Elinor Raas Heller

A VOLUNTEER CAREER IN POLITICS,
IN HIGHER EDUCATION,
AND ON GOVERNING BOARDS

In Two Volumes

With Introductions by
William K. Coblentz
James E. O'Brien

An Interview Conducted by
Malca Chall
1974-1980

Underwritten by a research grant from the
Research Collection Program of the
National Endowment for the Humanities

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Ex-UC Regent
Elinor Raas Heller
Is Dead at 82

Elinor Raas Heller, the first chairwoman of the University of California board of regents and a former member of the Democratic National Committee, died Saturday of cancer at Stanford Medical Center. She was 82.

The daughter of a longtime San Francisco banking family, Mrs. Heller became the first chairwoman in the regents' 107-year history in 1975, after serving many years in an advisory capacity for institutions of higher education.

She was a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Mills College who made public service her life's work.

In 1928 she married Edward Heller. During World War II she moved with him to Massachusetts, where he was stationed as a lieutenant colonel in the Army Finance Department. While there, she organized the war bonds campaign for the state's public schools.

After the war, the couple returned to Atherton, where they had settled after their wedding and where Mrs. Heller lived until her death.

She served as a Democratic committeewoman from 1944 to 1952. She was a trustee of Mills College for more than 50 years and was on the advisory board of San Francisco State College. In 1961, Governor Edmund G. Brown appointed her to the UC board of regents to serve out the 14-year term of her husband, who died that year. She continued to serve until 1976.

Mrs. Heller was a trustee of the Bancroft Library at UC Berkeley and a board member of Stanford University Hospital. She was founder of the World Affairs Council in San Francisco and the Children's Health Council in Palo Alto.

She is survived by her daughter, Elizabeth Mandell, of Los Angeles; two sons, Clarence, of Atherton, and Alfred, of Kentfield; six grandchildren; and a great grandchild.

No services will be held. Memorial donations may be made to Mills College in Oakland or the Bancroft Library at UC Berkeley.
VOLUME I
The following interview is one of a series of tape-recorded memoirs in the California Women Political Leaders Oral History Project. The series has been designed to study the political activities of a representative group of California women who became active in politics during the years between the passage of the woman's suffrage amendment and the current feminist movement—roughly the years between 1920 and 1965. They represent a variety of views: conservative, moderate, liberal, and radical, although most of them worked within the Democratic and Republican parties. They include elected and appointed officials at national, state, and local governmental levels. For many the route to leadership was through the political party—primarily those divisions of the party reserved for women.

Regardless of the ultimate political level attained, these women have all worked in election campaigns on behalf of issues and candidates. They have raised funds, addressed envelopes, rung doorbells, watched polls, staffed offices, given speeches, planned media coverage, and when permitted, helped set policy. While they enjoyed many successes, a few also experienced defeat as candidates for public office.

Their different family and cultural backgrounds, their social attitudes, and their personalities indicate clearly that there is no typical woman political leader; their candid, first-hand observations and their insights about their experiences provide fresh source material for the social and political history of women in the past half century.

In a broader framework their memoirs provide valuable insights into the political process as a whole. The memoirists have thoughtfully discussed details of party organization and the work of the men and women who served the party. They have analysed the process of selecting party leaders and candidates, running campaigns, raising funds, and drafting party platforms, as well as the more subtle aspects of political life such as maintaining harmony and coping with fatigue, frustration, and defeat. Perceived through it all are the pleasures of friendships, struggles, and triumphs in a common cause.

The California Women Political Leaders Oral History Project has been financed by both an outright and a matching grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. Matching funds were provided by the Rockefeller Foundation for the Helen Gahagan Douglas component of the project, by the Columbia and Fairtree Foundations, and by individuals who were interested in supporting memoirs of their friends and colleagues. In addition, funds from the California State Legislature-sponsored Knight-Brown Era Governmental History Project made it possible to increase the research and broaden the scope of the interviews in which there was
a meshing of the woman's political career with the topics being studied in the Knight-Brown project. Professors Judith Blake Davis, Albert Lepawsky, and Walton Bean have served as principal investigators during the period July 1975-December 1977 that the project was underway. This series is the second phase of the Women in Politics Oral History Project, the first of which dealt with the experiences of eleven women who had been leaders and rank-and-file workers in the suffrage movement.

The Regional Oral History Office was established to tape record autobiographical interviews with persons significant in the history of the West and the nation. The Office is under the administrative supervision of James D. Hart, Director of The Bancroft Library. Interviews were conducted by Amelia R. Fry, Miriam Stein, Gabrielle Morris, Malca Chall, Fern Ingersoll, and Ingrid Scobie.

Malca Chall, Project Director
Women in Politics Oral History Project

Willa Baum, Department Head
Regional Oral History Office

15 November 1979
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Patricia Hitt, *From Precinct Worker to Assistant Secretary of HEW*. 1980, 220 p.


Elizabeth Snyder, *California’s First Woman State Party Chairman*. 1977, 199 p.


The Helen Gahagan Douglas Component of the California Women Political Leaders Oral History Project

Volume I: The Political Campaigns
Discussion primarily of the 1950 Senate campaign and defeat, in interviews with Tilford E. Dudley, India T. Edwards, Leo Goodman, Kenneth R. Harding, Judge Byron F. Lindsley, Helen Lustig, Alvin P. Meyers, Frank Rogers, and William Malone.*

Volume II: The Congress Years, 1944-1950
Discussion of organization and staffing; legislation on migrant labor, land, power and water, civilian control of atomic energy, foreign policy, the United Nations, social welfare, and economics, in interviews with Juanita E. Barbee, Rachel S. Bell, Albert S. Cahn, Margery Cahn, Evelyn Chavoor, Lucy Kramer Cohen, Arthur Goldschmidt, Elizabeth Wickenden Goldschmidt, Chester E. Holifield, Charles Hogan, Mary Keyserling, and Philip J. Noel-Baker.

Volume III: Family, Friends, and the Theater: The Years Before and After Politics
Discussion of Helen and Melvyn Douglas and their activities at home with their family and among friends, and their work in the theater and movies, in interviews with Fay Bennett, Alis De Sola, Cornelia C. Palms, and Walter R. Pick.

Volume IV: Congresswoman, Actress, and Opera Singer
Helen Gahagan Douglas discusses her background and childhood; Barnard College education; Broadway, theater and opera years; early political organization and Democratic party work; the congressional campaigns, supporters; home and office in Washington; issues during the Congress years, 1944-1950; the 1950 Senate campaign against Richard M. Nixon, and aftermath; women and independence; occupations since 1950; speaking engagements, travel to Russia, South America, Liberia inauguration, civic activities, life in Vermont.

*William Malone preferred not to release his transcript at this time.

July 1982
Writing about Ellie Heller to those who know her seems presumptuous on my part. But I have been asked to do so by the Regional Oral History Office for her oral history. So, as one who toiled with her in the fields of the Democratic party and also served with her on the University of California Board of Regents, I will at least try.

The most vivid part of Ellie to me is her sense of humor, about herself as well as others. Pomp and self-seriousness are the principal targets of her gleeful scorn; such targets were plentiful both in politics and in the University.

Ask me more about Ellie, and I would list three qualities.

First, I would put style. She thinks clearly and expresses those thoughts in an unclouded, cogent manner.

Second is pluck. When an issue was raised, and lines were drawn, she never evaded a fight. She accepted victory and defeat with equal grace, understanding that not all sources could be expected to agree on all issues. Her courage in the face of conflict during the Free Speech Movement helped to prepare all of us—Regents, students, faculty, alumni—to take better in stride the deep turmoil which marked the Republic during the country's most unpopular war.

Finally, perhaps more in combination with style and courage than in addition to them, there is the precept of integrity. At a time when many were speaking out of two sides of their mouths, both during her time as a Democratic National Committeewoman, and subsequently as a Regent, she was and still is a clear, strong, consistent voice. Her commitment is total, undiluted by pettiness, undistracted by ambition or ulterior motive.

Democratic National Committeewoman, in the years Ellie held that title, was an important position indeed. (Each state had only one national committeeman and one national committeewoman.) Applicants for appointments solicited her aid; always she maintained her principle that the best person for the job was the one best qualified—period.

Like many others, Ellie was both saddened and outraged by much that was rude, crude and unattractive in the noisier, more exhibitionist minority of the University in the sixties, a minority often the most visible and audible even though not necessarily the most representative. Manners matter to her, and the ill-mannered atmosphere of that time "drove her up the wall." She would not believe that feeling intensely canceled the obligation for civility.

A few personal reminiscences are in order. I remember her cautioning me to sit still as well as shut up while the demagogic Max Rafferty, who as Superintendent of Public Instruction was an ex-officio Regent, fulminated at length. "Relax," she would say. "He'll kill himself off." And he did.
During the crisis of People's Park, both Ellie and I received vitriolic telephone calls from a fellow Regent, damming us for our attempts to cool tempers and air differences. "The blood of the students will be on your hands," he screamed. I was upset, and, I assume, so was Ellie. But she took me aside and calmly pointed out that we were doing the right thing, despite our colleague's hysterics, and since we were confident of that, we could proceed.

She disliked behind-the-scenes maneuvers before Regents' meetings, because she thought things should always be in the open, and I believe she converted many to her point of view.

What does this all add up to? Ellie is one of the finest, most decent, and thoughtful human beings I have ever known. I am fortunate to have felt her imprint personally.

William K. Coblentz

23 August 1984
San Francisco, California
INTRODUCTION by James E. O'Brien

VIJNETTE

Only a hardy—even foolhardy—mortal would suppose that within the compass of a few short paragraphs the essence of Ellie's life, talents, careers, and accomplishments could be captured. She has had too many incarnations in one life (combining the roles of daughter, student (Phi Beta Kappa, Student Body President), wife, mother, scholar, philanthropist, collector, practitioner of the science of national politics and a devoted fiduciary of higher education), to yield to such an effort.

How can one convey adequately the sense of this elegant and sophisticated friend, exquisitely dressed and coiffed, and luminous countenance, the lovely dark-brown eyes, all reflecting an inner serenity, strength and sense of self-worth?

There are many vignettes. There is Ellie in her sitting room, surrounded by cascades of flowers, rainbows of colored pictures of children, grandchildren, gardens, sharing her very large sofa with half a dozen heavy books. On a small table close by is a telephone with a Wurlitzer of buttons by which she orchestrates her enormous variety of interests and friendships.

And then there are her beloved books which line the sitting room and flow down the halls into bedrooms, living room and gallery. Books for her have ever been the beatitude of the halcyon days and, I suspect, a healing solace on those other days. There are fine printed books and the companionship of Dwiggins, Goudy, Meynell, Cobden-Sanderson, Morris, Nash, and Grabhorn (among myriad others). Long ago she jointly authored the definitive bibliography of the Grabhorn Press. But fine printing is only the beginning. There are books of hours, bindings, rare books in shiny decorated calf, portly old books and slender maidenly books shielded in slip covers, sets of books (oh! Galsworthy!)—all read and loved in this and other scenarios. It is a bounty and benison of beautiful books.

Sometimes I see her presiding at Sunday lunch looking out over the expanse of garden beds, a thoughtful hostess presiding with easy grace and assurance over a delicious meal.

Again, I see her making her way by excruciatingly slow degrees into the cold and silvery waters of Lake Tahoe where after these preliminary agonies she swims far out in the shadowy and amethystine depths.

But most of all, when I think of her talents and achievements, I think of Ellie attending a meeting, a pursuit which she has elevated into an art form. She was the youngest person ever appointed to be a regular trustee of Mills
College where she learned her way into the big leagues under the tutelage and discipline of such chairmen as W. P. Fuller, Jr. and others like him. That early experience has been honed and sharpened by years of service on the Boards of Stanford University Hospital, the University of California Board of Regents, the Children's Health Council, the Coordinating Committee for Higher Education, the California Accreditation Committee and many others into a consummate skill in the art of participating in and running a meeting. She understands the intensity of conflicting ideas and personalities, the supreme importance of timing in the resolution of differences.

How often have her friends watched Ellie heading into the meeting room at Berkeley, at Stanford, at Mills and elsewhere, impeccably groomed, her handbag slung over one arm, wrists on her hips, her feet well planted as she strolls into the arena! And what does she bring to such a meeting? Total preparation, a capacity to read the documents with a total understanding of the nuances of what is written and not written. But instead of imposing views or conclusions based on this preparation, she listens, and listens with a wise receptivity, with a mind open to persuasion and always seeking some constructive step or modification on the way to resolution and solution. These are rare gifts: judgment, sensitivity, open-mindedness, forbearance and a total absence of vanity or wish to win.

Her general tolerance of human frailties, her cheerfulness at the shortcomings and foibles of her fellows find particular expression in her conduct at a meeting. Her fundamental optimism, the faith that the worst rarely happens and the best really might, makes her willing to yield her own ideas to the ideas and convictions of others. If she sometimes seems indignant (but never shocked) with her peers, if she maintains a demanding standard of performance from herself, she is generous and understanding of those less gifted or experienced. Beware, however, of visiting upon her cant or hypocrisy. She gives all comers a fair hearing. Her seasoned judgments inspire confidence. She makes friends, not enemies, even when judgments clash.

She is such a good sport! I see her, head wrapped in a red and gray scarf, weaving her way through the enormous crowds at the Osaka World Fair, on a bitter winter day, looking for another great adventure around each turning. I see her aloft in a Honolulu hotel lashed by a tropical hurricane—without telephone, lights or elevators—embracing the whole exercise as a great lark. Or there she is, rafting down the Colorado in the broiling sun, game for every rapid.

No wonder she is so widely loved, honored and respected, not as an Ancient Monument, but as a vibrant and valiant lady who has really made a mark.

James E. O'Brien

6 September 1984
Atherton, California
"Oral History is primary source material obtained by recording the spoken words—generally by means of planned tape-recorded interviews—of persons deemed to harbor hitherto unavailable information worth preserving."*

In light of that definition, Elinor Raas Heller must be considered an ideal candidate for oral history. And, in contrast to the correct but somewhat stuffy definition, Ellie Heller's recollections of her diverse experiences during eighty active years are as lively and engrossing as they are historically significant.

Mrs. Heller was asked to participate in the Regional Oral History Office's California Women Political Leaders oral history project because of her long-time activity in the Democratic party, during eight years of which she served as Democratic National Committeewoman for California. The project was designed to understand the role of women in politics between 1920 and 1965, and to consider other significant experiences prior to and after their most active involvement in politics.

The project's design allowed for the details of Mrs. Heller's experiences, as those of a vital participant in and a keen observer of innumerable past events, to be fully explored. The result is this biographical oral history. That it is packed full of "hitherto unavailable information worth preserving" is due not only to the richness and diversity of the subjects covered, but to Mrs. Heller's excellent recall, her fluent conversational style, and her own interest in history which kept her continually aware of the need to treat facts candidly as well as accurately.

Consider a span of time covering most of this century, and experiences as varied as Democratic party politics; writing a bibliography of the Grabhorn Press; membership on the boards of the Stanford Bank, the Palo Alto-Stanford Hospital, the Institute of Pacific Relations, the World Affairs Council, public television station KQED, and the Children's Health Council of the mid-Peninsula. Add to that almost fifty years on the Board of Trustees of Mills College, a long term on the San Francisco State College Advisory Board, and nearly sixteen years on the University of California's Board of Regents, most of them during the upheavals of the 1960s when Berkeley's campus was the scene of rebellion watched with awe throughout the country, and during which the University grew

from six to nine campuses. It did not take long for the emphasis of our interviews to shift from politics to disclosing her intense and life-long interest in higher education.

Consider too the opportunity to learn at first-hand about the family backgrounds of Elinor Raas and Edward Hellman Heller, each growing up in an era of San Francisco's history which only few can now recall. What were their experiences as children? What were the codes of conduct, of dress, of responsibility to family, friends, and the community? On a scale of values, where was education, religion, politics? Who were the Raases and the Fishers (Elinor's family)? Who were the Hellmans and the Hellers (Edward's family)? How did they relate to each other, and how did Elinor and Edward establish their own identities, and, as San Franciscans, rear three children in their country home in Atherton?

Covering all of this personal history required thirty interview sessions, each averaging one hour and a half, a total of fifty interview hours. Although Mrs. Heller was familiar with some of this office's oral histories, before beginning the interviews she wanted to understand the process to prepare herself for the task ahead. With a characteristically gracious gesture, she invited me to join her for lunch in her home in Atherton. Through a visit lasting well into the afternoon, we became acquainted. It was a delightful day, and one which commenced a decade of harmonious collaboration. The day held a further advantage in that I learned the route to Mrs. Heller's home and enjoyed the first of many drives through the beautiful park-like grounds which surround her house. (It was designed by George Washington Smith, an architect famous for his Spanish-style homes.) We chose 2:00 to 4:00 on Friday afternoon as our time for the interviews, excepting the one Friday a month when Regents' meetings were in session.

Interviewing began on December 6, 1974, and except for occasional breaks, continued at weekly intervals until February of 1975. Then, due to Mrs. Heller's extra duties as chairman of the Board of Regents during 1975-1976, and later problems in scheduling—hers and mine—we did not resume interviewing until April and May, 1978. Another hiatus followed, but on September 20, 1979, we began again and holidays and vacations excluded, continued our weekly sessions until April 25, 1980. On that day we celebrated the conclusion of the interviewing phase with lunch, seated as before in the dining room at the small table in front of the picture window that overlooks a peaceful, well-groomed Spanish-style garden.

We held all of the interviews in Mrs. Heller's home, in her sitting room which opens out onto an enclosed courtyard. A large room, its comfortable furnishings—couch, chairs, tables—are usually covered with books, papers, and magazines currently being read. The room's shelves hold rare books, some, for example, from her collection of modern French bindings. On top of the television and tables stand framed pictures of her family at various stages of growth. Throughout the winter a few pieces of wood lie on the hearth of a small corner fireplace, ready, one assumes, to lend warmth during the cool evenings. Everything in the room seems designed for comfort and use, even the magnificent Boulle desk which came from the home of her mother-in-law, Clara Hellman Heller.
Without knowing beforehand, just by being in this room and glancing into the adjoining book-filled bedroom, one would learn that Elinor Heller is an assiduous reader. In walking from the front entrance hall through the two-story library that serves as a formal living room, and from there to Mrs. Heller's sitting room, all of the rooms being filled with large bouquets of flowers fresh from the garden, one realizes the extent to which she has ascribed value to intelligence, careful planning, and subtle esthetic harmony.

During our interviews, Mrs. Heller sat in a corner of her large couch with her feet propped up and her notes beside her. On a nearby table was the telephone. I sat opposite her, the tape recorder and my notes on a small extension table.

And so we proceeded. Prior to each session or group of sessions on a single subject, I prepared and sent to Mrs. Heller a fairly detailed outline of material to be covered. Frequently, to help her recall details of events that went back many years or to elicit comment, I sent along copies of newspaper clippings or passages from books, or my own typed notes.

She often corrected the available historical records. Always she added her own firsthand recollections and analyses of the events under study and the people involved. For purposes of accuracy and in order not to bias the historical record by omitting what she deemed to be important details, she occasionally chose to speak candidly and then place those passages under seal until 1990.

As the interview moved along between 1974 and 1980, the tapes were transcribed, lightly edited, and arranged into chapters with titles and subheadings. Reviewing the transcript is always a major task for an interviewee. And reviewing a 1,500-page transcript looked like a formidable task to Mrs. Heller, despite the many tasks she had encountered and risen to in the past. She started in mid-1981, but laid it aside for a period. Finally in late 1982, possibly weary of my prodding, and because she did not want to allow a project once started to remain unfinished, she and her personal secretary Alice Adams together tackled the review, as together for over twenty-five years they had tackled other projects.

They revised some sentences and subtitles to clarify meanings; corrected the spelling of names; made decisions about the few passages to be sealed. By April of 1983 enough material had been returned for the office to begin final typing. Mrs. Adams searched for and sent a folder of pictures from which I could select those for the volume. From Mrs. Heller's files and those in the office I selected interesting memorabilia to place in the volume wherever it seemed relevant.

Researchers will find in this oral history an exceptional amount of "information worth preserving," covering a diversity of subjects, but focusing on higher education and its ramifications. The Brief Biography and the Table of Contents reveal the extent of subject matter covered. The Introductions written by her two long-time friends and associates, William Coblentz and James O'Brien, provide a vivid picture of Ellie Heller at work and at her leisure.
In its entirety, the oral history reveals why Elinor Heller was sought out to serve on boards, and her reasons for accepting or refusing, for staying on for many years or leaving after a term or two. (Although politics remained of great interest to her, she told me she had never considered running for public office, preferring to stay in the background.) We also gain insight into her theories on governance and why, at times, her presence may have been crucial to the organization's health. Of this latter she said modestly, "I see a problem and try to solve it. If I think I know the right way, good. I'm not determined to have things my way, but once I've thought it out and think I'm right, I do my best to work it out. That's one of the best roles I can play that I've found in my life."

Malca Chall
Interviewer-Editor

24 September 1984
Regional Oral History Office
486 The Bancroft Library
University of California at Berkeley
BRIEF BIOGRAPHY

1904 Born, San Francisco, California
1910-1921 Madison Grammar School; Girls High School
1921-1925 Mills College, B.A.; Phi Beta Kappa
1925 Marriage to Edward Hellman Heller

Son, Clarence, born 1926
Son, Alfred, born 1929
Daughter, Elizabeth (Mrs. Alan Mandell), born 1931

1927-1942 Board, League of Women Voters, San Francisco
1932-1942 Board of Trustees, Mills College
1946-1956 Board of Trustees, Mills College
1957-1967 Board of Trustees, Mills College
1975 -- Lifetime Trustee, Mills College

1936-1947 Board, Institute of Pacific Relations
1947-1963 Board, World Affairs Council, Northern California
1940 Bibliography of the Grabhorn Press, 1915-1940, Elinor R. Heller and David Magee, co-authors
1942-1945 Chairman, Education Section, War Finance Division (Defense Savings Bond Program) Northern California, Massachusetts, Washington, D.C.
1944-1952 Democratic National Committeeewoman for California
1944, 1948, 1956 Delegate, Democratic National Conventions
1949-1952 Member, Council on Arthritis and Metabolic Diseases, National Institute of Health (NIH); appointed by Oscar Ewing, Federal Security Agency Administrator
1950-1961 Advisory Board, San Francisco State College
1953 -- Board, Childrens Health Council of the Mid-Peninsula
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Position</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1961-1976</td>
<td>Board of Regents, University of California; appointed by Governor Edmund G. (Pat) Brown; chairman, 1975-1976</td>
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<td></td>
<td>California Council for Higher Education</td>
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<td></td>
<td>California Postsecondary Education Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961-1970</td>
<td>Board of Directors, Palo Alto–Stanford Hospital</td>
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<td>1962---</td>
<td>Member, Council of the Friends of The Bancroft Library</td>
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<td>1964-1971</td>
<td>Board of Directors, Stanford Bank</td>
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<td>1965-1969</td>
<td>Member, Marshall Scholarship Committee, Pacific Region. Appointed by the British Consul General</td>
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<tr>
<td>1968-1975</td>
<td>Board of Directors, KQED-TV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973-1978</td>
<td>Visiting Committee, Charles Drew Graduate School of Medicine; 1976-1978, chairman, ad hoc committee regarding affiliation with UCLA Medical School</td>
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<td>1974-1980</td>
<td>Member, Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities and the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC)</td>
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Honors and Awards:

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<td>1952</td>
<td>Honorary Doctor of Laws, Mills College</td>
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<td>1974</td>
<td>Elected to Membership, American Academy of Arts and Sciences</td>
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<td>1976</td>
<td>University of California, Clark Kerr Award</td>
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I THE RAAS AND HELLER FAMILIES: BACKGROUND AND EDUCATION

[Interview 1: December 6, 1974]##

Heller: I have done my family tree as well as I could, on both sides of the family. You know, it was looking into a Bible here, and into another thing there. I did as much as I could on it anyway.

Chall: That's quite a job, isn't it, putting together a family tree?

Heller: It took me two months. First of all, no tree is ever designed to suit you; you have to design your own, because it depends on what you want to put in.

Chall: Yes, how much information, and how you want to carry all the roots of the tree.

Heller: That's right. I discovered that when I did the bibliography of the Grabhorn Press. No bibliography had ever been made that suited what I thought belonged; so I made it up as I went along.

Chall: Maybe it can be used as a model for others. Has it ever?

Heller: Well, it was carried on to the second volume. I just believe certain things belong in bibliographies that have never been in any I've found.

Chall: So did you make up the family tree?

Heller: Yes, in a way. I didn't finish it. I got down to my children and grandchildren, and went back in my husband's family as far as I can, and in mine. We're all sort of lost in obscurity in some places.

Chall: We can find out as much about your family as possible that will fill in the tree, which of course is just a skeleton.

##This symbol indicates that a tape or a segment of a tape has begun or ended. For a guide to the tapes see page 836.
Heller: I didn't give the names of the different children of my grandparents; I just confined it to my father and mother. That's the next step I should take, I guess—you know, the different ramifications. No, I made it a direct thing.

Elinor Raas Heller and Her Parents and Grandparents

Chall: Well, let's start, then, with your parents. I'd like to start with your mother. Your mother was Ida Fisher?

Heller: That's right.

Chall: Can you tell me when she was born, where?

Heller: She was born in San Francisco, October 10, 1873.

Chall: You must have been born almost on the same date—you were born almost on her birthday.

Heller: A week earlier, yes. She died in 1960. I don't know if you want that part.

Chall: I do want the dates, yes.

Heller: She died in 1960 in Palo Alto, where she was in her own home, 2240 Cowper Street.

Chall: Who were her parents?

Heller: Her parents were Philip I. Fisher, who was born in 1839 in New York City. He died in 1906 in San Francisco—I'm not sure of that date; it might be 1907. It was right after the earthquake and fire. He married in San Francisco, in 1866, Eve Solomon. She was born in 1846 in Sydney, Australia, and came to San Francisco with her parents from Australia in 1850. She died in 1883 in San Francisco. My mother was ten years old then.

I don't know if you want to go any further than that?

Chall: Those were your mother's parents.

Heller: Those were my mother's parents.

Chall: No, I think that's far enough. So her father was born in New York City and her mother in Australia.
Heller: His family was German.

Chall: They had come over from Germany?

Heller: Yes. His father was married in 1838 in New York.

Chall: Oh, I see. They were very early immigrants.

Heller: He, my mother's grandfather, was born in Buttenheim, Bavaria, and he died in San Francisco; so he lived a long time. He was married in New York. Did I give you his name? It was Isaac Fisher.

Chall: Do you know what these Fishers did?

Heller: I'm not sure about what my mother used to refer to as "Grampa Fisher"--I'm not sure what he did. I know he had other wives. [laughs] But her father, Philip I. Fisher, was cashier of Levi Strauss in San Francisco. It was not a big salaried job, or a big money job; but that's what he was. He was with Levi Strauss, though not related to them. It's lost to obscurity why he was, except, I guess, a lot of those families went into mercantile, you know, sort of things.

I know that Philip I. Fisher, her father, was in the New York Seventh Infantry Division in the Civil War. That was the only one of my ancestors, I think, that was in the Civil War. His main assignment was that he guarded the White House; that's come down through history. Why he came out here I have no exact idea.

Chall: But when he did he was with Levi Strauss?

Heller: Yes. He was eventually with Levi Strauss.

Chall: That was the position he had up to his retirement?

Heller: Well, he might have retired by the time of the San Francisco earthquake and fire.

Chall: He was only 67 at that time, so he wasn't really an old man.

Heller: Well, you aged more quickly then. I think maybe he actually died in Portland, Oregon, visiting some family after the earthquake and fire. It doesn't make any difference, though.

My mother's mother, Eve Solomon, as I told you, came from Australia. Her parents--Israel Solomon and Sarah Philips Solomon, married in 1831--were both born in London. They both arrived, as I said, in San Francisco in 1850, and they both died in San Francisco.
Heller: We have records of Israel Solomon's parents, John Solomon and his wife whose maiden name was Simke, also born in London. As far as we know from the records of the family, they were English and it's a safe guess that they had been in England for quite a long time.

Chall: Do you have any idea why they left England and went to Australia?

Heller: My great grandfather, Israel Solomon, I think went to Australia from London just to seek his fortune. He didn't stay there terribly long, according to legend, and he heard about—Well, it's sort of a nice story, actually. He heard about the discovery of gold in California and he came alone from Australia to look San Francisco over in 1849. He went back to Australia and had his house put in sections—a wooden house—on a sailing ship, and brought his huge family—he had about ten children—and his wife to San Francisco in this sailing vessel, with the house, because there were no buildings; they were very short of building materials. I guess he went into some form of mercantile business, too, as far as I know.

Chall: You don't know what it was?

Heller: I have no idea. My mother wrote a little book about all her ancestors that I have here, but she was pretty old when she wrote it. She had some of these things, but the businesses are lost; but they were none of them very wealthy. They were comfortable, I guess. I've always liked that story of leaving Australia. It's a true story.

Chall: It's so enterprising.

Heller: Yes. I'm not sure when he went to Australia; he was born in London, married in 1831, and certainly was in Sydney by 1846, if not before. My husband always said about my ancestors that they were probably sent to a penal colony in Australia. But unfortunately, this was the wrong period. [laughs]

Chall: It was a long journey from London to Australia.

Heller: Oh, heavens yes—and then to come to San Francisco. So he must have been adventurous in his own way. The name Israel Solomon doesn't sound terribly adventurous, does it?

Chall: No, no.

Heller: And every one of these ancestors are, I think, one hundred percent Jewish, as far as I know. I think you have to get down to my son Alfred Heller's family (he married Ruth Botsford) before you find anybody not Jewish, though except for Grampa Raas they were not very religious, at all. They did belong to the Congregation Emanu-El—my mother's parents.
Chall: Your mother's parents did?

Heller: Yes. You know, this was one of the earliest—Yes, they did belong to that, but they were not members of a very religious family. I've had very little religious training, in a way. Does that do?

Chall: That takes care of your maternal grandparents.

Heller: My father was Alfred E. Raas.

Chall: What does the E. stand for?

Heller: My father always said, "Nothing." I suspect it was for his father, who was Emmanuel, but he always said it didn't stand for anything. He was born July 22, 1873 in San Francisco. He and my mother were almost identical in age. He married my mother March 18, 1900. He died in Palo Alto in December, 1945. My parents had both moved to Palo Alto, you see.

Chall: Did you tell me where he was born?

Heller: He was born in San Francisco.

Chall: Who were his parents?

Heller: Maybe I should put in someplace along here some information that kind of ties in. My mother attended Girls High School in San Francisco—and I did, too! And my father attended Boys High School in San Francisco, which later became Lowell High School.

Chall: What became of Girls High School?

Heller: Well, it went on for years and years and years—the building is still there on Scott and Geary—and it turned into a junior high school eventually. I think it's used as a storage depot now. It was a very famous and marvelous public high school.

My parents were married in San Francisco. My father's parents were Emmanuel Raas, and Ernestine Blum Raas. They, too, were married in San Francisco, but they were both born in Strasbourg, Alsace. They both died in San Francisco. I don't have the date of my grandmother Ernestine Raas's death. My grandfather Emmanuel Raas is the only grandparent that I remember, and he died in 1915 happy that the French had gone to war against the hated Germans. You see, he left Alsace well before the war of 1871, when it was still French. I think, although I don't have the exact date, that he arrived in San Francisco around about 1860. I know that he came overland in a buckboard from
Heller: El Paso, Texas--and don't ask me how he got there--I think it was over the Isthmus. I do remember that he would never talk about it, he said it was so full of hardships when he came overland. I guess those families had known each other in Strasbourg, although they were married in San Francisco.

Chall: He came over by himself in the buckboard without other members of his family?

Heller: Yes.

Chall: Did he leave his family behind him in Europe?

Heller: As far as I know, yes. There is a collateral Raas, but I don't know exactly where they came from. His father--we can go back one further [generation]--was Moise Raas, who married Philippine Reins. They were born in Strasbourg and died there. I have some scattered information before that.

Chall: Did he have any brothers or sisters--Emmanuel, who came over?

Heller: Not to my knowledge. There were cousins there; but I just have lost that. There was some Raas family, and also some Blum family.

Chall: In San Francisco?

Heller: Yes.

Chall: They were related?

Heller: Yes. Definitely.

Chall: Is the Blum family the family of the Blum restaurant?

Heller: No. Nonexistent now. Ernestine Blum, my grandmother, must have had brothers because there were a lot of first cousins of my father's by the name of Blum--all of whom died, I think, without issue, as far as I know. Emmanuel Raas and Ernestine had four children--my father's two sisters and one brother. The two sisters never had children, though they were married. So the only remaining Raas was my father's brother, Charles Raas, who had one son and one daughter. And that is the only Raas name around here, because his son, Alan Raas, has two sons by the name of Raas, Stephen and Daniel. Otherwise, you see--I only had a sister--the name just died out.

Chall: Where do these present Raases live?

Heller: In San Mateo.
Chall: What did your grandfather Emmanuel do?

Heller: I know he was in the drygoods business.

Chall: That's what, as you define it?


Chall: In San Francisco?

Heller: In San Francisco. That I know. And my father, sort of growing out of that, had a wholesale millinery, called Muller and Raas. That was a very successful business until about, oh, after the mid-1920s. You're too young, you don't know, but millinery business used to be a matter of having a straw frame or a cloth frame. The main part of wholesale millinery—I remember this from when I was a child—was that you sold ribbons, you know, you decorated with them, or flowers, or feathers. And I can remember his store very vividly.

But then the cloches came in, in the twenties, and that business just disappeared overnight. My father was not inventive enough to ever—he was not enough of a businessman. It was fine until he had to take a new direction. And he just got out of the business with a small amount of funds in the year of '28, before the Crash. You know, he had just about enough left to live on. He wasn't enormously wealthy, but—

Chall: But he didn't suffer from the Depression, then?

Heller: Well, it's a little hard to say. I was married in 1925, and my husband's family was very well-to-do. I remember Ed Heller suggested to my father that he give him all the capital cash he had and he'd invest it for him with his funds. And I've never been able to figure out—I have a hunch that Ed Heller was being a little generous with how well he had done with it. You know, there's no proof of this.

Chall: He was just comfortable for the rest of his life?

Heller: Well, he had enough for the rest of his life. But Ed Heller was very nice that way; he never would have given it as a gift. And he never would say it. I feel pretty sure, in those thirties—he didn't overdo it, but he probably was just making it come out all right.

Chall: And your father never worked after that? Or did he?

Heller: No, he only did volunteer work then, after that. He was terribly active during World War II in Palo Alto, you see, because he wasn't that old. He was heading up all these scrap drives for all of Palo
Heller: Alto; he had moved down there in the meantime. He did just volunteer things; he was a great member of the Commonwealth Club; devoted more time to that.

Chall: Doing what?

Heller: Serving on the various committees.

Chall: Was he a student?

Heller: No. If you've ever examined the Commonwealth Club, they have all sorts of committees--lunch committees, education committees; you know, whatever--and my father was just always available. Sort of like the League of Women Voters, but not quite. He was a very nice person. Neither of my parents ever went to college. It wasn't done very much then.

Chall: What about your mother?

Heller: My mother, after Girls High School, went to what was called San Francisco Normal School and got a teaching degree. And she taught for a little while, but I don't remember where. In fact, I do know one place she taught was Madison Grammar School, which was then out on Clay Street near Presidio Avenue. Because when I eventually went to school I went to Madison Grammar School; by then I had moved further out on Clay Street. So I know that's one of the places that she taught.

Chall: For a few years before she was married, do you think?

Heller: Yes. Because my mother was about twenty-six when she was married; and I was born when she was thirty-one. I don't think she particularly enjoyed it; I never heard that much about it.

Then there was another thing: I know she was always involved in what was very much the "lady's" thing to do in San Francisco, which was called the Fruit and Flower Mission.

Chall: What was their mission?

Heller: Oh, sort of the Lady Bountiful type of thing, where you took fruit and flowers to the sick and the elderly. It was very well known in San Francisco. I've forgotten what it grew into.

Chall: Was it a Jewish group?

Heller: I don't think so.

Chall: She was doing this when you were growing up?
Heller: Well, at the beginning. She belonged to one Jewish group called the Philomath Club. Oh, I think they had book reviews; that was done a lot in those days.

Chall: The cultural aspect.

Heller: But my parents' activities were not very Jewish, though their associations were. My father, you see, was a Christian Scientist.

Chall: How did that ever come about?

Heller: The story is that his father, my grandfather Emmanuel Raas, was quite religious. I can't remember the name of his synagogue, but I can remember that it was not a reform one. I never went to it. My grandfather was very active—he was one of the founders of the Mt. Zion Hospital.

Chall: Grandfather Emmanuel Raas?

Heller: Yes. Obviously my father and his brother and sisters did not have much religious upbringing. But my father apparently was a highly nervous young man, and somebody suggested Christian Science to him when he was first married, and he liked it, and he was a Christian Scientist all his life, to the day of his death.

Chall: What about his sisters and brother?

Heller: One sister became a Christian Science practitioner in Fresno, and one sister was sort of batty—not crazy, just offbeat. His brother, Charlie Raas, also was a Christian Scientist. So my father must have had quite a bit of influence on all of them. My father was the oldest of the family. My father's parents both died of diabetes, and his sisters and brother died of diabetes. But the theory is that he was born before the diabetes took hold in his parents' genes, because he never had a sign of it; and nobody in our family ever had a sign of it. No, I don't know what that means; you can give that to the doctors. Because to this day they check all of us on diabetes, and there's never been a sign of any, with this whole history surrounding it. And, of course, it wasn't controlled then.

Chall: So they must have had real troubles as they became more ill. Was there insulin, or anything of that kind? Well, there must have been, yes, while they were growing up.
Heller: Well, I remember one aunt of mine had terrible gangrenous diabetes—I can remember her—and she ignored it pretty well. Then my mother, sort of, was a Christian Scientist.

