: Zero. Then they asked if I knew how many had gone unsolved more than one night. When I said no, they replied: Zero.

I began to get the point that this was it, as far as they were concerned, and they didn't go through the judicial process. They would call the family of the victim, to 'work you over' and do whatever they wanted to do, and then they would take you out and shoot you. I was indignant, to say the least, at the whole thing and mentioned that if I went through all of this and were not killed, that I would certainly bring a federal suit against them; I would immediately contact the governor of Oklahoma and the senators from the state of Oklahoma.

They thought it was a bluff on my part, initially, until they let me make one phone call, and that's who I called.

Morris: The governor?

Hall: Yes. I called my parents and the governor's office.

The family of the victim then backed down and said they didn't want to physically harm me at all, even though they had come down to the jail with the intent of doing so. But the police, initially, were still intent on going through with it. They had called this henchman to come out. He arrived with his gun, and they were discussing the whole thing right in my presence: that they were to take me outside and then say I tried to get away, and shoot me.

I told them: You must think I'm a fool if you think I'm going to go with you, now that you've announced the plan. I just said: You'll have to do whatever you're going to do right here.

Anyway, after twenty-four hours, the ordeal ended. They never formally arrested me, I was just being detained -- that was kind of the end of it.

Although I did not go into the South for a civil rights demonstration, I had my share of the Southern experience that summer.
2. EXPERIENCE WITH INDUSTRY AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

Hewlett-Packard Sponsors the Urban Coalition

Morris: Did this have a part in your decision, later on, to leave Hewlett-Packard and become the executive director of the Urban Coalition?

Hall: That's an interesting question, and I don't know the answer. I never thought of it in that context. That experience certainly increased my awareness of the universality of the problem. I mean, in addition to knowing how it was in Oklahoma City where I grew up, and in California where I was going to school, I gained new perspectives of the severe impact of racism upon the lives of people not previously provided in newspaper and television accounts.

I would have probably accepted the Urban Coalition assignment with or without that Arkansas event happening in my life because of other events -- less dramatic, but still reinforcing the fact of racial discrimination. The offer to help set up the Urban Coalition was extended on a temporary basis; I was going to keep my job at Hewlett-Packard. I was going to come and set this up over a six-week period and then go back to my job at Hewlett-Packard.

I never intended to become the executive director of the Urban Coalition when I first got involved in setting it up.

Morris: Was Hewlett-Packard involved in getting the Urban Coalition started?

Hall: Yes. A group of people had formed a steering committee, and Bill Hewlett and Dave Packard were two of the spearheading members. They were looking for somebody to organize it and turn the paper into action, which requires day-to-day activity that was beyond the scope of time that they could commit to it.

And my views on the need for corporations in the area to involve themselves more in things like Urban Coalition were known to both Bill Hewlett and Dave Packard, and they offered me the opportunity to do it.

Morris: To put your energy where your mouth was.
Hall: Right.

Morris: Hewlett-Packard was (and is still?) small enough so that you did have this kind of contact with the founding executives?

Hall: Well, the company itself is quite large, but I think the contact that you have depends upon your attitude. My attitude then and my attitude now is that people are just people; they have different responsibilities, different authority, different assets, different characteristics in a number of areas.

The philosophy at Hewlett-Packard was an open-door management policy. So that if anybody in the company has any idea about anything, there's an open door to any executive office. I gather that few people actually utilize the opportunity to do that. I happen to be one who did. If I had an idea about corporate matters or social matters, I had no reluctance about opening the door and saying: This is what I think.

Most people would not do that, so, if you do, your ideas generally get attention. Perhaps more attention than they're worth [laughs] because everyone's not marching in all the time saying: I think we ought to do this.

Morris: Why do you think so few people do take advantage of an opening like that?

Hall: I have no idea. I just don't know. I guess you'd have to ask different people for their own views. But the policy still exists today at Hewlett-Packard, even though there are some 30,000 people employed by the company, worldwide.

Morris: I wonder if the policy is more visible here in the home office than it might be at some branch plant in Europe or some place.

Hall: I'm sure it must be. And in my own case, Bill Hewlett, in addition to being president of the company, was the guy I happened to meet at this social function, and he was just an individual like everybody else. And so he happened to be president of a company, and I happened to work for the company. I didn't feel inhibited by those constraints. I generally don't feel very inhibited by artificial constraints anyway, so --

Morris: Is that you, or does that go back again to your parents?

Hall: Oh, it's thanks to my parents. It's something that I'm fortunate to have been able to get from them. They had a wide range of friends, including people from all walks of life. People who were janitors, people who were executives, people who were elected officials. They would speak as highly of the custodian of the school as they would of the conductor of the symphony, whom they would also invite to dinner.
Hall: They also made a point of exposing all of us -- I have one brother and four sisters -- to a wide range of people and we could just get to observe that there's a person behind every title. One is not necessarily honorable or dishonorable because of his or her station in life. And so I did know the governor of Oklahoma. I knew the head of the symphony, I knew paper carriers, I knew firemen. I knew a wide range of people, and they were all just people, and that's the extent of it.

Morris: Fascinating.

Hall: I didn't come to understand authority and power until later in life, that certain people wield substantially more of it than others.

Morris: And wielded it consciously?

Hall: Oh, yes.

Nonprofit Housing Effort

Morris: Going back to the Urban Coalition — was that primarily set up for housing?

Hall: The answer is no, not just for housing. We started with the general view that, taking a philosophical slant, there are a great number of problems in society affecting racial minorities. There is racial discrimination and there's subsequent economic discrimination, and it affects certainly housing, as a function of income — in that persons with low or moderate income find it difficult, if not impossible, to get housing they can afford. I'll explain that here in the Peninsula area.

'Housing you can afford' is defined by the government to mean that you don't have to pay more than twenty-five percent of your income for housing, and then that leaves X-amount for food and Y-amount for something else. And if you have to pay more than twenty-five percent, then it cuts down what you can spend on other necessities. So that is the general definition that's used. That translates roughly to getting a house no more than two to two and a half times your annual income. So that if you make $10,000, you can afford a $20,000-$25,000 home. If you make $30,000, you can afford a $60,000-$75,000 home.

Those are rough guidelines, but if you look at the average cost of housing on the Peninsula, it's a minimum of $30,000-$40,000. But half of the people earn $11,000 or less, and can 'afford' homes from $22,000-$28,000. There's no market there; you can't buy much for that on the Peninsula.

So that was one of the problems. Racial discrimination in the sale and rental of housing was another problem. The lack of adequate
Hall: health care for minority and low-income people was another problem. The inequity in the administration of law and justice was another problem. The fact that minority individuals would have a much tougher time establishing a business was another problem.

We were looking at a wide range of problems. We tried to look at some of the questions, propose some of the solutions, and then identify who should be doing this.

Morris: Who in the community?

Hall: Who in the community should be solving this need. That was our general intent when we established ourselves. We found that it was easy to identify the problems. Given the intellectual power in the community, it was relatively easy to propose solutions to problems.

Morris: Intellectual power in the -- ?

Hall: In the mid-Peninsula community. The idea of the Coalition was to bring together a cross-section of individuals, from the minority community, from the corporate community, scientific, governmental, labor, other communities. If you can get the leadership elements involved, you can generate solutions that take into account the special interests of various elements in society whose support is crucial to success, and you also then have access to the resources to implement the solution.

Morris: Not necessarily governmental?

Hall: No. Not necessarily just governmental. Not excluding the government, but not necessarily governmental.