Oh, if you want my religious background, this is what it is: My grandfather, as I told you, was alive, and he lived with us.

Chall: How did he handle all this? This must have hurt him if he was going off to a synagogue.

Heller: It's very interesting; but I remember that my parents decided that they wouldn't send me to Christian Science Sunday school because it would hurt him. You see, my mother's family were members of the reform congregation—Emanu-El. So they sent me to Temple Emanu-El Sunday school, where I went till I was thirteen. However, my sister went to Christian Science Sunday school; she was five years younger, and my grandfather, I guess, had just died before she started Sunday school. So here I was going to Christian Science church with my parents, and then to Emanu-El Sunday school [laughs] which I loved, because it was lots of fun. There were parties and all that.

Chall: Were you considered sort of an odd combination by the other members of the Jewish community?

Heller: I don't think they gave it a thought. I went automatically, as you do when you are a child, into the confirmation class. Rabbi Martin Meyer was the rabbi, and he taught the class. Because I was a year ahead in school, I went in when I was thirteen instead of fourteen.

I never understood what I was supposed to learn, and then one day after the year was almost up—the year for confirmation—I remember Rabbi Meyer said, "Well, if everybody in this class knew as much and was as good a student as Elinor Raas, I wouldn't have any problems." And I took myself out. I never went again, because I knew I didn't know anything. You know, I'm the sort that could always do papers. I didn't know what I was doing, and I thought, "Well, this is ridiculous."

Chall: You didn't understand what the message was?

Heller: I never did. So I just stopped going.

Chall: Did you understand what was the message of the Christian Science Church on Sundays? Did that come through in a different way?

Heller: Well, I guess I thought I did, later on. Then I started going to church with my parents more often.

Chall: They went regularly on Sundays?
Heller: Uh-hmm, and on Wednesday nights, too. And my sister went. And I continued, more or less, through college, until I got married. Then my husband quite sensibly talked me out of the whole thing. So you can see I wasn't very attached to it. I think I'm a nonreligious person. Now you have my whole religious background; it's not very big.

Well, after I was married my mother-in-law—My husband's family were all members of Congregation Emanu-El too. My father-in-law died when I was first married, and I'd go with her to Friday night service. I hated it—hated every moment.

Chall: But your mother-in-law went?

Heller: Well, after her husband died she thought she had to. You know, the weeping—oh, how I hated it. And I still belong; I still have seats at Emanu-El, but I've never—They're in my name. My husband always kept them. He thought he was religious at one point, but he really wasn't.

Chall: Your husband?

Heller: Yes. But he never did anything, although he did go to Emanu-El Sunday school. And we were married by a rabbi.

Chall: Rabbi Meyer?


Chall: During the years when you were going to Sunday school at Emanu-El, was it the building on Sutter, with the towers?

Heller: No, that was the synagogue. The Sunday school was further out on Sutter near Van Ness.

Chall: As I understand, it was pretty well injured by the earthquake—at least the towers were.

Heller: Oh. Oh, well, you're thinking about a different thing. I remember the Sutter Street synagogue. No, that was downtown, between Powell and Stockton. Yes, I went there when I was in confirmation class; particularly I remember going there on Saturday mornings. The Sunday school was on Sutter between Jackson and Franklin. It was separate, I think maybe because of this earthquake injury. And, you see, everything west of Van Ness in San Francisco was not touched by the fire. A lot of things moved west. I think this building was just an ordinary building and they took it over. And that's where I went. I was wondering how you knew about the Sunday school.
Chall: No, I didn't know about the Sunday school; I just remembered the temple.

Heller: I'm really exaggerating the effect of all this on me except that it was fun.

Chall: Well, then, the Christian Science part of it required—well, I'm not sure it "required," but I've often wondered about it—a belief in healing powers through Jesus Christ. Is that a necessary aspect of the belief?

Heller: No. The main belief is that you had to believe one thing: that God is love. Everything followed from that. Mary Baker Eddy, with her book, started with that premise. If you accepted that premise, which I did at that time—until I was married—then everything flowed from there. You know, there was no disease and there was no anything. And my father really stuck with that all his life. I guess he was a very healthy man.

Chall: Did it help his nervous condition?

Heller: Yes! It was marvelous. And my mother more or less believed. You know, you could go to dentists, or have bones set.

Chall: You could have babies in the hospital? How about that?

Heller: Well, I remember that my sister was born at home, but I think that was just done at that period. I think it had nothing to do with—

Chall: Christian Science?

Heller: --but I think most people had their children at home.

The 1906 Earthquake and Fire

Chall: Where were you born?

Heller: I was born at home in San Francisco on October 3, 1904. We were living on Washington Street between Van Ness and Polk Street, in a flat next to a firehouse. But we moved right after that, before the earthquake and fire, to 2911 Jackson Street. The flats there are still standing, believe it or not, and they're in use, at Broderick and Jackson. Of course, I was a year and a half old—I don't remember, but I've heard so much about it. We were there at the time of the earthquake and fire. And we were out of the fire zone. But everybody left their homes, you know. There was no water.
Chall: You left yours?

Heller: Alta Plaza Park, on Jackson, was just two blocks away, and we went up there—you know, an open park. My mother had an aunt, Mrs. Haber—she was one of the many Solomons—who had a house right on Jackson Street, facing Alta Plaza. So there was a house there that we had access to, but there was no water; the water mains were all broken. Oh, I've been told these tales so many times by my parents—by my mother, particularly. We stayed there for a few days. You know, there was no transportation. It's hard to remember what it was like; and I don't literally remember it, but I've heard about it.

Well, my father had a partner, not by the name of Muller, but some woman whose name has escaped me, who lived in Alameda. I think she was the cashier. He figured out that if he could get my mother and me to Alameda, that there would be somebody who would take us in. You have to remember, no communications, you see, were possible. They took me in the baby buggy and they walked down—according to my mother—Jackson to Van Ness Avenue, and then walked on the west side of Van Ness Avenue (which the fire didn't reach) down to the bay, and then started walking around what you'd now call the Embarcadero to the Ferry Building.

At some point some horse and buggy drayage person came along and picked them up; they didn't quite walk the whole way. They got to the Ferry Building, and we got on the ferry to Alameda. That's where we were for two or three months, I guess, because he figured there was a home and somebody who would know that his credit was okay. My father would go back and forth by ferry to San Francisco. That's what everybody was doing. They were looking for family, or looking for their businesses.

My mother had lost track of her father in this thing. It's a sort of nice story, because my father was walking up Market Street from the Ferry Building one day, just trying to find his way around, and there was my grandfather coming down Market Street in a carriage with a couple of relatives. They'd lost track of him, and they just ran into each other!

Chall: This was your mother's father?

Heller: My mother's father, Philip Fisher.

Chall: But he seemed to be all right? Taken care of somehow?

Heller: Yes, somehow. You can't remember what it was like.

Chall: I guess some people went up to San Rafael.
Heller: Yes, and also to San Leandro; they came down this way, too; but we landed in Alameda.

Chall: What about your grandfather Raas? Was he living with you at the time? Your grandfather, Emmanuel.

Heller: No. I don't really know. I don't remember anything about Grandpa Raas in that period. Maybe he wasn't living in San Francisco. I just don't remember anything about him. It was my mother who always told this story about her father. Then, of course, we could move back once the water was connected, because this flat we lived in had not been harmed. But when something that vivid has happened, the family for years doesn't stop talking about it.

Chall: Always an exciting thing to look back on for the family.

Heller: Oh, yes. It wasn't one of the more dramatic tales of the earthquake.

Chall: But your lives were upset, just like everyone else's.

Heller: Yes, so I remember the stories. Obviously, at a year and a half I don't remember the incident.

Chall: What about your father's business? Was it in the section of town which was destroyed?

Heller: I'm trying to think about that. My earliest remembrance was that he had a store on Polk Street. That must have been after, because I couldn't remember when I was a year and a half. It was sort of the beginning of his larger store. Then he moved to 833 Market Street, right next to the Emporium--exactly where the Emporium is today--on the third floor, the whole third floor. It was a wholesale business when I was a youngster. That's how I got to know California so well; that business consisted of your personal customers, your lone milliners. I used to go with my father to all these little towns in Northern California, where he'd always know the milliner.

Chall: Your father traveled around to these customers, is that it?

Heller: Well, he wasn't a salesman; he was just the owner of the business. And wherever we'd go, we'd always drop in to see the lady milliner of the little town. I can remember in Lake County, Lakeport, in Dunsmuir--in all sorts of little communities all around Northern
Heller: California, we'd always go see the milliner. My father was just the boss—not the boss, that makes it more important than it was, but the owner—of the place where she got her supplies to make the hats for the people in the little town. You know, there always was a milliner in every little town.

My father just loved to poke around Northern California, and that's how I got to know Northern California so well. First we might go by train, but then when I was about—(I'm trying to think of my age) eleven, my parents got their first car, which was a Buick. I remember this. And I learned to drive when they did. You won't believe it. When I was eleven. There were no rules about what age you had to be. My parents could never say they had driven longer than I had and knew more about it. We'd always go off on these trips on these crazy roads. That was a marvelous part of my--

Chall: Did you have to get out and change tires and drag through mud?

Heller: Oh, my father was helpless at that sort of thing. We certainly did, but my father would just stand, looking unhappy. Eventually somebody would come along with a horse and a wagon or something and feel sorry. I can picture my father to this day, standing and looking unhappily at this flat tire, maybe for an hour, hoping somebody would come along.

Well, we went up what is now the Redwood Highway, and they were the most terrible roads. I don't know if you've ever heard them described?

Chall: No, but I read The Reivers, by [William] Faulkner, and I got a pretty good idea what those first roads must have been like.

Heller: All absolutely dreadful. They were one-way roads with turn outs, and steep precipices down to the river. The rule of the road was supposed to be that the car going uphill had the right of way. If you met a car coming downhill—and you did that all the time on these one-way roads with no controls—the car that was coming downhill (you probably know this) had to back up to the turnout, because there was less danger of going back uphill than back downhill. But you'd often argue for a half-hour.

Chall: Is that right?

Heller: Yes. We'd go up into that redwood country, and east into Trinity County, which were even worse roads, and up into what is now Sequoia National Park; well, it was then Sequoia National Park, but it had no road into it. I don't know why I remember this—I'll give the wrong percentage—it was called a 25 degree slope, which is just [demonstrates], you know—it's just terrible, these curves.
Heller: I remember we went up into the sequoia country practically before anybody'd ever gone in. Well, I don't mean anybody, but you know, a handful of people. A lot of people had cars way before we did, but I don't think they had the desire to poke into places that my father did. So that's how I learned my way around Northern California.

Chall: When would you go? In the summer when you were on vacation?

Heller: In the summer, and sometimes spring vacation. We'd go up into Oregon. My father had some family in Portland, and so he had some millinery friends in the little towns of southern Oregon, too. Through these terrible roads. I think there might have been one or two better roads, but my father liked to--

Chall: He really liked that sort of thing?

Heller: Oh, it was really wonderful. It still is wonderful country if you get off the freeway.

Chall: Where would you spend the night? These must have been long-time travels.

Heller: Well, little hotels. In small towns there was always someplace to stay. They weren't much--some little country hotels. I think I've stayed in most of them.

Chall: How long would you be on the road at one time?

Heller: Not too long, I don't think--maybe two or three weeks at a time.

Chall: And your mother would always go along?

Heller: Usually.

Chall: And your sister?

Heller: Yes. You know, it's funny. My sister's five years younger than I am, and it was as if she didn't exist, as far as I was concerned. I can't lay my hands on it now, but I found a diary I kept for a year in 1919, when I was nine to ten years old--no, when I was fourteen years old--and I don't mention my sister, except once, in one whole year--when I had to take her someplace.

Chall: Do you expect that at the year five you resented the fact that she came into your family life?

Heller: No. No, my parents were awfully good about this sort of thing. She was five years younger than I was, and because I was a year ahead in school, she was six years behind me in school.
Chall: That's practically a generation for children.

Heller: It was almost a generation. Yes, Aline was along; she had to be along. Where was there to leave her?

Chall: Yes, if your mother came along. Did your mother travel with your father, even in the days when you took the train? Was it a family affair?

Heller: Yes, but we never went any distances. Until I was married, in 1925, I had been as far south as northern Mexico—right at Tijuana—and had been once up to Vancouver and Victoria with my parents. But I had never been East. I don't think I even was in Reno. I had never traveled there, though my father, when I was a child, used to go East for business, and my mother would go with him.

My sister and I would stay with my mother's older sister, Mrs. Henry Sahlein, who was sort of the dowager of my mother's family. She had a marvelous big old house. She was the one wealthy person in the family. Her husband was a maternal great-uncle of Madeleine Haas Russell. My aunt Carrie Sahlein was sort of the shelterer of all the family, and she had this wonderful huge old house. It didn't come down till about maybe fifteen years ago.

Chall: Where was it?

Heller: 1718 Jackson Street, between Van Ness and Franklin, just half a block west of the 1906 fire zone. We always could stay with her; she had help and lots of rooms.

Chall: Were there other cousins there? Did she have children?

Heller: She had three daughters who were nine, ten, and eleven years older than I was.

Chall: So you didn't mind your parents going?

Heller: Oh, no! I had a lovely time there; they were very nice to me.

Chall: When your father went around selling his ribbons and feathers—

Heller: Oh, he didn't sell, actually. He had sales people that did that.

Chall: What did he do?

Heller: He just talked nicely to people, and made them feel—

Chall: But he wasn't selling anything?
Heller: No. He had sales people; or these milliners would come in to San Francisco. You see, he wasn't a salesman as you think of it.

Chall: Then it was a public relations--a sort of a walking vacation?

Heller: Sort of. You know, it was instinctive. Nobody had ever heard of public relations. These were people who bought from him, and he wanted to say hello to them.

Chall: How many salesmen did he have?

Heller: I have no recollection of that.

Chall: Did he travel on these trips mostly in Northern California and into Oregon, or did you go south with him as well?

Heller: Mostly Northern California. We did go south once or twice when I was a little older, but I think that was just to see the state. As a matter of fact, my parents were among the earliest white people who ever went to Palm Springs. They had been there once, and then they took my sister and me there in Christmas vacation in 1920, I guess--maybe '21. Palm Springs had one narrow dirt road. The Indians were on one side, and the whites were on the other. And I adored it. It was really right out in the desert.

Chall: What did you do? Why did he go down there?

Heller: He'd heard about it. He was always curious about everything in California. That's why we'd go to all these obscure places—he'd heard about them. There was a nice little resort there—very small; it became famous later—the Desert Inn. When we went there it was just a handful of people.

Chall: Your father had an inquisitive nature?

Heller: In a very gentle, nice way. Money meant nothing to him. I don't mean he was a spendthrift; he just never thought in terms of money. I never knew what it meant to be wealthy or not wealthy; I never heard that sort of conversation.

Chall: Can you tell me about Mr. Muller?

Heller: No. I don't remember a thing about him.

Chall: You don't know whether he was Jewish?

Heller: I think not. I think it was his sister whom we went to in Alameda, and I think she was Catholic. But her name has just gone from me; I can't think of it. It might come back. No, it was not a Jewish firm.
Chall: Besides going with your father to the little shops which sold the millinery, do you know where he got his supplies? Or is that what he did when he went to New York—the ribbons and straw and all the rest?

Heller: I think so. He usually used to go during Christmas vacation, when we could easily be moved to my aunt’s. I think he would time it to go by train then. My best guess is that he did his buying there, because he used to go East every year.

Chall: Were you beautifully hatted in your family—the women? Did your mother wear beautiful hats, and your aunts?

Heller: Well, they all wore hats. I can remember my hats. I don't know they were so beautiful, because we didn't have a direct contact with the milliners. You see, we had the wholesale thing. Every once in a while, I do remember that there would be a decorated hat in my father's store, and I would have one.

Chall: You never went out without a hat and a pair of gloves.

Heller: Oh, no, you wouldn't dream of going out without a hat. Oh, I think I did in high school.

Emmanuel Raas and the Alsatian Community

Heller: My father was part of the French community in San Francisco—the Alsatian. We had a great deal of connection with the French Alsatian community because of my grandfather Raas's background. My grandfather Raas lived with us (it was really Raas—pronounced Ross—but then it was anglicized). Some of my earliest memories are going with my grandfather and my father to the Quatorze Juillet celebrations of the French colony in San Francisco—you know, the Fourteenth of July. It was really my grandfather who had the involvement with this French community. There were quite a few Alsatians that came to San Francisco early, and it was a rather tight little community—not all Jewish. They had great patriotism, and they hated the Germans.

I was never allowed to learn to speak German, though I spoke French immediately, because my grandfather was living with us. I had what I guess you'd call a French governess—that makes my family sound a lot more wealthy than it was, but you didn't pay much in those days. I always spoke French with her, and I used to play games in French, when I was a little girl; and I always spoke French with my grandfather, though he could speak English. I just can remember so well how my grandfather—I was ten when my grandfather died—hated the Germans.
Chall: Did he hate German Jews?

Heller: It wasn't religious--

Chall: It was just Germans of any kind?

Heller: Germans. You see, the Germans had taken over Alsace in the war of 1871. Oh, how he hated them! It would have been natural at my age to learn to speak German and French, but with my grandfather around there was never any question of it—though he could speak German, as an Alsatian; but we were never allowed to.

Then, when I was in high school, which was just about when the United States went into World War I, where I might have learned German, it was taken out of the schools; no German was taught in the schools. So I've never learned German. You keep asking me all these things I haven't thought about for so long.

One of my father's sisters, Palmyre, the Christian Science practitioner, called Mimi, married a man named Henry Gundelfinger. That family was very well known in Fresno. His generation were all German born. They were quite prosperous and well known in Fresno—I think to this day some of them are.

Chall: They were Jewish?

Heller: Jewish. Uncle Henry Gundelfinger had a marked German accent. I remember when we got that first automobile, he always said we had a "Puick" [laughs]. Grandpa Raas was perfectly satisfied about Uncle Henry Gundelfinger till the outbreak of war in 1914. Uncle Henry was not allowed in the house after that, though the United States wasn't in the war and he was an American citizen. I can remember my grandfather just getting into a frenzy, though he was a mild man. He said he "wouldn't have that man—that Boche" in the house.

Chall: That was hard on the family relationships, wasn't it?

Heller: They lived in Fresno, so it wasn't as bad as it might have been.

Chall: Would you tell me what Henry Gundelfinger did in Fresno?

Heller: No. I have no idea. That Gundelfinger family, though, was quite prosperous. I just don't remember: I think they had some ranching property and real estate property. You see, it was an expanding community.

Chall: Mimi went down there to live?

Heller: To live, yes.
Chall: Was she the only one who went away?


Chall: What did he do for a living?

Heller: He was in my father's business.

Chall: Did he stay in the business after the twenties?

Heller: He stayed on afterwards, and it failed quite badly. They were very hard up, that family. His wife had been a school teacher. He died sometime during the Depression, and I remember his wife, my aunt Adele Raas—who had gone to college; I think she had gone to the University of California—was just poverty stricken, with two children. She got a job under the WPA [Works Progress Administration] in San Francisco, supervising some sewing project—which was so far removed from her intellectual abilities. I've forgotten what it paid—maybe thirty dollars a week or something like that.

Chall: Something to live on. Did any members of the family help her out?

Heller: Oh, I think my father, who didn't have that much, gave her some; they never were starving. My father's two sisters were both quite well off; they both married fairly well-to-do men. So nobody was starving in the family.

Chall: So they could help one another. Was there a sense, a feeling in the family that one does help the needy, whether they are members of the family or not—a strong sense of purpose, besides the "fruit and flowers"?

Heller: I hadn't really heard that discussion. I think we took it for granted that nobody was going to starve. As I say, my father's family never thought of that. If they had a home, you know, and were comfortable, they didn't think about the things that money bought. It's hard to explain, but I just never heard that conversation. Of course, my mother had an enormous family. I don't think I could even trace them all down for you.

Chall: The Fishers?

Heller: Yes.

Chall: How many brothers and sisters did she have?
Heller: She had two brothers and two sisters. One I've already mentioned—the oldest—Mrs. Sahlein, who really had the money. Her youngest brother was Dr. Arthur Fisher. He was an M.D. I think he was the only college educated of the lot, and he was a very well known, what we call an orthopedic man, in San Francisco where he practiced.

They were the most long-lived family—my mother's family; they all lived to great old ages except for one sister who died about—I don't know, maybe while I was in college.

The only thing I remember about her was that she was married to a man named Grothwell. Her first name was Rose. I think she was comfortably off. She had a mysterious illness when I was in college. My mother used to hint that it was probably syphilis, caught from her husband; but I've never been sure whether my mother didn't like her husband. You know how things were in those days. The thing that I most remember about Aunt Rose Grothwell was that she was scared to death of ladybugs [laughs] and she'd get into a frenzy when a ladybug appeared.*

Chall: Was she the one you called the batty one? There was one aunt you called batty.

Heller: Oh, no. That's Aunt Alice Schlesinger, my father's sister. My Aunt Mimi Gundelfinger, and my father, and his brother were rather—very nicely conventional, and she (Alice) loved to do shocking things. Not shocking in today's sense. She wouldn't dress the right way; she wouldn't have her hair fixed. It used to drive my father and my Aunt Mimi Gundelfinger right up the wall! She was so unconventional. Ed Heller, my husband, knew her. He thought she was marvelous [laughs].

The one time I can remember that I was ever sick, with my parents and myself as Christian Scientists, was when I was a sophomore in college. I got this terrible throat, and they were not Christian Scientists enough not to call in Uncle Arthur Fisher, who announced that I had quinsy sore throat, and I was out of college for about a month. No, I was in my junior year, I guess. In later years I've decided that it was probably mononucleosis, because you don't hear much about quinsy sore throat anymore.

Chall: There's strep throat.

Heller: I remember my symptoms; I was plenty old enough that I can remember them—sort of the classic mononucleosis.

And then once my mother got diphtheria when I was in grammar school. I guess Uncle Arthur Fisher was brought in then. No, I guess that was another doctor brought in. All I remember about that

*The second brother was Harry Fisher.
Heller: was that a stranger that I didn't know came to school and said I had to leave because my mother had this communicable disease. I can remember wondering, "Should I go with this person?"

Chall: Didn't they put a little sign on the door?

Heller: I can't remember, but I had to be taken out of school.

Chall: Were you allowed to stay at home during that time?

Heller: Yes, and I don't remember that my mother was terribly sick. I think she was one of the lucky ones, probably. I remember no other diseases except the usual chicken pox, whooping cough, mumps, and measles, that were all the childhood, easy things. We were an amazingly healthy family. I guess to be a Christian Scientist you had to be.

Chall: It may have helped.

Heller: It may have.

Chall: What about the flu epidemic after the war?

Heller: I was in high school then. I never missed a day of school. We had to wear these masks—you know, these gauze masks. At least San Francisco had that ordinance. You had to wear them over your mouth and face. The first ones just tied in back, and then you got a little more sophisticated, and made little tapes and fit them over your ears. When I was going to Girls High School, everybody had to wear those.

Chall: For how long?

Heller: Oh, I would say for four or five months. I'd go to play tennis at Alta Plaza Park and the policeman up there would come around and see if you had your flu mask on. The second he'd go, we'd slip them off. We were wearing those when World War I ended. I remember going with my parents down to Market Street—which was always done then—to celebrate the armistice. It was like a masked ball, because everybody was wearing these. And not one of us ever had the flu. We never missed a day of school—my sister, nobody did—and we just kept doing everything.

I had nobody close to me connected with World War I. Of course, my husband was a soldier, but that was when I didn't know him. My father, at the very end, decided that he had to get a commission. I think he was whatever the last age limit was—forty-five. His commission for captain, I think in the quartermaster corps, came through—that would be the place he would go with his training—the
Heller: week after the armistice. You see, when you were in your mid-forties you weren't drafted, but finally he decided he had to try to get in.

Chall: Do you remember a great deal of talk about the war in the family?

Heller: Well, yes. My father followed this very carefully, and I think it was the Alsatian background—that French background. We were very pro-Ally before the United States went into the war. And, oh, yes, we had maps of Europe up on the wall. My father used to move those colored pins every day to show the fighting line—according to the newspaper reports. There was no radio then; there were just newspaper reports.

Chall: Your grandfather died in 1914?

Heller: No, 1915.

Chall: He died before we entered the war.

Heller: But we were very pro-Ally, and we kept those maps all through the war. My father marked them up every night. Oh, yes, in that way I was very conscious of it, but I had no close friends or relatives in the war. We just happened to be in the wrong generation.

Chall: Yes, because the boys you would have known wouldn't have been old enough to go into the military.

Heller: No, they weren't old enough, you see. My husband, who was almost five years older, was one of the youngest groups in World War I. So I just missed it. But, you know, we knitted all the time.

Chall: Oh, that's right—your mother, I suppose.

Heller: That awful khaki yarn. We'd knit these endless scarves.

Chall: And you'd knit, too?

Heller: Oh, everybody did it. I never was very facile at it.

The Panama Pacific International Exposition, 1915

Heller: One part of my childhood that was very important in my life was the 1915 Panama Pacific International Exposition. You see, I was ten then, and it was the great event and the great thing of my early youth; it really was. They issued these books of admission coupons, one for every day of the whole exposition, and my parents gave me a coupon book. I used to go there every day after school. We had a nursemaid.
Heller: From where we lived, at 100 Locust Street—I never did mention where I was really raised. We moved there when I was five or six years old, and I lived there until I was married—that's Locust and Jackson Streets, San Francisco. The house is still there. It was a lovely neighborhood, and still is.

I would walk down after school with my nurse and my sister—I remember her on this—through the Presidio, to the exposition, which was on the bay front. You see, it was all downhill. It must have taken us maybe a half-hour to walk down there. Then we'd just go into one building after another. Sometimes I went with my parents. Remember, we had no automobile then.

My mother was very fussy about certain things. There were very few streetcars that went to the exposition, but there was this Fillmore Street cable car that went from Fillmore and Broadway, at the top of the hill there (I don't know how well you know San Francisco), straight down almost to the bay—the exposition. It had always been there. My mother wouldn't let me ride down, because there were two very steep blocks, and they'd hook a cable on the upcoming car and the downcoming one. She said it was too dangerous to go down—it might be unhooked. But I could go up, because if it was unhooked it wouldn't move [laughs].

So we were able to ride out, up the Fillmore Street cable car, to Broadway. Then they gave you a transfer, and you had to walk two blocks to Jackson; then you could take the Number Three streetcar out to Presidio and Jackson; then you walked three blocks from Presidio out Jackson to my house.

I lived on streetcars, all through high school; I knew every streetcar there was to be known.

Chall: Was the nursemaid who went with you your French governess?

Heller: No, no. This was much later. This was—I don't even remember who it was. Somebody named Julia Costello; that's all I remember about her.

Chall: What else did she do?

Heller: Nothing. She did some housework, I think; she was more a housemaid type. But I'd go with other people, too. I went, I would say, five days out of seven, and just knew every nook and cranny.

That's the first time I remember going to a symphony. I remember my father had taken me to the Boston Symphony there, and that's the first remembrance I have of hearing symphony music. I may have before, but I don't remember it. And I also heard Teddy Roosevelt speak there; I remember that perfectly well.
Heller: No exposition's ever lived up to that first one. I've gone to dozens --to all of them, all over. It was very romantic, if you've ever seen the pictures of it. The Tower of Jewels, and the different buildings. All of us, including my parents, went around that exposition for nine months, I guess.

Chall: How long was it?

Heller: I think it was about nine months--nine or ten months.

Chall: So you continued to go for the whole year?

Politics: The Progressive Republicans

Heller: Yes, yes. And, of course, the whole world came to San Francisco. I don't know how conscious I was of all of it, but I certainly remember Theodore Roosevelt. My parents were Progressive Republicans, so they were very excited about Theodore Roosevelt. That's my first direct remembrance of national politics, in any sense--Theodore Roosevelt. When I was a child, the other discussion--besides the earthquake and fire--I used to hear a great deal of at home, was about Abe Ruef. I think that occurred about 1908, and I used to hear endlessly about this terrible man, Abe Ruef, and [Eugene] Schmitz, the mayor, who was indicted or imprisoned, and the corruption. Those are my earliest political remembrances, but all these things always interested me.

Chall: Was your father conscious of Abe Ruef in more than just the consciousness that comes from reading the paper? Or was he then active?

Heller: No, he was very active. There was a group in San Francisco that called themselves Progressive Republicans. They were the Hiram Johnson followers, and the Theodore Roosevelt followers. I remember going to Philip Bancroft's house. You know, he became the most fantastic conservative, but I can remember him when I was a child. I remember being taken by my parents to his house--because they lived up on Pacific or Broadway and had a wonderful view of the bay--to see the fleet come in. When was that? About 1914 or '15 maybe. I can remember going to Bancroft's because they had this wonderful view.

Chall: And you all went to see the fleet come in?

Heller: Yes. Oh, that was a big event, to see the fleet come in.

Chall: You must certainly have had a clear view of it in those days.
Heller: Oh, yes! Oh, all of San Francisco was watching. I'm not sure of the date of that. It's well established, I guess, because it was right after the opening of the Panama Canal, and I think it was the first time it had ever come to the West Coast.

Chall: Oh, then it was an occasion.

Heller: Oh, it was a tremendous event.

Chall: Who else was there? Do you remember?

Heller: I don't remember. I just remember the Bancrofts and their home.

Chall: Your father must have been an active member of the club, then, to be taken to the Bancroft home for a view of the fleet?

Heller: Yes. He was part of that group; that was one of his great interests. I can remember doing some mailing pieces. I think maybe they were for neighborhood distribution, you know, with various campaigns. This was all the Progressive Republican group.

Chall: What about your mother?

Heller: My mother—well, she wasn't a suffragette in the terms of the violence, but she was always a "vote for women" person—you know, before they had the vote.

Chall: California women got the vote in 1912.

Heller: That's right. And she was one of the early board members of the San Francisco Center, which became the League of Women Voters. So she was active in those things—never to a violent degree, but always terribly interested in that.

Chall: In 1912, you were still just a little girl.

Heller: Yes, and so I partially remember it. My parents were all for votes for women—I remember that very well.

I've often wondered if I had lived in that time if I would have been a suffragette or not. I'm not sure. I would have been for votes for women, but I don't know that I would have marched the streets. I think my mother did some mild marching. I may be wrong, but an annual event (you probably know) in San Francisco was the Columbus Day Parade. That was another big event. I can remember my mother marching once with a group in that, when I was little. You always went to see that, you know. That was a whole-day thing.

Chall: It's lost its luster in the last few years.
Heller: Oh, this is when I was little. My father's store, on Market, had its big windows, on the third floor, with big wide sills. I always thought I was so lucky that my father had a store that I could view from. We'd take our picnic lunch and we'd start out early in the morning, because we had to get on the south side of Market, and the police were very fussy, they wouldn't let you cross Market if the parade had started. You know, it went on from maybe ten in the morning to five in the afternoon. And, oh, I was always so proud of that and I could take some friends there. It was a great event.

Chall: Your friends must have been happy to be able to go with you, too. Those were always exciting if you could get a really good view.

Heller: That went on forever!

Chall: Did you get tired of it?

Heller: Well, you could get away from the window if you wanted to, though we'd sit on that wide sill. I have vague recollections of the Preparedness Day Parade—that was 1916. But I wasn't acutely aware of the bomb throwing. Wasn't that 1916? You know, the buildings—? I think I remember it more from reading afterwards, than I remember it then.

Chall: You don't remember your parents talking about it?

Heller: I think I do. It would be a thing they would talk about, though they weren't very conscious of labor movements. No, it was just those Progressive Republicans.

Chall: Was your father a Mason?

Heller: No. No, I don't think my father belonged to anything, except the Commonwealth Club.

Chall: He belonged to the Commonwealth Club from its inception?

Heller: I don't know when it started, but he was very active in that.

Chall: Now I can see why.

Recollections of Family Life in and Around San Francisco

Heller: We really led quite simple lives, when you think about it.

Chall: Who were the people who came to your house that you remember? Were they political friends and family members?
Heller: Well, lots of family. A lot of the French colony used to come to see my grandfather, who lived there.

Chall: How long did he live with you?

Heller: As far back as I can remember—and until he died in 1915.

Chall: So it was a close family?

Heller: Yes, but there were lots of friends coming and going all the time and lots of conversations. It wasn't high pressure sort of talk. They were, I guess, more intellectuals, but not in the sense of today. They were people who liked ideas; there was not much card playing—that sort of thing.

Chall: Were they readers—your parents and any of your uncles and aunts that you can remember? Did they read the books that were being written in those days?

Heller: I'm just wondering, because I read so much that it must have come from them. They had a pretty fair library. I'm not sure whether my reading came—it must have been encouraged by them, but I had a high school teacher of English, who, I think had an influence—Beth Armer, who was famous in Girls High School as an English teacher. So many people in San Francisco went to Girls High School and were under her.

Chall: Was there a choice about where you went to high school? Why did you go to Girls instead of some other high school?

Heller: There was no district high school at that time, in terms of the way it's districted now. Boys went to Lowell High School. And when I was in high school, a few girls I knew went to Lowell, but it wasn't considered quite proper to go to a coed school.

I graduated from Madison Grammar School, and my mother had entered me and I was accepted at Miss Burke's. I begged not to go to a private school. My father, and my mother, too, actually, were very understanding. Most of my friends were going to Girls High, and I didn't want to go to Miss Burke's. I remember my mother made no objections at all. She had sort of taken it for granted that I'd go there [Miss Burke's] but I'm very glad I didn't. Girls High was magnificent.

[Interview 2: December 13, 1974]#

Heller: Since I talked to you last week I have been thinking quite a bit about my own childhood. I don't want to say that I felt as if I had been on a psychiatrist's couch, but it does sort of get you thinking of things. I had enough sense to jot them down or I would never have thought of it.
Chall: Do you want to tell about it on the tape?

Heller: They're in no order. You can ask me what they're about.

Chall: [gives notes to Chall] You've written something here called Harbor View.

Heller: Well, what I started thinking about was that I've read lots of books about San Francisco and the United States pre-World War I, and they don't seem to be terribly accurate; they are over-dramatic or they're over-something. What I wanted to give was the impression of what a simple life a family like mine—which was just comfortably off, but not wealthy—led in those days; a very nice life, very simple. Harbor View is something that's sort of been lost to San Franciscans. It was a little cove on the bay, surrounded by a little grove of trees, at the eastern end of the Presidio. You used to go there, and there was a small shack—where you could buy "sarsaparilla" or some other soft drink—and where you could change your clothes. There was a sort of a little beach, very small, and you went swimming. That was there until the 1915 exposition was built in that part, which later became the Marina.

I was thinking of all these sort of simple expeditions we used to take all the time. Alameda—I guess the Alameda slough—I think it was called Neptune Beach. As I remember, there were several bathing places along the Alameda slough. You had to pay a minimum amount to go there; they weren't terribly crowded. But it was a great thing, you know, to take the ferry and I think the train to Neptune Beach. I think there was a ferry to Alameda from San Francisco.

Chall: What did you do? Did you go over in the morning with a picnic lunch?

Heller: Yes, the whole day.

Chall: Eat on the beach?

Heller: Yes.

Chall: Were there picnic tables?

Heller: I don't remember picnic tables; there probably were. It was terribly simple.

Chall: Who all went? You and your sister and your parents?

Heller: Oh, my parents, and usually they'd take some friends of mine with us. It was just an all-day expedition. When I look back, the one in San Francisco, Harbor View, must have been foggy at certain times of the year. We went to Marin County a lot of the time, too. By ferry to Sausalito, then by train to Mill Valley.
Chall: Where did you go when you went to Marin?

Heller: Well, you do what's even done now—you go into Muir Woods. There was that little train that went from Mill Valley part way up the mountain, and then down into Muir Woods. Very few people, comparatively, went on it. You'd picnic in Muir Woods. There was no automobile road, even if you had a car; there was no transportation except for that little train. That's been written about often enough. The train could either go down to Muir Woods and half way up the mountain, or go on up to the top of Mt. Tamalpais. Sometimes you'd hike it.

Chall: How old were you?

Heller: Oh, I think I was still in grammar school. The term grammar school doesn't mean much to people any more, but it went to the eighth grade in those days. So it would be up till I was thirteen, probably, mostly, that you do those things.

Chall: That's just about the time of the war, then, isn't it? You were born in 1904?

Heller: Yes. We went into World War I in 1917. It was up until about that time. But it was a very, very uncomplicated life.

I don't remember what other notes I gave you.

Chall: You did a lot of walking and going on streetcars.

Heller: Oh. My father was a great one for exploring San Francisco.

Chall: He was an explorer, wasn't he?

Heller: Oh, he was a great explorer. We used to take streetcars and then we'd climb up all the different hills in San Francisco, and we walked all over them. You have to remember that none of these places were developed. It's hard to believe it, but they just weren't. He'd dream up a new expedition all the time. You know Telegraph Hill? There were a few little houses that are still there, but nothing on top of the hill. And in the Mission, and the Sunset, and of course everything out near what we called the Ocean Beach—I guess it's still called that—sand dunes.

Chall: What about Golden Gate Park? Had that been developed yet?

Heller: Well, when I was in high school I used to play tennis there quite a bit. There weren't many available tennis courts. And on Sundays—almost every Sunday—my father would take me and my best friend, Elizabeth McCoy, who lived on the block with me (and who is still my best friend, believe it or not, after all these years.)
Chall: I think she was part of your wedding party.

Heller: Yes, yes she was.

Chall: She lived down the street from you?

Heller: Yes, she lived on the same block as I did—the 3400 block. She went to private school, and I went to public school. We used to go to Golden Gate Park every Sunday. I guess there's still a band concert, is there, in the park?

Chall: Yes.

Heller: We used to go there every Sunday afternoon and listen to that band concert, with my father; and as we got older, young boys used to flirt with us. We would be so embarrassed. So it was just another family sort of gathering. I think toward the end my father had a car. The McCoys had a car earlier than we did.