After doing this, I became much more interested in running an organization of this type than I had thought I would be. When offered the job of executive director, I decided to take it.

We would set up task forces that were comprised of volunteers and try to move from identification of specific problems -- to alternative solutions and looking at kind of benefit-effectiveness, cost-effectiveness, possibility-effectiveness matrix. There's nothing terribly innovative about that; I mean, that's the way people solve problems. But the interesting thing for us was to realize that there was no one to point to who had the responsibility to do it.

Morris: For any given problem?

Hall: In some cases there were, but in most cases there were not. And so the question was, could we put together something that would make a difference?

The housing development is something I guess we've had more publicity about. First we did a study identifying the needs in the
Hall: area, and then: What do we do about it? There happened to be a government program that would reduce one of the costs of housing, the interest cost. This program, under section 236 of the National Housing Act, provides an interest subsidy to effectively reduce cost of occupying the house.

We set up a nonprofit corporation; the government passes on the subsidy to the nonprofit corporation, which owns and manages the housing. Then that corporation passes on the savings, since it's a nonprofit organization, to the tenants. It can reduce the rent by roughly one-third to a moderate income family. And then there's a special rent supplement to reduce it another one-third, for a total of two-thirds reduction, for a low-income family.

The provisions of the act are that twenty percent of the tenants can be low-income, and up to eighty percent can be moderate income. So it provides a substantial benefit for a small number of people.

We utilized the program to create a housing development corporation and to give it the capacity to go and acquire land and do the things that you need to do to develop housing, and also to cover the staff expenses for the first three years.

We selected staff for it. We obtained a parcel of land, retained an architect and contractor, produced a plan, secured city approval, built it and then rented it out.

Morris: Fantastic.

Hall: Right. And then we did it again. We have developments that are completed: thirty-two units in Mountain View, sixty units in Palo Alto. And there are two developments that are under construction now that will be completed later this year. One is a ninety-five unit development in Sunnyvale. The other is a two hundred twenty-one unit development, also in Sunnyvale. Those are moving along quite nicely. This will mean over four hundred units of new housing for low to moderate income families.

The program had a tremendous setback--- not our existing developments, but the total future program -- when Richard Nixon, when he was President, declared a moratorium on the whole program.

Morris: So you really got a fast introduction to how the community worked, and to many segments of it.

Hall: Yes, fortunately with some success.
3. **Stanford's Youngest Trustee: 1970**

**More and Younger Trustees**

**Morris:** Is that what brought you to President Sterling's eye? You must be the youngest trustee they've ever had.

**Hall:** Well, I guess I was, or I was close to it. Stanford decided to expand its board of trustees in 1970. Up until that time, its board of trustees was self-perpetuating, in that the existing trustees would name all successors. Not very surprisingly, not that it's any more tolerable, the board tended to appoint people like its current members. Although there were two females, the board was substantially male, Republican, chief executive officer or corporate lawyer for this thing.

Not that there's anything wrong with being white or male or successful or a chief executive officer of a corporation or a corporate lawyer. It's just that that does not represent a very wide spectrum of society, or a wide spectrum of people who should be inputting direction of the university. And while trustees do not or should not interfere directly in the academic policies of the university, the board hires and fires the president, who in turn does and should have substantial influence on policy and implementation. The characteristics of the board, then, can have a powerful impact on the university.

Stanford, for a number of reasons, decided to expand the board. They chose to add trustees elected by the alumni. They decided to add eight elected trustees, four of whom would be, by requirement, thirty-five years or younger.

**Morris:** Were these additional trustees elected for a limited number of years?

**Hall:** Elected trustees served a four year term.

**Morris:** Would younger alumni elect the younger trustees?
Hall: All alumni could vote for both categories, but there would be one category of people thirty-five and under, and another category of people thirty-six and over.

Morris: That sounds like it might have been directed towards increasing alumni interest and involvement in the old school. Was that a part of it, too?

Hall: That certainly should have been, and I assume that it was. So in 1970, my name was one of those proposed to this committee to be a candidate, and when contacted, I agreed to be a candidate. I was very interested in doing it.

Then the committee narrows it down to a smaller number and there is an election, and all alumni are eligible to vote. I received the highest number of votes for the category thirty-five and younger and became a trustee of Stanford.

That also provided for continuation of my working relationship with Dr. Sterling, then Chancellor of Stanford in 1970. I had first met him while I was a student. As president of the senior class, I had the opportunity to interact with him in his capacity as University president.

Morris: As a new category of trustee, and one of the younger ones, did you feel that anybody thought of you as a different kind of trustee? Did you feel the younger trustees were given a hearing in the trustees' meetings?

Hall: Well, it's, I guess, like most anything else. If you have ideas that are different from anything that's gone on before, people have to be persuaded to your way of thinking.

Most institutions, especially universities, I think are conservative by nature. I mean, in addition to shedding light on what is new, we want to preserve at the university the mathematics that was taught in the year 1450, the literature prior to that, and the same for a great number of subjects. I think that contributes to a conservative slant on the basic philosophy of what a university is about.

If you look at the trustees of most universities, I'd say that by and large, they're just like Stanford's board of trustees was prior to the election. Especially for private universities. A large part of their job is raising money for the university, and higher education is expensive, and trustees tend to select people who have the capacity to go and raise money --

Morris: Or give it?

Hall: Or both. They also are looking for people who are known to be finan-
Hall: socially conservative, to assure donors that their money is in good hands. I don't know if other trustees perceive their role that way; that's my observation of basically how they're picked, and why.

Morris: Do you feel you've had much success in persuading trustees to what I gather are new ideas that you'd like the university to adopt?

Hall: Well, yes, that's the other part of the question. In looking back over any individual meeting, I always felt that things moved incredibly slowly, that people were not as well versed on certain issues as I would like them to be; but in looking back at the things that I believed in, the objectives that I had four years ago, and looking at how many of them were addressed over the four-year period, and how many changes were actually made in university policy, I certainly don't have such an inflated ego that I think that I'm the only sparkplug that caused all of those things to occur. On the other hand, I'm not so naive as to think that I had nothing to do with the changes.

Investment Policy and Proxy Votes

Hall: In the area, for example, of investment policy, the university always voted its proxies with management. I mean, you just didn't consider doing anything else. And a number of people -- I'm certainly not the only one who had that view -- many students at Stanford, many professors at Stanford, and maybe other trustees at Stanford, silently, had felt that Stanford should be doing something different. After I became a trustee, and I certainly was one who was raising this issue, we appointed a committee to review the subject, and the committee was headed by a distinguished faculty member at the business school.

The committee, which included trustees and students and others, recommended to the trustees that they do take into account social considerations in voting of the proxies, and establish a mechanism for doing something about it. Well, the trustees decided to do that. I don't need to tell you which side I was arguing for [laughs].

We decided that the matter would be handled by the investments committee because that committee handles a portfolio of something like $300,000,000 of university assets. I was appointed as a member of the investments committee. We then took up these issues as they came about. In some cases we voted with management, and in some cases we voted against management. In some cases we abstained from voting, with a letter to the management indicating why we were abstaining.

The categories of proxy activity that I think we unanimously voted for were: one -- more affirmative action, in terms of minority hiring, and information about that hiring to stockholders and the
Hall: public; two — the nature of allowable activities in South Africa and not condoning the morally atrocious policies of apartheid;
three — calls for more public information about pollution and what the company was doing and should be doing.

Morris: Are these kinds of questions normally on the proxy form?