The other thing I was thinking about (I don't think I have a note of that) is about the movies, which I saw very little. My parents didn't approve of them. I was a very well behaved child, and I did whatever they said. They were called nickelodeons—you know, the neighborhood things. I remember Elizabeth was always going to the "nick," and once in a while I would get to the "nick," just in the neighborhood.

Chall: What do you remember seeing?

Heller: Well, I remember some of these Perils of Pauline things. But I remember earlier (as I mentioned last time), a housemaid we had named Julia Costello, who took me to a movie not in the neighborhood—I think it was out on Fillmore; just off Fillmore—to a very grownup movie. I'll always remember the name of it; that's the first movie I remember about. It was called Hearts Adrift, and I've always meant to look in some movie bibliography and find out who I'd seen. Oh, it was just so emotional. It was one of these very romantic, ridiculous things, and I think had something to do with a volcano. But my mother never knew that I had been to that movie. That's the first one I remember anything about.

I've just been reading the Manchester book, and he has quite a bit about the movies of the time, and the movies of the twenties and thirties—I don't think I've seen one of them; I've practically seen none of them.* What I wanted to say is that movies have not been a part of my life.

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Chall: Did they become so later?

Heller: Never. Never. I've never seen any of the famous movies—oh, maybe one or two, but practically none.

Chall: What about vaudeville?

Heller: Yes, vaudeville quite a bit. There was the Orpheum Theatre. The father of another friend of mine was the manager of another one—I think it was the Alcazar, where we saw operettas and plays. But we went to vaudeville when I was a young child. You went to the Orpheum for birthday parties. And after you went to—Tait's on Powell Street—a place where you got ice cream and cakes; that was the thing to do. That was the big entertainment, and the Orpheum, of course, was vaudeville. I can remember my father taking me when I was quite young to see Sarah Bernhardt, because he knew what a great actress she was, and said, "You're never going to be able to see this great actress again." She was in a play version of the opera—you know, the consumptive?

Chall: Oh, Camille.

Heller: Yes. Then I remember seeing Little Women—this was all drama—and quite a few plays that are lost to me now completely. Of course these were all matinees. Yes, quite a bit of that; that was within our scope—the scope of things we did.

Chall: But that was all quite intellectual. I mean, your father really had a feeling for intellectual activity.

Heller: Yes, my father did. It's interesting. He had a very good feeling for that. He was really a very fine person. He had a feeling for that—for music; the symphony—as I said—I went to for years when I was young; I just loved it.

Chall: Who was conducting symphonies here in those days?

Heller: Well, I think "Papa" [Alfred] Hertz was the conductor then, as far back as I remember.

Chall: Where were they held?

Heller: I believe it was the Alcazar on Geary near Mason.

Chall: Oh, the same theatre where the vaudeville was.

Heller: No. That was the Orpheum. It was not the corner one; it was next to it and I'm sure it was the Alcazar.
Chall: Ask Miss McCoy.

Heller: She'll probably remember it. She's now Mrs. Robson, and she was Mrs. Fenster--she married Lajos Fenster, who was the assistant concertmaster in the symphony, who then died; and then she was married to Dr. George Bernard Robson, and has been for over thirty years. They'll be here Christmas; that's how intimate we've been.

Chall: Now, you've mentioned something about outdoors and redwood trees.

Heller: Oh, well, my father just loved the outdoors. He taught me how you have to look at redwood trees, and I never get in a grove that I don't do it to this day. You lie flat on the ground with your head at the foot of a redwood--a giant redwood--and you look straight up. And that's the way you look at redwood trees. You do. And you just get the marvelous feeling of it. We used to do that quite a bit. My father loved the outdoors, and my mother loved wildflowers. We used to go wildflower hunting. There used to be tons of wildflowers. At Tahoe I still have my wildflower book, with the pressed flowers that I collected when I was a child.

Chall: How did your mother learn the names of wildflowers? Did she pick them out of books?

Heller: Yes. I think she took a course from that famous woman in San Francisco, Alice Eastman. She was very well known. I think she was taking a course with her once, because I can remember going on one expedition down near South San Francisco, way over those mountains that look so barren—and they are—but they were just filled with wildflowers. They're still pretty barren. We did all that sort of thing, you know, very low keyed.

Chall: Now it's the kind of thing that the younger generation is doing with a certain amount of fervor, isn't it?

Heller: That's right.

Chall: They're finding it again.

Heller: It's very interesting. But we didn't think of it as a "cause"; we thought of it as a way of spending a nice day.

Chall: Did you go up to Lake Tahoe when you were young?

Heller: No. The first time I went with my parents was, I think, when I was about sixteen. I don't think I'd ever been there before. We went to Yosemite and Sequoia National Park, and places like that. I'd been to Yosemite a couple of times, and to Wawona, which is the Wawona Big Trees. But Tahoe didn't come into my life really, except when I
Heller: was engaged. The Heller and Hellman family were so much Tahoe, and I moved into the realm of Tahoe much more than I had before.

Chall: How did you father ever learn about looking at redwood trees by lying on his back?

Heller: Well, he belonged to the Sierra Club from as far back as I can remember. You know, I wouldn't call him a great outdoors person in terms of a rough person, but he always had the standards that the Sierra Club had. It probably dates from that, maybe when he was younger—you know, when he was a young boy. I'm not sure.

Chall: He grew up, as I recall, in San Francisco?

Heller: Yes.

Chall: Where would all this have come to him? Do you remember much about your grandfather Raas? Was he interested in this sort of thing?

Heller: Not really, no. He was a gentle man. He was called Marguerite by some people because he always used to have a white Marguerite (daisy) between his teeth as he walked. (Of course I knew him in later years. I'll show you a picture of him if we go to Clary's. [Clarence E.]) He always made sure that there was a Marguerite around.

No, I'm not sure where this came from for my father.

Chall: His mother?

Heller: I guess she was alive as he was growing up. I don't know where it came from—just natural interest.

You asked me last time if my family read a lot, and I was thinking about that. I was always very proud that my father was a member of the Mechanic's Institute Library. How he came to be a member of that, I don't know. But I used to, more when I was in high school than when I was in grammar school, go downtown proudly with that membership card, and study at that library, and do work for high school papers, and get books out of there. And it's still where it was. Now, I'm not sure how my father came by all these interests, but he certainly did. So he gave me sort of a nice set of values.

And another thing you asked me was who were my father's associates in the Progressive Party, and I mentioned Philip Bancroft. Then it came to me that the one he looked up to, and who used to come to our house and we followed very closely, was Chester Rowell, who was editor of the San Francisco Chronicle—I guess. He had a column. I think he ended up in Fresno. He's terribly well known. I believe he was a Regent of the University of California, but I was not conscious of
Heller: that at that time. He, unlike Philip Bancroft, remained a Progressive. He was sort of the ideal person. There was a nice personal relationship, and there was this Fresno association through my aunt.

Chall: He was a Hiram Johnson Progressive, too?

Heller: Oh, and how! I think he maybe died in the thirties. Philip Bancroft lived many more years and became an extreme conservative. I think he lived in Walnut Creek or thereabouts.

Chall: Were there some women who were part of that, as well as men?

Heller: I don't remember. The first thing I remember is when Mother was a member of the San Francisco Center. I guess I was in high school then.

Summer Vacations in the Country

Chall: Now, your summer vacations--seven weeks?

Heller: Oh, well that was something I wanted to put in. If you went to public school in San Francisco, summer vacations were only seven weeks then, which was not very much. It was roughly the last week of June to the first week of August--very short, compared to the three months now. Everybody that we knew--and remember, this is not wealthy people at all--made every effort to be out of San Francisco for six of the seven weeks. I can think of every summer of my life as a child, when we went to very simple places; but we were always away for six weeks. My father would have to come back to work part of the time. We went to San Rafael a couple of times.

Chall: You rented a house or cabin?

Heller: We rented a house at San Rafael. Once in a little place outside of San Rafael called Alta, we rented a couple of rooms in a little house up on a hill. And we went to the Santa Cruz mountains quite a bit; that was more of this outdoor--Then we went to a place (named Lake View) out of Los Gatos, seven miles into the mountains. That doesn't sound like much, but when you went by horse and wagon--You took the train to Los Gatos. I remember mostly the cherry orchard there; it was on the side of the mountain. They'd send their horse and wagon down for you, and it took four hours to get up this mountain road after you got off the train. We went there two or three summers. As I say, there was never a summer that we were not someplace in the country, under very simple circumstances.
Chall: Did your mother take help with her?

Heller: Sometimes. Castle Crags, outside of Dunsmuir— I remember Julia Costello there; you see, my sister was five years younger. That was another place. These were all wonderful places—not San Rafael, particularly—for hiking, and woods, and wildflowers. And it was all very simple.

Chall: You said also last week that your father would sometimes use the summer vacations to take trips around the countryside and visit some of the people—milliners.

Heller: Yes, or in school vacations. But that was really after we had a car. I was asking Elizabeth McCoy if she could remember, and she said, "Oh, yes, I remember exactly when we got a car. I was eleven and you were twelve when you got a car." And she said, "And I remember when we sat down and wrote to Sacramento for our driver's licenses." She was eleven and I was twelve, and we got them [laughs]. Isn't that crazy? Her parents had had a car, but she remembered exactly when we had gotten our car. We called them cars then.

Chall: They were called cars and not automobiles?

Heller: No, they were called cars. The speed limit, I remember, was twenty miles an hour. I can remember my mother grumbling when the speed limit was raised to thirty miles an hours, "Why would anybody want to go so fast?" [laughs] Also, just at that point my parents bought this little place in Ross. Did I mention that?

Chall: No.

Heller: In Marin County.

Chall: That was after you had the car?

Heller: Yes, just at that time; just before I went into high school. They bought a little place in Ross that must have been, maybe, a hundred and fifty feet wide, and it went straight up one of those mountains that backs onto Mt. Tamalpais. You climbed and climbed and climbed, and there were redwoods on this. After my parents bought this place, the McCoy family bought the place next door, so we had these two places. It was mostly mountain, but we'd climb up there in the redwoods. And our house is still there; I looked a year or two ago when I was visiting my son. I go over there to Kentfield where my son Alfred lives. I took my grandchildren, and there was that house, still there!

Chall: Is it being lived in?
Heller: Yes, it's being lived in.

Chall: What about the mountains behind it—have they been built on?

Heller: No, never been built on.

Chall: So does it look fairly much as it used to?

Heller: It looks exactly the same, except a new coat of paint. Very simple. It was a little country house.

Chall: How did your father happen to decide to purchase a piece of property there?

Heller: I don't know. I guess he thought it would be nice when I was in high school—you know, as we were growing up, to have a place to be in summer. At that point there was the seven weeks vacation only, as far as I was concerned, and that's where we did this commuting. I don't know if I mentioned that?

Chall: No.

Heller: Well, that was when I went to Girls High School. My parents would stay there in Ross about three months, so before summer vacation and after I would commute to school every day from Ross. I'd have to walk about two miles to the station, wait for the train, go to Sausalito, change to the ferry, which took you to the Ferry Building; then get on the streetcar and go out to Girls High School, which was at Geary and Scott. And then you'd reverse it in the afternoon. A lot of people at Girls High did that; there were quite a crowd of us that used to commute together.

Chall: Elizabeth McCoy, too?

Heller: She went to Miss Burke's, and they had a three months vacation. But some of them to this day I still see; they had no great importance in my life, so there's no particular reason to mention them. Of course, that was the time when you sort of liked the boys and they didn't pay much attention to you; and we played a great deal of tennis on the Ross public school tennis courts.

Chall: You've been a tennis player all your life.

Heller: Oh, yes, I've always played. There were no swimming pools, except that Elizabeth McCoy's brother went to Hitchcock Military Academy in San Rafael, and in summer vacation the school was empty and we were free to use the pool of that military academy. I think it's now Tamalpais School for Boys, which is a good private school still. We did have cars, sometimes, there—our parents' cars; never our own, none of us had our own cars.
Chall: But you could drive?

Heller: We could drive.

Chall: Your father, then, drove to his work?

Heller: Yes, in San Francisco, or he'd walk it quite often because he'd leave the car for my mother. When we were in Ross, he'd always commute by train, ferry and streetcar. He usually walked to the train. We walked an awful lot. Nobody dreams of doing that—well, I think the young ones do now, don't you?

Chall: Yes, more.

Heller: Actually, my second granddaughter—they live in Kent Woodlands, which was part of the Kent Estate when I was a child—went to Catherine Branson School for her freshman and sophomore years in high school. Now she goes to public school. But she went by bike over to Ross, to that school, always; so they're doing it again, you know.

Chall: Where did your mother get her groceries when she lived there? Were there stores? Where would she shop?

Heller: Well, I remember we used to go to San Rafael mostly—it isn't very far—and buy things. I can't remember that there was any store in Ross.

Chall: So she really had to have a car, or were groceries delivered in those days?

Heller: I think the car and buying that place in Ross all came together.

Chall: And you had a telephone, of course?

Heller: Yes, we had a telephone ever since I can remember. I remember my uncle, Dr. Fisher, had a phone before we did because doctors were the first ones to have them. I always remember his number—they lived a block away from us—was three-six. Then when we got our phone, I was so impressed because our number was three-six-five. [laughs] I think we had a phone ever since I can remember; I think we always had a telephone, or at least from the time we lived at 100 Locust Street we had a telephone—when I was six. We always had a phone, and we always had electricity.
Neighborhood Play

Chall: What about the block?

Heller: I was just thinking about Elizabeth McCoy at one end and me at the other.

Chall: And who else? Was that on Locust Street?

Heller: No, Jackson Street, really, 3400 block—-at the corner of Locust and Jackson. Very few automobiles traveled Jackson Street. There was a steep hill on Jackson two blocks away, and there were no buses. All the neighborhood children used to play right out in the middle of the block—not on the sidewalks. You know, we'd play hand baseball with a tennis ball, and all sorts of street games; and we were very seldom bothered by cars. It was boys and girls, all playing together. And there were quite a few empty lots out there still, and we'd play in those lots an awful lot.

Chall: Did the boys build forts?

Heller: No, not particularly—just fool around and sort of explore. When I was little, they seemed much bigger than they probably were.

Chall: Were there wildflowers on them?

Heller: Yes, there were wildflowers. They were sort of the remains of sand dunes. You see, we were a block from the Presidio wall. But I was forbidden to go to the Presidio alone; that was a taboo. We were a little bounded in our neighborhood because the Presidio was believed by my mother to be dangerous. We went over the wall at the foot of Locust Street, which is a block from where Julius Kahn Playground is now.

Then, four blocks over (south) were those Masonic cemeteries—-I can't think of the name of them; they've all been moved—and that was a very tempting place to go, those blocks. We'd go over the wall occasionally, but we were forbidden to go. So we just had a very small area that we could roam in. And we'd roller skate a great deal. It was a level block, and it was all protected. You never talked to a person on the next block—you only played with the people who lived on your own block.
The Godchaux Family: French and Piano Lessons

Heller: Oh, I know what I was thinking about. Have you got the Godchaux?

Chall: Yes, then we come to the Godchaux.

Heller: I want to get them in. I wonder if anybody has ever given--?

Chall: Mrs. Rinder talked about them very briefly. I'd like to know more about them.

Heller: The Godchaux were a French family. They were Parisians, if I remember. There were four sisters, one of whom was married: there was Becky Godchaux; Helene; Phine (I guess it was Josephine; I'm not sure); one married sister, Madame Salomon; and a brother, Edmond Godchaux. He had some minor civil service job in San Francisco that he kept all his life. They absolutely had no money at all, but great cultural background. I guess because of the French association, they came into my father's life when he was a child. He learned French--well, I think he learned it from his parents--but French grammar from Becky Godchaux. And Becky Godchaux was my French teacher, you see, many years later, and the most marvelous teacher of French there ever was. I remember those verbs and that grammatical construction to this day because of her training.

Chall: It was Becky who taught? What about Helene?

Heller: Helene and Phine taught piano, and Helene had taught my father to play. My father was a rather good piano player but I was not. But because he had had Helene for a teacher when she first came, he had me have her. She was a perfectly dreadful piano teacher--just terrible, really. You know, it was really terrible that I had her. It was all right for my father, because he did have ability as a player, but without a player's ability it was so dreary--you have no idea.

Chall: She taught it in a dull way, or she just didn't teach--?

Heller: She really didn't know much. You had to hold your hands in a ball this way [demonstrates]. Did you ever--? You had to practice holding a pencil in a ball and [raising her fingers to demonstrate]--Oh! Well, I took four and a half years with her and hated it all.

But what I wanted to say was that the Godchaux were really characters in San Francisco. They lived in a big old wooden house on Buchanan and Broadway; it's still there. It wasn't that big, but it was big enough. And because of Becky, who was really the character everybody loved, that house was so jammed with souvenirs and presents, that you could hardly move in it. She knew a lot of famous people.
Heller: I remember she always used to talk about her friends—like Maurice Maeterlinck, I remember, and many musicians. I did even take French from her after I was married, just because I enjoyed it—it was more literature.

She was the one who taught Yehudi Menuhin his French, and she was very proud of young Yehudi as one of her pupils. I took, and many people took French lessons with her. They really were characters in San Francisco, and had a great influence, you know, on music—the literary world. They had salons of people coming. But they were here much longer than Mrs. Rinder would have known, I think; I don't think she knew the early background.

Chall: No, she only knew them from 1914, when she moved here.

Heller: Well, this goes back to my father. He was born in 1873—he probably took lessons in the eighties, anyway.

Chall: Were these Godchaux women a little older than your father?

Heller: They were older, yes. I don't remember why they came, except I know they had no money. In later years—I can't remember which ones died, but Becky lived a long time—a great many people in San Francisco contributed every month to a fund that would keep them, when they were past their teaching years—for years; this was after I was married. Of course, my husband had also had French from Becky Godchaux; everybody had friends who knew Becky Godchaux. I don't know how she had so many.

Chall: Did she teach you all privately?

Heller: Yes, everyone had private lessons. There were no class lessons, and you went to her house.

Chall: Once a week?

Heller: Yes, once a week.

Chall: One hour?

Heller: One hour after school. It was a fair distance from where we lived. When I was in grammar school, I can remember going there. I had to walk up Jackson Street and up the steep hills, and then to Lyon, and up the Lyon Street hill to Pacific, and down Pacific till I came to the only streetcar I was allowed to ride on by myself—the old Pacific Avenue cable car, because the gripmen were so well known to everybody that it was safe. I was allowed to ride on that and I could take that cable car, which ended right at Divisadero and Pacific,
and I could ride it down to Buchanan Street. I was allowed to do that without anybody. Then I could ride back, but I had to walk blocks to get to and from it! That I did when I was still in grammar school.

Then you had French in high school?

Yes, but I kept taking it from Becky Godchaux when I was in high school. Well, I didn't have too much French in high school, because I had had too much—I took maybe a couple of years, but I was way ahead of the class. Actually, when I went to college I skipped all of the beginning French and started with French literature. You see, I had had all that background. To skip ahead of myself, though I didn't major in French, I ended up with the equivalent of a French major. I was given a prize by the French government at graduation; they considered me a major. So I've had a lot of French in my lifetime. And then I did continue to take--just to keep fluent you know--conversation in French when I was married. So that was a long-time influence.

You've probably gathered that I always enjoyed studying; and I loved playing. I adored playing—I mean, playing outdoors, games; I just loved athletics.

Did these Godchaux live all together?

Every one of them, all together; and I remember a Monsieur Salomon.

He was there?

Yes, he was there, sort of in the background; and Madame Salomon, I guess, ran the house.

Did you ever know the Godchaux parents?

No. My father may have. Whether they were brought here by their parents or not, I don't think I ever knew. They were a very important part of that period of San Francisco. A whole lot of us used to pay twenty-five dollars a month or something like that into a fund; I've forgotten who even kept the fund, but the checks just went to them, in later years.

Impressions of the Extraordinary and the Mundane: Revolution, Comets, and Clothing Styles

Now [continuing to read from Mrs. Heller's list] what about dancing school; and the Russian Revolution?

Oh, it wasn't really about dancing school. We all took dancing school; it wasn't about that, but it was something related to that. When was the Russian Revolution—1917?
Chall: About that time.

Heller: Well, it just struck me as something I remember. My father was taking me to dancing school—it was early evening—for an hour; they were very simple little dancing schools. I think maybe I was in the first year of high school then. I remember being on the streetcar with him, and he wasn't as friendly as usual. He said, "I'm very bothered by something that happened today, Elinor." He always called me Elinor. He said, "There was a revolution in Russia. I just want you to know, and remember this; the world's never going to be the same again." Isn't that interesting? He was right! So, in a way, that's a turning point that I can mark—my father's realization of that.

The other thing I had down there was that with no radios or anything, newspapers were our source of all information. Somebody has recorded how the newsboys used to come out to the neighborhoods all the time, crying, "Extra"; but it sounded like "Wuxtra." No matter how often they'd come, especially during World War I, my father would go out and buy a newspaper. And, you know, these kids used to fake it half the time, to sell more papers. So I was raised with newspapers—drowning in newspapers. And then I married a man who had this bad habit of buying newspapers everyplace, too. [laughs] Well, it's not a bad habit; it's a good habit. You learn a lot as you travel if you buy newspapers. But that was the way we always got the news—from these extras; they'd come crying through the neighborhood with them.

Chall: Halley's Comet. You saw Halley's Comet?

Heller: One summer when we were in San Rafael—in 1910. I remember my father keeping me up at San Rafael to see Halley's Comet, and telling me over and over again to watch this, for I was never going to see it again in my life. So I can pick it up very well as one of my first memories.

Chall: Your father really left impressions, didn't he?

Heller: Yes, he did.

Chall: He knew just what was historically important, and never missed an opportunity to tell you.

Heller: He was very interesting, as I look back—how he paid attention to things like this.

Chall: But he also wanted to carry it on; he wanted to let you know the meaning of it, and not just let it slip by.
Heller: Well, he seemed to.

Chall: Dressmaking.

Heller: Oh! Well, I just happened to remember—you know now you can go to stores and buy clothing. My mother had a dressmaker who came twice a year to the house. She'd be there for two or three days. Before she came, I'd go downtown with my mother—and my sister, too—and we'd look at materials for dresses. We'd have all the materials sent home, and then all our school dresses would be made, and one or two party dresses. That's the way we always got our clothes when I was a child.

Chall: What were the seasons of the year when the dressmaker came?

Heller: I think just before the beginning of school at the end of summer, and in the spring. I always remember my sister was very fat—though she's slim and attractive now—and my mother always said when the dressmaker came—I remember she gave the instructions to make the front of her dresses three inches longer than the back because her stomach stuck out, and then they came out even!

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Heller: While we're on clothing, I was thinking of one thing. There was some subtle change in there. You see, my sister was born in 1909. I always wore long black stockings, or white stockings for good.

Chall: Lisle?

Heller: Yes.

Chall: Did they come to your knees only?

Heller: No.

Chall: All the way up?

Heller: I don't remember how they were attached—garters, I guess. No, they were not knee—they weren't dashing that way; they were high.

Chall: You must have had a garter belt.

Heller: Yes, or a cliplet. I don't remember a garter belt, but it must have been something. And I remember these high, black, laced shoes. Still, my sister, who was five years younger, always wore socks.

Chall: You mean what were called bobby socks?

Heller: Yes, bobby sock type of thing. I never went bare legged and she did; so there must have been some changes in style.
Chall: At what stage was she wearing bobby socks?

Heller: I think when she was a little girl. Now, there may have been some personal reason for this, but I don't remember that. But I can remember those stockings of mine.

Chall: And you didn't like them?

Heller: I don't think you thought much about them; you know, you take things for granted.

Chall: But they were either black or white, and they were cotton?

Heller: Yes. They were very ugly. I guess lisle is what you'd call them.

Chall: You didn't wear silk.

Heller: No silk then. They were quite ugly.

Chall: Were you dressed in the style of the day?

Heller: Oh, yes. There was not much style.

Chall: Just plain dresses tied with a belt or a sash?

Heller: That's right--just very plain. Then when I went to high school I always wore middy blouses and skirts. I never wore anything else.

Chall: Was that required?

Heller: No, not where I went, because I went to public school. But that was the style my mother liked on me--and I was very happy with--you know, with the sailor collars. And then you had the big scarf that you tied in a bow. I don't think I ever wore anything else.

Chall: Black pleated skirt?

Heller: Black or blue or plaid pleated skirts.

Chall: Were they made of wool or cotton, or both?

Heller: I think they were wool. They were on the heavy side. At the end of my high school career the skirts had gone long all of a sudden. I don't remember too much about style except that, and I remember the skirts were long as you got older. Really, I was raised in a very unattractive period of dress. Also when I went to college--very unattractive. I don't like to look at pictures of those times. [laughs] There was no style.
Heller: I can remember adults—my mother, who was not high style. I can remember the hobble skirt period, but I was too young—you know, when they could hardly walk? I can remember my mother with a hobble skirt, which she thought was rather ridiculous, but she wore it.

Chall: Wasn't there a move toward freeing women in their clothing to something that was easier to wear than the corsets, the hobble, and all that?

Heller: I guess there was, but I was too young to be a part of it. I think our clothes were free enough.

Chall: You grew up later than the so-called "bloomer girl" period?

Heller: Yes, a little bit later. Of course, when I was in high school "boyish bras" were the thing. You know about those? Where you tried to make yourself as flat chested as you possibly could?

Chall: Oh, my, did you really?

Heller: Oh, you did! Instead of an uplift, it went this way [demonstrates].

Chall: Flat.

Heller: And that's why so many women of my age have sagging breasts, because you kept tightening and tightening and putting them down.

Chall: How could you even breathe?

Heller: I don't know; you just wore them. They were like a bandage, almost. Everybody wore them; we wanted to be flat chested.

Chall: It must have been hard on many women—growing girls.

Heller: Well, when we were in high school that's what we wore. Yes, and I guess we wore corsets, too.

Chall: In high school?

Heller: Yes.

Chall: Did you have a swimming pool in high school?

Heller: No. When I first went to high school, the Women's Athletic Club had just been built in San Francisco—it's still there, of course—and my mother had me made a member. I used to go there after school quite a bit, and there was a swimming pool there. There was also an indoor tennis court on the top floor—wooden floor. Though I had played tennis before then, that's the first time I ever had lessons. I learned the basic strokes from a woman teacher—I think she must have
Heller: been a college girl; she seemed old enough to me--named Miss Lamert. And to this day my forehand and backhand are exactly what she taught me at that point. I've had lessons from other people since, with other strokes.

Chall: You never had to relearn those strokes?

Heller: No. It's amazing, isn't it--that far back?

Chall: When you went swimming in the club and at the beaches when you were a little girl, did you wear a bathing suit that covered you all up?

Heller: I remember what I wore in high school. Yes, it covered you up. Well, you had no sleeves. It was very stylish when I was in high school--I don't think it was so much modesty--to take these black lisle stockings and roll them just below your knees. You went swimming with the black stockings on, and a little knee showing. They were horrible. Actually, I never cared too much about swimming, and I never really learned to do anything but the breast stroke, which I do to this day. I'm a strong swimmer, but I never did learn the crawl, though a lot of people did at my age; I wasn't that interested in it.

Chall: Did you not want to get your face wet? Is that one of the reasons? Although you do get your face wet in the breast stroke.

Heller: I decided I didn't like my head under water, and to this day I don't. I'm a very healthy person, but water over my head gives me a headache. So to this day I swim miles out into Lake Tahoe with my head still out of the water [laughs]. This wasn't true of the period. It was very true of my parents' period, and they taught me to swim that breast stroke. I never was interested enough or had enough access to pools to bother; well, I did after I was married, and then I didn't care.

Chall: So your primary form of exercise has been walking and tennis?

Girls High School

Heller: Oh, I did all sorts of athletics in high school and college.

Chall: Did you run?

Heller: No. Basketball, baseball, crew--in college; but that was not the crew that it is now. It was two people to a seat (sixteen to a boat) on Lake Merritt--we used to do that. And handball, field hockey. I liked sports! I never learned to play football. Well, you
Heller: know, anything you've learned in your youth you can still do. I had plenty of exercise. Yes, I think I went with the athletic group of Girls High School.

Chall: Were they giving girls letters on their sweaters for athletics in those days?

Heller: I don't remember that they were. I used to play tennis in high school, after school, almost every day at the Athletic Club or on the courts right across the street from Girls High School. And I used to play some mild high school competitive tennis; I was never that good, but I was okay.

Chall: I wanted to ask you about high school--something about your teachers. You mentioned a Miss Armer, who taught you English?

Heller: Yes, Beth Armer.

Chall: She's not related to the woman who paints, is she?

Heller: Oh, yes--she was an aunt of Ruth Armer, who is now married to Joe Bransten. Yes, she was her aunt.

Chall: What other teachers can you remember especially, or whose subjects interested you?

Heller: Well, except for science I liked every subject I ever had.

Chall: No science appealed to you?

Heller: I took the minimum that was ever required. I think I took chemistry in high school--I think that was all I had to do. In college I used botany as my science. I just was not attracted to science, but I liked everything else.

One of the famous teachers, who was rather old when I was in Girls High School, was Mrs. Prag. She was the mother of Florence Prag Kahn, whose husband had been a congressman from San Francisco. When he died she (Mrs. Kahn) became a congresswoman. Mrs. Prag was a history teacher, and she had taught my mother when she went to Girls High School, too. She was a tough teacher--not as good as Beth Armer, but good enough. Very, very tough. Girls High was a big school--about two thousand girls. It was a marvelous public school. It was largely college oriented. I remember there were quite a few Orientals there, especially Japanese. But, you see, when I went to school there were very few blacks in San Francisco, and I don't remember any blacks there; there may have been some, but I remember mostly Orientals besides the whites there.
Chall: And mostly Japanese rather than Chinese?

Heller: Well, I remember the Japanese better. Maybe they were more friends of mine. There were quite a number of Orientals there. This was the era when girls were starting to go to college in great numbers. It was an academic high school.

Chall: And Boys High School was an academic high school for boys?

Heller: Yes, but it was Lowell High School by that time and it was coed. It was an academic high school, too. Those were the two great academic high schools. They were surprisingly good.

Chall: There were high expectations, I guess, among the students and the teachers?

Heller: Quite a few of my friends went to Miss Burke's--real private schools--and I think I got a much better high school education than they did.

Chall: Where was Miss Burke's located then?

Heller: I think it was where it is now, on Jackson Street. It was a newish building then--on Jackson near Lyon.

Chall: Was it a new private school, or did it have a history?

Heller: I first remember Miss Burke's school when it was on Broderick Street between Jackson and Pacific Avenue. Miss Burke somehow was a friend or acquaintance of my mother's, and I remember going there when I was, I guess, the equivalent of kindergarten, because one of my cousins was there. Because I spoke such good French they had me go there and sort of talk French with the older girls. I just have a vague recollection of that. I don't remember why I didn't start public school--or any school--till-- You know, at that time the school classes in public school were half-year classes; you were in the low second or the high second--you know, starting with the first grade. Somehow I did not go to school until the high second grade. I wasn't ill; there was nothing that kept me out. I'm not quite sure why, because I loved it! There was nothing you could--

Chall: You don't remember being taught to read before then?

Heller: No. I'm sure I did, but I don't remember it. It's just not clear to me why. You were districted, just as you are now, and our house was the farthest away from the school--a good six blocks away from Madison Grammar School--and I think maybe my parents thought it was--You see, you came home at noon; you had a funny family if you didn't go home for lunch. So you'd walk there in the morning, and you'd come back at noon--and you'd gulp down your food, when you lived six
blocks away, to get back before the afternoon classes started. I think maybe my parents thought I was too young to do that much until then.

But you walked and you walked and you walked, and I envied the people who lived near the school because they could play in the noon hour, and I could just make it home and back. I've thought about that: nobody took lunch to school; you were considered not to have a decent family if you did. Except there were always students at Madison from the Presidio—they'd come on a bus of some sort. We never spoke to them, because they came and went, and they weren't part of us. They ate lunch at school.

There were no facilities for anything warm; they had to bring it themselves?

No, just sandwiches, and then they went straight home.

In high school how did you eat your lunch?

It depended. One thing was stylish one year, and one thing another. Sometimes you would have a brown bag with a sandwich in it, and you'd buy a bag of potato chips. There was a cafeteria, and one year we ate in the cafeteria. But it was still considered that you didn't come from quite the right background. Well, that sounds snooty, and it isn't meant to sound snooty—you didn't have a proper mother looking after you if you ate in the high school cafeteria.

But it was too far away to go home, wasn't it?

Yes. You took your lunch in a brown bag. And we had nothing hot, ever; there were no thermoses—I guess there were, but we never thought of it.

If you ate in the cafeteria would the food be warm?

Yes. I ate so little in the cafeteria. I just can remember mostly rainy days when we'd have to go in there and eat our sandwiches. We'd always eat outside in the school playground.

You took Latin?

I took Latin, and I took four years of English, and four years of history; I guess I took two years Latin and the last two years French, and all the English there was. I once thought I should learn to sew, so I took one term of sewing, at which I was an absolute failure.

Cooking? Did they teach domestic science, as it was known?
Heller: I had domestic science in grammar school; they sent us to another school. And I learned nothing. Domestic things were not for me. And I couldn't draw; I never could do anything in art--never tried to. And I couldn't sing. Well, I had a little music somewhere along the way--musical appreciation, but those are the things that are lacking in my high school. And very little science. Oh, and lots of math! Lots of math, at which I was particularly good.

Chall: How far in math would they teach girls--algebra, geometry?

Heller: Algebra, geometry; I guess advanced algebra; and then I took some at Mills. I would have gone on, except it was before math was important. I took trigonometry in college, and calculus, and I thought, "What am I doing this for? Nobody ever uses math!" I'm sure I would have been a math major if I'd gone to college later.

Chall: You loved school?

Heller: I just was always happy! I liked to study, I liked the courses, I liked the homework, and I liked all the activities--I got into every sort of activity. In high school I was president of the student body in my senior year.

Chall: Does that mean you were popular and knew how to organize a campaign?

Heller: I'm not sure what it meant. I also was president of the Associated Students at Mills College. I think I just didn't have much competition running against me in my classes--I don't know. You know, you don't set out to do those things. Somebody says, "Why don't you run," and they put up signs, "Vote for Elinor Raas." And then you do it! Well, it sort of ties in to later life, that's why I thought maybe I should mention it.

I was in every sort of school activity, except acting I didn't do.

Chall: You weren't in the chorus?

Heller: No.

Chall: Nor the orchestra?

Heller: No. When I was in college I did prompt for college plays; I thought I had to learn something about the methods of drama, and prompting seemed to be the only thing [laughs] I could do properly.
Mills College

Chall: Why did your family choose Mills College for you? Or did they?

Heller: Well, it was always taken for granted that I was going to go to college; that was point number one. My parents both had always remembered that they hadn't gone when they could have; their families were well off enough that they could have gone to college, and they hadn't.

You must have in your memoirs something about Mrs. M.C. Sloss—Hattie Sloss? She was a friend of my mother's—well, friendly enough—not that they were the most intimate friends, but Mother liked her very much and liked the things she was interested in. She had a daughter who had started as a freshman at Mills when I was a freshman in high school—Margaret Kuhn her name is now. I don't know if she's alive yet or not; I've lost track of her. Mrs. Sloss, who was a great conversationalist—what she believed in she believed in—began talking to my mother about Mills College and about the new president there, Aurelia Henry Reinhardt, and what a marvelous person she was. I imagine my mother met Aurelia Henry Reinhardt along the way, but I don't really remember that. The first I remember is my mother saying that Mills College had a marvelous new president, and that Mrs. Sloss was convinced that by the time I was ready to go—four years hence—it would be a wonderful place to go. And I put my mind on Mills College and I never thought of anything else! It was just that simple. I knew I wanted to go to college; I didn't crave coed—you see, I had gone to a girls' high school. I knew plenty of boys.

I wasn't particularly looking for a coed college; even then I knew enough, having gone to a girls' high school, how really I had a much better time and how much more I learned than girls who had gone to coed schools. So the idea of a girls—women's college, you call it now—was very appealing to me because I could be much more myself. I always knew plenty of boys, so that I didn't feel that I had to go to college to meet the opposite sex. I'd always had plenty of opportunity—you know, a lot of dances and things like that.

So having heard that about Mills, I really didn't think too much about it. Then in the back of my head I thought I would like to go to Smith College; I'd heard about that. My parents said they thought I was too young to go East—they didn't have any family in the East—and I could transfer in my junior year. So that was sort of my idea, but once I went to Mills I never thought of changing.

Chall: Did you then go to live in Oakland?

Heller: I lived right on Mills campus.
Chall: So you really left home, as it were?

Heller: Yes. I lived on the campus and came home very occasionally. It was usually when my laundry got beyond me [laughs]. I didn't have a car. There were no bridges then—you had to go by train and ferry. I'd go lugging my suitcase up to the K-Leona streetcar or down to that other line—I've forgotten the name of it—that ran out Fourteenth Street in Oakland.

I liked Mills College from the day I went there. That's all you can say; I just enjoyed everything.

Chall: Did any of your classmates from Girls High go to Mills, too?

Heller: Yes. There were six of us, strangely enough, who went—which is quite a number to have gone to a private college from a public high school.

Chall: Elizabeth McCoy?

Heller: No, Elizabeth was two years behind me—she was a year younger, and I was a year ahead. (She went to Miss Burke's.) Her eyes went bad on her, and she never went to college. She studied music. She wasn't allowed to use her eyes a lot, so she never went.

I'll tell you someone you might come across in your memoirs who was one of my classmates, who was also a Girls High graduate—it was Ellie Fleishhacker Sloss. You know, her mother was a Gerstle [Bella], and her father was Mortimer Fleishhacker [Sr.].

Chall: What's her last name now?

Heller: Well, it's changed quite often. Her first husband was Leon Sloss, and he died.

Chall: Was that a relative of Hattie?

Heller: Oh, they were all related.