Hall: These are sometimes put on the proxy statement by interested stockholders. So there are a number of proxy issues of this nature on the ballot on a recurring basis.

Morris: Did the people on the investment committee take to going to the corporate meetings?

Hall: We did not go to the corporate meetings, but we would send our views in writing, to the president or the chairman of the board, along with our vote. In some cases the company's chief executive officer was a Stanford trustee. [Laughs.]

Morris: Really?

Hall: That's the way it sometimes happened. We decided that it would be better for the investment committee not to report its actions to the board monthly, but rather issue a report of its actions perhaps twice a year.

Morris: Because of a possible conflict of interest?

Hall: Well, these actions would result in considerable discussion, with most trustees probably not favoring what we were doing. So the president of the board just decided that the best way to resolve it was to let us vote the way we felt we should vote, and not let the trustees get all involved in it.

Morris: In other words, you were a committee of trustees, functioning autonomously.

Hall: Our actions were not subjected to approval from the whole board, but we would report to the board on our general philosophy which guided the actions.

Morris: Oh, that's marvelous.

Hall: That's the way the portfolio is managed. I mean, when we have investment decisions, we don't bring all of those to the full board. We go ahead and take the action, and we might report what we do, or it might be buried somewhere in the minutes, but the view is that if it's a legitimate committee of the board, and it has authority to act, then it acts. It shouldn't be different from any other committee on the board.
4. A NEW VIEWPOINT ON THE SAN FRANCISCO FOUNDATION

Appointment to the Distribution Committee

Morris: With this kind of issue being acted on by the Stanford trustees, and running something as energetic as the Urban Coalition, why did you decide to accept appointment to the San Francisco Foundation Distribution Committee?

Hall: Well, the objectives of the San Francisco Foundation are very consistent with the objectives of the Urban Coalition. I would always discuss any involvement of my own with the co-chairman of the Coalition prior to taking the act, but I would really make up my own mind, and then inform them that I thought this was in the best interest of the Coalition. Unless they had an objection, I would go ahead and proceed with it. And they certainly agreed that my participation with the Foundation was consistent with what the Urban Coalition would like to do.

Morris: In what sense?

Hall: In that the Foundation has resources that can go to help eliminate racial discrimination and subsequent economic discrimination. To the extent that I can help direct those resources, I am certainly in keeping with the objectives of the Urban Coalition. And hour for hour, four hours spent deciding where half a million dollars will go is probably as significant as any other four hours I'll spend during a month at the Coalition.

Morris: In other words, you yourself have a multiplier effect.

Hall: Yes, you're right.

Morris: And along the same line -- you thought that the Foundation was important enough to take it on in addition to the kinds of things you could do as a Stanford trustee, in terms of Stanford policies?

Hall: Yes. In terms of my own time, I, like most other people, have more
Hall: things to do than you get done and still have ample leisure time. But you can always become more efficient, and I certainly could rearrange things I was doing to be able to devote the necessary time to the San Francisco Foundation. The Foundation was important for a number of reasons. One is the area I already referred to: it is a source of financial assistance that's generally unrestricted, as long as the activity is not illegal --

Morris: Or political, I gather.

Hall: Or overtly political, and I'll elaborate on that, if you like -- overtly political. But if you look at the Foundation's board, which is called the fiscal Distribution Committee --

Morris: I'm using board to denote that group which decides on the grant policies, which applications to fund.

Hall: It's composition had not been very different from the group of universities I was referring to before. The median age was over sixty-five. The mean age would also be over sixty-five. The median net worth was substantially over a hundred thousand dollars. The mean worth was higher than the median probably. [Laughs.] In fact, before I became a Distribution Committee member, I doubt that any committee member had a net worth of less than -- I'm picking the figure $100,000 to be conservative. We might just as easily multiply that by ten. And that probably had been the case (even though I don't know all of the individuals as we go back to the beginning, but from what I know about some of them, that would hold true, incomewise) from the origin of the Foundation.

Here again, not that there's anything inherently wrong with wealth. In fact I think the Foundation is fortunate that people are willing to spend the time that it takes to be a Distribution Committee member, but I think that the governing board for a foundation should be more representative of society as a whole. A group whose average age is sixty-five and net worth is substantially over $100,000 is a very small cross-section of society, and I don't think that's right.

Morris: I gather that foundations in general, and the San Francisco Foundation in particular, have discussed this question of representation on their board.

Hall: I have heard that over the years they have discussed it. It was certainly obvious that the San Francisco Foundation, supposedly at the cutting edge of social change, only ten years ago had a staff and Distribution Committee with no blacks, or other racial minorities.

Morris: Was Rudy Glover there, had he joined the staff when you joined the Distribution Committee?

Hall: Yes. I believe he started about six years ago. There was a discussion,
Hall: as I understand it, at the Foundation about how they were going to solve this "problem," quote, this lack of minority representation, and they decided to solve it by adding to the staff, rather than to the Distribution Committee. Subsequently Andy Glover, who is quite an able professional, was hired.

And then the president of Stanford decided to appoint me. It's the individual who was the appointing authority and, specifically, the person who was resigning from the Distribution Committee who suggested that I be appointed.

Morris: Was that Mr. Hewlett again?

Hall: Yes. It is my understanding that he encouraged Richard Lyman, then president of Stanford, to consider my appointment. I don't know how they came up with me, whose suggestion it was, but I knew each of them.

They felt that one who had been engaged with agencies of the type that request funds from a foundation is certainly familiar with philanthropy, and that that input should be represented on the board as well. For a number of reasons, perhaps ones in addition to the ones I'm aware of, [laughs], I was asked if I would be interested in doing this. I agreed to do it, and there it was.

Morris: Did they talk to you, either or both Mr. Hewlett and Mr. Lyman, about how you felt about breaking the ice, as it were?

Hall: Well, having observed my activity at Stanford, I guess they had some idea how I felt about that. But it was that --

Morris: It's appropriate as a student, however. That's different from going --

Hall: Oh, no. I meant as I had been a trustee at Stanford prior to my appointment as a Distribution Committee member. I try to act consistent with my own value system, just as I expect that other people are acting consistent with their value systems. And the fact that we may disagree doesn't bother me, necessarily.

Oftentimes I find that the value systems are not necessarily in conflict, but they're perceived to be in conflict, and therefore people will act accordingly. But if you help relate activity to other people's value systems, as well as exposing them more to other value systems that exist in society that may be just as valid, if not more valid, than some of their own views, then the acceptance of other ideas comes much more easily. That was the way I approached my involvement at Stanford.

I guess the way I approach most anything is that I think people are generally honest. They may be doing something that I disagree with, but they generally are acting in a very honest and consistent way with their own value system and their perception of the issue.
Hall: Often they can benefit from people who perceive the issue differently, and might even point out contradiction of that action with parts of their own value system. It's very helpful to have people who can give a different reflection of the same idea from another perspective. To the extent that you draw all of your people from one narrow batch of all possibilities, you lose the capability of getting those different reflections.

[Tape turned over.]

**Working Through Differing Value Systems**

Morris: Could you give me an example of this idea of value systems that seem to be in conflict, that really aren't?

Hall: Okay. There was a program proposed in East Palo Alto to divert young first offenders of the law from incarceration into the regular criminal justice system with other individuals who were, say, 'more hardened.' For these first offenders, there would be a way that they could maybe be assigned to somebody in the community. They would work also with the person that they offended. If it was a theft, they would have to interact with the person they stole something from. If it was assault, they would have to interact with the person that they assualted.