Chall: All right. And now what's her name?

Heller: Well, she's gone back to Sloss after two other marriages. She's now Mrs. Eleanor Sloss; she was Mrs. Leon Sloss in her first marriage. You may come across her in your things.

Chall: Well, if we don't, it's a good idea to put it in anyway, just to get it on the record. She was from Girls High?

Heller: Yes, she was from Girls High.
Chall: Are there any other classmates whom you see?

Heller: Yes, quite a few.

Chall: Have they done anything in the community?

Heller: Well, it's a funny way to put it. Most Mills College girls are very active in their communities, one way or the other. And I keep running into them all the time. I don't know, it's just something that happens. I'm forever running into them and being on boards with them. It wasn't drummed into us; it just was something you did.

Chall: Is it because most of them came from upper middle class families, and this was a tradition of the family?

Heller: Not necessarily, because those that went to Stanford or the University of California at the same time, have not done nearly as much. It's something we often discuss.

Chall: You don't know why? Have you ever come to any conclusions?

Heller: No. Maybe the self-assurance a women's college gives you. I think that may be it.

Chall: What was expected of the women at that time in our society? That was in the twenties, right after women were given the vote.

Heller: We were not terribly conscious of world affairs. You know, that was a period of time--the Harding era--when there was sort of a revulsion against anything but having a good time. It was a very prosperous time. You knew what was going on, to a degree, in the world; but you weren't consumed with it.

Chall: What was Aurelia Reinhardt's purpose in teaching women? What was her goal?

Heller: Well, let's start back with somebody who had been acting president of Mills, who had been a professor of math and the dean of the faculty--Hettie Belle Ege. Her slogan was, before Aurelia Reinhardt came (I think Aurelia Reinhardt went there in 1916), "Remember who you are and what you represent."

Chall: That was Dean Ege?

Heller: Yes. That expression remained in use for years. You must have lots in your oral histories about Aurelia Henry Reinhardt. She was a very dynamic, domineering, dramatic woman, who was forced to earn a living. Her husband, who was a doctor, had died. She had two young boys and no money. I'm not sure that she even had a Ph.D. from Berkeley--maybe,
Heller: maybe not—and she decided she would take the presidency of Mills! It was offered to her. Her field of scholarship was Dante. And she came in like a house afire, and turned Mills upside down; and borrowed money, and built buildings—and paid no attention to the finances. Of course, when she came in it was a prosperous time. It caught up later with Mills; they had a terrible time getting out of this. But she attracted more and more students—awfully good students; very good.

Chall: Good faculty?

Heller: A good faculty. She didn't particularly try to recruit women for the faculty, but women and men. A Ph.D. was not necessary for the Mills faculty, though most of them had it. But probably the finest scholar did not have a Ph.D. It was E.O. James, the great Shakespearean teacher of the Mills faculty. He was probably the greatest scholar there, and he influenced many.

But there was a joy of learning there. Let me say that there were dropouts; there always are. People dropped out or transferred to coed—they wanted coed.

I really enjoyed all the long term papers, and all the subjects except that science that I had to take. But it wasn't too bad.

Chall: Botany shouldn't have been too hard, because you had grown up with wildflowers.

Heller: Well, that's why I took it, but you did have to do some laboratory work; and I never could see what you were supposed to see in the microscope [laughs]. But I got very good grades all the way through.

Chall: Did you tell me that you majored in economics?

Heller: I majored in economics. Don't ask me why, except it was very easy for me, and I liked the subject.

Chall: Who taught it?

Heller: Mrs. Owens was the chief person. It was really a weak department there, except that there were so few of us that we got a lot of attention. Of course, everything I've learned in economics is all—

Chall: All different.

Heller: Everything was so absolute then. You know, you would take theory of economics, advanced theory of economics, money and banking, labor relations, rural economics—it was all so sort of cut and dried.
Chall: Did you read such things as Veblen, or other economists of that day?

Heller: I don't remember that I did. I think that's why I majored in it— because it was a very easy subject and didn't have too much requirement for the major, and that left me time to dip into all different subjects. That was one of the reasons. You know, I'd take a year of this, and a year of that—the history of art, for example. Or I did quite a bit of English literature, lots of French; I even did one course in drama, because the professor there said that if I'd do the work she'd guarantee me a passing mark, even though she knew I couldn't act. But I thought I'd see what it was about. That way I took all sorts of subjects.

Chall: But if you'd majored in literature, which one would have thought might have been the thing you'd do—?

Heller: Well, I considered it, but I'm not very facile at writing. I knew that in literature you had to write short stories; you had to write a dramatic play; and I just wasn't sure that I could pull that off. I could write essays and that sort of thing, and I can write grammatically, but I have no imagination. And that's why I didn't major in English. But I took a lot of literature, a lot of philosophy. I'm not sure I approve of these courses where you have to work so hard in your field that you don't dip into other fields.

At Mills, too, I was active in every sort of extracurricular activity that was around. I ended up as president of the Associated Students, which was a good experience for me.

Chall: What kind of social life did you have in the dormitory? Did you like dormitory living?

Heller: Well, it isn't so much social life, as living life in a dormitory. You know, I sound like a sophomore: I—still to this day—loved every bit of dormitory life. I lived in a women's dormitory for four years. We changed our halls, when I was at Mills; now I think you go into one dormitory and stay there. But we had a different system—you were assigned your freshman year, and then you drew lots and landed where you did. Sometimes you could trade or sometimes not.

Chall: Did you have double rooms, with a roommate?

Heller: After my freshman year I did. For my freshman year I was assigned with Ellie Fleishhacker, and though we were very good friends, we both agreed we didn't want to room together—we didn't go to college to room together, when we knew each other. She was a very bashful girl at that point, and I wasn't. I said I'd like a single—I wanted to meet as many people as I could, and not be tied down. Then I had the same roommate my last three years, a very, very quiet person—Joyce Mayhew.
Heller: She died last year; she never married—a weird, strange, lovely person, and probably a very good roommate for an extrovert like me.

Chall: You were an extrovert?

Heller: Oh, yes! Completely. Completely. There was no social life at that point in terms of dances or anything like that. There were girls' events—you had certain customs for parties, and they involved girls. But I always knew plenty of boys who would come and visit the campus. I'd go out with them, or I'd take them to college events, or I'd go to dances with them. Sometimes you'd go dancing in San Francisco. I had lots of social life.

Chall: Then I'd like to separate that aspect of social life from what the girls did in the dormitories. Was life any different in the dorm when you were there than when your daughter was there, for example?

Heller: Not enormously, no. There still are central dining rooms. If you liked it, you loved it. Most girls put on weight, and I think that's true today of dormitory eating. I don't remember if I did put on weight or not, but that was the general feeling.

You had all sorts of get togethers and meetings. Depending on which dormitory I was in, I would study in the library at night if I was near the library; otherwise I would study in my room.

Chall: Were there rules about studying, and quiet, and going to bed?

Heller: I guess that compared with today there were pretty strict rules. You had to be back in your dormitory by ten o'clock. If I remember correctly, it was lights out at eleven. It wasn't boarding schoolish, but they were fairly strict. I think you could study later, if you just wanted to have a lamp on. But they were very strict; on weekends you had later hours for being out. You'd be locked out—that's the way they did it. I suppose now you can go and come anytime you want.

Chall: What were the girls interested in? What did they talk about when they got together? What were they planning to do with their college education? Or did they think about it?

Heller: Well, not too much. You have to remember that this was a very affluent time—the stock market was going up all the time. Very few girls had to work, as they do now. There were a handful of jobs on the campus—waiting on the tables or working in an office. But there wasn't too much stretching. They were from, I guess, basically middle class backgrounds—some very wealthy girls, and some very poor. No, you just talked about what was going on in college, or whatever you were interested in. You didn't talk about the world.
Chall: Were any of them planning careers? Or did they all expect they would get out and get married and have families?

Heller: There wasn't that much talking about what you were going to do. There was very little graduate work then. If I hadn't become engaged at the end of my junior year, in the back of my head I thought I'd go to law school, which would have been more unusual than not—but not absolutely unusual. The B.A. was the degree then.

Chall: I was under the impression that in the twenties girls began to look with a little more freedom toward a different kind of life—toward careers, perhaps; that life for women was beginning to change.

Heller: Yes, we were free to do anything; a lot of them did take jobs. But you weren't career oriented per se.

Chall: Not to be doctors or something like that?

Heller: No. I can remember offhand only one who went on to be an M.D.—she was aiming toward that. She became a successful M.D. It was more unusual than not. A few became quite eminent scientists. But you didn't really think much beyond the B.A., though it was not the period where you were just sitting there waiting to get married—that was the last thing. There was a freedom then. And you must remember that this was the age of the height of Prohibition.

Chall: How did you all handle that?

Heller: Well, my father was a Prohibitionist, and there was never any liquor in our home, simply because he was a Christian Scientist. I started taking drinks—though I don't want to give the impression of alcoholism; you know, in terms of my father, one drink was terrible—I guess in my sophomore year, because at the dances or parties they always had this bathtub gin—pink gin drinks.

Chall: How did they get it? Did you ever wonder about that?

Heller: It was all over the place. I never bought any, but it was always there. So you did no heavy drinking, but you did more drinking, I think, than has been done recently in college generations. But it wasn't on campus—Good Lord! It wasn't allowed on the campus. You weren't allowed to smoke on the campus, either. I forgot that.

Chall: Did you take up smoking when you were in college?

Heller: I smoked practically not at all—I just occasionally tried a cigarette—until after I was married. It wasn't a matter of principle at all. I guess the people I was going with weren't smoking. I think it was probably that simple.
Chall: And the people after you were married were smoking?

Heller: Starting to, yes.

Chall: That was the age when women began to smoke in public, isn't it?

Heller: Yes. Oh, yes. Well, I can remember at Mills, sitting on the fence at one of the boundaries, with my feet on the outside of the college, you know, looking out and smoking a cigarette, saying, "I'm not breaking the rules; I'm outside the college."

Chall: It was a very daring thing to do, wasn't it?

Heller: Very daring. In today's terms, there wasn't anything very wild about all of this, but I guess we thought we were sort of breaking rules. Though I was a natural keeper of rules. It sounds awfully goody-goody; it wasn't that. I just was not rebellious, let's put it that way. I liked the rules I was operating within.

By my junior year I went out much too much with different boys--that's a different subject.

Chall: I'd like to go into that. But I was wondering what was expected of the girls--of themselves and by their teachers and parents.

Heller: Of course some girls left Mills--but most of those who went for four years basically enjoyed their classes, enjoyed studying, enjoyed working--digging into term papers. There were many activities--

[Interview 3: January 31, 1975]#

Chall: You've been very busy since I saw you last month, I take it?

Heller: Oh! Crazy. Nutty. I've just gotten into too many things. They all come together. Well, it's nutty, that's all. I think that's why I got a cold. So at that point I just called off everything. It was lucky it was the kind of things--you know, individual things--that I could call off.

Chall: I wanted to finish our discussion about Mills College. With respect to the atmosphere at Mills College, I wanted to know what the expectations were of the girls. Many of them, as I understand it from what we talked about last time, were not really thinking in terms of careers.

Heller: No, they weren't--they were the exceptions.

Chall: Were they thinking mainly of marriage and families? Was that expected of them?
Heller: They never talked about it. You were in college for four years—No, there was much less than what you read would lead you to believe. They'd talk about their dates, but, no, not an extraordinary amount of that at all. There was very little "looking to the future." It was a very affluent time, remember, and still it was a time, basically, before careers for women were thought about terribly much. See, I graduated in the mid-twenties. Nobody was worried about earning a living. There were comparatively few students at Mills who had to be on scholarships or student aid; there were some, but comparatively there were not too many. It was not career oriented. Not that some of them didn't go on to great careers, but you really didn't think in terms of that. I think I had mentioned that in the back of my head I thought I might go to law school, but then I got married instead.

Chall: So it wasn't a real concern or question?

Heller: It wasn't, really, with anybody. I think it was mostly taken for granted that you'd do more volunteer work, really, than any paid job, for the most part.

Chall: It wasn't looked down on that a girl would work for a living in a profession at that time?

Heller: No. No, I remember a few went on into high degrees—some doctors and scientists, some teaching—some went into work in various things. It was just a very different atmosphere, I would say, than it is now.

Chall: They were not conscious feminists then?

Heller: No, not conscious feminists. That's one of the great strengths of a women's college; you're sort of yourself, and, at least at that point, I've always found, you found out what you could do yourself. You were not in competition, and therefore, I think, you had a great deal of self-assurance about your own capabilities. You weren't being un-feminine if you got into all sorts of activities and asked lots of questions in class—it was just the norm. You had a pretty close contact with faculty there; that was always encouraged quite a bit.

Chall: Can you recall any faculty members that you particularly considered special, outstanding, or whom you liked particularly?

Heller: Oh, yes, quite a number; but I don't know that we'd get any place by going into that. The sort of dominant personality when I went there was Dean Hettie Belle Ege, who had been, I think, acting president at Mills just before Aurelia Reinhardt came in. She was always referred to as Dean Ege. She was a math teacher. She had a very strong influence on the students there.
Chall: What do you mean by influence?

Heller: She had very high standards, and she let it be known. She was a very dominant and (I think) puritanical person—I didn't know her that well.

Oh, there were lots of excellent people, and some terrible ones, too. I just don't think it would get any place, except maybe to—E.O. James was an English professor. He actually was a teacher of Shakespeare mostly. He did not have a Ph.D., and I think he had a heavier influence on generations of Mills students than any other faculty member.

Chall: Was that in terms of your appreciation?

Heller: His teaching, his quality, and his standards. I think he was probably the most beloved faculty member. He always seemed to know all his students and to be interested in them. They lived right on the edge of the campus, and one of his daughters, Mary Louise James—who lives down here—married James E. O'Brien and has become one of my best friends—though she's younger than I am. Her husband is in charge of all the legal affairs for Standard Oil of California. He's a member of the board of Standard Oil, the vice-president; nonetheless, he's not an oil-oriented person. He's a perfectly superb human being with many interests in literature and art, music, and all sorts of things.

So that's one thing that holds over from Mills very closely in my life. (There's really no sense in going into details.) You're encouraged very much to sample all sorts of different departments at Mills.

Chall: And you did?

Heller: Oh, yes. I did that—even drama, because I can't do dramatics.

Chall: You had said that during this period you had a very active social life. I assume you mean by that that it was off campus—dating? Was it in Oakland? Or did you have to come to San Francisco?

Heller: It was largely with fellows that went to Berkeley—Cal as we called it then—and some Stanford boys, but getting up from Stanford was more difficult. Though Mills women and Stanford men were always paired. But I think mine, basically, were more Cal people. I'd met them one way or another, not through Mills.

Chall: Where did the social life take place? Was it dating for campus activities? Or Cal activities?
Heller: Some Mills activities, or you'd go dancing, or you'd go to dinner. It depended on the amount of money the boy had [laughs] to spend, because it wasn't a time when women paid half for dates. Or there would be Cal dances or a fraternity dance, or two couples would go out together a lot. It was a time you went dancing a lot.

Chall: Where?

Heller: The St. Francis was the main place, but other places around, too. It was quite the social ballroom dancing time. Then there'd be other things, like picnics or weekends with a group—usually at the home of somebody whose parents had a country place. It was all, really, at a rather simple level.

Chall: When you went dancing, were the girls wearing long dresses and white gloves?

Heller: I don't think so. I can't remember the length of our dresses, but they weren't long, formal things. I think they would be what you would now call a cocktail dress maybe. I don't remember; lengths changed. They went very short just before I was married. But I think they were probably mid-calf.

Chall: Just a dress-up dress, not a formal?

Heller: A dress-up dress. I personally had, maybe, only two dresses—maybe three. Most of us didn't have cars then.

Chall: Yes, I was wondering how you got to the St. Francis and to Berkeley if you were going to a fraternity party?

Heller: Well, sometimes the boy you were going with could borrow a car; or you'd take the K-Leona streetcar from Mills into (it's so involved) Oakland, and maybe the boy would meet you at the end of the K-Leona, which is half way.

When I started going with Ed Heller in my junior year—though I was going out with other people, too—he did have a car, and he did come and pick me up. But that was involved, too, because he came from San Francisco. (He had just finished Harvard Law School.) He had to take the car on the ferry across the bay, and then drive out to Mills. He was the only boy I dated regularly who had a car. It seemed natural at that time not to have a car. Sometimes the boy could borrow his roommate's jalopy, but basically you didn't have cars. You really went by streetcar and train and ferry.

If it was in San Francisco, I probably would have spent the weekend at my parents' and the boy I was going with would spend the night there if he came from someplace else. That was up to my senior
Heller: year, when I was engaged. Then, for one year there were just parties every weekend. It was terrible when I think of it.

Meeting Edward Hellman Heller

Chall: How did you meet Edward Heller when you were a junior?

Heller: Well, let's see. I had vaguely heard about him, but I really didn't know him; he was almost five years older than I, and he'd been away at Harvard Law School. I remember the Christmas of my sophomore year in college I was asked to a big party in San Francisco given in honor of a young man who went to Harvard Law School. It was given by three of his friends who also were at Harvard, at the Law School and the Business School, Lloyd Dinkelspiel, Joe Feigenbaum and I think Joe Bransten. I didn't usually go to those parties because, though I knew that group, I wasn't particularly interested in any of them, and they weren't in me either. But that invitation was going to be in the Southern Pacific's yard at Third and Townsend, in a couple of Southern Pacific train cars—you know, a Pullman car and a diner and a baggage car there for dancing. I decided to go mostly because it sounded unusual. It was a big enough party that I was included; I wasn't part of that inner group.

I definitely remember meeting Ed Heller that night, because I was staying with my aunt, Mrs. Sahlein (that I mentioned before, whose house I always went to when my parents were away)—my parents were away, I'm sure. I remember that she asked me the next day if I had a good time—you know, the usual. She asked what I thought of anybody, and I said, "Well, I had a good time. Ed Heller is a very well-raised boy." She asked me why, and I said, "Because he was so much nicer to me than everybody else there, and he felt responsible when he saw I wasn't as intimate as some of the others." It never entered my head that he became interested in me that moment.

Just at the very end of that term, probably in May, his first cousin, Flutie Hellman—Florence Hellman, who married Lloyd Dinkelspiel eventually, and who went to Mills and was a year behind me—phoned me on the campus one day and said, "I'm phoning for my cousin, Ed Heller. He'd like to know if you'd come to dinner at his house next Tuesday." It was right at the end of the term. She said, "I'm going," and I've forgotten who the other person was. Apparently he had had me in his mind all this time. So I accepted. And that was the beginning. That night (I've forgotten) I think we must have gone dancing or to some play, and, by God, he asked me to marry him that night! I told him he was crazy, that I didn't know him and he didn't know me. Isn't that ridiculous?
Heller: Well, then we went out all the next year, but I went with a lot of other people, too. This was a long affair, because it wasn't until May eighth of the following year, 1924, that we became engaged. I remember that date. Then we weren't married until May twenty-sixth of 1925, because we both agreed that I should finish college. So that's how we met.

Chall: Did you know about his family? Were you surprised?

Heller: No, I really didn't. I was absolutely unconscious of--I just wasn't raised to think of those things at all.

Chall: Did you tell your parents that first time he asked you to marry him?

Heller: Oh, no, I didn't dream of telling them, because it just didn't mean a thing to me at the time. I thought he was crazy, because I didn't know him and he didn't know me. I thought he didn't really mean it, that was all. I thought that maybe he was the sort that goes around—not seducing people, because that wasn't really done then—just having a good time that way. I didn't give it too much thought, to tell you the truth.

No, I really and truly didn't know about his family. Of his family, Flutie Hellman was the one that I knew the best because we were really the same age. I was unconscious of these terribly wealthy people, as such. Bit by bit I began to see the way they lived, compared to the way I lived. But Ed was not very show-offy about things; that was one of his nicest traits. There was a strong family feeling there, but he was not impressed with the fact of wealth.

Probably the only thing that I knew was that he had a car. I think that first winter, before we were engaged, a whole group of us went up to Yosemite one Christmas, which at that point was a great adventure. We went up by train and so on. That was about it. He was starting to think about going into business then. He didn't want to practice law.

He didn't finish Harvard Law School. He really didn't want to go to Harvard Law School, but his father, E.S. Heller, was a fine attorney with a good law firm, which is still there—Heller, Ehrman, White and McAuliffe. Ed really wanted to be a college professor in history. But then his father said, "Well, it wouldn't hurt you, would it, to go to law school and see how you feel about it?" So Ed said he'd go, and he went to Harvard. There was not too much difficulty in those days. Ed had gone to Cal as an undergraduate.

He went for almost two years, and then he got typhoid fever—not to his great joy, but after he was through the typhoid fever he had missed his finals of the second year at Harvard Law. That was an excuse for him never to go back.
Chall: He never really liked it?

Heller: No. And he always said that he took the Bar exams, but I've never been sure if he was exaggerating or not, or whether it was a joke, because they were easy in those days.

His father was E.S. Heller—Emanuel S. Heller, called "Manny" by people. Ed always said that the orals in the Bar exam was, "Are you Manny Heller's son?" He always swore that this was why he was admitted to the Bar, but I don't know. He might have, because the Bar exams were very uncompetitive in those days. He would never admit it, but I think his law training stood him in good stead. Actually, he spent half his time reading in the Widener Library when he was at Harvard—reading all sorts of history, which he loved.

Chall: He came back, then, and--

Heller: He went into the Wells Fargo Bank, which was the family bank.

Chall: Right away? When you knew him he had come back and gone into the bank?

Heller: Yes. He was working in the bank in some one of those indefinite positions—in the bond department or something. He knew he never wanted to be a banker. He just didn't like banking. It was too strait-laced. Ed had a great business imagination, and banking was so cut and dried at that time.

Then, I guess Schwabacher and Company were looking for more capital in their business, and Al Schwabacher asked him to be a partner with the young firm then. And he became a partner, and was a partner in Schwabacher and Company before we were married. He did have a great flair for business—not for the brokerage business as such, but just for putting businesses together and making them tick, and so on.

Chall: Even at that stage he found that interesting?

Heller: Even at that stage. He never did the day by day going to the opening of the market, or anything of that kind. So that's where it all started.
Edward Heller and His Parents and Grandparents

Chall: Did he have any other family? Were there sisters?

Heller: No. He was an only child.

Chall: Had there been others? Had his mother lost any children by miscarriages?

Heller: No, I don't believe so. She always used to say she couldn't have any children after Edward was born. I've never decided whether she didn't want any or whether she physically couldn't have any. I know that he was a very large baby, and she was very small. I imagine she was badly torn. But there was never any talk of that at all. And he should have been impossible, he was so spoiled, but he turned out to have a fine mind and really was not spoiled; he was rather bashful and he doted on his grandfather, I.W. Hellman.

Chall: You never met I.W. Hellman?

Heller: No, I.W. Hellman died just before I started going out with Ed. Undoubtedly Mr. Hellman had a tremenous influence on his grandson, Ed Heller. He was a very dominant man; he was a very brilliant man, I guess. Ed always claimed that he was the favorite grandchild, but maybe some of the other grandchildren wouldn't agree with that [laughs]. Mr. Hellman did live at the Hellers' house, and he dominated that house, according to all I ever heard from Ed about it. Everything revolved around what time he wanted the meals— and he was really dominant. Ed's father took a secondary role, which was too bad, because his father was a fine, intelligent, excellent attorney; but Mr. Hellman just ruled that family.

Chall: Well, the Hellmans are strong! We'll probably find out about each one in time. There was the other daughter, Florence, who was Mrs. Sidney Ehrman. That was the family—the two daughters?

Heller: And one son, I.W. Hellman, Jr., who was called Marco.

Chall: Were they all here in San Francisco by this time?

Heller: Yes. But I.W. Hellman, Jr., died just one month after Mr. Hellman, Sr., died.

Chall: I had understood that he predeceased his father.

Heller: No, but it was very close. No, I never knew him, either. He was Flutie Hellman's father. I always had the impression that he was always so dominated by his father that he never had a chance to
Heller: amount to anything in his own right. But this is impression; I really didn't know him.

Chall: Considering how dominating I.W. Hellman was, in what way did he influence Ed Heller?

Heller: I think he talked to him about all his business. Ed used to say how he'd spend every evening in his grandfather's room as a young boy. He'd tell Ed about all the different business interests he had. I don't think it was a conscious teaching as much as it was unconscious; but Ed so often--all of his life--referred to his grandfather.

Chall: So that may have given him his interest in business and its exciting aspects?

Heller: His knowledge of business. I think so. He always said that although his grandfather was a banker (he also had business interests and much land in Southern California), that if he were still alive the Wells Fargo Bank wouldn't have been run the way it was run, in later years. Because, Ed felt that his grandfather would have changed with the times, whereas the bank management always stayed with I.W. Hellman's image. I think Ed was probably right.

Mr. Hellman was incorruptible--honest. I guess, quite German. You know, we were talking about the beginning of World War I. Mr. Hellman had been born in Germany--in the town of Reckendorf, in Bavaria. At the beginning of World War I, Mr. Hellman was all for the German cause. E.S. Heller, his son-in-law, was all for the Allies. It must have been just hell in that family! It must have been just awful; that's all I can say.

Of course, Mr. Hellman, as soon as the United States went into World War I, was completely pro-Allies and against the Germans. That happened to a lot of Germans, I understand--German born.

Chall: Was there any suspicion of him? So many Germans were looked upon suspiciously.

Heller: No. He had established such a position for himself as an American, not as a German. No, no, he was far above any suspicion. It was interesting that Clara Heller, Ed's mother, made a very strong impression herself. While I gather she sided with her father in almost everything, she sided with her husband politically. That's the one definite image. Her father was a Republican. He was anti-Hiram Johnson, with Southern Pacific interests and all that. This is all second hand; but I know it's true.

E.S. Heller was one of the few people in that period that you knew that was a Democrat.
The world's greatest silver lode, the Comstock in Nevada, made famous the four Silver Kings: James G. Fair, James C. Flood, John W. Mackay and W. S. O'Brien. In 1875 they founded a bank in San Francisco, the Nevada Bank. In 1876 the capitalization of this bank was increased from $5,000,000 to $10,000,000, largest at that time of any bank on the Pacific Coast.

In 1890 the noted Los Angeles banker and financier I. W. Hellman was invited to take charge of the Nevada Bank. Under his leadership, it became a national bank in 1898, and in 1905 consolidated with Wells Fargo & Co.'s Bank to form the Wells Fargo Nevada National Bank. He also founded the Union Trust Company of San Francisco in 1893 — the first corporate trustee in California.
Chall: How did it come about?

Heller: Ed always said that when the Heller family came from Germany—I guess it was in the same period—they went first to Atlanta and lived in the South. It probably started there. E.S. Heller was a very rigid Democrat, and there were very few Democrats around San Francisco among the more established or wealthier families; but he was one of them. And after her marriage, Clara Hellman Heller became an ardent Democrat, even though she had formerly been a strong Republican. It was the one thing she went against her father on.

Chall: Even at the time he was living with them?

Heller: Oh, yes! She was strongly for Woodrow Wilson. She never wavered, and she loved fighting with her sister, Florence Ehrman, who was an ardent Republican to her dying day.

Chall: What about Emanuel Heller's brothers and sisters? I think he had two of each.

Heller: He was never called Emanuel Heller: he was always E.S. or Manny. Well, I don't know too much. There were two sisters that I knew: Aunt Eva Kohn, who apparently had been very beautiful. She married a sort of man around town; he was reputed to be more or less of a gambler. When I knew her, he had died. She had a terrible temper, and she was alive long after I was married. She lived at the Fairmont Hotel, fairly well to do.

There was another sister, Carrie, who married a man named [Isadore] Fleishman, and they lived in Paris. They had very little money. I think that's why they lived in Paris, because they could live much more cheaply there. When her husband died, in the early thirties, she returned to San Francisco and also lived at the Fairmont there. She was really very sweet and very cheery.

Then there were two brothers, both of whom died before I came into the family. One was Clarence Heller, apparently a bachelor—young and lively. The other was Sig Heller. I don't feel I know too much about them. They were a quite handsome family, though, and a very good family.

Chall: So, E.S. Heller just happened to marry into a wealthy family, which was not expected or anticipated as he grew up?

Heller: I have no idea. He had gone to Cal, in one of the early classes there—1885, or something like that—and then he went to Hastings Law School, which was the only law school. As I remember, he was thirty-six when he married; so he was well on his way to earning his own way. You know, he had his own income from his law practice; he was not impecunious.
Chall: He had established a fairly good career?

Heller: Very. He was very highly thought of professionally.

Chall: Was his wife much younger?

Heller: Yes, she was about fourteen or sixteen years younger; quite a bit younger.

Chall: I have a note here that says Ed Heller had some position in World War I. Was he in the service?

Heller: [laughs] Yes, he was in the service, but he didn't have a position -- he was a private in the infantry. He was one of these people who hit both world wars, but was never in a combat position. The war ended in November, 1918, and Ed was eighteen in March of that year. He and a lot of people from Lowell High School--where he went to high school--enlisted in this (what do they call it?) Army Officers Training School.

Chall: ROTC?

Heller: Well, it wasn't then called ROTC. They were sent to the Presidio, and they were supposed to be training to be officers--seventeen and eighteen year olds! To this day I keep meeting people who were in that group. They were all very patriotic and wanted to serve their country. Then Ed and one or two others of that group were sent to Waco, Texas for their officers' training. The great flu epidemic came along, and Ed got this terrible flu there. He always said that he remembered being in a hospital--they had numbers over their beds--hearing that number ninety-one was dead. That was he! So that was his World War I experience. But he had every thought of going overseas in the infantry. I have his uniform here someplace--a regular doughboy uniform. But by the time he finished his pneumonia the war was over, and that's the end of that story.

Chall: So he came back and--?

Heller: He came back and went to college [Cal] then.

Chall: At the time he was seriously courting you, before you became engaged, were your parents aware that something serious was going on here?

Heller: Well, they knew all the boys that I was going out with. I remember the day after I became engaged I told my mother, "Well, I'm engaged." I think my father was there, too. They said, "Who to?" Because I had been going out with two or three boys at the same time. They were very good about not prying. Of course I was in college, but in those
Heller: days the boys would come to your house and pick you up and meet your parents. So they always knew when I was out with boys, or most of the time they knew it; sometimes I went from Mills. But there were never any great secrets about any of that.

Chall: So you really didn't discuss the fact that you were perhaps going into the Hellman family?

Heller: No. In fact, I was surprised. It was the last thing that I expected. I sort of thought that you finished college before you thought about getting married. I guess by that time I had had enough of going out with different boys. It seemed like a very good idea at the time. Ed was very persistent, and it worked out very well, I must say.

Chall: Do you think he was as casual with this information with his parents as you were with yours?

Heller: I think so. Well, they knew he was taking me out because he'd take me down to Atherton here, which was their summer home. His mother was sick during that period; she had a middle inner ear problem. I went there for dinner at the house, at 2020 Jackson Street in San Francisco, and I might say hello to her or something; and his father would be there. And I was down in Atherton in the summer a couple of times.

Chall: They had a summer home down here?

Heller: Right here, on this place. This was it. We bought property adjoining it, and the two places sort of functioned together.

Chall: The reason that I ask is because one would assume (maybe I'm assuming) that people of this stature and wealth in the community would be particularly concerned about the status of their only son's marriage.

Heller: I think they were, but after all, they knew who my parents were--they weren't unknown--and they had mutual friends, in a way, though socially they-- They knew it was a very proper and good family. As I said, I know that long ago we were the Alsatians. They were Bavarians. Actually my mother's father was originally from Bavaria.

But we didn't sit and think about that very much. No, I'm quite sure they were quite concerned.

Chall: Even though you were for Hiram Johnson you were all right?

Heller: I was a Hiram Johnson Republican--my parents were. Oh, no, I came from a perfectly proper background as far as they were concerned. It just wasn't particularly wealthy.
Chall: That was not a problem, then?

Heller: Not at all. I suppose they thought, "Is this a fortune hunter?" I guess they decided I really wasn't; or, if they thought so, when they got to know me they couldn't have dreamed I was. Ed has told me about one or two people that his mother or his aunts were always sort of pushing him to marry. But we had lots of mutual friends, you see. His cousin Flutie and I were friends—I mean, our paths crossed fairly often.

Chall: And he had taken a year to get acquainted.

Heller: Oh, I took a year; so I wasn't thinking about that [fortune hunting] at all. It never entered my head.

Heller: I'm sure they worried about it more than I realized. Then my father-in-law died six months after Ed and I were married—he had a heart attack—so I never knew him terribly well. I always wished I had known more of him; I liked him very much.

Chall: Do you think your husband took more after him than he did his mother in terms of personality?

Heller: No. He had the Hellman dominance, but he didn't have that terrible ego that some of them had. Mr. Hellman's wife—I.W. Hellman's wife—was a Neugass. That's part of the Lehman family in New York. Her name was Esther. Her sister married one of the senior Lehmans there in New York. Her sister, I believe, was named Babette, and she was the mother of Herbert Lehman and Irving Lehman, who was on the supreme court of the state of New York, and Arthur Lehman. They were raised very closely as cousins with the West Coast branch. We're still friends to this day with a lot of that family.

This Neugass strain was very dominant, and that's really what Ed had more than Mr. Hellman's personality. It was this very, very dominant, bright, almost imperious Neugass strain.

Chall: Did he know his grandmother?

Heller: No, she died quite young. But his mother was obviously very much a Neugass. And I've met those families, and I can see it; it just reappears. It didn't really come in any of my children, though, particularly.

Chall: Your husband, I understand, was called "Bear"?

Heller: No, no. That's a different Heller—that was Walter S. Heller, a second or third cousin. Oh, completely different! He was older than Ed Heller, and he was in the investment business. On his second
Heller: marriage he married a girl about my age (because I went to high
school with her) whose name was Eloise, and she's called Ellie. Ed
and Bear Heller were friendly, and especially in his first marriage.
They used to come over. No, no—entirely different.

The Marriage of Elinor Raas and Edward Heller

Chall: Now, you were trying to get through your senior year and at the same
time go through a great round of social activities?

Heller: Yes, that was sort of a hectic year—and I was president of the
student body, too, that year. Maybe if I'd known I was going to be
engaged I wouldn't have run; but I did that. I think I didn't have
a terribly heavy schedule of courses; I had plenty of units to graduate.
But I always did my studies; there was no question about it. I enjoyed
it.

But these parties on the weekends—Well, Clara Heller,
Mrs. E.S. Heller, lavished attention on so many people; she was very
warm hearted. She always wanted to give gifts to everybody, and do
things for them. So when her only son, Ed Heller, got engaged—Ed
Heller's crowd was the social Jewish crowd in San Francisco, and he
was the first one of his particular crowd to be engaged. So all
these people wanted to give parties in honor of us—it was really
because of his mother. There was a party every weekend, and of course
neither of us had enough sense to say we wouldn't put up with them.

Chall: Could you have?

Heller: We didn't care that much about them. But there were some very elegant
parties; it was crazy.

Chall: And gifts? Or just parties?

Heller: Well, there were some gifts when you became engaged then—not to
amount to anything. But at the time the wedding gifts came floating
in—my parents' house was practically not big enough to hold every-
thing. You'd get very lavish gifts at that time, compared to what's
spent now, and when you think of the difference in prices. People
spent $250 or $500 on a wedding present.

Chall: And some of them were probably duplicated?

Heller: Oh, yes, and you returned a lot and got credit for them. Though Ed
and I did have the sense—that was one thing where we showed good
sense. (I guess he had some idea of the sort of gifts that were going
Heller: to come; I didn't)—to tell everybody who asked that we wanted books. That's really what started our library, and that was about the best thing we ever did!

Chall: What kind of books did people give you—people who wanted to give you $250 silver trays or something as expensive as that?

Heller: We got some very fine books that are still in the library—Doves Press; Kelmscott Press books; or some first editions: Mark Twain or other first editions. Those were the people who understood books. The rest gave us these sets, which were very fashionable then. For the most part we kept all the sets of the standard authors that we wanted to form a library around, and then we returned others and had credit. Some of the most atrocious sets came in. Oh! Beaux and Belles of England is one I remember very well. On the other hand, we were given a marvelous English edition of Shakespeare—Johnson-Steevens, 1793—that's so good—I still have it—fifteen volumes; it was excellent. There was a great variety. There were some art books—there wasn't so much of that then. I think that really saved us from—

Oh, but we got silver. Oh! I don't even like to think about the silver.

Chall: Did you have a feeling, when you were undergoing all this—though I'm sure it must have been fun—

Heller: I was in a daze.

Chall: Did you think you were sort of like Cinderella going to the ball?

Heller: No. I didn't pay any attention to it.

Chall: Did you have any idea what you were getting into?

Heller: No.

Chall: What was expected of you?

Heller: No, I didn't know a thing about it. I had great self-assurance, that I was myself. Ed and I were in love with each other. It was okay. But I had no idea—And here I was at college—I got married [May 26, 1925] two weeks after I finished college. I left my poor mother to cope with all this influx of presents that came. I just paid no attention to it. I didn't know who most of the people were. I remember Aunt Carrie Sahlein and others used to write thank you notes all the time; I never had time.
Generally, the family of the daughter provides the wedding. From what I saw of your wedding, it couldn't have been provided very well by your parents.

Yes it was. Oh, yes it was.

It was? All this gold cloth, elaborate dinner and dance, and the candelabra, and the gold altar cloth, flowers. The expense seemed incredible. I read about it in the Chronicle. [May 27, 1925]

No, it wasn't that expensive. We had the Fairmont Hotel, and it wasn't that expensive. It was not so elaborate, as those things went; it must have been that the paper exaggerated. If I remember correctly, the Fairmont Hotel had these gold cloths. No, it was a fine meal, and there was no liquor—it was Prohibition. But it was a wedding ceremony, and then dinner, and some dancing, I guess. I think the newspapers exaggerated. No, my parents were very strict about that.