The idea was to find some means of trying to work out the difficulty, and to have the person serve a different type of penalty, so instead of going to a youth home, the individual might go and clean up streets, for three hours a week for two months, and also have sessions with various youth groups, with various community groups, and that might be a better way than taking a first offender and having him spend time with a fifteenth offender, and have him learn all of the ways of the latter.

Well, this was proposed as a neighborhood court system, initially. The term 'neighborhood court' just did not strike Governor Reagan the right way and the proposal was vetoed.

Morris: This was proposed through the Youth Authority?

Hall: Yes. The response was: Neighborhood courts -- we don't have neighborhood courts, we have a judicial system -- and then all of the value system and the rhetoric comes out. So we went back to the drawing board, and called it a Community Youth Responsibility Program, and that had a different ring to it.

It was the same exact program, but it touched a different buzzword. You know: Right. We need to build pounds table, more responsibility into these youth, and it's great that they have an opportunity to work with -- etc.
Hall: Well, then it met with the approval of the governor and his representatives, and it was funded and it was instituted. And it was a very successful program, as a matter of fact.

Looking at the whole idea of minority enterprise, there were some in the corporate community who at first saw this as a handout. It just went against the grain of 'rugged individualism,' 'free enterprise,' --

Morris: 'Pull yourself up by your own bootstraps.'

Hall: Exactly. But then, when the same idea was viewed through the fact that there were certain markets that were not being appropriately tapped, because people most knowledgeable about tapping the markets were not involved in the free enterprise system -- well, that was very different.

That's right [pounds table]. That was then in marketing terminology: Free opportunity in the market place. There was a very strong drive then from the individuals to help make this program work. They said; That's right. That's right. You can make it in the system, too.

So it's not necessarily the idea that's measured for its own worth -- this is just my own view -- but it's how discordant or how much in harmony the view appears to be with the value system of the person making the interpretation. If there had been someone on the governor's staff who initially could have translated what appeared as a neighborhood court to a youth responsibility program -- initially --

Morris: Up there, in Sacramento?

Hall: Yes. It might have been approved the first time. If the initial proponents of the minority enterprise program had had someone in the office of the decision-makers, the first time around, who had explained that this is not a welfare program, this is helping bring people into the free enterprise system, and it expands markets, and then there's the total multiplier effect on the economy, and it makes a lot more sense economically than a welfare program -- then there perhaps would have been a more positive reaction initially.

Now, I'm taking cases that subsequently did go back and were funded in a re-interpreted fashion, but there are many that don't get back in a revised fashion because there's not that communication bridge, not of words, but of values.

And taking, say, the changes that have taken place in minority hiring, in corporations. This year, when the day-care bill came up in Congress, the administration initially was saying: This is a handout, and: We've got to stop this, etc., etc., and reduce the tax dollars.
Hall: But by now you had people in corporations who were 'minority affairs consultants,' and 'vice-president of urban affairs.' These corporate people started bringing in the facts, saying, for example: Look, the day-care program exists now, and there are two hundred people who work at our location, who are good workers, but if they don't get day care, then they cannot afford to work here. We don't pay them much. And if they don't work here, they're going to go on welfare, and that's going to cost X-amount.

Now, in just sheer economic terms, it makes more sense to hire a day-care worker at Y dollars per hour to allow more mothers to work at a higher rate per hour, then it does not to hire the day-care worker but have more mothers getting welfare checks from the government. So you found corporation presidents sending testimony to the White House and the Congress, in favor of the day-care proposals. And revisions were made in the White House's position, and then the result was much more favorable than was initially proposed. But initially, it was only the national Welfare Rights Organization and other similar groups that were saying: Day care makes sense.

Morris: And the Day Care Council, which would be suspect because they were speaking for their own business.

Hall: Right.

Some Unfunded Proposals

Morris: Both of these examples sound very similar to some proposals that have been to the San Francisco Foundation for funding. Did these same kinds of questions come up in the board discussions?

Hall: Well, this is very typical of the kind of discussion that does come up in the board meetings.

Morris: It's helpful to learn some of the questions asked by a foundation board. Usually the annual reports limit themselves to saying: This is what we funded.

Hall: Well, the annual report says: This is what we funded, but it doesn't say: This is what we did not fund, and this is why.

I think it's in the latter category that a lot of concerns that I have are in. For instance, there are indications that sometimes a grant which is consistent with the Foundation's objectives is not made because one or another member of the Distribution Committee mentions something he was told at a party, or otherwise informally, to the effect that the applicant or the project might interfere with the prestige of an older, established institution.
Hall: If a comment like that affects just two other members, that's all it takes for a grant not to be made when you take a vote.

Morris: It's a two-thirds majority?

Hall: There are seven members of the committee, and it takes five affirmative votes to make a grant.

Established Institutions and Social Change: Health Care and Education

Morris: How do you feel about the San Francisco Foundation in relation to being on the cutting edge of social change, which seems to be a buzzword of the foundation community.

Hall: In my opinion, it clearly is not.

We are good about taking chances with groups that don't have a proven track record, who want to provide services of one kind or another. That, I think, is the thing that the Foundation has done a good job on. But when proposals seek to question the basic operation of the institutions in society which are creating problems, that we tend not to touch with a ten-foot pole. And you can't get to the problem unless you want to go to the core.

Morris: I had assumed that the groups without the proven track record were more likely to be in new territory that might question some of the accepted institutions. Does that not necessarily follow?

Hall: Well, it may or it may not. Generally, we fund the provision of services, with both existing and new agencies. The new agencies might look at a type of service that can be provided in a way that the existing organization doesn't do very well. And so in that sense, they might be looking at new types of services, or a new way of providing a service. But in terms of looking at the fundamental nature of the problem, the new groups that want to do that won't get funded. The existing agencies generally don't want to do it, because they perceive it may disturb their mainstream financial support.

We could take most any issue, but let's look at two hypothetical proposals regarding health care delivery. If the Foundation received a proposal to examine, say, the need for the current provisions that require a doctor to be present or a doctor to administer certain kinds of health care delivery, I'd think it would have virtually no chance at all of receiving the Foundation's funds unless it was the American Medical Association itself that wanted to do the study. The question certain to be raised at the Committee is: Well, what does the AMA think of this?
Hall: But, if the AMA is not going to like it, you can be assured that we're not going to vote for it.

Now, it may or may not be phrased that way at our meeting, but consistently, things that challenge the established order of things are denied for one reason or another. It might be the 'cost effectiveness' is not good, or it might be: Well, we don't think they have the capacity to carry it out, or it might be that: Well, they certainly couldn't do this without an excellent person, and since they don't have the person yet, we can't make the grant.

For one reason or another, those are always defeated. Always, always. However, if it's a group that wants to provide services for people who are not getting care at the hospital, that we'll do.

Morris: Like a free clinic, or a storefront kind of thing?

Hall: A free clinic or a storefront -- that's fine. Or maybe to help a medical school examine a new way of treating this or doing that. If the Stanford Medical School wanted to examine ways that it could change its own internal procedures, to free the physicians, and if a part of that were applying to the State Board of Medical Examiners, or whatever board would control that, then that could get approved. But if it's a group of maverick physicians who say: Look, we know how the hospitals work, and we know what could be changed. We can document it. We can do such-and-such. That would just never fly.

If a group wanted to -- and this was an actual case -- if a group wanted to examine the way that educational revenues are apportioned throughout the state, they would never get any chance of funding.