So the Hellers—and by that I sometimes mean the Hellmans—weren't concerned that this be a great, elaborate wedding? They didn't take over, in other words, as they might have?

Mrs. Heller—Clara Heller—would have loved to, but my father would have none of that; it was going to be his wedding. The only thing she could do was provide the bouquet for the bride and the bridesmaids. The other thing they did, was that they had, I guess, a couple of rooms in the Fairmont Hotel that were stocked with liquor, that people would go up to; but I never was up there. That was all they had to do with the wedding.

How did your mother get along with Mrs. Heller? This is always a rather difficult period at best.

Well, my father was a great conciliator. My mother would get a little mad—my mother was really very even tempered—and my father would say, "Now, we have to get on; don't let that upset you. That's her temperament. You just go ahead and do it." My father got on very well with Clara Heller. She liked men very much—I mean this as a very nice thing—and my father was a very nice-looking man. They got on, and he knew how to handle her. He just wouldn't let my mother get upset. But he was just very firm with her.

Oh, I imagine that wedding maybe cost about $2,000.

But it was your family's?
Heller: Oh, absolutely. My family had this little summer place I told you about, in Ross, and that's where I really wanted it to be. Ed would have been perfectly happy to have it there. But May weather is very unreliable, and the house was so tiny; and it was very difficult, because you had to take the ferry to get there. We decided that we just couldn't take the chance on the weather. If we could have had it outdoors, it would have been fine. The house in town at 100 Locust Street was a nice sized house, but it couldn't have held the number of people.

I remember some argument about the guest list, in which they agreed to hold it to family, plus my parents and the Hellers each asked maybe ten or twenty of their own friends. Then it became unbalanced, because my parents had so many cousins—and they were all asked—and the Hellers didn't have as many. I do remember Clara Heller being quite annoyed that there were more Raas relatives than Heller [laughs], but I've forgotten how it was ironed out.

I was oblivious. I really was. I paid no attention. I remember Ed and I made a list of our friends, and that's all I remember. But there were a lot of parties, and bridal parties, too. He had six ushers and I had six bridesmaids, and there were, oh! parties and parties and parties. Ridiculous, when I think about it.

Chall: Well, that was the way things were done in that social group.

Heller: That's the way things were done. Then there was a men's stag party before the wedding; that was always done. Ed's cousin, Esther Ehrman, who was a little younger than I was—I think she was a freshman at Mills then—I remember gave a party for the women the same night. A lot of those people married each other, as it were.

Chall: This is a list of your bridesmaids: Rosalie Green. Who is she?

Heller: Rosalie was one of my childhood friends and I knew her long before she married Ed's first cousin Frederick J. Hellman, Fritz.

Chall: Of course I know that Esther Ehrman became a Lazard.

Heller: Yes, she married Claude Lazard.

Chall: Flora Marx?

Heller: Oh. Well, she was one I picked out from my grammar school days, because I really have nothing in common with her any more. She married an orthodontist in San Francisco named Wolfson, but I just never, never, never see them. That was just picking somebody out of my childhood. She'd lived quite close, and we'd go to grammar school together.
Chall: Aline, of course, is your sister.

Heller: She married George Levison. Aline wasn't sixteen yet [at the time of the wedding].

Chall: Was Rosalie Green a friend of yours, or was she part of the other group?

Heller: Both. You see, this was part of the mutual friendship. She belonged to that group, but she and I had been friends since seventh or eighth grade and had gone to all the same dancing classes together. Rosalie also went to Mills; there were a lot of them going to Mills then. Elizabeth McCoy I've talked about.

Chall: Florence was "Flutie"?

Heller: That's right.

Chall: Who was Joyce Mayhew?

Heller: Joyce. She was my roommate at Mills. She died just this last year. She was a sad person—not at that time, but she had a very sad life. She never married, except for one very brief, unfortunate thing. She was very hard up all her life, and never well. But she'd been my college roommate.

Chall: So these were your choices. Your friends mainly except that Esther Ehrman and Flutie were members of Ed Heller's family.

Heller: Well, Esther was because of the strong family business. Flutie was my friend. I had no cousins that were anywhere near my age; they were married. One of my cousins who had been very nice to me, I will say that, didn't forgive me for years, I found out later, for not inviting her to be a bridesmaid. I just never thought of it; she was ten years older and married, with children. We're friendly now, but for years she was furious at me. But you can see how little attention I paid to those things.

Chall: You hadn't read Emily Post?

Heller: Oh, no!

Chall: Then the men, it looks like, have been either cousins or very close friends. Irving Hellman was a cousin?

Heller: He certainly wasn't in the bridal party.

Chall: I have here that the best man was Irving Hellman.
Heller: No, no. You've got it all wrong. It was I.W. Hellman, III, known as Warren. Well, I don't know if he was the Third or the Second by that time; or maybe he was plain I.W. Hellman. He was the grandson. He's still alive; he is six months older than Ed. He became president of Wells Fargo Bank eventually. Oh, Irving Hellman, no--that's Los Angeles; it's entirely different.

Chall: Joseph Bransten—he was just a close friend?

Heller: One of Ed's best friends always. He's in MJB Coffee.

Chall: I read that interesting book that his sister wrote.* Have you seen it?

Heller: Oh, yes. Now, you see, his sister was a very good friend of mine, too, and I could well have chosen her for a bridesmaid; but, you know, you stop someplace. It didn't make that much difference.

Chall: She had been a close friend of yours. I guess you went to the same school?

Heller: We went to high school together, and we were friends before that. We've always been friends. We both played tennis, and oh, we had much—and our families were friends. They were Alsatians too.

Chall: The early sections of her book reminded me of what you had told me.

Heller: Her mother was the one who was Alsatian—Roth. Ruth was a year ahead of me in school, but we were very, very close friends. As a matter of fact, at my seventieth birthday party this fall she was here. Our ways have gone a little separately now, but we stay good friends.

Chall: Sidney Ehrman, of course, was a cousin.

Heller: Yes, who died. He was younger than Ed. He was called Tod—a very brilliant young man, who went to Cal and then went on to Cambridge in England. He became a brilliant scholar. He got some strange, crazy disease. Oh, I think it was something that modern drugs probably would have taken care of; I'm not sure what it was. He died in 1930. I was very fond of him. He and I shared the same birthday, October 3, as did Mr. I.W. Hellman. So I think I was welcomed; somehow I made it because of this birthday. Tod was a year younger to the day than I was. He was a very spoiled, difficult young man, but very bright, very handsome.

*Ruth Bransten McDougall, Under Mannie's Hat, (San Francisco: F.L. Francisco Co., 1964)
Chall: I guess his death was a real tragedy as far as the family was concerned, from what I've read.

Heller: Oh, yes. He was quite wild, for those days.

Chall: William Goodman?

Heller: That was really Ed Heller's best friend, not a childhood friend, because he'd met him at Harvard Law School. He came from Memphis, Tennessee. I can tell you tales about Bill Goodman forever, because we're still good friends. In fact, my son Clary [Clarence E.] said he was going to visit the Goodmans this spring.

Chall: He's still in Memphis, Tennessee?

Heller: Yes. He's an attorney. Bill came out for our wedding; he didn't marry until much later. Every trip we ever went on, Bill would come along with us. After he got married, he and his wife would go all over the world with us.

Chall: So the two men remained close friends.

Heller: Always. Bill came out for Ed's funeral. Oh, yes, they always stayed close friends. They took places at Tahoe in the summer.

Chall: Who is Martin Mitau?

Heller: Martin Mitau married Marjorie Fleishhacker, the daughter of Herbert Fleishhacker. Herbert Fleishhacker, Sr., had a brother, Mortimer. They were the brothers who started the Anglo Bank. They were rival bankers in a way. They got into some financial trouble eventually, but they were a very wealthy family. Martin Mitau was just one of Ed's friends from Pacific Heights Grammar School days. He died just about a year ago. They lived down here in Atherton; they stayed close friends.

Chall: That's an unusual name. It sounds French.

Heller: Mitau? No, I think it's German, but I can't swear.

Chall: Lloyd Dinkelspiel? He had also been a close friend, of course.

Heller: Yes. He was Ed's closest boyhood friend. Within less than a year after we were married, he married Ed's cousin, Flutie Hellman.

Chall: Joseph Feigenbaum was another close friend?

Heller: Yes, B.J. Feigenbaum was another one of Ed's close boyhood friends. He's an attorney; I see him every so often. As a matter of fact, most of them or their spouses were at that seventieth birthday party.
Heller: Isn't Johnny Stern listed there?

Chall: Yes, he is. He is the last name on the list.

Heller: John Stern is a first cousin of Mrs. Walter (Elise) Haas—that's the best way to explain it. The whole Stern family that we were talking about, before. His father was Abe Stern. My parents'-in-law house here in Atherton—219 Atherton Avenue—was his parents' house first. The senior Hellers bought it in about 1912, after Mr. Stern died.

Johnny was just one of the handsomest young men that ever lived. He married a very good college friend of mine, Jane Lawler, from Los Angeles. Her father was a very famous attorney, Oscar Lawler. Her mother had originally come from San Francisco, I believe. They were among the prominent of Los Angeles socially—really Los Angeles—the old families down there. Johnny ended up a complete alcoholic, which is sort of sad. Jane got a divorce from him and went south to live again. She was Flutie Hellman's roommate at Mills, and later Johnny married her. That's how these things go. Except for Elizabeth McCoy, Jane Stern was really my best friend.

Chall: Now, finally, Frank Hellman.

Heller: I never heard of him. Oh, I know—that's Fritzie Hellman, Frederick J. I don't know where these names came from. Frederick J. Hellman was the younger brother of Warren Hellman. He married Rosalie Green, who was also a bridesmaid. He was a vice-president of Wells Fargo Bank. He died a few years ago. He was called Fritzie, or Fritz. He was about a year younger than Ed Heller, I guess. They're all cousins.

Chall: Well, that must have been an exciting wedding. You had just finished school--

Heller: Yes, two weeks!

Chall: —and your mother dressed you and got you into the ballroom.

Heller: Oh, I was in a daze. I really paid no attention. I just let my mother take care of everything. I had to fit a wedding dress that I've always hated; I have it in a box someplace.

Chall: This may also not be true, but I noticed that your veil of [quotes] "long antique lace had been worn by Mrs. E.S. Heller at her marriage."

Heller: Well, I don't really remember. I think she gave me some lace that she had worn, and it was added to a tule veil. You know, I don't pay much attention to these things; you'll find that out about me. I am not very clothes conscious.
Chall: [laughs] Well, somebody wrote a great, glowing article--

Heller: I remember that I went with my mother to Maison Mendessolle, which was one of the couturiers, and they made this dress. It was in the hideous style of the mid-twenties--up to your knees, and the belt around your hips. It was horrible. It was a very unattractive period of clothes.

The only other conscious decision I remember was that I wanted my bridesmaids to wear white. That's the only other decision I can remember making. I don't remember anything about the meal, or about the table decorations, which were just some flowers, I guess; I think one of the florists must have done it--Stein or one of those. It sounds a lot more elaborate than it was.

The Honeymoon in Europe

Chall: Then I understand you went to New York for about ten days, and then you sailed for Europe and you were away for four months in Europe. Is that right?

Heller: Well, partly. We went to Europe on our honeymoon. I had never been out of the state.

Chall: Had your husband?

Heller: Oh, he'd been in Europe a lot with his parents; and also as a young man he'd gone off with friends. He'd been in Europe quite a bit.

We always said when we survived our honeymoon, we were going to make it, because everything was wrong. We went East by train, and because I'd never been East Ed wanted me to see Washington; then to New York, and then sailed.

Now, just to give you some miserable highlights of it: We went across the continent by train, I think two days after we were married; we had to wait to get our passports. You had to have a joint passport then, and you had to be married to get it. I can't remember why, but that was it. You're too young to know about going across the continent by train, before air conditioning. You'd stop all the time, and you'd always rush off and buy the local paper, wherever it was, all the time. I can remember Ed's getting off at Sacramento and coming back with (I guess) the Sacramento Bee. It said, "Heat breaks all records," and we went across the continent that way. Every place we stopped, the headline would be, "All heat records broken." It was just a nightmare. We got into one of the
Heller: longest heat spells that ever was—because I've lived in the East (during World War II) so I know. We hit Washington in this blazing heat; and that was the beginning of our honeymoon.

We were in Washington for quite a few days, and Ed wanted me to see everything—Mt. Vernon, Library of Congress, Congress—you know, all the sights. And I wanted to see them. But I've never been able to take heat, and I was just woozy, dazed and exhausted. We stayed at the Mayflower Hotel. I can just remember complete waves of heat the whole time.

Then we went by train to New York, and we stayed at the Ritz-Carlton, where Ed's family always stayed. And the heat continued. It was two weeks; it was just absolutely a nightmare—you know, and sightseeing.

We went down to see the ship we were sailing on. Good Lord. It was the Columbia—or Columbus, a German ship. We were sailing for England first. We went down to see our cabin the day before, which you did. The heat in there was just awful. We came back to our hotel, and were just sitting there about ten o'clock at night, and we felt a breeze coming in the window. I remember we threw on some clothes, got into the elevator, rushed out onto the streets of New York—and everybody else did the same thing. It was like a festival. You know, there was absolutely no way to get away from it. So it broke the night before we sailed.

Then Ed was seasick all the way to England. He was a terrible sailor. I'd never sailed, but I was okay. So, I'll tell you, that honeymoon—

Chall: [laughs] How was Europe?

Heller: We landed in Plymouth. It was a small port that couldn't dock a big ship. We were brought in by tender. There was to be a boat train to meet the passengers from the boat, and it wasn't there. We stayed up all night.

Chall: [laughing] It sounded so romantic when I read about it in the paper.

Heller: It was the most unromantic thing. We got to London, and we went to the Barclay Hotel (of course, Ed had made reservations months before) more dead than alive. We arrived there about nine or ten A.M., and of course there were no rooms available.

Chall: Even in those days?

Heller: No. We were absolutely done in from all this. Some friends of ours from San Francisco—it makes no difference who they are—came out on their way to Ascot. It was Ascot Week; that's why it was so jammed.
They had been married just before we arrived, and they were dressed up fit to kill. They saw these woebegone people, and they said, "Here's the key to our room." We went up there and just flopped on their unmade beds. I think late in the afternoon we finally got a room, and it was on a lightwell. We were so exhausted. I didn't know enough to complain; I was so glad to have a room. It took practically a week to recuperate. Oh, we did some sightseeing.

Then we went to Paris, and had a very good time there. We didn't lay out, particularly, where we were going. We had a couple of reservations ahead. We had a driver who had worked occasionally, I think, for Ed's aunt, who then lived in Paris. He had a little Renault that looked like a cab; that's what it was—one of those yellow and black checked things. Ed asked Maurice, who drove that car, if he'd like to drive us to Switzerland, which was sort of grand. Oh, he said he'd love to; he'd never been out of Paris except when he went to Marseilles in a dirigible in World War I. He was a young fellow. Ed and I both spoke French, so there was no language problem. So we told him to make the arrangements.

He didn't know what the arrangements were. We went to Basle. We were very concerned there, so we had reservations. Ed had told Maurice to get the trip tique, or whatever it was you had to have for the car, and Maurice didn't get the right thing. We had nothing but trouble on that trip.

We went to Lucerne, where it rained all the time, and where Ed and I had our worst fight of our married career. I must get this in; everybody knows it. It was raining, and it was gloomy. They'd given us an enormous suite, which Ed had a fit about, but there was no leeway; they thought we were his parents. He was furious at what he had to pay for Lucerne. And it rained, and it rained. I remember he put up a card table and started playing solitaire—you know, Canfield—and I started watching. It didn't come out, so then he slipped a card under and made it go. I said, "You can't cheat at solitaire." He said, "I certainly can." I said, "You just can't cheat at solitaire." He said, "It's my game and I can play it the way I want."

I got madder and madder, and I said, "I never would have married you if I knew that you were a man who cheated at solitaire." My father, who taught me all my card games, had told me that you always had to start it over; you couldn't cheat at it. [laughter] Oh! We were furious.

Then we read in the Swiss paper that the Engadine was open to passenger cars for the first time in history (buses had gone through). Ed said, "Well, let's do this." So we told Maurice that we were going to go to St. Moritz, which you never could do before except by bus or by train. We were a curiosity; we were one of the first cars that ever went through all that Swiss country. The villagers would come down and wave to us.
Heller: Then we stayed at St. Moritz, which is not the world's best place in summer. It's all right--huge hotels. Then we wanted to go to that huge pass, Brenner Pass, down into Merano, which had been Austrian but became Italian after World War I. This crazy little car--no cars had ever gone over that pass--couldn't get over those mountains. The hikers would pass us, and we'd be driving. We had to unload all the suitcases (and you traveled with quite a bit then). They put me in the driver's seat and Ed and Maurice pushed the car up to the top of each mountaintop. I would steer, because I was the lightest. We did this over and over, to get through these Swiss Alps.

That was fun. And then we went up into the Dolomites, which also was a pushing matter with that little car.

Chall: Maurice didn't know what he was getting himself in for.

Heller: We stayed at Cortina d'Ampezzo--that's on the way. It was then a very small little place; of course, it's quite a sports area now. That was lovely, and unspoiled; marvelous.

Then we went down into Austria and to Munich. Then, I guess the strain of the trip was too much. I don't want to say strain. Ed picked up some sort of bug. We had had about four days of all that opera-going there, and all that. Then he got terribly sick. I don't know to this day what he had. The Germans were very unfriendly to Americans. We were staying at that beautiful hotel that was destroyed in World War II--the Regina Palast--one of those luxury hotels. Nobody would speak to us. Ed could speak some German, but he couldn't read it, and I couldn't speak any. And, oh, they were just horrible to us. But I finally tipped the concierge enough so that he got me a doctor who spoke French. I think the doctor was perfectly competent, but those were the days before antibiotics. Ed just had a raging fever; he was very sick there the whole time. So we were just stuck.

Every morning there'd be a knock on the door, and it would be this driver. He'd always say, "C'est moi, Maurice." And I'd say, "Rein aujourd'hui; Monsieur est encore tres malade," and he'd go away. The next morning, "C'est moi, Maurice."

So you can see why I say we were lucky we survived this whole trip.

Chall: You certainly got to know each other well.

Heller: At the end, once he got well, we decided to stop driving. We told Maurice to get home. Oh, and we had the worst time on the borders in Switzerland. We didn't have the right papers. That was part of the problem. Getting into Austria from, well, Italy, after the Brenner Pass--Remember that we were one of the first private cars
Heller: that had ever gone through; and we didn't have the right papers. They kept us at the border for four hours. It was a Sunday, and we had to bribe our way through; and there were no banks open, so we couldn't cash from our letters of credit. Among other things that they did, they took off all the tires from the car and started weighing them. I think they were looking for contraband, maybe.

So we stayed at this little border town for four hours; they wouldn't let us through. We finally routed somebody out who had some cash; he was a banker and he decided our check was good. It wasn't so much a matter of bribing; they demanded an enormous deposit when they gave us the slip. They said when we left the country we could get it back again. It was like a nightmare! And remember, I was unseasoned.

Eventually we realized that one of the problems was that in my family my father had made all travel arrangements, even though we hadn't gone far. He made all the reservations—all the train and hotel reservations. In Ed's family, his mother did that. So he assumed that I was going to, and I assumed that he was going to. It took a long time to figure that out. Each was always expecting the other to do it, and that's really where the trouble came. In Ed's family, he paid the bills—the hotel bills and that sort of thing—but I was supposed to make all the travel arrangements.

Chall: My goodness, you had a lot to learn. How did you ever resolve it as you got into your marriage?

Heller: Oh, I just did it!
II ESTABLISHING A HOME AND A FAMILY, 1925-1940

[Interview 4: February 7, 1975]##

Heller: Where did you get this? [looks at the label on an empty bottle of Angelica wine bearing the Hellman label and dated 1875]

Chall: Someone gave it to my father, but he can't remember who it was or when. We drank the last remaining glass of it when I was visiting a year or so ago and I brought back the bottle because I thought it had historical significance. I'm not even sure that I knew at the time that it would have some connection with you.

Heller: I.W. Hellman had vineyard property in Cucamonga (San Bernardino County) and from those grapes laid down barrels of port and angelica wine in 1875. When he moved to San Francisco in the nineties he brought these barrels with him and left them in the basement wine cellar of his new house (Franklin and Sacramento Streets) where they remained until his death. At that time (1921) Mrs. E.S. Heller had them bottled and labeled. She had it all bottled and then they divided it. There was both angelica and port. This is the hundredth year of it. It was divided among the Hellman, Ehrman, and Heller families. Oh, I just have quantities of it down here!

Chall: That's incredible. I would have thought it would have all been gone.

Heller: No, no. Just quantities and quantities. This is the hundredth year of it, and I've sort of had it in the back of my head but forgot about it. Oh, we'd give somebody a bottle once in a great while.

Chall: My father has no idea who gave him the bottle, and since it all belongs in your family, I thought I'd ask you.

Heller: It's most apt to have come from somebody in the Hellman family—the Dinkelspiels, maybe. I think they sold some of theirs.

Chall: Last week when we left off you were returning from your honeymoon. You explained that one of the problems was the differences in your expectations. This had to do with who makes the travel arrangements.
Chall: When you did get back, I'd like to know where you lived and how, and then something about the various kinds of expectations that you had as a wife—either your own expectations or others toward you.

Heller: You're making this much more important—[laughs] Expectations. [laughter]

Chall: Well, we'll see; maybe there weren't any, but usually there are. Where did you first live?

Heller: Oh, let's see. We came back here and, I remember, went to live at the Fairmont Hotel for a few weeks, looking for a place to rent in San Francisco. You know, 1925 was a very affluent period. It was very hard to find something. We were determined that we weren't just going to live exactly where everybody else did. We ended up renting a house at 1085 Vallejo Street in San Francisco that belonged to the Franklin K. Lanes. He was in President Wilson's cabinet.

Chall: You weren't too far away from the rest of the family—your parents?

Heller: No, it was on Russian Hill. It wasn't that far away, but nobody that we knew lived up there. We lived there for two or three winters, anyway.

Chall: It was rented all the time?

Heller: It was rented, yes. We spent our first summer down here in the country at Mrs. E.S. Heller's. My father-in-law died on January 1, 1926 right after we came back from our honeymoon in Europe. We were down here with her that summer, and I was pregnant.

But we had already acquired this property, which was adjacent to the E.S. Heller's property—behind them. I guess that summer, already, we were thinking about building here for the summer. We were only going to live here in the summer; that was what was done then. You lived in San Francisco in winter and came down here in summer.

Elise and Walter Haas, who live next door, acquired property at the same time. This was all from Mr. Edward Eyre—that's part of the original Atherton family. The Haas property was behind her parents' property—the Sigmund Sterns—which was adjacent to my parents' in-law property on Atherton Avenue. There are two places in front and then there are two places behind.

There was no access to this place or to the Haas property except through my parents' in-law. So Mr. Eyre gave us a right of way through his property, which came up to this property and then actually goes around by my fence, and can be used by the Haases. They still have
Heller: it, as a matter of fact—the right of way. They acquired a little piece of property, so they got access from another road over here and never used the right of way.

Building the Home in Atherton, 1927

Heller: Ed and I started looking at various houses. I didn't know very much about things, but I did like the Spanish architecture. George Washington Smith was the architect of this house. He lived in Montecito. A very interesting person. There’s been quite a bit written about him.

Chall: How did you find him, or why?

Heller: He had built about three homes in this area that we had seen—the Jackling place up in Woodside, which was bigger; and a couple of places in Palo Alto. And we liked it. Then we went down to see him, and discovered that he wasn’t really an architect. He was an artist. He had taken a course or two in architecture—he came from an eastern college—I’ve forgotten where. He had bought a lot and built himself a house in Montecito—you know, that’s just right outside of Santa Barbara, in a lovely residential section—in this style. It really was very attractive. Somebody came along and immediately asked to buy it from him at some vastly increased price. So he said, "Fine."

He owned the lot next door, and he built himself a second house immediately. And that's what established him as an architect. He was very clever about having a fine office, good draftsmen. But he was really more an artist than an architect. He built some magnificent homes in the Montecito area and Hope Ranch; a sort of monstrosity in Pebble Beach for the Paul Fagans. But what he did basically was what I call the California adaptation of Spanish architecture. If you start looking at the Spanish homes in California, George Washington Smith's are much finer and much more sensitive than the run of the mill type. He was terribly fussy about the roof tiles he used, and things like that.

We built this house—which has been enlarged since then—as a summer house. We were going to live here in summer. We moved into this house in November of 1927. We still rented different houses every year in San Francisco.

Chall: Why did you move in in November?

Heller: Because we were anxious to get into the house. Then we went on up to whatever house we had rented in San Francisco. I happen to remember a party that we gave here for the Big Game that year. Just
Heller: having furnished the house, I had to move out all the furniture because we had so many people. That's why I remember the date.

We used to stay down here for four or five months. We loved it. Clary, our oldest son, was a little over a year old when we moved in. We kept renting, but we had bought a lot in San Francisco we were going to build on, out on Jackson Street. We had a lovely lot on the Presidio wall. But we sort of delayed it. You can think now that it was because of the stock market crash, because it was 1929. In fact, we had George Washington Smith do us sketches—that I have someplace—for a Georgian house. But it really wasn't because of the crash; we just put it off. As I said before, the stock market crash really didn't affect us very much.

In 1932, when Clary was ready for first grade, we realized we couldn't spend as long down here as we usually did. Ed said to me one day, "Why don't we spend the winter down here?" I was sort of appalled; both he and I were San Franciscans through and through. He quite properly said to me, "It wouldn't kill you to try one winter, would it?" I said, "No, it wouldn't." And that's the end of the story. I loved it, and we never thought of building in the City or of moving back to the City. So I've lived here year round since 1932, and my children went to school down here. By that time I had all three of my children.

Chall: Why did your husband want to try it for the winter—to move down here?

Heller: I can't remember. I just don't remember. He liked the house, and he always hated the houses that we rented in San Francisco. They weren't nearly as comfortable as his own house. And we hadn't done anything about renting one that winter. He sat up and said, "Why don't we stay down," and so we did! I think it's really just that simple.

I don't think we ever had any idea at that time that we'd live here permanently. But then, once we lived here, we found as the kids got a little older that we had to add onto the house. We didn't have enough room. Actually, this house is faced wrong for winter living. It was all laid out for a summer living. The main garden and the terrace off the dining room and living room never dry in the winter. You see, they were supposed to get the summer shade.

Chall: The additions carried out the basic style of the house?

Heller: Yes, it's carried out exactly the same; thick walls. We're near the San Andreas fault, as is everybody, and the original part of the house has the most massive foundation—a huge basement. Ed Heller always said that he wasn't going to have his house fall down in an earthquake.
Heller: I think that carries over from his parents' house in San Francisco, at 2020 Jackson Street. It stood with no damage at all during the 1906 earthquake and fire, it was so well built.

Chall: Had they built that house?

Heller: Yes, they built that in 1901, at 2020 Jackson Street. That's where Ed Heller was raised.

Chall: Your mother-in-law continued to live there?

Heller: She continued to live there until about the last two or three years of her life, when she stayed down here at her summer place permanently. I think she wanted to be near us; we were her only family. But we never lived in the same house together. 2020 Jackson is still there, solid as can be.

Chall: I understand from something that I read that I.W. Hellman reopened the Wells Fargo Bank in his home at 2020 Jackson after the earthquake.

Heller: That's true. Both the Wells Fargo Bank and also E.S. Heller's law firm, which was then, I believe, Heller, Powers and Ehrman did business temporarily from that house. When we go over to Clary's I'll show you a picture of 2020 Jackson with the signs. I think the bank was downstairs and the law firm was upstairs. It was about three blocks west of Van Ness Avenue, which was where the fire stopped. As I say, the house was so well built that everything was intact. Yes, the bank was there for months.

Chall: Did your husband remember those days? He was about six years old at the time.

Heller: Oh, yes, extremely well. He was six at the time. Yes, he remembered all of that. His family had an automobile. Very few people did, but they did, and if I remember correctly, they camped in Golden Gate Park for a while. Then they went over to the I.W. Hellman family, who had a summer place in San Leandro.

Chall: Is that the Dunsmuir house?

Heller: That's the Dunsmuir house now--a beautiful place; it was just beautiful. Then that area sort of faded away as a summer area, but Mrs. Hellman always kept that place. But they were sort of cut off from people by being there.

Chall: Was that house built by I.W. Hellman, Jr. or Sr.?
Summers at Lake Tahoe

Heller: It was Jr. No, I.W. Hellman, Sr. never had a summer place except for his great place at Lake Tahoe. That's where he went every summer. That was built, I think, in 1903.

Chall: Is that where you all continued to go in the summer when you went up there?

Heller: Well, no, not I. But my husband went there every summer, until his grandfather died, and adored it. That property is now Sugar Pine Point State Park—a part of the state park system. If you want to go ahead about that property, it's sort of interesting.

Chall: Yes, I'd like to.

Heller: After Mr. Hellman died, it was owned jointly by the Hellmans, Ehrmans, and Hellers; it was left in joint ownership. Mrs. Ehrman had always run the Tahoe house for her father, because the Hellmans had their country place. The Hellers used to rent down here, and then eventually they bought this 219 Atherton Avenue property about 1911 or 1912. Mrs. Ehrman had always run that house for her father but they were all up there during the summer. By the time I was married Mr. Hellman was no longer living.

One summer when the Ehrmans were in Europe, Mrs. Heller ran the house—after I was married; I think it was the summer of 1928 that we spent there. Oh, I visited there besides. It was a wonderful place. We adored Tahoe. The Hellmans didn't care that much for it, but we did and so did the Ehrmans.

Up to about 1939—somewhers in through there—we were always trying to get the Hellman place divided into thirds.

Chall: The property?

Heller: Yes. It was three miles of lake front, and some twenty-five hundred acres of back property. It was enormous. And nobody could agree how to divide it—that's why I gave you that background—because the house wasn't in the center. Mrs. Ehrman felt that she had first rights, and nobody else wanted the house. But she thought she could determine where the boundaries should be of the thirds. They argued and argued and argued, and Mrs. Heller and Mrs. Ehrman for a lot of the time weren't speaking to each other. They loved each other and they hated each other. It was awful.
Heller: Of course, this was long before property values had gone up at Tahoe, they way they have now. Around 1939 one of Ed's great friends that we mentioned last time, Bill Goodman, the attorney from Memphis, made up his mind that, by God, something had to be done, that this was impossible. He was a very tactful sort of person and he knew the Ehrmans quite well. In fact, he'd been wild about the Ehrmans' daughter, but she wouldn't marry him. But he was always very friendly. Mrs. Heller used to rent other places near there up at Tahoe; we'd be up there every summer.

Chall: For how long?

Heller: Oh, usually two months.

Chall: That was after you had moved here, to Atherton, permanently?

Heller: We rented the Drum place a couple of times. Well, there were big places over on that side.

The Hellmans really didn't care too much about dividing the property; so finally Bill Goodman got them to agree on a total price. There was no argument about the price of the total property. Then he suggested that the Ehrmans buy out the Hellmans and the Hellers. So Mrs. Heller sold her third, and the Hellmans sold their third to the Ehrmans; so they had the whole property. So that's the story. It's really a marvelous story. It's a wonderful house; I'll show you a picture of it. The house is really just the way it was. It's used as the center of that wonderful state park.

Chall: Did the Ehrmans then deed it over to the state after many years?

Heller: After Mrs. Ehrman died, sometime in the sixties, it was left to her daughter, Mrs. Claude Lazard, who lived in Paris a lot of the time. She and her children used to come over from France to Tahoe for part of the summer. And they all really loved Tahoe, but as her children got older they were using it less and less.

I can remember there was a state park bond issue on the ballot which happened to fail the first time. But there was an explanation on the ballot of what that bond issue would be used to acquire. Without a word to the Lazard's--the Ehrmans--they said they were going to acquire that property with it. Well, I can remember Esther Lazard in a cold fury about the whole thing. Esther was very much a Republican, and [Edmund G. Sr.] Brown was governor. Somehow it was all the fault of the Democrats. They had nothing to do with it at all. But that bond issue failed.
Heller: In the meantime, the state started negotiating with them. If another bond issue were on the ballot, they wanted that property to be part of the bond issue. Esther, who was pretty good about money—pretty clever—struck a deal. (I've forgotten who was in charge for the state) after her mother died, and sold it for something like eight million dollars to the state, once the state had passed another bond issue. Of course, that bond issue was for other things, too. 

She did pretty well. But they needed the cash for inheritance tax purposes on her mother's estate. I'm not sure but what that property was left to Esther's children in the end. But she did all the negotiating. I think Mrs. Ehrman—or Aunt Fodie, as we called her—changed her will and left it to the children, to skip a generation. There was some argument going on about anticipation of death, but I think nothing came of it in the end.

The Ehrman and Lazard Families

Chall: What about the Lazard children? Are they living in France?

Heller: No. Two of them, the two daughters, live in France. Now that's a story all its own; you really should pursue that. There's Christiane, who married Andre Paul de Bard, and Florence (I know her the best of all), who married Bernard de Lavalette. And they are completely French—but they're bilingual. During the war [World War II] they came to the United States from Paris where they were living, and lived partly in New York. Their father was in the French army, in the De Gaulle part of it. The parents of Claude Lazard, Esther Lazard's husband, were really a very remarkable couple. His father, Christian [accent on last syllable] Lazard, was a most handsome, attractive man; and his mother was a lovely person, too. His mother was not Jewish—Madame Lazard was not Jewish. His father was, but he was a practicing Catholic.

Chall: With a name like Christian he was Jewish?

Heller: Yes, Christian [American pronunciation]; but they were practicing Catholics. And by God if the Germans didn't come and take him away toward the end of the war. Madame Lazard spent years trying to trace him, and never could trace him. But, as a result of that she was honored by the French government because she did so much for locating lost Frenchmen all over. In fact, she turned it into her whole life. As long as she couldn't find her own husband, she--

Chall: You mean Christian Lazard was taken off by the Germans? He must have been a fairly elderly gentleman at that time?
Heller: No he wasn't.

Chall: This is Esther Lazard's father-in-law?

Heller: Yes. Well, I would say he was sixty or something, but very handsome and in fine health. If I remember, they were living (I don't want to be held to this exactly) somewhere along the coast of Brittany in a cottage owned by somebody who had worked for them for years—so were sort of hidden. And by God, somebody gave Mr. Lazard away, and the Germans just came and took him. They traced him on trains—you know, these awful trains—and then nobody knows to this day what happened to him. Terrible story. And he was so un-Jewish.

Chall: And Esther during that time was here in this country?

Heller: No, she sent her children over and she stayed in Paris. When the Germans occupied Paris she fled along with many others. But she was entirely by herself, because her husband was in the army. That's a fascinating story, and I wish she were alive to tell it. Maybe her children could tell it sometime—of how she made her way, eventually, into Spain.

She was a difficult person, but had a lot of guts. She just made her way, bit by bit. She had a car to start with, but I don't think she ended up with one. Then she just sat for months and months and months in the port of Bilbao, Spain, waiting to get out. She finally did.

Chall: Her family here must have been rather frantic.

Heller: Yes, I guess they were. But I think that once she was in Spain she was able to communicate with them overseas. But there was no ship to get out on. She's told me this story; it's a very dramatic story.

Chall: If the Germans had gotten hold of her, she might have been unable to cope--

Heller: I think she would have coped with them somehow. Her entire family have been raised as Catholics and she had converted when she married. She has two sons, both of whom live in New York or near New York. All her children have dual citizenship. But the two sons, Sidney and Claude Eric, have become absolutely American now, although they were raised in France.

Chall: Are they with the business?

Heller: No. They were only sort of collateral relatives; they weren't directly in that business. You mean Lazard Freres?
Chall: Yes.
Heller: No, it was a cousin. And they all have a lot of children.
Chall: And they are all Catholics?
Heller: Yes, they're absolutely Catholic, every one of them.
Chall: Well, that's quite a tale.
Heller: Yes, it really is.
Chall: Did she remain close to her father after her marriage?
Heller: Very. Very. She had an apartment in San Francisco and she used to spend at least half the year out here. I used to see a great deal of her. Then, after her mother died, she spent a lot of the time out here. Her children were raised by that time. So she was a San Franciscan as well as a Parisian.
Chall: What about her husband?
Heller: He'd be out here a lot of the time; he'd go back and forth to France on whatever business it was that he was in. It never was clear to me.
Chall: He wasn't part of Lazard Freres?
Heller: No. Something to do with soybeans, I think. He was not much of a businessman. Very attractive.
Chall: Had he inherited money? Or did they have money from her family?
Heller: Oh, they were a moneyed family. Well, there was some money, but she (Esther) was the one who had a great deal of money. His parents' place outside of Paris was absolutely a beautiful place—you know, one of these typical French places. They call it the park, usually, but it's the home with the gardens around the house, and then the beautiful forest—you know, the lilies of the valley grow wild there. It goes in circles—the outer part is the farm. They grew vegetables and they had cattle. It was typical. It was a beautiful place. I visited there a few times. Madame Lazard lived there. No, there was money in that family, but they were not tremendously wealthy.

Esther Lazard bought an historic landmark in Paris for her own home—45 Rue de Varennes—and nothing can be changed in that place without the permission of the French government. Oh, it's a glorious home. The de Bards live there now, I think. It's a magnificent place. It was a great historic monument. It has beautiful furniture.
Heller: She had great taste. In fact, all the family had beautiful antiques. Mrs. Heller did, too; and Mrs. Hellman to a degree—not quite as much. But they all had magnificent possessions.

Chall: When you say Mrs. Hellman, you're speaking of Mrs. Hellman, Jr.—Frances Jacobi?

Heller: Yes. I think Mrs. Hellman, Sr.—I.W.'s wife—had bought a lot of things before she died; quite a lot of fine furniture. They were great collectors and spenders, and that sort of thing.

Well, I got way ahead on the property!