Morris: Would this relate to the Serano-Priest decision, which requires equalizing educational expenditures?

Hall: That's right. But some of the committee members knew that: Well, the governor's working on that problem.

Morris: And the legislature.

Hall: And the legislature. And: Obviously they're going to work in the best interest of these low-income communities, so we shouldn't be questioning what they're doing.

Now, it's not to say then that the Foundation cannot do good things, because there are a lot of people who do need medical care, and who do need alternative education, and do need all the kinds of services that people come to us hoping we'll provide.

I think you get the maximum bang for the buck by doing some of both. Doing some providing of direct services, but also looking at the basic way that we are organized, and saying: Is there a better way?
Morris: In education and health care, does an alternative service sometimes start out with a program for people who are getting no service and then begin to ask some of these questions about the whole system of health care or education? Do they then come back and seek another grant to push out the frontiers of what they're doing?

Hall: There might be examples where they do. I don't want to give a blanket No. The experience of new groups will probably be that you can get foundation funding, maybe a hundred percent for the first year, seventy-five for the second, fifty for the third year, but you have to spend a lot of time working on how you're going to exist after the foundation money runs out. So the organization has to spend a lot of time looking for an ongoing source of funds. And it's difficult to find an ongoing source of funds that also will allow you the freedom to attack the major institution that you're up against.

Foundations like to be innovative. They want somebody else to pick it up after it's innovated.

Political Activity and Tax Exemptions

Morris: You mentioned the overtly political territory that foundations are not supposed to get into. I gather that there are a number of proposals which border on political activity. How does the Distribution Committee deal with them?

Hall: Information is the first step toward political awareness. And a lot of activity just hopes to produce information. It may be known that this information will in fact then be the grounds for some action, but I think that the Committee is certainly aware of the legal constraints on it; the law spells out specifically what you can and cannot do.

I think the law is written that way for a very specific reason. If you are looking for a way to encourage certain types of activity and discourage others, instead of governments trying to police all of it itself, it will just say: Certain kinds of activity shall get a favored tax status. And then you let everybody who is making contributions worry about whether something's political or not.

With the present regulations about engaging in political activity, you create kind of a dual standard that says: Non-political activity is better than political, because you can get money for non-political activity and you can't for political. Even though the real impact of it is only the difference in fifty percent of the amount.

Say that you make a contribution that's for non-political activity that falls under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue code, if give $100,000, then you can deduct $100,000 from your taxable income. So that, say, for a corporation might mean a saving of $50,000.
Morris: Because it reduces the base on which they have to pay the taxes?

Hall: Yes. So that each dollar given, within the allowable deduction, in general reduces the taxable amount by two dollars. Because the law sets up differences in exemption status, there's a psychology not to give to non-exempt activities. That tends to, then, prohibit the kind of resource development that grassroots groups need to attack some of the major issues, or some of the points in the system that might be considered political because of their exemption status.

Balance of Grants and Funding Grassroots Organizations

Morris: Are you thinking that foundations should consider a more permanent or assured form of funding for grassroots groups?

Hall: That's another question, and I have thought through it well enough to say that I think perhaps a foundation might look at a certain percentage of its revenues being available to things on a longer than a one or two or three year basis.

The dilemma that an organization finds itself in is that it has to devote so much time to fund-raising that it may have to get away from applying its expertise to the job that it's created to do. Any non-profit organization has to spend a substantial amount of time raising money. Take, say, our Housing Development Corporation that we set up. We wanted to raise money for the first three years of operation before we ever hired a director so that we could tell the director: Look, build housing. That's what we're looking for.

Morris: Don't worry about the money for the budget.

Hall: If we hadn't done that, we'd have to hire a director who knew how to raise money, and then let him raise enough money to hire a housing guy. And it's a very different kind of --

Morris: Raising money takes a different set of skills?

Hall: The best technician for housing may not know how to raise money. He may know how to finance a housing development. He may not know how to go and beg for money. So it does inhibit creative activity, so that you wind up with universities, for instance, that select trustees who can give or raise money.

Morris: Wasn't this for many years the traditional model in the social field? You had an auxiliary and a couple of benefactors; they raised the money and left the program to those who do that best.

Hall: Yes.
Morris: What about what looks like an increasing percentage of the Foundation's budget that is going to environmental and arts activities? Has this been discussed by the Distribution Committee as a matter of policy?

Hall: We don't have a policy, an explicit policy, of how much money we will give to what subject. We do have an implicit expectation that the amount of grants this year, by category, will roughly equal the amount of gifts last year, by category. It's implicit, rather than explicit. We have no set goals that we shall give thirty-three percent of our money to arts and the humanities and forty percent to this, and twenty percent to this and twenty-seven percent to the remainder.

If you look at it from year to year, it will turn out to be that way, because there's the expectation that's repeated from time to time at the Distribution Committee meetings that we do want to stay pretty much with where we were last year. So if you're the executive director, you get these signals.

Morris: How do you make provision for the new kind of issue that's arising, or the new kind of program?

Hall: Well, we have three broad categories, and most new issues fit into one category or the other. Arts and humanities encompasses a wide variety of things. Social welfare encompasses a wide variety of things, and environment fits into a category that we already have. So something else in that category may get less.

A lot of this is also a function of doing something for three years, I mean, not getting into long-term grant commitments. If you're going to do things that are innovative, and your own involvement is short range, three years from now things will tend to drop out. If that same thing were proposed three years from now, it wouldn't be innovative. So there's kind of a natural rolling cycle -- some things are coming in, some things are going out. And they balance out.
5. OBSERVATIONS ON FOUNDATION ISSUES AND PROCESSES

Assessing Community Needs.

Morris: In reading through the annual reports of what has been funded, I wondered if the sum total of all the proposals considered might give the board a sense of what is going on out there in the wider community — what kinds of things are bothering people. Is there some kind of an early warning system, by which either board people or the staff says: It looks like these things are happening, and we should give --?

Hall: The staff, I think, really does an excellent job in this regard, of keeping in touch with what is going on in the community. One of the things that people who have ideas certainly do is start asking foundations: Is there a possibility we can get funding for this? So they get a very early warning signal.

It's like people in the semi-conductor business having a head start on knowing what's going to happen in the computer business, because all the computer people will come to the semi-conductor people and say: Hey, can you get me something that'll do that? So the Foundation gets a very early input when new things are on the horizon. Distribution Committee members, being drawn from the category of people who are civically concerned, should also be getting some kind of input on this, but I think most of it comes from the staff.

Morris: You think more of it comes from the staff?

Hall: I think it does.

Morris: How good are they as predictors, from your observation?

Hall: How good is the staff?

Morris: Yes. At predicting that this or that is going to be an area of critical concern that the Foundation should --
Hall: My own experience has been that they were accurate. But the way we function, it wouldn't affect us if they were not accurate. I mean, we make a grant because of a need, rather than because we see a sweep of these coming in the future.

If anything, having increasing numbers of proposals in the future aids you, because when you get more proposals, people get more innovative, more creative, because they can learn from what the last group did in that area and see a new way of doing it. Also, when you get enough people interested in an area, then they might get together and have a little conference, and invite someone who had the best program in the country, but who's in St. Louis, and no one group could bring him out. Together they might pitch in fifteen dollars apiece and fly the person out on a weekend. So there is a payoff in getting more community interest in a new topic, but we don't allocate, we don't say: We think this'll be big next year, so let's reserve fifteen percent of our budget for that.