Chall: That's fine, because if you don't tell it to me when you think of it, you may forget it.

The vacations in Tahoe, then. Did you ultimately buy a home up there? Or did you always rent?

Heller: Before World War II Ed was always urging his mother to buy this property or that property, but it never exactly jelled. Ed adored Tahoe above any place in the world. We didn't go up during or after the war very much. Toward the end of the forties, Mrs. E.S. Heller started renting every summer a huge cottage at Brockway, which is at the north end of the lake. Mr. Hellman's property was on the west side of the lake. We'd go up and visit with her for a few days, and we started looking for property then. We looked on the west side; we thought we'd want to be there. He and I both craved to have beach property, which is very hard to find at Tahoe; there isn't too much of that.

Eventually we got Mr. Whittell to sell. He was a character at Lake Tahoe. He'd always refused to sell before. It has about a third of a mile of beach front in Nevada. It's about three miles from the state line at the north end; it's in Crystal Bay—now called Incline. It's really a lovely piece of property. We acquired it in fifty, built on it, and moved in in fifty-one. Bill Wurster was our architect. We built a main house, and then afterwards we added a cottage for ourselves, and then another cottage. It's really very nice. It's still in full use by the family. It's actually my children's place.

Chall: By that time they were grown.

Heller: Oh, yes. They love it.

Chall: Prior to that, would you ever stay in the big house—-the Hellman house—when your children were little and you were up there for the two months?
Heller: No, that was when Mrs. E.S. Heller would rent these various huge places on the west side, close to where Mr. Hellman's place was. That was the part of the lake we knew. We spent a great many summers up there.

Chall: Always in a rented house?

Heller: Yes.

Chall: By yourselves? Or were you joined by other members of the family?

Heller: No, just Mrs. Heller. She ran these places. But when we bought the property from Mr. Whittell, Ed and I ran it and Mrs. Heller never even stayed at the place. She stayed over at Brockway, which wasn't too far off.

Chall: Did Mr. Whittell own a tremendous amount of property there?

Heller: During the thirties he bought up most of the northeastern end of Tahoe property, mostly from the Holbrook estate, I believe. It had never been populated over there; that side just wasn't used. Tahoe was a California place, on the west side. I don't know what he bought that property for, but it was very little—it was in the mid-thirties, in the Depression. He had thousands of acres.

He died a few years ago, and the state of Nevada has acquired a lot of that property now. But I think we bought as good a piece as he had. We never met him. He was a strange, weird character.

Chall: How did he happen to buy it all? Did he live up there?

Heller: Sometimes. He was a very weird person. He lived in Woodside. There are great stories about him. He kept lions in Woodside—wild animals. I think he drank a great deal, and he never could be seen. But we got a real estate man to go make an offer on that property. People had tried to get it before and he had said no. He didn't know us, and we were just lucky that the day we said we wanted it, he said he'd sell. In a week it was done!

As a matter of fact, when I think of it, I think we got only about half of the property to start with, and then he sold the other half to us the following year. And we should have bought more. We had no idea that that development would occur. We moved to the Nevada side because we thought the west side was getting too crowded; it was so social. And here's this dreadful Incline development around us. But our property's fine; it's intact. It is fine when we are around the place; with a third of a mile we have good protection, and a beautiful sandy beach. Oh, that other property—it's just a crime what's been done to it. We should have bought more—
Chall: Just to protect it.

Heller: But we never dreamed of it.

Chall: Did you say that I.W. Hellman had purchased his property in 1903?

Heller: I think he moved into that house in 1903. If you read any story of Lake Tahoe you'll see his place mentioned. He was one of several San Francisco families that bought property up there. It was quite tough to get up there.

Chall: I was just trying to imagine how he would go up there. No wonder he stayed for the summer!

Heller: Well, as is well known, he went by train to Truckee, and then on a little narrow gauge railway to Tahoe Tavern. Then Mr. Hellman had one of the early motor boats. Of course, they were not the way we think of them; they were more like cruiser things. It would come over and pick anybody up who was there. And you had to get all your supplies in, because at first there were no roads.

When I was engaged to Ed we were up at the Hellman place at Tahoe, and there still was no electricity in there. They had a power plant of their own. They'd flick the lights at quarter to ten—or five to ten, I think—and give you five minutes to light kerosene lamps; because you couldn't keep the man, who was doing the power, on all night. So as late as that—it must have been in the later twenties that lights were put in on that side.

But, oh, the amount of food that was ordered for those places—because they were huge, you know. Sometimes I try to think of how many servants they had.

Chall: When you say that Mrs. Ehrman "ran" the place, it sounds like an institution.

Heller: Oh, fantastic! And there were all these butlers; it was very formally run. And actually, Mrs. E.S. Heller ran her places that she rented pretty formally.

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Heller: I do remember there were fourteen people—servants there.

Chall: What did they all do?

Heller: Well, there was a cook and two assistant cooks; a butler and an assistant butler; and maids; a chauffeur. I've really forgotten what they all did [laughs]. But she ran her place very formally, and, as I remember, the Ehrmans ran their place the same way. Everybody's
Heller: clothes were unpacked and pressed—pressed every day. All the house-
work was done. Breakfast was slightly informal, in that you didn't
go at a set hour. But you sat down and were served whatever you
wanted. Lunch was at a set time and was a served lunch, and dinner
the same way.

Chall: How many would be around the table at any one time?

Heller: Oh!

Chall: The Ehrmans had a small family.

Heller: I know, but all those places were filled with guests all the time—
always. As a matter of fact, at our place at Tahoe we have a
tremendous number of guests staying with us. But we run ours in a
much easier fashion—very informal compared to this. Oh, it was
terrible, when I think about it.

Chall: Does that mean they had to have their fine dishes, and silver, and all
of that up there? And linens and all the rest of it?

Heller: Oh, I think all of the places, as I remember, were very well equipped.
The Ehrman place was, obviously, and the Drum place—which was one of
the places Mrs. Heller rented—was beautifully equipped with fine
china and silver. And also the Newhalls. Oh, they could seat—I
don't remember—twenty-six or thirty people. They all had big dining
rooms. And you have a lot of people staying with you all the time.
That's part of Tahoe. Almost everybody at Tahoe was equipped to sleep
a lot of people.

But I made up my mind that if I ever had a place it wasn't going
to be run that way. I think my mother-in-law was quite appalled.

As I say, we still run it, and the kids still run it the same
way. We have a couple living there, and in summer we get a couple
of college girls who work part time and it's part vacation. We have
breakfast out, as a buffet; people just come and it's there. This is
coming into modern times now. It just sits there and you can boil
your egg and make your toast, and the bacon's put out there, and the
coffee, and the frozen orange juice is out. We leave it out until
about nine-thirty; people can come in whenever they want for break-
fast. And for lunch, we just put out some buffet food on a big table
and people go—Usually a salad and some cold meats—you always have
to have lots of food at Tahoe; people are very hungry there. Dinner
is at a set time. It's self serve—no waiting or anything. But
that's the chief meal.
Heller: I learned very quickly how to serve these quantity meals. Really, I'm not a cook; I always have to have somebody do it. But you serve sort of basic meals up there, because you have so many people staying with you that you have to have the least common denominator—things that everybody likes.

Chall: Large roasts or something like that?

Heller: Large roasts, ham, chops; you barbecue chops or steaks; or lamb stews. You learn how to cope with it quite quickly.

Chall: When you first were going up there, were you somewhat appalled? You had come from a quite different family.

Heller: You see, I worked into it gradually because I first was there the summer I was engaged to Ed, visiting with the Ehrmans. So I sort of moved into it bit by bit.

Chall: But you took it in stride—what you saw on a summer's day?

Heller: Well, it's hard to explain [laughs]. I suppose it depends on your own temperament. That was the way they did it, so that was the way they did it!

Chall: Did you expect, or did your mother-in-law expect, that you would follow suit? Did your husband expect that you would follow suit? And that's not just the summer; I'm thinking about your winter homes as well.

Heller: No, I think not. I think Ed Heller always liked things in a simpler style. No, he never expected to live the same. Well, he liked good cooking; but we always had a cook. You see, Ed could afford these things. From the time I was married we always had at least a cook and a maid, but nothing like the elaborate things his family did.

The Heller-Hellman Family Routines and Expectations

Heller: There was a great institution in that whole—what I'll refer to as—Hellman family. That includes the Ehrmans and the Hellers. It went back to when Mr. Hellman, Sr., was alive. Every Sunday night the three families had dinner together. You went from the Hellmans to the Ehrmans to the Hellers. All the children, who were getting to be young marrieds—all the offspring were roughly the same age—showed up with spouses, if they had any. Each one of those families tried to outdo the other in the originality of the food that was served.
Heller: There were more fights at those dinner parties [sighs] Oh! Well, Mrs. Heller and Mrs. Ehrman were very volatile. Mrs. Ehrman used to be very difficult for me. She'd always be mad, and there were always arguments. Of course, I'd been raised in a peaceful family. That really hit me—the whole bunch of them together—more than anything, but the way they fought every Sunday and then had to get together again the next Sunday! [laughs] They kept on for quite a while, until finally—I've forgotten why—it just broke up; it just did—thank heavens.

Chall: They continued to do this even after I.W. Hellman, Sr., died?

Heller: Oh, yes, because I wasn't even in the family, then.

Chall: That's right. So this was a continuing—

Heller: They continued a tradition, I guess. I think all of our generation finally just decided it was too much, though it kept on for quite a while.

Chall: That was three homes: your mother-in-law's home, and the Ehrmans—

Heller: And Mrs. I.W. Hellman, Jr.'s.

Chall: Where did she have it? She didn't live in San Leandro all the time, did she?

Heller: No. After her husband died she took a two-floor apartment at—I think—2000 Washington Street. It's still there; it's one of the nicest apartments in town. She lived there. Her children weren't married then, but two of them were a little older than I was, and Flutie (Florence) was my age. Flutie was married in that apartment, I can remember that.

Then, Mrs. Hellman and her daughter (who had married Lloyd Dinkelspiel, by this time) built adjoining houses on Broadway—2900 and the next number, whatever it was—at Broderick Street. I think the Rosekrans have that house now. There are two houses; they sort of connect between the two. Sunday dinner was at that house, too—and at that big apartment.

Chall: Mrs. Hellman and Mrs. Heller both were widowed quite young.

Heller: Yes, very young.

Chall: Were they good friends? Did they see a great deal of each other?

Heller: Fair. Mrs. Hellman was really a very sweet, nice person. But she wasn't ever fully accepted—it's part of what we were talking about last time. I used to hear, when I was first married, that she had
Heller: married their brother for his money, which is ridiculous. The Jacobi family was a fine family. And I still would hear traces of that. For some reason that had no basis in fact, they half thought she was responsible for her husband's death—which had nothing to do with the facts. But Mrs. Hellman was always very sweet, and she just wouldn't fight with people.

On the other hand, she was very demanding. I realized that she was terribly tough on her daughter, Flutie—demanding her attention. She had her own will of iron; but she didn't have that same volatile temperament. She didn't like this outward fighting at all. And in the end she was really more friendly with Mrs. Ehrman, though I think it made her very nervous—you know, the tensions were so enormous. But the business connections by that time were more related to the Ehrmans: Lloyd Dinkelspiel was a partner in the firm of Heller, Ehrman, White and McAuliffe. Of course, Mr. Heller was no longer alive and Mr. Ehrman was. That firm, you see, was always the attorneys for the Wells Fargo Bank; though it had started with my father-in-law, he was no longer around.

So I would say those two families were close, and they lived very close to each other on adjoining blocks. Also, the Hellers were Democrats [laughs] and the rest were Republicans.

Chall: [laughing] Yes, we have to keep that in mind.

Heller: It was sort of an invisible barrier that was being set up there.

Chall: Sunday nights during election campaigns—?

Heller: Strangely enough, I don't really remember it in the beginning. I can remember some things later on, but not at the beginning.

Chall: Did their being widowed at such a young age mean that they worked harder in the community, or that they demanded more of their children in terms of attention?

Heller: Probably. But Mr. Hellman, Sr., had demanded terrific attention from his two daughters. There was just no question about that. I used to hear about this over and over. Mrs. Heller wasn't critical about it; she just would tell me about it. She or her sister went riding every single afternoon—an automobile drive—with Mr. Hellman. They were at his beck and call. He was a very demanding person, and it didn't seem to bother them. And then there was a carryover, you see, into the next generation.

Chall: They expected similar obeisance, as it were, from their own children?

Heller: Well, maybe. But they didn't get it.
Chall: What about Ed Heller--he was an only child. Did he have any qualms about this?

Heller: He was a very smart man. He fought with his mother all the time. He just wasn't going to have this dominance. And then I always found myself in the ridiculous role of peacemaker. He'd always say, "You're ridiculous. My mother and I wind up friends eventually. Stop fussing about it." But she'd phone and tell me terrible things about Ed, and I'd try to defend him; and I'd try to be nice to her, because sometimes I thought he was very mean to her. And they always were friends by the next day. I don't know why I bothered!

But Ed just would not be dominated. But this part of the dependence went on all her life. She died in 1959. If we traveled, we had to always let her know where we were. I just never knew what it was to get any place without sending a telegram or a cable about where we were and where we were going. She would just be miserable if we didn't. So there was that sort of dependence. Then she would phone me, well, I would say twice a day.

Chall: Did she expect you to phone her?

Heller: Well, she'd usually phone first, but I'd phone her. If I was going someplace I'd have to phone her first. And she always liked to know where we were, even when we were around here. Neither Ed nor I liked to say exactly where we were. But on the whole we gave in to her. It annoys you, but then you think, "Well, it's really a very little thing to have to do; and if it makes that much difference to her--" But as a result, I made up my mind that my children never were going to have to let me know where they are. And they don't to this day. I think you react to that sort of thing, don't you think so?

Chall: Oh, yes. If it had bothered you in any way, I'm sure you wouldn't want it to bother your children.

Heller: I just hated always having to go where I said I was going, and not to change my mind or do something on the spur of the moment.

Chall: Or to have to talk about it or to tell.

Heller: It's not that my life is that full of secrets or anything like that. My children, in general, tell me what they're doing, in terms of if they're going on a trip; sometimes they don't when they go on short trips.

Chall: How often do they check in?

Heller: My children? On some special time, when they go--Of course, Clary is here--lives down here--and he'll pop in and out of the house, because he won't take an answering service. He uses this house as a
Heller: phone message center; so all messages are left here. So I can always leave a note for him, because he'll be in sometime at night. Sometimes I'll go for a week without seeing him, but other times he'll come in for a minute; or if I have company he'll come in and have a drink with people. So I see him a little bit more; and, of course, he's a bachelor, too. He'll often say, "Can I have such-and-such girl spend the night in your house?" That sounds awfully moral, I guess. I think he just doesn't want to be bothered with cleaning up in his own house.

Alf [Alfred E.]? Oh, I don't know. I may hear from him, oh, sometimes once a week; sometimes once in two weeks. His wife, Ruth, is lovely, and I hear from her once in a while. And Liz, my daughter, is in New York. Until she was married, I didn't hear very much from her. But when she got married I think she found more in common. I would say I speak to Liz once a week in New York; it's much easier than writing. So I stay in fair touch, but I certainly don't know their day to day, minute to minute activities. They don't know mine, either.

Chall: Of course, you have your own life, which makes it quite different. I'm sure that these young women, suddenly widowed and part of what would have been a social whirl at the time—

Heller: I think it was very tough on them. I don't think Mrs. Hellman ever thought of remarrying. She was even younger, you see, when she was widowed. But when Mrs. Heller was widowed in 1926 she was—

Chall: She was in her late forties I think.

Heller: She was physically a very timid person. I can remember her, oh, going to a football game or something with a widowed man once or twice; but I don't think she ever thought about remarrying. I think she was in her late forties, and she seemed old then, to me. She was older in her physical manner. She didn't swim; she didn't drive a car; she didn't do anything athletic. She was very different from what I would be at that same age.

Chall: She managed her household.

Heller: She managed her household. I don't think she ever in her life took a trip alone; she always had a maid, at least, with her. I think she rarely rode a streetcar alone. She would take a taxi, I think, occasionally, but she usually had a car and chauffeur. She was very dependent, and still she had a fine mind—a very independent mind. She'd decide she was going to Europe, and she'd make all the arrangements and all that sort of thing. But physically she was timid.

Chall: What about her sister, Mrs. Ehrman? Was she somewhat the same?
Heller: Sort of the same, yes. But her husband was still alive, so they lived a different life. They neither of them were physical people at all.

Chall: Is this the way girls were reared, do you think, at that time?

Heller: I think so. Well, my mother was older and she drove a car, and she used to go out for hikes and swam and all that. So it wasn't--

Chall: It wasn't the generation? Maybe it was the culture?

Heller: No, whether it was that family alone-- I have no idea why Mrs. Heller never learned to drive a car. They had one of the first cars in San Francisco, and she never drove!

Chall: Well, she probably didn't have to. They were wealthy enough to have a chauffeur from the very start.

Heller: Oh, but she ran the household. Good heavens! She was a marvelous housekeeper. I was a great disappointment to her.

Chall: [laughs] How could you tell that?

Heller: She liked me; we got on extremely well. But I think I didn't do the things she expected.

Chall: That's what I was asking about at the beginning. What were her expectations, do you think?

Heller: I think she thought I would just go along in the pattern as she had done—you know, entertaining (I liked to entertain, but not in the lavish form) and play bridge in the daytime. I think those were the sort of—But she never criticized any of my activities at all, really. Aside from running her home she did quite a bit in her own way. She really did a lot. And it's too bad that she didn't have a college education. Her mind was so good that if it had just been a little channeled and trained—And as she got older she did more. She really was very remarkable; she was a strange combination.

Chall: I will probably pick that up at another time. She certainly was active in the community in many ways.

Heller: In my opinion she did more than the other members of the family. Mrs. Hellman did a lot for music and was always on the Mills College board of trustees.

Chall: How did that come about? Was that because her daughter had gone to Mills?
Heller: No, no. Their summer place in San Leandro was close to Mills College. I guess maybe because her daughter was there, but I didn't think of it connected. Oh, it was after her husband died; that was it. She gave a swimming pool to Mills College, that had never had one, in memory of her husband. That was just when I was first at Mills.

Chall: That's interesting, because some note I picked up somewhere indicated that her husband had a long time interest in Mills College and she continued this interest after his death.

Heller: I think he did, because of the proximity of the San Leandro place and Mills. I think they supported Mills as an institution close by. And then her daughter, of course, went to Mills. Then it was continuous all her life.

I remember when Mills used to have its summer sessions; that was when I was first married, I guess. That Pro Arte Quartet used to be at Mills. Mrs. Hellman just had them over to her summer place in San Leandro all the time to entertain for them. It made a very nice life for her. She did love music.

Chall: Was she very close to her relatives here—the Brandensteins?

Heller: She stayed close to all her family. Yes, very much.

Chall: So she had that side of the family as well as this side?

Heller: She had two lovely sisters, both living in New York and both married. They were a devoted family. Mrs. Henry Glazer—I can't think of her first name—was Rena Bransten's grandmother. Mrs. Paul Baerwald was the other sister. They both belonged to this same top Jewish society of New York.

Chall: "Our crowd," as it's called.

Heller: Yes. They're all in Our Crowd. That's right. Mr. Hellman is a footnote in Our Crowd. Because they were talking about Mrs. Lehman and they have a footnote that her sister, Esther Neugass, married I.W. Hellman in Los Angeles. So he's the footnote.

Chall: I'm assuming that you started housekeeping with all the fine things that one gets for wedding gifts?

Heller: I don't think I unpacked for a long time. But, yes, we had very nice things. It wasn't a terribly big house. There were a lot of silver candlesticks; but it wasn't that elaborate.
Chall: Did you find that your parents and the Hellers got along well? And the Hellmans?

Heller: Well, my father got on very well, as I said before, with Mrs. Heller; so he kept everything on a very nice, even keel. And as Mrs. Heller got older she was quite dependent on my father in many ways. She liked to have a man around. I think the worst part of her widowhood was that her father and her husband died so close together. She was used to being the center, when Mr. Hellman used to bring all sorts of important people to the house, as E.S. Heller also did. Then all of a sudden she had to make it for herself. My father was pleasant and easily available, and intelligent. She got to be terribly fond of him.

I think my mother she just took for granted was there; that was all. Mother was really a wonderful person. Mrs. Heller always referred to the fact that my mother was older than she was. She used to do that all the time. I don't think my mother really cared; but I think my mother was pleased to outlive her. Mother never said much. Once in a while she'd get mad when my mother-in-law got excited about something. That would annoy my mother, but my father would calm her down. They got along about as well as in-laws get on—not that badly, really. But, as I say, my father was marvelous.

Chall: Was there any tug between the Hellers and the Raases with respect to the children?

Heller: No, that went quite easily. First of all, my parents realized that Ed Heller was an only child, and that they had two children. They had a lot of common sense, you know. They realized that naturally we'd be forced to spend more time with Mrs. Heller because there was one, and they had two. That was very good. Then in my family, Thanksgiving had always been the great family day at my aunts's—Mrs. Sahlein's. That was established: Thanksgiving was with—what I should call for easy purposes the Fisher family—so there was never any argument about it. Of course, Mrs. Heller was always asked to come to my Aunt Carrie Sahlein's; but she didn't. She went with some of the rest of the family, I think; I can't really remember. But it was always established that way. Then Christmas we did jointly.

Chall: Did your children get to know your father and mother in the way that you did? Did they teach your children about trees and nature, and take them on hikes?

Heller: Exactly. I think Clary will tell you about that. Oh, my father still did these expeditions when my children were little. That was one bone of contention: my father was a terrible driver [laughter],
Heller: and Ed used to have a fit when he took them off. But we always knew that it was never going to be speed that would cause an accident.

Yes, my father took my children all around the area—to the redwoods and all. He loved doing that.

My parents moved down here to Palo Alto. Well, they used to rent small houses around Palo Alto in summer, and then they built in Palo Alto in 1939. Bill Wurster did one of his lovely, simple houses for them. They had bought this lot on Cowper Street in Palo Alto. My parents were both sixty-five—they are the same age—when they built that house. And they really adored living in Palo Alto. And they were then living here the year around, so they saw quite a bit of my children.

You know, that doesn't seem so long ago to me; it may to you. I can remember my father saying to Bill Wurster (that's where Bill was a great architect; you knew he could do expensive things, or these wonderful little simple places he did so charmingly), "Remember that house can't cost more than $15,000." After my mother died we had to find the papers to establish the cost—she left the house jointly to my sister and me—and there the bills were; they were just under $15,000—the whole cost. Isn't that unbelievable? That house had two bedrooms and two baths; a maid's bedroom and bath; a dining room; a living room—all lovely proportioned things—a pantry, kitchen, back porch; lovely loggia, garage. Isn't that hard to believe?

Chall: And a nice piece of land.

Heller: A nice piece of land. It was bought (after my mother died) by a man who is a city councilman in Palo Alto now—a builder. He's still living there. It's a lovely little house. Sometimes I wonder why we sold it, except nobody wanted it at that point; nobody was looking for a house. It's too bad. But it's hard to believe.

Chall: That was in 1939? That was about as cheaply as they would go.

Heller: And beautifully built. I think you could hardly get a bathroom for that now! They settled happily into life in Palo Alto.

Chall: Did they give up their summer place in Marin County?

Heller: Oh, they had sold that quite a while before—very shortly after I was married. They gave up their house at 100 Locust Street. I can't remember if it was before my sister was married—she was married in 1930—or just around that time. They lived at those apartments at the Huntington Hotel for a while, for about nine years. They had a summer place down here. Oh, I know—no, they didn't. When my sister was married they let her use their house—100 Locust—and my sister paid them a modest rent and remodeled the house a little bit. Eventually they gave it to her. She lived there for quite a number of years;
Heller: her children were raised there. It was a nice house; it still is. They all managed to live in good neighborhoods. That neighborhood is still as good as it ever was.

Chall: What was your relationship between your family and your sister's--the Levison family?

Heller: My sister was not quite sixteen when I was married--she was almost five years younger. Ed liked the idea of a young sister. She adored dogs, and so did Ed; and I could take or leave dogs--it's just one of those things. So that immediately established something between them. One of the first things he did was to give her a dog [laughs]. My mother could take or leave dogs, too.

My sister was not a student. When she went to college--

Chall: Did she go to Mills?

Heller: No. She wouldn't go. She'd gone to Girls High School, where I had gone, and she was six years behind me in school. Her first term there she got all A's--or whatever the marking system was. Then she got poor grades from then on. She realized that all of the teachers were the same ones I had had, and they had assumed in that big high school that she was going to be as good a student as I was. So she really was miserable about this--she'll talk to you about it. You know, she couldn't get away from being my sister, and I had been a very good student. She had plenty of talents of her own, but she didn't know it for a long time. You can see how that can happen.

She couldn't get into Stanford; her grades weren't good enough, I guess. It wasn't very hard to get into college then. She went to summer session, but she couldn't get in. Then she went to Berkeley, Cal, one term. I remember Ed insisting on picking out her courses, and he picked out much too tough things for her. So she quietly got a doctor's excuse so as not to flunk out.

At that point, in 1929, Mrs. E.S. Heller wanted to go to Europe, and she invited my sister to go with her. My sister and Mrs. Heller really got on marvelously always. My sister was always lovely to her, and she was lovely to my sister. In a way, this was very helpful to me, because I was living in the country and she was living in the City. She'd drop in and see Mrs. Heller all the time. I don't mean that she was relieving me deliberately; but she enjoyed it, and Mrs. Heller enjoyed her, and treated her almost as if she were part of her own family. So that was excellent. My sister got used to her temperament, and it didn't bother her.
Heller: In one way, I think my sister satisfied her more than I did. My sister loved to play any game; she'd be glad to play bridge or anything like that. And I'm not a great cocktail-period person. Ed Heller loved cocktails. But I'll take one, or I can go without it. Mrs. Heller always wanted somebody in to have cocktails with her. My sister was perfect for that. You know, it sounds more drunk than it was. But it meant a great deal to her, to fill that late afternoon hour. And my sister would always be happy to drop in.

Then, after World War II, the traffic got much worse for commuting. Ed didn't like to take the train because the hours never suited him. So he got in the habit then of going in after work every day to his mother's and having a couple of drinks with her, and then coming down to the country after the traffic had thinned out. Up to that time she used to tell me how Warren Hellman went to see his mother every day, and Fritzie Hellman, and where was Edward Heller? He wouldn't come and see her. She'd get furious. But then as his own pattern of life worked out better, he really did go there almost every day; it suited him very well. So that was quite good, as a matter of fact.

Chall: Then he would get here rather late for dinner, I suppose?

Heller: Oh, yes.

Chall: That's the way you had to plan it?

Heller: About seven-thirty, usually. As a matter of fact, to this day, I never take dinner before seven when I'm alone. You get into the habit of late dinners.

No, Mrs. Heller got on extremely well with my sister. Once in a while Aline would get upset at something Mrs. Heller said, but she'd get over it.

Chall: So even though there was so much difference in their ages they were good friends?

Heller: Yes, they got along very well; they really did. You know, I'm leaving out-- Mrs. Heller was very busy for quite a period there. There were all sorts of things she was doing-- juvenile court. She was very active in the AWVS [American Women Voluntary Services], quite interested in International House at U.C. Berkeley, and on the Board of Governors of the San Francisco Symphony, et cetera. She was also on Children's Hospital board; she did a lot with that. Oh, when she went on a board, she really worked at it. She was very good about it.

Chall: So she just had the evenings, then. When you are talking about her later in life, you're thinking about her when she was about seventy-five years old? Because she did live to be something like eighty-two.
Heller: Eighty-one.

Chall: And so did Mrs. Hellman--Frances Jacobi.

Heller: Yes. But up to the last few years of Mrs. Heller's life she'd go out every night to a dinner party, or have company. She didn't like to be alone very much. But she was happy doing that, and she played bridge, and that sort of thing.

Chall: Ultimately she would have gotten into the swing of what it was like to be on her own, I'm sure.

Heller: She managed. The last few years of her life she didn't feel that well, but up to then she was very good about-- Oh, she had quantities of company—not huge numbers, necessarily. But she always managed to keep herself busy at night. She was very good.

Chall: Were there any restrictions, unspoken, perhaps, about who would be entertained and who would not be entertained, in terms of whether they were on the right side of the tracks?

Heller: No. That's where Mrs. E.S. Heller was amazing. With all that background, she had the damnedest mixtures of people at her house; you'd think it couldn't possibly come off—you know, people with nothing in common. People loved to go to her house; it was always fun.

Chall: This was from the time you first knew her? It wasn't later in life?

Heller: No. No, she really wasn't—She was very good about that. Part of it was this Democratic party business that put her in touch with all sorts of people. And she enjoyed all sorts. No, Mrs. Heller was certainly not a social snob. She had, really, the most varied assortment!

In summer, at the Sunday lunches at her house in Atherton, there were twenty to twenty-five people at a time—the craziest mixture of people. The luncheons were lively—lots of fun. She liked people to drink and be happy; she had marvelous food. It sometimes annoyed us that we had to do this every week, but we were urged to invite anybody we wanted to bring along. Our children were expected to come if they were at home. My parents were invited; sometimes they came, sometimes not. Her house was a place where people liked to go. At the Ehrmans', it was always a little stuffy, to my taste. Mrs. Hellman was very proper in her entertaining.

Chall: How did you address your mother-in-law?

Heller: I didn't call her anything. She had announced to me when we were engaged that only Ed was to call her "mother"—and she didn't like first name use. So when my oldest child, Clary, started calling her "Goggie," I did too. Eventually everyone called her that!
The Heller Children: Clarence, Alfred, Elizabeth
[Interview 13: October 19, 1979] ##

Chall: We're going back in time now. When we left off we were discussing some of your early years in marriage. I wanted to know about your children. Whether you had any plans to have three children, or you wanted a boy and a girl, or anything of that sort?

Heller: No. I just assumed we were going to have children. Ed and I were not the sort that planned things out. I don't know if other people did. I remember after we'd been married about six months, Ed said, "I think it's about time to start a family." That's about as much discussion as there was about it. I will say I had always thought little boys were awfully cute. But it didn't make that much difference.

I often thought after I'd had my three children, maybe if I'd thought about it, I'd have thought two boys and a girl would have been fine. I was always envious of any of my friends who had an older brother. I'd never had that in my life when I was a child, or in my teens. I suppose if I'd thought about it, I would have said that. But I figured after we'd had three children we'd had enough.

Ed (we have to jump way ahead) never thought of having more until just at the end of World War II. Our bachelor friends had been married in that period, and were suddenly having children. One couple whom I will mention because they sort of fit into this tale, was Bill and Catherine Wurster. Catherine was exactly my age, and Bill had been a bachelor for years and didn't marry until he was about forty-five. Catherine was about thirty-five. Catherine was my exact age and they had a child just at the end of World War II. Sadie. Just as we were leaving Washington, Ed said to me, "Why don't we have another child?" Here were our children practically grown up by this time. Our youngest was born in 1931. And I wasn't very thrilled about the idea, but I said, "Okay."

We'd been living in the East all this time; I'd never been to a doctor during this time. "I think we should wait." We were just going back to San Francisco in September of '45. "I think we should wait until we get back to San Francisco and I get a proper check-up." I would have been forty-one, I guess, at that point. That's the end of the story. [laughs] He never thought about it again. That's the most we thought of another child.

Actually, I think Ed would have been happy to have another, but I just got the feeling that three were what I could handle best in the way we would like them to develop in light of all my other interests.
Heller: That's about all there is to the story. But it came out very well to have two sons and a daughter.

Chall: Did you bring up Elizabeth any differently than you did the boys?

Heller: Not essentially. First of all, I always had help, and a nurse. Not always very good ones. You have to put yourself back, not to my time, but to my mother-in-law's ideas, which were very firmly entrenched.

Chall: And what were they?

Heller: When Liz was born, I had what you might call a French governess. Governess is really a fancy name for her. But she got on very well with the two boys. Knew nothing about infants. The first time I had a real nanny was when Liz was born. It seems ridiculous when you think about it.

Chall: When she was born. But you didn't before that?

Heller: I had nurses. But I had the real old nanny type, who was really very nice. The boys were off doing things with the French governess. I don't think I'd ever do anything like that again, but at that time it didn't seem strange. I must have had her for about two or three years with Liz. But that was the only different thing.

Chall: But in terms of how you raised her, what she did as a little girl?

Heller: Because I was never a "little girl" type--I wasn't into dolls and feminine things--Liz didn't turn out to be that sort either. I didn't discourage her, it just didn't come about at all. I would say we raised them very much the same, and we sent them to the same school. All three of them.

Chall: Were your children in public school?

Heller: No. Both Ed Heller and I were complete products of public schools; but we were living down here, and there was only one public school, for Atherton; there was a little school. It's still there, but it's a big school now--called Los Lomitas. It had four classrooms, I think, and four teachers. The principal up there had heard about progressive education, and like any unskilled person in that field, went too far. It was just completely undisciplined, I thought, when I went to visit. I just thought Clary, my oldest, would just never learn anything. There weren't many alternatives. There was the parochial school, which I had no interest in, and there was this progressive--but good, (in my opinion and in Ed's opinion)--private school called Peninsula School. I don't know if you've ever come across that, run by Mrs. [Josephine] Duveneck.
Chall: Oh, yes.

Heller: And that's where all my children went to school. Some people used to say Mrs. Duveneck was a "red," which was very fashionable to say in those days--also it was nonsense. But actually, they got an excellent schooling there, excellent.

And when my kids moved East, into New England schooling, except for Clary, who stayed out here, during the war, they did excellently, in those tough schools. So that's how nobody went to public school. Though I believe in it. There wasn't much choice; that was one of the difficulties of moving here, living down here. Palo Alto schools were good, but we weren't eligible for them.

Chall: Oh, I see.

Heller: We were in a different school district and county.

Peninsula was a good experience for Clary, who was quite timid as a youngster, a very timid little boy, which I think often happens to an older child. He had gotten along quite well at Peninsula as far as adjusting to people. Alf, who was two years behind him, just breezed through school. He was just one of those. Liz went two years later, and we just put her into Peninsula School too, where all was fine, as far as she was concerned.

Chall: Did she have the kind of relationship with her older brothers that you had hoped you would have?

Heller: Only when she got to college. You have to remember the war came in there, and messed up things quite a bit. When we moved East to Cambridge, Massachusetts at the time of the war, Liz was just going into the seventh grade. Clary was going to be a junior at Menlo School, a private school here, and he wanted to stay out here. Because he already knew that he would be going into war before too long, he wanted to stay out here. And he did, and did very poorly in school. So many of those young men at that age thought, "What's the use of studying. Let's have a good time." He got terrible grades. He was really lucky to get into Cal after the war, only because he got some credits for serving in the army.

Chall: Did he finish at Cal?

Heller: Oh, yes. Not with glory, but loved it. No, when he got back from the war--he spent the whole war waiting to get back so he could get to Cal. Even though the entrance requirements weren't anything like nowadays. He was in that class of '50, that went in in '46, which was the biggest class there's ever been. All the war veterans
Heller: came back as well as the new students. It was just enormous, and all was chaos. He adored it. He never studied, and he learned a great deal. That's about the most you can say.

He was terrible in mathematics. Just awful. I don't know why, because Ed and I were both very good at math. He flunked advanced—No, he didn't flunk advanced algebra, I think he got a "C" in advanced algebra at Menlo School, which wasn't good enough for getting into Cal; he needed a "B." He never took any science. Ed and I were neither science minded. So he had no science credits. He flunked advanced algebra in his junior year. Chris Connor, who's still alive, and who was his math teacher at Menlo—and Clary's still very fond of him—said to him, "I think it would be a good idea if you took it over and get a 'B' for college." And what happened? He got a "D" on the second try. It's unbelievable.

Then just as he was graduating from Menlo, before graduation in May of 1944, he up and enlisted in the equivalent of the V-12 program that the navy had that so many people went into—to get a commission in the navy. He had no interest in the navy, he wanted to be in the army, and there was an equivalent A-12 program in the army, that was never any good by the way. But he enlisted. He was seventeen. He enlisted in that. It was such a miniscule program. He was sent up to Idaho someplace, and then he was sent to the University of Iowa, which he loathed, with other army young people of his age trying to get a commission. But the army thing was looked down on. The navy program was at Iowa, and they got all the good accommodations. The army people got terrible accommodations and were looked down on. He took advanced algebra a third time and flunked it. And then he flunked himself out of the whole training program. He hated it.

He got out, and came back here. His eighteenth birthday was going to be in August. This all covers a very short time span. He enlisted in the infantry. Well, he didn't want to be drafted; he preferred to enlist. I think his father had a big influence on this idea. Ed had been a World War I man and very patriotic (which Clary, God knows, also was) and wanted him in there earlier. I think Ed influenced him quite a bit and I think Clary would tell you that.

He went down, as a child, actually, to Camp Roberts, down near Paso Robles, which was the big training ground, and got his basic training there. But young men who went in at that time were given practically no basic training because it was just as the army, both in Europe and in the Pacific, were having these terrific losses in the field. Most of them from Fort Ord got sent to the Pacific. He was sent to the Pacific, and had what they called "jungle training" in Hawaii, which was no training at all. He just sat on the beach with a friend. They were shipped right over to the Pacific area and on to Okinawa, with no training at all, as infantrymen. He really
Heller: went in toward the end of the Okinawa campaign, but he was on the front line in active fire, I think, only once. Maybe two days. And then his whole division (77th Infantry) was pulled back to rest. They'd been fighting; it was just the end of the battle.

Eventually they were sent back to the Philippines, to get ready for the invasion of Japan. He was put on the island of Cebu in the Philippines, and just loathed everything about it. He was just such a child, I guess. I'm not trying to defend him, but he could just barely cope with it, I think. He had been promoted to corporal, and then some sort of sergeant, not the top sergeant, and he got busted because they claimed he fell asleep on the ship when he had some sort of watch. It happened not to be true, and he thought he was going to be court-martialed. That's the way things went. Finally, a young southern officer, a lieutenant, began asking what had happened. Clary always hated all the southerners with their accents, but this changed his mind about some southerners. This officer found out what had happened, what was untrue about it, and helped Clary not to be court-martialed. He was in the Philippines on Cebu, when V-J Day came along, which was a happy day for him.

I want to just put in one thing about the army, and that's all about Clary's experience. He wrote frequently. The mail service from the Pacific was absolutely superb. A letter would get to us in Washington, where we were then, while he was in the active thing, no later than three days after it was written. So three days after he had been under fire, he had written us, and we knew he was okay. When you think about it, I don't think there's ever been proper appreciation of that—what do they call that? V-mail or something like that?

Chall: Something like that, and they had a special post office somewhere to take in the mail.

Heller: That was one thing they were absolutely marvelous about during World War II.

So then we occupied Japan and went into--

Chall: Did he go to Japan?

Heller: His division, which was the 77th, a New York regiment, was sent into Hokkaido, the northernmost island of Japan. They sat there for three months freezing to death. Here they came out of the jungle to this freezing area. They lived in sort of a barn, but they were the first Americans, and they were well received; there was no problem whatsoever except for freezing to death.
Heller: Clary had no points built up. If you remember, you got as many points as you had had service, and you got out depending on points. He had the least number of points of anyone who had ever been in active service. And he had to stay in Japan with the occupation troops for a year.

Chall: That was an experience, I'm sure.

Heller: There was no way to get him out. I don't mean that we tried to get him out. To get himself out, he had no points. That's all there was to it.

Chall: How was that experience? Did he enjoy that or get anything out of it?

Heller: He was outside of Tokyo. I can't remember where, some little village. The trains were running. He was a little scared of Japan; he was a little scared of Japanese food, which he now adores. He would never eat any Japanese food while he was there. He had two or three pleasant things happen. He was really bored. But they eventually set up an army college in Tokyo, and he was allowed to go. He got that unit of biology, which enabled him to get into Cal. So that was a great triumph.

He had a very close friend, who spoke Japanese, whom he had gone to Menlo school with, who's still a close friend of his. Not Japanese, American, who had been raised in Japan as it happened. Though he was not the age to be an officer—they were all so young—he had been made an officer because of his knowledge of Japanese. That friend, Bill Pearce, was in Tokyo. Bill would take him to the Officers' Club. Clary by then was once again some sort of a sergeant. He had built up again. He got a cushy job toward the end. He could type, and he had some sort of an office job, which wasn't too bad. Didn't learn anything; it was really just a waste of time as far as the occupation went. So when he could get into Tokyo and Bill Pearce could take him to the Officers' Club, that sort of made things a little brighter.

He saw nothing of Japan, except for one week they were sent up to that lake near Kyoto for rest and recreation. That's all he ever saw of Japan. It was not an enlarging, see the world time.

Chall: Were you and your husband concerned about your children's grades in school?

Heller: No. First of all, Peninsula didn't grade, which we were very grateful for, because Ed Heller had been an excellent student, had excellent grades. He had graduated number one from what we called grammar school then—eighth grade. It was Pacific Heights school on Jackson near Fillmore. And I had graduated number one from my Madison Grammar
Heller: School. That was one of the reasons we chose Peninsula. My parents weren't competitive at all. They didn't care if I got high grades or low grades; they just assumed, I think, that I was going to get good grades. Ed was a little bit more competitive, because it was the nature of the Hellman family to be competitive. He had a fine mind and he did very well. Ed did very badly in high school. He too had barely got into Cal. The standards were lower then. He did very badly. He didn't want pressure on his children. Neither of us wanted pressure.

As I say, Clary was a very bashful child, and it was much better not to have any pressure. Clary went to Menlo School for Boys (high school), (I talk more about Clary but you always do about your first child) which was not a very good school when I think about it, though he's still devoted to it. It is a pretty good school now, but it just wasn't a very good school then. The only thing I remember about his grades was this thing about Chris Connor telling him to take his math over.

Chall: Because at that time it would matter in order to get in to Cal?

Heller: Yes, in order to get in. No, there wasn't any pressure. Actually, they all had good minds. Alf always did well. Liz got very good training in the seventh, eighth and ninth grades in Cambridge, Massachusetts at Shady Hill School, because all those New England schools are pointing to prep schools, and eventually, college. They're much more conscious of it than they used to be out here. She got good, tough, training, but she did very well. That too was not a grading school. Peninsula was sort of modeled on it. It was a stricter school.

Alf went to Putney; he had just finished the eighth grade when we moved East. Alf doesn't like to be called Alfie. He's called Alf, but if I say Alfie, he goes crazy. Hates it. He went to Putney, in his first grade of high school. And that too was ungraded in the ordinary sense. There were grades kept for college entrance, but they weren't given to the students. Alf was always an excellent student. Because Putney was in Vermont, the University of Vermont used to give a scholarship to the highest boy student and girl student in every prep school or high school in Vermont. It amounted to fifty dollars. And Alf was the boy in his class that got that University of Vermont—which he never dreamed of going to—award. I'm just saying that to say that he was just a naturally good student. And Liz was always a very conscientious student. None of them had brilliant records at college, by any means. But good ones.

Chall: Where did Alf go to college?
Heller: Alf went to Stanford. Alf had always grown up with the idea that he was going to Cal, but he didn't have the intensity that Clary had about Cal. Because of the war, they were both going to enter college at the same time. It was just sort of informally decided, never really spoken, that we knew that Alf was a more conscientious student than Clary. It was just as well not to have them both enter the same place at the same time. Alf fiddled around about where he was going. He thought of Reed for a while, and was admitted, but he chose Stanford. The first Stanford person in our family. The one and only until he married a Stanford girl eventually.

Clary majored—if you could call it majoring—in political science at Cal. He really learned a tremendous amount. He's a bundle of information. But his grades were horrible. He went to his own graduation, but had to go back for—what do they call the summer quarter?—after graduation to complete his grades. He couldn't have cared less at that point, but he did it. He did literally finish.

Alf did quite well at Stanford. Nothing outstanding, but well enough to do graduate work. He was a creative writing major under Wally [Wallace] Stegner, which had a great influence on his life. He had lived in the East for the four years he was at Putney, and he had been brought up in the West, so he decided that he should experience the Midwest. So he applied to the English department for graduate work in English at the University of Minnesota, which had an excellent English department at that time and probably still has for all I know. The great Mark Twain specialist who has been at Cal all these years—what's his name? That was one of the reasons that he went. But then the specialist transferred to Cal very shortly after that. Alf never got his M.A. He completed all his work; he hadn't written his thesis.

The Korean War broke out just as Alf finished Stanford—just at that time—1950. Here he was at Minnesota, and all of a sudden, he felt he couldn't sit around going to graduate school. This wasn't super patriotism, but it was sort of a nagging feeling of, "What am I doing here?" or maybe that the draft will catch up with him, I don't know. He spent a year at Minnesota. You didn't get an M.A. in a year there in the English department. All of a sudden he just took off and volunteered for the army out here, and was sent to Fort Ord, where he got his basic training. All those damn military bases when you think of them. He had a pretty good time when he could get away from basic training. After all, it wasn't like World War II. Just at the end, without telling us, he applied for Officer's Candidate School.

Chall: Yes, OCS, I think.

Heller: OCS, and was accepted. I can't remember where he got sent. It was in the Midwest someplace. Someplace like Leavenworth or something like that to get his OCS. He got a commission as a second lieutenant.
Heller: in the artillery. I don't remember how he happened to be in the artillery. Then he was sent out here and manned the anti-aircraft guns that were posted over on the Marin County side of the Golden Gate. You know, manning the harbor there.

Chall: Point Fort, Fort Mason, or someplace like that?

Heller: No, I think Fort Baker. He was over there. And then he got word he was being sent to Korea. We did see him, because he was around here off and on. He was assigned to go by ship. Most of the people for Korea were being flown over, but he was sent by ship. And by God, the cease-fire—or whatever it was called in Korea—the armistice was signed or agreed on while he was on that ship. He had already gotten his orders about where he was going. He was to go up to the front. Anti-aircraft—artillery is a front-line job. He knew exactly where he was going. If he had gone by plane, he would have been up in the front. As it was, he was up at the front, and it was lonely and cold. There was one other officer up there with him, a captain. As soon as we got a mailing address for him, it wasn't too bad for him because Alf loves to read and we could send tons of books to him, which you couldn't do in World War II. But in Korea then the war was over. He was just up there cold and all that, but really essentially doing nothing.

Chall: How long was he there?

Heller: About a year. They got home from Korea more quickly. I don't know why I dwell on the wars, except it was sort of a culmination of their youth.

Clary was sent overseas by ship from Portland, Oregon of all places. He left from Portland, so of course we couldn't see him off. But he came back by ship through the Golden Gate and landed in Oakland. Of course, we got word, and we were over there. There was, you know, great excitement. As far as he was concerned, the only thing he wanted was a milkshake when he got back. [laughter] And to get to Cal and to go to the Big Game. I think he got back in October. He couldn't start until the next semester.

Alf had been sent by ship from San Francisco. But it was all sort of secret movements about the ships. He came back via Seattle. But we knew where he was landing. He went by ship both ways. He was mighty happy to return. But of course, he had a college degree, and was on his way to an M.A., but he never went back to it. And of course Clary had that beautiful world of Cal ahead of him, where he was very happy.

Chall: And Elizabeth went to Mills.
Heller: And Liz, who had very good grades and could have gone anywhere, to my real surprise, decided to go to Mills. Ed was always talking about Cal, but I don't think we ever tried to influence anyone about where they went. It was so taken for granted that Clary was going to Cal; he was always so crazy about it. We never tried to influence them there. Liz just announced one day that she wanted to go to Mills, which sort of surprised me, actually. She went to Mills, and did very well there. She was the only one in the whole family who got a higher degree. When she graduated from Mills, she went to Radcliffe, and got an M.A. in American history.

Chall: Wasn't she, a few years ago when she was in New York, working on a degree in urban management—at Columbia?

Heller: She had just been working in all that urban planning out here before she went to New York. It went from a volunteer job to a paid job. When she went to New York, she worked for the city of New York—had this background of experience in San Francisco. She always said she found out why she had taken an M.A. When she went to New York, she was at such a better salary scale in city government than those who only had a B.A.

Chall: I thought that she was studying statistics and such things a few years ago when they were in New York.

Heller: Yes. She thought she might take a degree in city planning. I don't know what the degree was. She did not go up to Columbia. She'd never had Statistics in college, though she's pretty good with figures. But she found this extremely difficult after eighteen years out of college. Still she did quite well; she got very good grades. But then her children came along. I think maybe Peter had been born when she was doing the statistics. She could tell you, but I'm pretty sure she had one child already.

Chall: Yes, I think so, because it was when I started working with you that you were telling me about it, and that was five years ago. I think both her children had been born. Whom did Liz marry?

Heller: Alan Mandell. Liz met Alan Mandell (who was born in Toronto, Canada) when he was with the Actors' Workshop in San Francisco, working with Jules Irving and Herbert Blau. They received a grant from the Ford Foundation which was given on the condition that Alan, who had a very good head for business, would become, besides acting, Business Manager. The Actors' Workshop was very successful and they were eventually invited to be the resident company at Vivian Beaumont Theater at Lincoln Center in New York, where Jules Irving was director and Alan was managing director. They were there for eight years. Jules Irving
Heller: and Alan moved to Los Angeles a number of years ago to continue in the acting and directing profession in movies and TV. Alan currently acts and directs plays, and he and Liz, with their two children, live in Beverly Hills.

Chall: Is she working in Los Angeles?

Heller: Well, she's just going to open what she calls a gallery for very fine handcrafts. There's nothing like that in Los Angeles. There's all sorts of mediocre things. It would be basically this magnificent weaving that's going on. You know, it's like tapestries. And the finest of handcrafted glass, that are museum pieces, really. And pottery of the same quality. It's going to be modern. She hopes to open it right after Thanksgiving.

Her children are now old enough. You see, she's much older than the average mother of young children. Liz is forty-eight. She decided it's high time she got back to doing something. She just developed this. Because when she bought a house in Los Angeles and started furnishing it--it's a very modern house, she loves modern furniture--she couldn't find anything in Los Angeles of the quality that she was looking for. That's how it came about. It may be a great disaster, but you never know until you try.

Chall: Sounds like an exciting thing to do.

Heller: I don't know how. I tried to be with our kids a lot; Ed did too, but I don't think we raised them on great theories the way people do now.

Chall: You had had—as you were growing up—a combination of interesting urban life in San Francisco where you were allowed certain freedoms to roam around as long as you stayed on the right streetcars at the right times, as I recall.

Heller: Yes. Down here it was more limiting, because there were no streetcars here, no buses here. The children used bikes, or we had to drive them.

Chall: How about intellectual? You had the advantages of going to the symphony with your father, and roaming around the city, and parades, and all the things that go with city life. Were you concerned that your children might be missing something that you thought was good?

Heller: When they were growing up, we took them to the City quite a bit on weekends. There's a pretty good intellectual life around here with the people that were here as our guests. They roamed around, but in a different way. They were in the country roaming. Up to World War II, there was very little down here. They'd hike the hills. They went to schools, not particularly Menlo, that gave them a very different sort of intellectual outlook. Putney was magnificent in art, and
Heller: choral singing; a very wide background. That was one of the reasons I liked Putney so much. Very wide range of interests.

Chall: Were you able to interest them in nature and wildflowers as your father and mother had interested you?

Heller: Mildly. Not to the same degree. Liz and Alf were pretty interested in it, and they've always been in the mountains a lot, as has Clary, camping and hiking. That's what they really loved, was hiking. None of my children were natural athletes. They weren't team sport people. Clary would have loved to have been, but he just didn't have it. Clary followed all the sports, and when he was at Cal, he was manager of the crew. That was as near as he could come to participating in athletics. Both Clary and Alf loathed tennis, because Ed and I both loved it. I thought, "Oh, you lucky children. There's a tennis court, and you can play." And they both loathed it. They had lessons, and they couldn't have been less interested. They never go near a court. Liz's tennis isn't bad. She's enjoyed it, but it's not terribly good. But she's at least enjoyed it all her life. She's a little better athlete than her brothers are. They all ski. I don't mean big downhill skiers, but they ski.

Chall: Do they swim?

Heller: Oh, yes, of course they all swim. But there's nothing superb about any of their athletics. But Alf loves fishing. They went off with Sierra groups a lot. I remember Alf's going off when he was fifteen on a burro trip with the Sierra Club. You ever done that?

Chall: No, but I know what it's like. Sounds like great fun.

Heller: It was great fun. Very difficult, you know. I remember Alf saying to me, "You have to think of the burro first before you think of yourself." And they had storms in the high Sierra! They've all done a lot of High Sierra camping and hiking. Really big hikes. Peaks. They did a lot more than Ed and I ever did in that direction. I think it's natural for children to do something different.

Chall: It was easier to go in to the mountains when they were growing up.

Heller: When they were in college, they did a tremendous amount, all of them, of really High Sierra backpacking. That's the sort of thing I had never done at all. I had camped in the Sierra, but I'd never backpacked. Each generation does things somewhat differently, which I think is good. Don't you?

Chall: Yes!
Heller: They were all in college at the same time. Liz was the class of '52 at Mills. And Alf and Clary were both in the class of '50, one at Stanford and one at Cal. That's when she had plenty of fun, because she had two older brothers two years ahead of her in college. And let us say, she provided a lot of girl friends from Mills. But it worked both ways.

You know your children, but you don't know your children. I think that's true of everybody.

Chall: What have been the careers which your sons followed after they finished college?

Heller: Clary went to Dominick and Dominick in New York to be trained in the investment business and came back to Schwabacher and Company where his father was a partner and where he eventually became a partner. Both boys have been enormously active in community, local, state and national affairs as well as business affairs. Alfred started by teaching English at Putney, then he went to Grass Valley, California and bought a small city newspaper in Nevada City, the Nevada City Nugget, which he published for several years. He founded the organization called California Tomorrow, which was one of the first to be really concerned with environmental problems in California—he was a pioneer in this field. He is now publisher and editor of a quarterly which he founded, called World's Fair.

I was thinking when you were talking about the children--ideas of raising them. We weren't full of theories at all. But there were two things we wanted to be sure of. One was that they should never be boastful about having money—coming from a wealthy family—but they should never be ashamed of it. We did try to make them understand that. It was nothing to be ashamed of, but nothing to brag about. And I think we were highly successful in that. I think it's been proved all these years.

Chall: Did you give them a sense of obligation to society?

Heller: I think they just picked it up. Because they all have been very active, you know. I think they just picked it up.

Chall: Was that something that both of you felt? That you had an obligation to society?

Heller: No, we just did it. It suited us to do it. It suited our temperaments. I think. All three of our kids have been marvelous participants in their communities. There's no question of it. In different ways, all of them. Ed's parents had had quite a bit of that—you know, symphony, and the modern museum and all that. Ed's father was one of the great builders of the San Francisco Symphony. But we didn't do as much of
Heller: the conventional things. I went on the symphony board after my mother-in-law died. I was bored to death on it. Now Clary's on that board. And Clary's on the executive committee, and he enjoys it. He's in the heart of it. But that hasn't been an automatic transferring. They've all gone their own directions.

Chall: Did they have any religious training at all? They didn't go to Temple Emanu-El?

Heller: No. No, we were down here. I think I told you once about that one year of religious training.

Chall: You told me that you went in to a confirmation class at Temple Emanu-El and then got out.

Heller: My children's religious training was zero. But that was one thing I wanted to say. Of course they knew they were Jewish. And we always tried to say, "Never be embarrassed by the fact that you're Jewish." I remember when Clary went to Menlo School, because there was nothing like that at Peninsula, I remember saying to him when he went into the ninth grade, "You know there's such a thing as anti-Semitism in the world. People don't always like Jewish people. And you may run into it when you get into high school, Clary. Don't let it bother you. Most people out here don't feel that way." There really was basically very little anti-Semitism in this area.

Chall: But at that time, it was quite a dominant factor in world politics. He would have been bound to pick it up in newspapers, even.

Heller: It wasn't dominant then. This was before World War II. Of course they knew about Hitler.

Chall: And Father Coughlin.

Heller: Well, probably. They always read very well. There's a funny little story about Clary's going to Menlo School. I did tell him that, and I thought I'd made my point. I remember he came home from school about a week later and said, "You know that anti-Semitism that you told me about? I know about it now. There's a fellow named Danny Stein in my class, who is impossible." So that's how he discovered what anti-Semitism was, which I always thought was terribly funny.

Chall: During the thirties there was a rash of kidnappings of children of relatively wealthy people, and wealthy people. Was that a concern of yours?

Heller: It didn't concern Ed and me at all, but my mother-in-law was absolutely panicked. She was in practical hysteria about that. She insisted on hiring a night watchman to be around this house, which was sort of a joke as far as Ed and I were concerned. She was so panicked that we just couldn't not do it. We made very light of it as far as the children were concerned. They were young enough--this was in the early thirties--
Chall: Elizabeth would have been quite young.

Heller: I think the boys would have been quite young when that was going on. I can tell you the end of it; I remember the end of it. I think they took it for granted that everybody had night watchmen. Anybody who had a house like ours. I don't think they thought of it as any different from having a gardener. I really don't. But these night watchmen were so stupid. And we had one who would invent traps for people, because he had nothing else to do. He had the mind of a bird, I guess. He used to put threads across the driveway and then examine them all the time to see if anybody had come through and broken them. It was ridiculous.

What he did quite a bit was to listen to the radio. This is why I know when the end of night watchmen came. And one night, he was calling in the window of this room from the outside. "Mrs. Heller!" He always knew that Ed went to sleep long before. "The swastika flies over Danzig!" [laughs] So that was the end of the night watchman. We knew he was listening to the radio. And that period was over then. But I always remember it. It's always been sort of a joke in this family. "The swastika flies over Danzig!"

Chall: How long did you have him, then? Five or six years?

Heller: I don't think that long. Maybe. I think we had a couple in there. I've really forgotten. I don't think the children ever thought of it as particularly unusual. That's why if you can find out when the swastika first flew over Danzig, you'll know how long we had it, which must have been about '37.

Chall: I don't remember when the swastika flew over Danzig.

Heller: You're too young.

Chall: Oh, I was aware. I'm not that young--maybe 1938?

Heller: I don't remember, but it was well before World War II started, and World War II started in '39.*

But my mother-in-law really-- When I felt strongly about something I could hold out against my mother-in-law. But I didn't think this was one of the points that was worth holding out. She was so panicked, and it really wasn't bothering us. And our children didn't think--I don't think, you might ask them--I don't think they thought much of it except as part of the routine.

*Danzig fell to the Germans when they went into Poland in September, 1939. The Sudetenland was taken over in 1938.
Heller: Clary took the brunt of all his father's lectures. His father was full of lectures and theories and discipline.

Chall: About what?

Heller: Anything. Ed liked to win an argument. I never won an argument from him in my life. He was so well read and knew so much that he could make up facts that I couldn't repudiate. He really was enormously well read. He was very stimulating. But he'd go after Clary when he was young. Clary, as I say, was a timid kid. If anything was going to be spilled, Clary would spill it. He was just made that way. He'd be lectured about his table manners, and lectured about this or that. Once he boasted that he knew how to gamble—he was very little. And Ed made some bets with him, and got all his money away from him on stupid bets—money that he'd been saving for something or other. Which, I think, probably taught him a lesson. But he was always the guinea pig.

Alf would just sit there at the table not saying a word, hoping he was invisible. He was very big for his age. Alf was the one of the three who sort of resented the family when he was probably in college. He had that feeling he wanted to get away from the family. Which he did pretty well. It was our understanding that if he went to Stanford, he was not going to be here.

Chall: He lived on the campus?

Heller: Oh, yes. But I think—in fact, I'm sure he imagined we were oppressing him more than we were. Clary and Liz may have felt that, but they never gave any evidence of it at all.

It's interesting how children develop. Clary was marvelous on facts. They interested him. When I say he was marvelous—they interested him. Did I ever mention to you about my father wanting to give him the Bible when he went overseas?

Chall: No.

Heller: When he knew he was going to the Pacific, my father said to him, "Clary, I'm going to give you a Bible." The privates were allowed to take one book. He said, "I'm going to give you a Bible to take overseas."

And Clary said, "Well, if you want to give me anything to solace me, I'd prefer a world almanac." And that's the book he went overseas with. That's the way his mind goes.
Heller: Alf was always very interested in literature. I don't think Clary ever read a novel. Menlo School wasn't insistent on literature. Clary's very literate, but I don't think he ever read a novel.

Chall: He preferred non-fiction? Biographies?

Heller: Yes. Always. Magazines, particularly, even more than biographies. He's a great magazine and newspaper reader and retains his facts. I remember once Clary said to Alf, "Where's such and such a place?" Which Alf had never heard of. And Clary said, "You don't know anything." And Alf said, "Well, who wrote the Old Curiosity Shop?" Clary said, "Never heard of it." [laughter] That's about the difference in the two. Alf's full of facts, now. He's very good. But this was in school.

Chall: They were different.

Heller: They were very different.

Chall: And was Liz spoiled or petted in any way because she was the last one and the only girl?

Heller: No. We were very careful about that, because I'd seen so many spoiled ones. She was not spoiled. As a very little girl, she had a terrible temper. And her daughter turned up with the same thing. Screaming for nothing. You've heard of children like that. I don't mean as an infant, as a two or three year old. We'd just put her in her room and let her scream. I've never known to this day why she screamed. She's asked me since, why did she scream. She can't remember. I said, "I never knew, Liz. Something in you wanted to scream." I don't think we handled it as well as we might have. But maybe it was just as good. It was before the days of psychiatrists.

Chall: You never know with children. She probably wanted something you didn't want to give her.

Heller: I don't know. She kept that up for years. Olivia her daughter is out of it now, but she did a lot of the same thing. Screaming for no reason. How do you know where these things come from?

No, Lizzie was never spoiled in any way. Very straightforward, very natural.

None of the kids cared about luxury or things that money would buy. They just didn't. Of course, some things, I guess, they just took for granted, such as the fact that when they were ready to have a car, they could have one.

Chall: And then you had your fine summers at Lake Tahoe.
Heller: Yes, we used to go up there a lot. Up to World War II, my mother-in-law used to rent places. I've described those to you before. But they lived the simple life really when you think about it up there. You know, the beach and the mountains.

Chall: Did they have pets--cats, dogs, white rats?

Heller: No. Ed always had a dog. He was crazy about dogs. Clary never cared much about animals. Alf's always had dogs, but I think maybe it's his wife Ruth more. And Liz had dogs some, and likes them. No we have never been a big animal family. Ed was crazy about dogs. He never was without a dog. Always a big airedale. They were all named Tykie. One would die, and then another Tykie would come along. We had endless Tykies. Not endless, because they all lived pretty long. They were quite smart dogs.

Household Management and Financial Arrangements

Chall: In your own activities in the house as wife and mother, was there ever a time that you were the housekeeper or cook?

Heller: No, I'm an incomplete woman. This is my Achilles heel. [laughter] Oh, I can housekeep, but cooking panics me. I've just been able to avoid it all my life. Even when I was a child, I would do the dishes or some of the housework, but I would avoid the cooking. My sister turned out to do the cooking. I always avoided it.

Chall: When you were first married, you didn't have to do any cooking?

Heller: No. Remember I was married in 1925. You automatically had one or two in help immediately at that time. It was just done, that was all. Even my parents, who were not wealthy, always had one person help, maybe two. They always had someone to take care of us. It's just the way things were done.

Chall: Did you gradually learn how to plan meals?

Heller: Oh, yes, that I did learn. Ed was very fussy about food. I knew very little about it, really. I found out quickly I had to learn about food because it meant something to him. I think that's the way you learn. I never did learn to cook, but I learned about the sort of meals he liked.
Heller: He had one big point. He never liked to repeat a meal, a main dish, in less than a month. It really tested my ingenuity. I didn't have to cook it, I had to produce recipes. He was adamant about this.

Chall: Was that how he had been brought up?

Heller: I think so. His mother really cared about these things.

Chall: Did you get any help from her in menu planning?

Heller: I still have a book that she gave me—some of her fine menus—hand-written. I don't know where they came from. Eventually I discovered most of them were fattening and abandoned them. No, I really did learn how to plan very well. I guess I still can, though I tend to have simple meals. We never were meat, potatoes, apple pie type of eaters. As a matter of fact, my parents weren't either.

You just learn those things if you have to. And that was one of Ed's demands. I had to plan.

We did a fair amount of entertaining. You did in those days. It wasn't lavish, but they were the sit down dinners, because you did have help always.

Chall: For how many people, usually?

Heller: Well, not more than sixteen.

Chall: Would they be your contemporaries, mostly?

Heller: It would vary. It would vary quite a bit.

Chall: I'm thinking about in the first years of your marriage.

Heller: Oh, yes, when we were first married. So many of my friends and Ed's friends in this one small group got married within one year. It was amazing. That happens once in a while. And it was back and forth and around. Clary, I guess, was the second child born in the group. Ellie and Leon Sloss, though they were married a little after we were, had a child immediately, so they had the first child. But there were so many in that age. There was much back and forth. Maybe five to ten years after we were married, Ed finally said, "There's just no reason we have to accept these dinner parties, just because we've always known these people." And I remember saying to him, "Well, what do I say?" He said, "You just say you're sorry, you can't come. Don't make any excuses."

Chall: Was he bored with the people, or just with dinner parties?
Heller: You get bored with them after a certain point. It wasn't a terribly heavy drinking crowd or anything like that. But when we were first married, it was all the same: cocktails, and you played bridge afterwards. He got bored. Ed was a very good conversationalist, and he enjoyed people that were very stimulating. This isn't to knock any individual, but when you're with the same people all the time, it gets a little dull. And there are dull ones among them.

So gradually we started seeing all sorts of people. Not too much of business people, unless Ed really liked somebody personally in business. He told his partner Albert Schwabacher, who was the senior partner of Schwabacher and Company, that he was not going to do any business entertaining. That doesn't mean we didn't entertain some business acquaintances that Ed would particularly like. That's a different thing. But we never, thank heavens, had to go through that dreadful business routine.

And Ed didn't like clubs. I might throw that in someplace, because all the proper Jewish families belonged to Beresford Country Club. Not the Concordia Club, it was the Argonaut Club. It was a San Francisco men's club.

Chall: Did he belong to that?

Heller: Yes, he belonged to that. Within five years after we were married, I think he was president of the Argonaut Club. He resigned, about two months later. He said, "I cannot bring myself to care about whether the roast beef suits somebody's taste or not. I just cannot be bothered." Ed was always sort of an independent spirit. It always amazes me with his background, a really conventional upbringing. He just struck out in his own directions and refused to accept the conventional things. He hated Beresford Country Club. We used to go there when we were first married to these big dances. He'd always get into a fight with somebody because he was bored. He'd take too much to drink. I soon discovered that the best thing to do was not to go. He was not a club person.

I'm telling you this, because it seems that he was,[a club person] about Argonaut. Well, Argonaut was just a convenient place to have lunch when we were first married. He gave that up pretty quickly. Then we became members of the Menlo Circus Club, which is the club here, and of which his parents had been founders. It flourishes to this day. We belonged all our married life. I finally resigned from it after forty-three years of belonging because I never used it. I've never used it in all these years.

Chall: The Menlo Circus Club?
Heller: Yes. We're neither of us club types. We were asked to join Menlo Country Club many years ago. I don't want to mention any names in this, but Menlo Country Club never had Jewish members. I don't know if they have any to this day, I've never followed it. Whoever it was—I know who it was, but it's no use mentioning names—came as head of the nominating committee and said that the board wanted Ed and me to become members of Menlo Country Club, because they wanted to prove that they had no prejudice. Ed didn't care about country clubs. He didn't like golf, he liked tennis. Ed just said, "No, I've no thought of joining." I guess they meant it as a compliment.

Chall: Surely you were going to be their token.

Heller: But we didn't think about it in terms of token. All Ed thought of was, "I don't want to belong to a country club." Then sometime in the thirties, Los Altos Country Club started. Without telling us, my mother-in-law joined for us, and we were members of Los Altos Country Club, which is still going too. I don't think we went there more than once.

I'm giving you this buildup to explain that when Ed went in the army in World War II and went East, the first thing he did was to resign from all these clubs. He'd been looking for an excuse for years. His mother would always say, "You can't do that. You can't do that! It's not right!" He finally found the perfect excuse.

The only club he ever enjoyed was late in his life when he had an office down here in Palo Alto with Fred Anderson. There is a very nice men's club in Palo Alto, very simple, called the Palo Alto Club, to which Clary now belongs. It's the businessmen in Palo Alto and a few people from Stanford. He was asked to join there. He really enjoyed that. It's just a simple old house where you go to get food, and domino playing, though Ed never played dominoes. But Ed really enjoyed going there with Fred Anderson and other friends. Clary now belongs to it, and enjoys it to just about the same degree. He doesn't go to the evening things or play dominoes, but he enjoys dropping in there for lunch and seeing a lot of the people. There are a lot of people his age there now.

Chall: It's just a convivial sort of place.

Heller: Just pleasant. It really isn't in terms of a club, the same as the others.

Chall: It's not a country club type club.

An old note card on Edward Heller made by someone else lists his clubs: Argonaut, Beresford, Los Altos, Lakeside, Olympic, Commercial.
Heller: Yes, he belonged to many clubs but was not a "club man."

Chall: What about matters of the family finances? Were you given an allowance, and that was it?

Heller: You mean after I was married?

Chall: Yes.

Heller: Yes, I can remember exactly what my allowance was for quite a long time. It was $250 a month to run the whole household, all the food, but it did not include things like insurance that Ed took care of.

Chall: And the employment of the help?

Heller: It included the help. In fact, somewhere I have tucked away—when I was first married I thought I should keep accounts of what I spent on everything. Light and heat and food and all that. It was somewhat supplemented in that my mother-in-law was forever turning up with food. More than we wanted. But there were certainly different living arrangements in those days.

Chall: Eventually did that arrangement change? The reason I ask is that when we were discussing your political years, I noted that you often gave or lent considerable sums to the party, or would buy tickets for dinners, on your own, I thought.

Heller: We made it a rule in politics never to lend, but to give. As for the household, I couldn't give you exact sums. I remember it moved to $1000. Ed never liked to do anything automatically. He'd always say, "When you need money, come and tell me. I'll give you a check." He was always reluctant to give me the check, in a way. Because I'd say, "I wish you'd look and see what I spent my money on." I'm not particularly extravagant myself. The only thing I ever would buy that you would call for myself were books. Ed liked them so it was okay. I did do a lot of book buying. But he was always really very generous about money, because he never wanted to know where it went. If I needed $5000 or whatever, he would give it. He'd always hold me up for a day or two, though.

Chall: So even in the days of your political party activities, you had to ask him for the money, is that it?

Heller: Yes, but I started building up a savings account that I could use. I mean, after all, from my point of view there was lots of money in this family, and I didn't have to save for the future. I saved for my own personal uses which I would call giving to political activities. But we gave very small sums compared to what's given nowadays.
Chall: That's true, but in one of those lists that I saw of donations given to a Jefferson-Jackson Day Dinner, in the Trott files, for example, the amount that the Hellers gave was far and above what anybody else was giving.

Heller: On the whole, Ed would give, would be the one who would make out the check.

Chall: But it was quite a bit more. They gave $25 on the average, you might give $500.

Heller: Yes. But Ed was the one who did the checks. And except in the Helen Douglas primary, we really were always supporting the same things. That's really true.

My mother-in-law always did one thing that was really very nice. She'd always give me quite big checks for my birthday and for Christmas. She said, "Edward's a tightwad. You should have money of your own to spend." She was very nice that way. She thought this up by herself, which was amazing, considering her background of always having had lots of money. And she'd always give me $1000, $2000 checks, which was quite a bit. Because I wasn't extravagant, I didn't use them, I kept them. She always wanted to be sure that I had cash of my own to spend.

Chall: That's interesting. I think she was more of an independent-thinking woman than many women.

Heller: She could have been marvelous, if she had ever had more education and less fears in her background when she was a child, and was less protected. She could have been superb. She had a marvelous mind, but it was not disciplined. I was looking for the right word, and that's it. It was not a disciplined mind. But she was a marvelous thinking person.

I've always thought of that, and actually, to this day, not for the same reasons, I give my daughter-in-law and my son-in-law checks for their birthdays, and for Christmas, or whatever I'm giving them for. I always sort of kept that going. Not that I'm worried about their spouses, but I just think it's a good thing to do. Give them money for their own charities. That's what my mother-in-law used to say, "You ought to be able to give to the things you want to give to." Which I thought was great.

Chall: The claim is that there were so few women in the past who had money of their own that they couldn't support other women or causes which they might be interested in.
Heller: She understood that. And another thing she did: Whenever I was really interested in something, she would always send a check to it. I would never ask her. Like the World Affairs Council was certainly mine; not hers. She'd always send them a fine check. In later years, when she was down here, I was interested in the Children's Health Council. She'd always give them a nice check. She was marvelous to Mills College, of which I was a trustee. She always, she and Ed together, but she'd really be doing it, gave about $20,000 or $25,000 every time there was a drive on, which was a big sum then. I wouldn't ask her; she'd know it and she'd do that. She really was very good about supporting my causes; she was really very kind that way. I don't want to say kind. Very thoughtful; supportive, I guess is the right word.

Chall: She used her philanthropy wisely, I think. She was careful, but she was very generous.

Heller: She was enormously generous for her time. Nowadays, it wouldn't be looked on as an enormous amount.

Chall: Times have greatly changed.

Heller: But she was generous. She did more things that never showed up in this.

I didn't think I'd spend that much time on all that background.

Chall: I didn't either, but I'm glad we did.

Family Bonds and Relationships

Heller: I feel that I'm neglecting telling you about my children, who are all really terrific people. I must say, they've all stayed friendly. They've never had any fallings out, which is amazing, don't you think so?

Chall: It's a credit to you.

Heller: I don't know if it's a credit to me. But they have stayed friendly. It may be a credit to the spouses of the two who married.

Chall: They all get along well?

Heller: They get along extremely well. My grandchildren are very—Alf's four girls just get on beautifully together and they're lovely. That part is really very nice, isn't it. I think a good family feeling.
Chall: Was this true of the Hellers and the Ehrmans and the Hellmans in your generation, when you all met together for dinner?

Heller: There was a love-hate relationship there. We were extremely—not the Hellers. The Hellers weren't the dominant family there. It was the Hellmans. Great jealousies and great loves. It was very bewildering to a newcomer to the family, I assure you. Enormous jealousies, not based on any very good reasons that I could ever perceive. They still adored each other.

I never knew Ed's grandfather, who died about four years before I was married. I barely knew my father-in-law, as he died a year after we were married. And I never knew Ed's uncle, Marco—I.W.—Hellman, who died at the same time his father died. I only knew Mrs. I.W. Hellman, Aunt Frances, who was an in-law. She was just protecting her brood. This is no criticism of her. I think she had a dreadful time with these two sisters, Mrs. Ehrman and Mrs. Heller, who were just at her all the time. She was sort of caught between.

You can talk to any of the family and they'd tell you about these great jealousies. But the younger generation, the ones who were my children's age, and there are a lot, second cousins, don't have any of those. I don't see those jealousies at all.

Chall: Do they see each other?

Heller: To a degree. They're friendly. It varies, depending—Lloyd Dinkelspiel, Jr. was a good friend of Alf's and Clary's. He died very young, you know, in about his mid-forties. He was a very close friend. Warren Hellman, Mick and Ruth Hellman's son, lives in the East. I think Alf barely knows him, but because he's in the investment business, Clary knows him and likes him very much. Lizzie got to know him when she was living in New York, and also liked him very much. So there are the ins and outs of this family. Franny and Billy Green, who are double cousins, because Billy was a cousin of mine. His mother was my first cousin and he married Frances Dinkelspiel, who's mother was Ed's first cousin. We see them. They live down here, and we see them quite often. It's not intimate, but friendly. The Lazard children, that's Esther Ehrman's children, Clary sees them whenever they come out here. He's quite friendly with them. They're slightly younger, but he's very friendly with them, especially the two girls who live in France. But there's none of the intimacy anymore, which I think was very bad, when I think about it.