Morris: Or go out looking for something interesting happening in this area?

Hall: Right. We don't do nearly enough of that. It's something that the staff has been doing on a limited basis, informally, through their own network of contacts, but we have not encouraged that officially as a foundation. I think we should.

Morris: It seems to be one of the areas that causes some controversy within the foundation world: should a foundation go out and generate projects which it will then fund?

Hall: In my view, when you look at the resources that a foundation has, a part of that certainly should go to -- this is just a personal opinion, and I'm expressing it as such -- it should devote some of its activity to assessing community needs and looking at encouraging joint collaboration to help solve them. It may happen to know, through its inputs, that -- oh, I hate to be hypothetical, and dream up things. I'm trying to think of something real that has happened.

Morris: It would be good to have an example.

Hall: Yes. Let's say that to do something about low and moderate income housing you have to get the cooperation of the local community: some participation from the corporate community and the minority community, or low income community. If you know that no one of these can do it by itself -- the government can't do it itself, neither can either of the others -- when the Chamber of Commerce comes to talk about doing an environmental need study, and when the tenants' group comes to talk about the need for rent control, and when the city comes and talks about the need for getting community participation on commissions, it might be possible to say: Well, look. Here's a need. Is it possible, if staff could be provided, if you didn't have to use your own resources, would you be interested in this kind of joint collaboration? Would you
Hall: be interested in coupling this into your master plan, that you say you want such-and-such units of low-income housing to exist? Would you be interested in this?

Well, just by the assurance that those groups won't have to drain their own resources from a limited budget to do it, a foundation can perhaps bring about a joint interaction from people who might otherwise be adversaries. I think that foundations can do more of that. You have to have enough of a cross-section of the community on the board of the foundation, that it's not afraid of doing that. It's not afraid of interchange with a tenants' group. It's not afraid of interchange with city hall, or whatever. I would hope that the foundation community in general could move more in that direction.

And also, foundations can establish joint sources of funds for a particular problem. We did that for the United Bay Area Crusade, when there was a massive cut in federal funds. An emergency fund was created, and all foundations contributed to it. Well, it took an outside force to bring the foundations together. Can't the foundations bring themselves together and say: Here's a problem. Let's look what we might be able to do, and if we can put together sufficient resources, couldn't we then attract some of the best people in the Bay Area to work on the problem?

Sure you can.

Morris: The outside force that produced this emergency fund was the cutback in federal money?

Hall: The cutback in federal money and the United Bay Area Crusade, coming to the foundations, saying: Look, can't we do this?

Morris: Because their member agencies came to them?

Hall: Right. Their member agencies said: Look, we were getting part of our money from here, and now it's going to be cut out. Why don't we do something?

I don't know all of the specifics about who made the first phone call to who, but that's the --

Morris: Is that supposed to be a continuing kind of a thing, in case of natural disasters and such?

Hall: No. It was single-purpose and terminal.

Morris: Just for that situation?

Hall: Yes.
Educating Board Members and Staff

Morris: What about the relationship between what the Foundation is doing and the federal grant programs?

Hall: No coordination, at all. None. The government invites people from the foundation community to some of its meetings. I know I've been invited to some in health care and some other areas. Instead of going myself, I asked if a staff member could go in my place. And they said yes, so somebody from the staff went.

Morris: Does that mean the federal government is not aware of foundations which do have staff?

Hall: Well, it could have been a case where the government was just aware of me as an individual. I had the opportunity to get what I thought would be a higher payoff from the conference, by having a staff member go who will have an opportunity to interact with people every day in this area. Whereas, if I go and then might see them only once a month --

Morris: Yes. It's not a working kind of a relationship.

Hall: Right, right. Also, the Council on Foundations, which is a national group, puts on an annual conference. They might have a speaker from the federal government and somebody from the foundation world and somebody who's a local, private practitioner in the same subject all in a panel; I think those have been excellent. The Council on Foundations is a forum to help move this private philanthropic world a little further than it otherwise would tend to go.

But most foundations -- and this is a general overstatement; I just want to be succinct -- most foundations, by their very structure, do not have the time or do not take the time and do not devote their resources for their own education. We, as the San Francisco Foundation, seldom get together ourselves and bring in a speaker from somewhere on some topic of interest to us. We come together for two things. We come together for meetings, to review a prepared docket, and we get together occasionally for a social function to honor someone who's either receiving a San Francisco Foundation award or honoring a new director or retiring executive director.

We could just plan our schedule, so that it didn't take any more time, but for one of our meetings -- you could fly in anybody you want. Looking at the cost, say if we did it twice a year, someone coming from anywhere in the United States for four hundred dollars round trip in plane fare, and say another hundred dollars for accommodations for one day, and so if you had to pay them a thousand dollars a day -- well, that's what, three thousand dollars a year, if you do that twice a year.
Morris: You could invite the boards of a couple of other foundations, too.

Hall: Sure. That's miniscule compared with giving away two or three million dollars a year. We don't make that investment in ourselves. The one thing that we do is send the staff to the Council on Foundations meeting. I started going to the Council meetings when I became a member of the Distribution Committee and I was surprised that no other Committee members had interest in going.

That's when they have programs on everything. They have resources to put together a good program and they do. It takes a lot of time. It maybe lasts a week, but you can just find out what's happening in health care, housing, education, governmental affairs, the whole schmeer will be covered during that week.

Now, when one of our members was about to resign from the Council's board, and we might have to appoint somebody to the Council, then a lot of people are interested in that. But they weren't interested in attending the conference without that possibility.

Morris: Did you find many board members from other foundations at the meetings when you went?

Hall: A fair number.

Morris: Is the Council on Foundations board composed of foundation board members?

Hall: It's composed of foundation staff, foundation board members and people from outside the foundation community. For example, Arjay Miller, who is dean of the business school here, is a board member. Terry Sanford was elected as a board member. There are some of what a corporation might call 'public outside members,' people whose input might be helpful in charting a future course for the foundation community, generally.

Minority Inputs, Local and National

Morris: I gather that you created quite a splash at that meeting. Did you put together a black caucus in the Council on Foundations?

Hall: [Laughs.] No, the only thing about doing something is that you don't know how it was before you did what you did, and so you don't see what you did as being that significant. So I just don't know how different it was from other meetings they'd had.

There was some concern at the meeting about having minority input on the board of directors. And there were several people who happened to be black who shared the same concern, and we got together and talked
Hall: about it, and met with the chairman of the board of directors, and the chairman of the nominating committee to see if we could work out some mechanism for input for our concerns.

The interesting thing is that there were a hundred different meetings at that meeting. Any time a group of ten people would get together and go drink, that was a caucus. But if ten black people got together and went to drink, it was a black caucus, but --

Morris: And it had a plan in mind.

Hall: Right. But I don't mean to downplay what happened, either. We were really concerned about it, and we saw that the Council on Foundations was a very potent instrument to help inform the local foundation community. We thought its potential should be realized; we found it amazing that the Council on Foundations, for example, had no affirmative action program for itself or an affirmative action for member organizations. And here everybody in the country is getting money from foundations to implement affirmative action plans. And here the foundations are without one. So we thought it would be appropriate that they have that on their list of things they passed for the agenda. I just see that as very straightforward, to introduce these resolutions and have them passed.

Morris: What kind of a response did you get when you said there doesn't seem to be an affirmative action program?

[New tape starts.]

Hall: Well, there was a general embarrassment and an acknowledgement of oversight: My goodness, you're right. We hadn't thought of that before.

Our view is that if you had the appropriate input on your board of directors, these kind of things would come up in the normal course of events, and we wouldn't have to do this kind of thing at the national meeting. We could just attend the meeting like everybody else.

Morris: In general, on the San Francisco Foundation, have you felt that projects either from the minority community or for services for minorities were getting the attention they deserve?

Hall: Many of them do, but my overall answer would be 'no,' that there's more, sometimes lack of awareness of why something is needed or a distrust on the real intent of the group or a feeling that the group doesn't have the wherewithal to implement it because they don't have any chief executive officers on their board of directors, and: They don't have anybody on their board that we know. So obviously they couldn't be any good. They don't have any bankers, they don't have any lawyers, and so on.

Now, I want to qualify that, though: a number of people who get money are minority groups. I'm certainly not saying that you can't get money if you're a minority member, but generally -- well, there was a
specific case of a -- well, here again, I guess I won't give the name of the group.

There was a certain category of service worker in the Bay Area who wanted to set up an institute to train its own members about their rights, because they are on an individual footing with their employer. They have no union; you get a job by placing an ad in the paper and you go and that's it. Well, there are laws that exist about what employers must now do, in terms of benefits and complying with Social Security laws, but the only enforcement mechanism is the employee. If the employee is not aware of the requirement or not willing to enforce it, they have to accept whatever basis the employer offers. The employer is an individual who has no records they have to keep. Well, if most Distribution Committee members have had relationships with people in that category, then to acknowledge that those people need protection from me is a self-indictment; see? And so it's: Oh, no. Things in that area work very well. Those people don't need any help. Next. [Laughter.]

Now that's just one example, but I can assure you that in less obvious ways it happens all the time. That either kind of an affront to the collective value system represented or a lack of perceived expertise for implementation.

That lack may be real. That's something that you never know until somebody gets a grant and you see whether they achieved it or whether they didn't. But I know that in the black community, employment has been such a problem that some of the highest educated people would be service workers, would be porters on trains, or would work with the Post Office. The Post Office was about the only place black people could get a job. This after the federal executive order stating that the federal government would no longer discriminate on the basis of race. In the early fifties, there were people with college degrees, master's degrees working in the Post Office.

So when I look him up and find out that one of an applicant's board members works at the Post Office, I don't assume that he's a dumb person. Not that you should anyway, I mean, think that a non-professional person is not capable of managing affairs. I just don't think you can tell everything you need to know about a person by his title. I can look at a group of non-professional people and see a board that looks like the group can get together.

I work with local boards all the time that have no professional people on them, but they know 'A' from 'B'. They know what's in keeping with their objectives and what's not, and they understand the English language, and they get business done. You don't have to have had lengthy experience with a corporate board to be effective with a community board. We have that kind of problem all the time. I spend so much time on it because it's very prevalent; there's a perceived lack of capability because of professional --

Morris: Lack of credentials.
Grant Followup and Application Screening

Morris: Have you got any sense of what kind of results are coming in from some of the --?

Hall: We are concentrating on that more and more, looking at follow-up to see what were the objectives initially and were they achieved. I think we should do more of that. I was one who called for us to do some of what we are doing now.

The grant-making process is only one aspect of foundation operations; you also have to do follow-up of a fairly vigorous nature. One reason for it is to give you feedback into whether or not you're considering the right things in the initial process. We have always done some of that and we are doing more of it now, on kind of a random sampling basis, even though it's not a truly random sample; but we do some follow-up investigation on grants that we have made to see if the objectives were met.

Morris: Is this on the basis of the reports that the grantees turn in, or the staff going out and --?

Hall: The latter. In addition to the reports, the staff goes out on a select few. If the Foundation were much larger, then it would be much easier to have a person who might spend half of his time doing follow-up. But with a small staff, most of the time is spent, as it should be, in handling the requests that come in.

Morris: Of all of the proposals that come in, how many come to the Distribution Committee for decision at a time?

Hall: I would imagine, oh, forty to fifty at any meeting.

Morris: There are that many?

Hall: Oh, yes.

Morris: Do you get some kind of a run-down on the ones that weren't recommended by the board?

Hall: Yes. Staff really does an excellent job of indicating which ones they -- well, everything that comes into the Foundation office is reported to the board. If it's a letter from New York City from somebody who wants to travel to Jamaica, that'll be listed in "Areas outside of geographic area."
Hall: Everything that comes in is reported. It might be a one-line report, but it's generally a one-sentence staff comment and some quote from the letter that's indicative of what it was about.* There may be a hundred or so of those, for any given month, or maybe two hundred. And then there might be some within our geographic area, but not of interest to the Foundation. Then there are some "Not favored by staff" for some reason. And then there would be those that are followed up in more serious detail, which may either be recommended or not recommended, but they will be explored in more depth.

The staff has really done an excellent job in producing that kind of information. If there's any question about the staff actions, a board member may ask that something be explored further.

Morris: On a proposal that was not recommended.

Hall: Yes.

Morris: By and large, do you have much contact with the staff people between board meetings?

Hall: I try to, on always at least one occasion, and that's generally what it is, on about one occasion. Then by telephone as often as is necessary. I get the docket and I read it and I almost always have some comment about something, and call up and --

Morris: Do you go around the three of them to keep in touch with all the staff?

Hall: It depends, because different staff members prepare different proposals, and so one month they may all be with one person, or they might be with all three. Most administrative things I do with the director, if he's in, but if he's not in, I'll talk with whoever's there. I don't think there's a formal expectation that you shouldn't communicate with anybody but the director, so --

Selecting a New Executive Director

Morris: When John May announced that he was retiring, did you have any particular qualifications that you thought should be looked for in selecting a new director?

Hall: Oh, I had only a million. [Laughter.] No, obviously, it would have to be someone who can get along with the kind of Committee that we're likely to have, given its current composition. So that would be one requirement.

*See appendix to John May interview in this series.
Hall: And the other is, I would hope for someone who could have an understanding of the various value systems that exist in the community and on the Committee; someone who would be able to help bring the Committee to be more tolerant and receptive of the kinds of things that a number of people may want to do that, as individuals, members of the Committee may not do, but in coming to an understanding with the staff, that it's something that they as a foundation might do.

Now, I'm assuming in that, that some of the applications we get are going to be less conservative than our Distribution Committee. That is implicit in my description. So someone who has understanding of the corporate community and who also has an understanding of the low-income community and the minority community, so that they can help be a broker, not only in getting resources from the Foundation, but in helping make introductions and do the other things --

Morris: Between groups and individuals 'out there,' aside from the money?

Hall: Right. The San Francisco Foundation is, I gather, a very well-respected institution in the community, and --

Morris: Have you got any feedback on that from the community in your other activities?

Hall: Yes. Especially from the establishment community, that if the Foundation gives a grant, that answers a lot of questions to other people. If the Foundation thought it was worthwhile, there must be something to it, and then other people will put some money in it. It's much easier to raise money in the Bay Area after you have gotten a grant from the San Francisco Foundation.

Morris: I've wondered about that; I'm interested to hear you say that it is so. How did you feel John May did as director in this business of interpreting value systems?

Hall: Well, all individuals are different and John May was in the job much longer than I knew him.

Morris: Yes. He was the founding executor --

Hall: He was the first director, and he was there for twenty-five years. So, a lot of what he did, I'm just not in a position to say. In my own observation, during the last five or so years, I think he did an outstanding job, given where he was in society himself. He's sixty years old. His future is fairly certain, economically.

You have to take the individual where he or she is, and that -- I think John has his strengths and his weaknesses, as we all do, and I attribute the areas where I wish he had been stronger more to the position of someone who is close to retirement, is in the middle sixties, who is not going to shift gears every two or three years to the extent that people who have to struggle to survive, you know, are in certain gear.
Hall: So I don't think, on the one hand, that John was as sympathetic to all the value systems as I might be. So if I were giving the total spectrum of views of people that age and the like, I'd say he's probably in the upper five percent.

Morris: I think I follow you, yes. Rudy Glover and Lou White are still there, working with Martin Paley. Do you feel they added different insights in territory that John may not have been as comfortable with?

Hall: Sure. Yes, they did, and that's the way it should work. The Foundation has to interact with a wide range of communities, and it would be extraordinary if all of that were encompassed in the director. If he were a financial expert, legal genius, instilled confidence in the corporate community, in the potential donors, and had no difficulty with any of the requesters to the foundation—I don't think all of that will be embodied in one person who is perfect in each of those regards.

Morris: So that's an argument for more staff, rather than less, in any situation.

Hall: Yes. And diverse staff, too. I think the current staff provides good input into a wide range of communities. The staff is highly professional, and by background and by personal and professional background, it had wide interaction with varying communities in the Bay Area.

Institutions, Representation, and Resources

Morris: Do you see changes in the kinds of people who will be appointed to the Distribution Committee?

Hall: Well, I would think so. I would think so. I think that people are beginning to view institutions as not just to be run by the chosen few. Society certainly is more aware of what institutions are, and society is in a sense demanding that --

Morris: It's almost a startling increase in awareness.

Hall: Right. I would think that if the Distribution Committee had not made the changes it had made in its last two appointments, that there would probably have been a number of lawsuits challenging the legitimacy of the current Distribution Committee. If not now --

Morris: By whom?

Hall: By the people in the community.

Morris: Who did not get grants?

Hall: No, no. Who had no involvement with grants whatsoever, but who just
Hall: said: The charter reads that these funds are to be managed by such-and-
such and such-and-such.

I guess I'm saying that there's more legal talent available to
people in the lower socio-economic classes in society than has ever
existed before. People may know something's wrong, but you have to
make legal change to do something about it.

Morris: On what grounds could one bring suit against institutions?

Hall: Well, you bring a suit. Nothing may happen to it. So I'm not saying
it would have any validity.

Morris: You have to have an issue, or a kernel of event to hang an issue suit
on, don't you?

Hall: That could be most any issue. I mean, you could take any one of a
number of things that would occur in any given year and use that as
the entree to the lawsuit. I don't have any specific one in mind, but
you could get a hundred quickly, I'm sure.

Then the question is, do you have a real basis for a suit, and a
judge would have to decide that it's tryable or not. If there were
something in the charter that suggested, as there is: a group to act
in the public interest, and such-and-such and such-and-such, you could
wonder whether certain people have been systematically discriminated
against in being on the board of that group. If you can show that,
de facto, they have been, then the Foundation would have to show cause
that this suit shouldn't be held valid. The same thing could be true
for any public institution, for a university, for a public trust --

Morris: That has interesting implications when you consider that a community
foundation's distribution committee is appointed by other entities out
there in the community. The appointing authorities all get involved in
that kind of an issue, too.

Hall: In 1948, I'm sure that by having the corporate community and the
university community -- that was about the thinking, from what I've
read. I wasn't in these circles at the time, but from what I've read,
that was considered a very diverse cross-section of society, in 1948.
Bringing the university, the League of Women Voters, the banks --

Morris: And the Chamber of Commerce.

Hall: And the Chamber of Commerce. That was diversity. Well, if you look
at representation today, that's just one small part of diversity.

Morris: Now that you mention it, the League of Women Voters in 1948 was considered
very pinko by some.
Hall: Right. And so, if we were looking at the intent then and interpret that for today -- you know, what does cross-representation mean -- one might be able to argue that there should be more than seven institutions appointing members, and maybe some of them should be from the minority community, or some of them should be from the low-income community. Such an argument might have some weight.

Morris: Has this question been raised, in a legal sense, in regard to other community foundations in the country?

Hall: Not that I know of, but I'm sure that it will. I'm just sure that it will. I don't know of any specific case at all, but I'm just sure that it will.

Morris: Do you suppose it'll wait 'till you get through your graduate work in business and law? [Laughter.]

Hall: I don't know, but it's a legitimate issue. It's a very legitimate issue. It affects resources, and that's where people should go first -- looking at the institutions that control resources.

The arguments have been made about starting with political representation, that gerrymandering was, de facto, excluding minority people from elected office. Courts upheld that, and then there've been -- oh, I don't know, in terms of percentage, it would be unrealistic, but thousands of percent increase in the last ten years in minority representation. I said that's misleading because you can go from one to ten and have a thousand percent increase.

The numbers are literally in the thousands, now, of minority elected officials, compared with maybe ten, twenty years ago. So that has had a dramatic impact, and I think it will continue throughout the next decade of so. But I think the next legal battles will be in the public arena. Institutions that have public purpose will be questioned as to how their activities relate to their interests. I foresee a number of serious lawsuits in that area, starting with United Fund, United Way, nationwide, and foundations, public and private. Anything that gets a tax exemption.

Morris: That might include the religious organizations, the churches, too, couldn't it?

Hall: That's true. I don't know that there would be the interest then. I mean, you would only be interested in being on the board of a Catholic church if you wanted Catholic education.

Morris: True, except in terms of resources. I've listened to this discussion in the United Way context, and from that point of view, the Catholic Church is generally considered to hold considerable assets. The question I understand is whether church assets are used in the best interest of the broader community.

Hall: That's a very interesting point.
6. THE NEXT STEP

Morris: Was your decision to go back to Stanford in this new MBA-JD program a kind of next step in developing your own ideas in the field of community issues?

Hall: Yes. Well, going back to school is a great opportunity for me to explore in more detail various ideas that I've had. I've had some touch of legal exposure, some touch of investment exposure, some marketing, some management, some public sector, some private sector --

Morris: And philanthropy.

Hall: And philanthropy, right. I had generated such interest in knowing more about so many areas, that I just decided to take time out for a while, and go to school, and starve to death for a few years. This is only a month into the program, and I'm still in an adjustment phase, but I'm glad I decided to do that. I don't have one specific thing that I'm doing all of this for. I don't have any one burning idea to implement as soon as all this is finished, but I think my interests will parallel my current interest, when I get out.

I'm interested in both the public and the private sector, and I'll probably spend a significant amount of time with each of them. I have learned, by working with a private, nonprofit organization, staff level, how to be effective as a board member, and to help educate other members that there can be a very high impact by helping to bring other board members to a given point of view, and thereby help change the direction of an institution, in addition to what you can do on a staff level.

Morris: That's an interesting relationship -- the interaction between staff and board of directors. Your sense is that they can work together and prod each other along to bring about some improvements that are needed in our society?

Hall: Oh [laughs], I'm certainly not the first person to observe that, but
Hall: you're right, and that there are a number of areas from which you can try to make changes.

Morris: And that one individual isn't necessarily limited by whether he is board or staff or user of an institution's services.

Hall: Right.

Morris: Well, I think that covers the questions on my outline. You've brought up a number of others that I hadn't thought of. Thank you.

Hall: Well, I'm glad to have the opportunity to do it.

[End of Interview.]
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