Chall: It was very close, that first generation.

Heller: Too much so. And that, I don't think, was true of my children. They are very friendly and get on. But there's not that back and forth talking, every-day-intimacy that I saw in that other generation.
Heller: Which I really was not for. I saw how many stupid things happened out of it. They (my children) keep in touch with each other. We're none of us letter correspondents. So it's all phone. The phone is a marvelous instrument. [laughs] I think we keep in very close touch with what's going on, because Clary, being unmarried, is quite mobile.

Chall: You mean he can visit them?

Heller: He never stays with them, but he'll go to Los Angeles and stay a few days. He'll be doing other things, and be seeing Liz and Alan and the children.

He takes Peter to Cal football games in Los Angeles. And Peter's for UCLA! [laughter] He's very fond of all his nieces, the girls. He visits all of them in their colleges. And they love to have him come and visit. That part is really very nice. We get together as a family. We're all going to Del Coronado this New Year's. Everybody is available in the whole direct family. Miranda and Jerry will be out from Cleveland; that's Alf's oldest daughter who is married, and they will be out here right after Christmas. Liz and Alan's children will be having vacation. Alf's second and third daughters will be home from college over that time; they'll be home by Christmas, of course. And number four is still in high school.

I had a seventy-fifth birthday in your absence, as you probably remember. So Alf and Clary cooked up this idea that we should all go away when we could all be together. But not over Christmas; it wouldn't quite work. They have reservations at the old Hotel Coronado which I remember off and on from years back. They didn't want to go up to the mountains. So we're going to be there together for three days, the whole family. So once in a while, you get together again, which I think is very nice. Of course, everyone was here for Miranda's wedding, too. We had the whole family together then, this summer. It's not few and far between.

Chall: And except for a college student in the East and a married daughter, it's not too hard anymore to get together.

Heller: Last Thanksgiving [1978]--I guess Annie Heller was at Wesleyan and Catherine was at Colorado Springs (Colorado College), but all the rest were together for Thanksgiving up at Sebastopol. Alf and Ruth have an apple orchard up in Sebastopol. We all went up there for Thanksgiving, which was fun. So we get together often enough. I've talked enough about the family.

Chall: Well, I did want to get all that in, because the family should be part of your oral history.

Heller: It certainly is.
III DEVELOPING OUTSIDE INTERESTS

[Interview 14: October 26, 1979]##

Community Affairs

The League of Women Voters, 1927-1942

Chall: I think we're ready to begin.

Heller: What are we going to do today?

Chall: We will start with the League of Women Voters. There's just a little that I would like to ask you about.

Heller: Okay, because otherwise, it's impossible to do.

Chall: You told me last week that you have retained membership in whatever local league is your affiliation now. I wondered if you still read their material and take an interest in their positions at the time when you might be voting?

Heller: Yes. I usually use their summary of ballot measures. I've always used it. It's good. I don't think I've ever failed to vote on the few measures that they do recommend for or against each year. I think I got all my training there; I like the way they analyze. Yes, I would say I've followed it all along.

I always had to laugh that Ed Heller, who was so his own man in everything, on ballot measures would always ask me if the league had taken a stand. He had absolute faith in them, in their positions. They take so few, you know. There are others now. The California state voter's handbook is better than it used to be on summarizing, but I think that the league's Pros and Cons publication provides a very useful service.
Heller: I did one of their first—when they first tentatively started this voter's service in San Francisco—oh so long ago in the thirties sometime. They had an empty storefront someplace on Geary Street between Grant and Kearny. I just can picture it. I may be wrong, but I think that's it. I was the one who manned it, explaining measures on the ballot the first year they ever did it. People always want you to tell them how to vote. That was my chief experience with it. You had to refuse to tell them. These were the facts, and the league had taken no position. So, I was in on that from the very beginning out here.

Chall: Was this the San Francisco league?

Heller: Yes. That was the San Francisco league.

Chall: And was it for the San Francisco ballot measures? They always have ten or twelve on the ballot each time.

Heller: I can't remember whether it was just San Francisco ballot or the state ballot as well, because they did take position on some state propositions.

Chall: Yes. The state league.

Heller: I don't really remember. I do remember taking part in what I thought was a great experiment. It was. I think it was very much used.

Even now, I make a contribution such as to the Ford-Carter debates. I made a contribution nationally to that. I really think that they have a standard that they live up to extremely well. Nothing else seems to quite fit it.

Chall: When you were the education chairman in the San Francisco league, did you work with a committee? I know you were the chairman of the committee, but do you remember working with any other women or were you alone?

Heller: It varied. It varied depending on the project, it seems to me. I know on these two big studies I did, I had a committee each time.

Chall: Did they volunteer to work with you?

Heller: It was one of those things where you ask people, or they hear about it. They were good people, awfully good people, who did that sort of work. And I imagine they still are.

Chall: How did you get on the board? Do you have any recollection?
Heller: I remember exactly. When I was in high school, I used to hear the phone ringing for my mother all the time. The league was then called the San Francisco Center. My mother was always saying, "Yes, Miss Delaney." Well, I always thought it was a "Mr. Laney." But it was "Miss Delaney" who was one of the original league people who had a great role in the league's studies.

At that point, the San Francisco Center was very interested in monitoring the dance halls that used to be in San Francisco. My mother was a member of the board of the San Francisco Center, strangely enough. I remember just hearing some about it. Then she occasionally took me to special meetings. When Herbert Hoover spoke at the league introducing the King and Queen of the Belgians, my mother took me to that lunch. I particularly remember that one. I think I was in high school then, maybe just in college. And I took a dislike to Herbert Hoover then, because he mumbled and he talked down into his soup. Isn't that funny how you remember things? She took me occasionally to some of those gatherings that are still going on.

Some time before I became a member, the name was changed to the San Francisco Center of the League of Women Voters. And then eventually, dropped the San Francisco Center part of it and became the League of Women Voters.

It was a year or so after I was out of college and married, maybe 1926, '27, Alice Arnstein, who was a member of the league, whose family knew my family—she was older—phoned me one day and asked if I would join the San Francisco league board. Or maybe it was still the San Francisco Center, I can't remember. Because I had known about it just a little bit, that's the first board I ever went on.

That's where I got catapulted into great activity very quickly. That's exactly how I joined it. I don't know who proposed me. I think possibly Mrs. Jesse Steinhart, the first Mrs. Jesse Steinhart, who had always been very interested in the education scene. The San Francisco scene, not higher education, though she herself was a graduate of Berkeley, or maybe Bryn Mawr. That whole group ahead of me—I've forgotten the names of so many of them—Nan Frank, Harriet Eliel, of course, who stayed with the league for a long time—had been part of changing the system of selection of members of the San Francisco Board of Education. Did I go into that with you before?

Chall: No.

Heller: It had just been accomplished when I went there. They (board of education members) used to be elected, and every Irish name always won in San Francisco. The league was really the leader in getting it
Heller: changed to nomination by the mayor, and approval by the voters of San Francisco. You know, the "yes-no" ballot. It stayed that way for many, many years until all this districting started up. It wasn't exactly district, it was a matter of getting them elected. It went back to an electoral system. I was maybe propagandized, though I could see what terrible things had been happening. This is the sort of thing that I hate to have published flatly.

At that time, the control of the public school system in San Francisco was really dominated by the Catholic schools. They turned out many teachers. At that time, they just did not have the training that the publicly educated teachers had. There was very little on credentialing then. A couple of people were just controlling the state of affairs in the public education in San Francisco.

Chall: And yet you happened to get a very good education through that system.

Heller: Yes, I really did. You know what one dominant control can do. The main thing was to get the graduates of the Catholic schools. I don't think you had to have any college training at that point. I may be wrong.

Chall: A two year normal school? Wasn't the early San Francisco State College a two-year normal school?

Heller: They didn't go to the San Francisco State College. It wasn't in existence then. Strangely enough, my mother, when she graduated from Girls High School, way back in the nineties, early nineties, went to San Francisco Normal School to get a teaching credential.

No, they didn't. That was the whole thing. They really didn't have any background. The turnover [in the board selection process] did make a much better standard. The public schools were awfully good in San Francisco for a long time, I think. They may still be good for all I know.

Chall: So that was one of the league's activities just prior to your getting in, then?

Heller: Definitely. It was very education oriented.

So that's how I really got into it. But it was basically San Francisco oriented. At that time, there weren't leagues all over. There was just a San Francisco league, and, if I remember correctly, a Los Angeles league.

Chall: How about Berkeley?
Heller: I guess. No, the Berkeley people belonged to the San Francisco league at that point. But I don't want to be positive about that. I think that came a little bit later. Now it's split and split and split and split.

I think I told you that four or five of us who had belonged to the San Francisco league eventually formed the Palo Alto league just before World War II down here. Now I don't belong to the Palo Alto league because they split it off. I belong to I think they call it the South San Mateo County league. For a while it was Atherton-Menlo Park. You're always put where your residence is. I pay minor dues, and I also give them a contribution every year. So I've kept up. I've always felt very grateful for what the league taught me on how to look on all sides of an issue. I really mean it. It had a big influence on me and on a lot of people, I think. A positive influence.

Chall: That's saying well for the league over the years. The fact that you're still interested in their conclusions is an interesting factor. Is there anything else you want to say about the league?

Heller: Nothing special, no.

Chall: Even if it's not special.

Heller: It's just been a sort of thing that I've always stayed with. Usually you get out of things eventually, and I did. But I always stayed faithful to it, as it were.

Chall: You became active in partisan politics for a while, so you couldn't be active on their boards.

Heller: That was later. I ceased being active. That was one of their things, as you well know. They encouraged your working in partisan politics. As you say, you couldn't be a member of their board and be active in partisan politics. But I think I was through, basically, with the league board by that time.

Chall: Probably at the time you went East.

Heller: No, before.

I made many friends from the league. A lot of friends.

Chall: People who have remained your friends?

Heller: Oh, yes. They've stayed my friends. I think I told you when I went East I had a letter or two from league people here who had served on the national league to people in Boston. And it was the greatest
Heller: entree in the world. At a certain age, there's a great common denominator among league people. They became my friends there.

    So much is known about the league it's just no use to go into greater detail.

Chall: I'm just interested in your own framework there. What about your own work as chairman of a couple studies on education?

    ##

Heller: Well, when I went on that San Francisco Center board, the local chairmanship of education was empty. I was asked to be the education committee chairman; it was just as simple as that.

    One of the roles of the education chairman was to follow the San Francisco Board of Education. You know, you go to their meetings; I think they still do.

Chall: An observer.

Heller: An observer. And that's how I sort of got interested in the whole field of education--through the league. Eventually, as a result of that--well, I didn't stay in the job very long, and I don't remember why--I was state of California education chairman.

    As education chairman, of San Francisco, I guess, there were two studies I particularly remember. I wish I had them, because they were really good studies, but I imagine that the league has long since cleared out those old files.

Chall: Well, when the league cleared out its files most recently, whatever was left, they gave it all to the California Historical Society.

Heller: I doubt that those are left, because that goes back, well, at least to the early thirties.

Chall: They may still have them.

Heller: One of the two main studies that I did for the committee was a very hot issue then--the state printing of textbooks. It was a very interesting subject at that time, very big--not partisan political, but very big political.

Chall: Oh, it turned into a big political issue; it took nearly twenty years or more before they finally cleared up that whole issue.

Heller: Strangely enough, my brother-in-law [George Levison] who was in the printing business, in the binding business really, and as such worked with printers, was the leader in getting that cleared up, all those
Heller: later years. Isn't that a strange coincidence? So I followed it for years. It was the unions that had this big hold, as I remember, on the state printers. Plus—and I may be doing an injustice here—the paper companies, particularly Zellerbach. I may be doing Zellerbach an injustice, but I remember it that way. They had this huge interest in having the textbooks printed here, and only the textbooks of companies that would lease their plates to the state were used. There could be supplementary textbooks, but the state-printed books were the only certified ones; it was really very limited in my opinion.

Chall: And the league took a position against the state printing of textbooks, didn't it?

Heller: I don't remember. I don't remember whether they took a position or not. I remember my own impressions of it. That was one of the two big studies I did for the league. The other was the migrant schools—the schools attended by children of migrant farm laborers. Now I don't remember any effect of the whole migrant labor thing on politics, per se.

Chall: But the migrant schools were in a really—

Heller: —were dreadful, and I toured these schools in the Sacramento Valley, and San Joaquin Valley. Not all of them, but we went to see them; some of the camps. Well, if you wanted to see the schools, you had to see the camps. And then some of the schools were not far from here, you know. Just down near Alviso, into there. And you know, it was just a shocking situation; those children would come in one day; the teacher never knew where they came from; or where they'd be. There were no records on them. These kids had no grade they were supposed to be in. There was absolutely no way of keeping any records. The teachers, I think, tried awfully hard, but there was nothing they could do. Those kids were in and out, and in and out, of their classrooms.

Chall: They didn't speak English, either, did they, many of them?

Heller: Yes, they spoke English. You see, those were the so-called Oakies or Arkies.

Chall: Oh, we're talking about those migrants.

Heller: Those were the migrants. Yes, they spoke English, but they were largely unwashed, and tattered clothing, and no food at that time. Maybe in this age of computers they could keep up with them. There was no way—the children would just appear.

Chall: What did the league think could be done about it? Do you recall?
Heller: Just call attention of the legislature to the state of these schools; the lack of facilities and education; how they were mixed with the regular students, and held back all the classes. They had to. Of course, that all straightened itself out by the time World War II came along. You know, it was a big problem one time.

Chall: Yes, the war took care of all of those people.

Heller: Well, those were the main things. But I started following everything in education, that's how I did it all. Not everything. Also, in '32, I was asked to be a trustee of Mills College, which brought me into higher education.* So I was in two ways brought into educational circles.

Chall: During the time that you were with the league, then, you were really doing primarily education studies?

Heller: Yes, educational studies. And I also was trustee of Mills. I was very active in the league up to the time we moved East, really, for the war.

Chall: Which was when? That was another date I didn't look up.

Heller: That was the summer of '42. When Ed Heller joined the army.

Chall: He became a lieutenant colonel?

Heller: Well, he started in as a major, but he was promoted to lieutenant colonel. He wanted to join the infantry, which he had been in in World War I, but they weren't interested in him, because he was forty-two at this time. It's always easy to know how old Ed was, because he was born in 1900. [laughter] So he was put in the finance division of the army.

Chall: He actually, then, volunteered?

Heller: Oh, he volunteered both times. He was seventeen when he volunteered in World War I, and he was in officer's candidate school, I think they called it, then, and then the war was over. No, he volunteered.

*Although Mrs. Heller's first term on the Board of Trustees of Mills College was from 1932-1942, this will be discussed in Chapter V along with the complete account of her years as a trustee which continue into the present.
The Institute of Pacific Relations, 1936-1947##

Chall: All right, then we'll move onto the Institute of Pacific Relations.

Heller: Where do you want to start?

Chall: I want to start with when you were first associated with the institute and why.

Heller: All right, I can spot that one for you very easily. I don't know if I even knew it existed until Mrs. Emma McLaughlin told me one day. She had come to know me through the League of Women Voters.

Chall: She was active in the league then?

Heller: Oh, yes, she was very active. She was president of the league and oh, enormously active. Marvelous at it. She knew my parents to a degree. She was somewhat younger than they were, but she knew them and liked them. She phoned me one day and said, "The Institute of Pacific Relations is going to have its—" I can't remember if they had annual meetings or every two years—"in Yosemite Valley, and delegates are coming from all over the world." They were from the countries that belonged to the IPR which I will call it from now on. She said that she had gone to two or three of the international conventions. I think there had been one in Honolulu, one in Japan. She thought it was time for some younger people—this is typical Mrs. McLaughlin—to be delegates.

She had convinced whoever was selecting the people, because there weren't too many delegates, that she would come but not serve as a delegate. She'd convinced them that I was a young woman, and should be the delegate to the IPR two-week conference in Yosemite Valley. Two full weeks. And that's exactly how I started in it. I didn't know if Ed Heller would welcome my leaving him, it was in 1936, for two weeks. But somehow, he didn't object to it. He wasn't one for having me run off at that point. Somebody drove me from Tahoe, where we were, over the Tioga Pass, down into Yosemite to get there at the appointed time. My mother-in-law would be apt to stick her head into this about my leaving the family, but her great friend, Alfred Esberg, who was married to her best friend, was going as a delegate. He assured my mother-in-law that he would act as my chaperone.

Chall: [laughing] Oh, that was the problem.

Heller: You know, keep an eye on me. I don't think he said that. I think that helped.
Heller: It was a fantastic experience, even if I hardly knew what the IPR was all about. There were people from all over the world. Japan, China, France, England, Australia, Holland, Canada. I don't remember if there were any from Mexico. I've forgotten what countries—but the ones I've mentioned, I can remember delegates from. I became very friendly with a lot of them. It was a very close thing to have this two weeks in Yosemite, staying at the Yosemite Lodge in the cabins there. Very intense sessions.

I was one of three young American delegates. One was an attorney from Seattle, Herb Little, a young attorney, just about my age, maybe a little bit older. And a man from Cleveland, I believe, Brooks Emeny. They had sort of an international forum that he was head of. But he was quite young too. He was married to a Rockefeller. She didn't show up to any of those things. There were young delegates and older delegates from all over the world. I was trying to find the—I had it tucked away, that was what I was just looking for—I had a list of the people that were there and the sessions to show you.

It was a whole new world that opened to me. The Russians were part of that delegation also. Very suspicious, keeping quite a bit to themselves. And the Chinese and Japanese at that point were pretty much at loggerheads because they started fighting in 1937.

Chall: In Manchuria?

Heller: Yes, in Manchuria. This conference came just before that. They hardly spoke to each other. But I had, by chance, a very good introduction to the Japanese delegation. That's why I wish I could have found that booklet, because one of the delegates was one of the great admirals on the Japanese side in the war. I can't think of his name. It began with a "Y".

My mother-in-law had what was called a houseboy—had had him for years. Frank Takahashi, who, like so many of the Japanese who came to this country, came from a very good family. They took jobs as houseboys. And he had worked for quite a number of years. He sent word to the head of that Japanese delegation to be sure to find me and spoke very well of the Heller family. Isn't that interesting? And they were perfectly lovely to me, all these Japanese. As a matter of fact, I had the head of the delegation down here afterwards with his wife. Frank Takahashi brought them down, but he would not sit with us. He sat off in the distance on the terrace there while we entertained them.

Those days are gone forever, I think. Don't you?
Chall: I think so, but I don't know.

Heller: There was a marvelous person in the Chinese delegation. He was very active. He had an American degree. His name was Hu Shih. I became very good friends with him for many years and always entertained him. During World War II you'd hear about him sometimes. I don't know what his eventual fate was. I believe he was the Chinese ambassador to the United States for a while. And then the Russians—one of them was assassinated by the Russians. Didn't hew to whatever line was going on in that period. That was the world of the IPR as it opened up. I later found out, that was '36, that there had been this great infiltration of Communist-inclined Americans into the IPR. Though the IPR was never really on the attorney general's list. I don't know if you know that. And the Bay Area IPR was a very respectable organization, with Ray Lyman Wilbur, the president of Stanford, as chairman. Most respectable.

Chall: When did you go on the board?

Heller: I would say right after that, probably.

Chall: That's quite long ago. Early on?

Heller: Oh, early on. Yes.

Chall: And what did you do on that board?

Heller: We did establish a center in San Francisco. We got the old Rixford House on California at Franklin. We rented it. It was one of these big old wooden houses that survived the earthquake and fire. We rented that and had that as our IPR headquarters. It was run by a half-Japanese, a fellow named I think Jack Oakie. Is that right?

Chall: Yes, you're right. Mrs. McLaughlin had talked about this.*

Heller: Who was really quite a marvelous person. But when World War II started, he had to get out of this area, or he would have been interned. He was really American through and through, and he did not get interned. He went to the Midwest someplace. Eventually, happily, came back and lived in Grass Valley.

It was somewheres in through there—I'm not sure of my dates on this—when Edith Chamberlain who was married to Bob Hunter, had been up in Yosemite. Her father was Selah Chamberlain. They had a lot

Heller: of young people who sort of ran errands and she was one. She fell madly in love with Frederick Vanderbilt Field, who was one of the secretariat from the United States. Divorced her husband and ran off with him, or ran off with him and divorced her husband, I can't remember which, and eventually married him. I can picture Fred Field in that house, so it must have been before World War II. And as I look back, or have looked back in the past, you could see his Communist leanings but you didn't know it at that time. So that's how that Communist element came into the San Francisco Bay Region.

Chall: Was it confined mostly to New York where Mr. Field operated?

Heller: Yes.

Chall: How did you see it in the Bay Area?

Heller: We didn't believe it. We were very naive, all of us. Including much more sophisticated people than I was, like Mrs. McLaughlin or Ray Lyman Wilbur. But Fred Field was living in Woodside at that point.

Chall: Oh, he was? He stayed here?

Heller: Yes, they lived here for a while. You have to sort of put it together. I can remember Fred Field pushing us in some direction but we wouldn't get pushed. Don't ask me for details because I've forgotten them completely. They eventually lived in New York, the Fields, though Edith Field eventually divorced him. That was after World War II. She came back and lived in this area and remarried. She's still around. This third marriage was to somebody named McDonald.

But we really didn't know about the Communist thing. That's why I wanted to find that list. You'd find quite a few names that were gone after by McCarthy eventually.

Chall: That's the Bay Area list, not the national list.

Heller: No, I mean the list of the delegates of that conference in 1936.

There was to have been another international IPR conference but with this Japanese-Chinese rift, the Russians getting very suspicious, it was somehow postponed. And then World War II came along, and that was the end of the international conferences of the IPR. As I say, the Bay Area just didn't know anything about these things. But you can look back, and see little glimpses of it. It was a natural target.

One thing that Mrs. McLaughlin may not have put in. When World War II started for us, and we were in the Pacific, do you know that there was no place in the United States that had maps of the Pacific,
Heller: and of Japan, and China, and the islands except the IPR? And those maps were the ones that the United States used as the basis for most of the planning, I have been told. And I think it's probably true. I'm sure they eventually got some. But there were none in the United States. The Pacific was sort of an unknown--

Chall: Even in the State Department?

Heller: I believe that's true. I think that's sort of an interesting side-light. A lot of good studies came out of the national IPR. There's no use my going into IPR because that's also sort of a public thing. But we continued to have a Bay Area IPR. You know, during the war, everything was sort of defunct. And in 1946 or '47, there was an IPR conference in Coronado--national. That's probably in Mrs. McLaughlin's memoir.

Chall: That's right.

Heller: That's where I first realized about this split that was going on. Edward Carter of the IPR National Secretariat was really a very difficult person. There's a long account of that Coronado conference, and the split we had, and the divided vote because Carter and Field were trying to push us more toward whatever the Communist line was then. People like Lynn White, and Harold Fisher, and Martha Gerbode, and I and some people from up in Seattle--Herb Little and a professor from Washington whose last name was Martin, and Eugene Staley, who was the executive for the IPR then, fought. And it's well documented some place by Lynn White, because we all felt that this had to get in writing, what had happened down there, and then by Eugene Staley. We had a good time as far as enjoying ourselves, but it was a very unpleasant session. It was really run by Edward Carter.

Chall: He was the national secretary.

Heller: Yes. This was the national IPR conference. He was really documenting it. He always had all these young people to act as staff volunteers. And he was very authoritarian in a funny way. He said to me down there, because I'd met him in Yosemite, and I guess I'd seen him in between, "Well, I guess you can act as--" I wasn't that young then, you know!--"as one of our recorders." He said, "Even though you did go to Mills. I usually prefer Bryn Mawr graduates. I guess you can do it." [laughs]

And like a fool I said okay.

Chall: That's interesting because by this time you were the national committeewoman of the Democratic party, and you had had all of this experience in Boston and Washington as a career woman. Had you run into the IPR at all while you were in the East?
Heller: No, never any contact with them, except some incidental people that I'd met through it.

Chall: Do you recall being, yourself, aware of what the issues might be when you went to Coronado?

Heller: No, I've been trying to think. Lynn White would remember.

Chall: I just wondered whether this board up here—you were still on the board?

Heller: I think so.

Chall: I wondered whether you were prepped in any way, about what would be on the agenda, the issues.

Heller: No, not until we got down there. That much I remember. Edward Carter was making the agenda and trying to get resolutions that we wouldn't pass, but I've forgotten what they were. But they were pro-Soviet. They were slightly subtle, but by that time we were all wise enough to resist it. But I never ran into the IPR any place except vaguely like, say Owen Lattimore, whom I'm sure was at Yosemite. He was the great Mongolia expert. A very nice man. His son and my daughter Liz were in the same class at Putney School in Vermont, and he was the commencement speaker, if I remember correctly. So I followed what happened to him very closely. It was outrageous.

The World Affairs Council, 1947-1960s

Heller: It was after that Coronado meeting at some point we decided there was no future for the IPR. I've forgotten exactly what date we formed the World Affairs Council. Do you know?

Chall: It was 1947.

Heller: Then it was really following the IPR conference in Coronado. I think all of us felt there should be some sort of an international forum in San Francisco. The IPR people lead the formation of the World Affairs Council. I'm just jumping in to the World Affairs Council.

Chall: That's all right, go ahead.

Heller: There were two or three groups in there with us, and the main one was called the Russian-American Institute or something like that, with a man named Augustin Keane. They were having problems. They weren't
a very big organization. He was perfectly decent, but they were having some Communist problems too. I've forgotten what other groups came in. They were quite minor. We just decided to form a World Affairs Council, the whole group of us.

Henry Grady, who had been on the board of IPR, had just been appointed ambassador to India. He was on his way to India, but he agreed that he would speak at the meeting, if we could form this World Affairs Council. So we just put together lists, a whole bunch of us, like mad. And we addressed envelopes. We grabbed every list we could find in San Francisco. There weren't many available at that time. We invited people to the formation of the World Affairs Council. There must be one of those invitations around Bancroft, I would think. With Ambassador Henry Grady, who was very highly thought of in this area—he had been a professor of economics at Berkeley—as the speaker, to our amazement, we had about two thousand people there.

Chall: Where was this?

Heller: At the Fairmont Hotel. It was very informal, I think it was more like a reception. I suppose, with cocktails. It didn't cost a lot of money. And that formed the World Affairs Council. People just signed up. That's how the World Affairs Council got formed. It was so casual. We didn't know what we were going to do, but we formed it. And there was no more IPR.

Chall: And did you stay on the board?

Heller: Yes. I was asked immediately to go on the first executive committee.

Chall: And what did you do?

Heller: What did I do? [chuckles] It's so hard to recall all these things. I think we were getting members, probably, and trying to structure it to get an executive to run the thing, and a place for headquarters, which were very minor—the headquarters. I may be wrong, but I think that Eugene Staley was our first executive, and he was paid—very, very—Oh, the salaries were just unbelievable at that time.

Chall: I think he was sharing his time with Stanford. That's what probably paid him.

Heller: That's right. But he devoted a lot of time to the World Affairs Council. Gene Staley has a very structured, tidy mind and he pulled the pieces together. We tried to put a library together, and have some public events. We had to become visible in some way.
Chall: Did Monroe Deutsch, the first president, give it good leadership?

Heller: I think to a degree. He certainly presided at the meetings. I can't remember how active he was. But Monroe was always excellent at whatever he did. He was very dignified about it.

We did get all the university presidents in the Bay Area in.

Chall: As members?

Heller: Yes, and they were active. We had Ray Lyman Wilbur at that point, maybe Wally [Wallace] Sterling, and we had Lynn White; we had Bob [Robert] Sproul. The universities backed us very well from the beginning, which was important. Not financially, but I mean their people served on our boards.

It was always a struggling institution in terms of money. I guess it still is, though they've moved a long way now. That first board is in the record some place, but a lot of us became quite good friends as a result of that. We conceived of this annual conference at Asilomar. The first one was so jagged—we didn't know what we were doing. It sort of patterns for the rest of the time, except we had two distinct subjects. I can't remember what they were. You might as well go to the record for it. It wasn't one big conference on one subject. We had very few materials. But we did have some speakers there. People came. It's an amazing thing with that World Affairs Council, the way it sort of sprang into being. We also made a great attempt to involve labor without too much success.

Chall: I noticed one labor person's name on here.

Heller: Jack Henning.

Chall: Well, Mervyn Rathborne. His name is on this list of persons active in the early years of the World Affairs Council.

Heller: Merv Rathborne could very well have been. I don't particularly remember him in that regard. He was CIO. It was not AFL-CIO at that point, and he was CIO. He later went to the FBI, and said he had been a member of a Communist party. Ed and I knew him pretty well, and he never tried to convert us in any way. He said he joined it as a labor guy in the thirties. That was the thing to do. But when he finally found out what was going on, he went to the FBI and informed them. His life was threatened. He was of course out of the CIO right away, because it was still Communist dominated in my opinion. He had to re-establish himself completely again. He had no money; he was out of a job. But I don't remember him in the World Affairs Council. He may have been.
Chall: Whom do you remember in labor?

Heller: John Henning, who is now secretary-treasurer of the AFL-CIO. I'm sure Neil Haggerty was the one who suggested that he be the member. This young, bright—he's still very active. He only thinks in terms of AFL-CIO strangely enough. He's not the way Neil Haggerty was, whom I felt was much wider. We made quite an attempt to get them, but labor people, in my experience, are not very good on boards.

Heller: We never were very successful with getting labor involved but certain corporate people were very helpful all along. I particularly think of Walter Haas. Always was a steadfast member; was an original member of the executive committee. The Bank of America always gave us one of its chief executives for the board. And Standard Oil was good too. I sort of hate to name them, because others have done it. Bechtel did it eventually—a lot of them. Though what they contributed was not huge, it helped keep us afloat.

It's funny. The World Affairs Council had a respectability from the beginning that the IPR never had in San Francisco. It just got itself to a broader base right away. I don't want to claim that the World Affairs Council had a big impact, but it had some impact, I guess. There was no forum in San Francisco, except the Commonwealth Club, which was a good one as you well know. Stuart Ward was the executive secretary of the Commonwealth Club for years and years and years. Have you come across him in anything you've done?

Chall: No.

Heller: He saw a Communist under every bed, every chair. He was a madman on the subject. He was convinced we were a Communist outfit.

Chall: The World Affairs Council?

Heller: Yes. I don't remember about IPR; I don't think he paid much attention to that. But World Affairs was a bigger thing. We started having these speeches, whereas the speakers would automatically have come to the Commonwealth Club before. He bad-mouthed us all over. He hated Democrats; he equated them with Communists. He wasn't bad about me, because my father and my uncle, Charlie Raas, had been long-time members of the Commonwealth Club, and active in it. Especially my uncle, who was on the board. So he would speak to me; he wouldn't speak to most people. If you've never heard about him, you should get some things about Stuart Ward. He was executive forever; he ran the Commonwealth Club with a rod of iron. He just said whom he would have to speak and whom he would not have to speak. I'm not saying the Commonwealth Club was aggravated by the World Affairs Council, I'm saying that Stuart Ward, as a spokesman for the Commonwealth Club, was just furious with the World Affairs Council. Very suspicious.
Chall: Was he also feeling the competition for members and speakers?

Heller: Oh, no. Only competition in the fact that sometimes we had speakers that he thought he should have had. Or sometimes we had joint speakers. We had enough clout. For instance, I remember a little later, but not that much later, when the Soviet foreign minister, Krushchev, came. The very colorful one, in the early fifties, who was later exiled. He was the best known of all of them. He was the one who slapped his shoe at Adlai Stevenson. That was a joint Commonwealth Club–World Affairs Council thing. When de Gaulle came, it was a joint effort. Stuart Ward didn't like sharing these people at all. They still do some joint ones, I think.

Krushchev was very colorful. I remember hearing him speak, he spoke in Russian, of course, and just his gestures had you convulsed with laughter. And his face. The interpreter would follow along, but that wasn't what was making you laugh. He did. He was a born showman.

I think there'll be a big history of the World Affairs Council eventually.

I was thinking. You know when you're involved with a board like that or an executive committee, you're so involved with details you never look at the big issues. It's just one of the facts that I've discovered. You get going full time on getting things carried out.

Chall: Did you work on raising funds, and setting up annual meetings and things like that?

Heller: Yes, I did. I worked on the annual meetings. I can't remember that I did anything particularly on funds, except to contribute. But I guess we all worked on them to a degree. We set up study groups.

Chall: Did you have a study group here in your house?

Heller: We weren't going out of San Francisco at that point. It was all San Francisco centered.

Chall: Did you attend any?

Heller: Occasionally. When I was living down here, it got to be a little awkward to do any night things. Yes, I went to some. They varied: some of them were good, some not.

At the beginning there were two branches. We didn't set them up; they set themselves up. One was the Monterey Peninsula, and one was in Fresno, I believe. And they were difficult, to say the least, to deal with, when they wanted to join with us. Monterey was stronger than the Fresno group.
Chall: Was there a division in the board at one time about whether you would have a constituent membership or it would be central?

Heller: There was a big fuss. But I've forgotten the details. Somebody else could give it, because I was on some committee about that. I think we insisted they all had to belong to the World Affairs Council at that point. But I've forgotten how it ended up. There wasn't a fight on the board so much as the fact that they wanted their own membership. They wanted control, whatever control meant. It was never a political force, never tried to be, the World Affairs Council.

Chall: Wasn't there at one time also some division of opinion about whether you would be an action group or just a study and education group?

Heller: I guess there was. But we opted for study. We never became an action group. Would have split the whole thing wide open. I'm glad you reminded me about that. There was endless discussion, but it seems to me the people I was friendly with just knew the whole thing would break up if it became an action group; it would split up.

Chall: If you started to make resolutions and all that?

Heller: Yes. Never did. Stayed out of it, which is I think what kept it strong. We had none of the action study groups. Now the Commonwealth Club always had study groups. Have you ever examined those bulletins of their study groups?

Chall: I've looked at a few.

Heller: I haven't looked at them recently, but they were very prejudiced. They were always stacked by Stuart Ward. Several times, they were on subjects that I knew. And I could see how stacked they were.

Chall: Study committees were frequently stacked, as I understand it.

Heller: As a matter of fact—I guess you'd call this hearsay—but Dr. Russel Lee down here, headed up some study group there. He told me about it, I guess it was on health insurance. He told me that Stuart Ward completely rewrote the whole report, and issued it under Russel Lee's name, because he didn't like the conclusions. He thought it was socialized medicine that Russel Lee was recommending. In a way, it's hearsay, but I think it's true.

Chall: There was a woman's name mentioned, a Mrs. Dorothy Rogers, who helped raise funds.

Heller: Yes, she was very good. She was about my age, Dorothy, I guess. She was a very hard worker, one of the hardest workers I'd ever known and extremely efficient. But she didn't get on with people
Heller: very well. She had been president of the League of Women Voters at one time in San Francisco. It was a big sort of back and forth of leadership people. She was married to William Lister Rogers, known to everybody as Lefty, a Stanford doctor who practices at the French Hospital. He's still around. She was one of these doers—you know, she did everything up in bows. It was very helpful at the time, even though people were disliking her most of the time. She wanted to impose her will. I don't know if you came across that.

Chall: No, I didn't. But I did come across her name as being one of the early hard workers.

Heller: She was. I can't remember if she was on the first board or not. She may have been. She and Martha Gerbode had a big feud on.

Chall: Was Martha Gerbode on the first board?

Heller: Yes. That's Dr. Frank Gerbode's wife.

Chall: That's Martha Gerbode who died a few years ago?

Heller: Yes. She and Dorothy just didn't hit it off at all, maybe because they knew each other because their husbands were both doctors. Martha was very quick tempered. She happened to be my friend; I liked her very much.

Chall: Emma McLaughlin was a real leading force?

Heller: Oh, yes. She was always on the executive committee and was her usual marvelous self.

Chall: Was she considered a real leader? Did she move things?

Heller: Yes. She, I would say of anybody, did the most reading about international affairs. She just did. She was very even tempered. She could keep people together. She was older than a lot of us, and we all respected her very, very much, including Dorothy Rogers, by the way.

Chall: So if there were divisions in philosophy or personalities, could she work those things out?

Heller: I don't want to make it bigger than it was.

Chall: I mean, would she help to work those things out?

Heller: As far as I remember, she was always a very positive influence.
Heller: Of course somebody else who came in much later and is still very active, one of my best friends, is Georgianna Stevens [Mrs. Harley]. She is active right now. She's been marvelous on it.

Chall: Did the World Affairs Council give you a strong perception of international affairs that you used in any way, aside from knowing and understanding?

Heller: That's what I was trying to evaluate. I think it did. When you start to read about world affairs, you do learn to read all sorts of things and try to evaluate, aside from partisan issues, what's going on. Sometimes I think I would have been better if I'd just been a member.

Chall: Just had the time to read everything.

Heller: And listened, instead of trying to make things go.

Chall: How big was your board in the early days?

Heller: Oh, I don't remember. Not too big. Maybe about twenty, twenty-one. But when we formed it, we formed what we called the executive committee. And we had a board which was enormous. The reason for that was really quite well thought out: to get people who were willing, not to give us time, but their names as supporters of us.

Chall: Good letterhead material.

Heller: It was good letterhead in that we were not established, and we really got awfully good names, from all over, on that board. If I remember correctly, maybe three times a year, the full board met and maybe a third of them would show up. They felt some obligation to show up, and they were always pretty good supporters—members, or in a minor way, corporate members. Seems to be there were about ninety people on that board.

Chall: But the real work, then, was done by the executive committee?

Heller: Always.

Chall: Did you all feel that it was necessary for you all to work, when you were on that board, on some committee?

Heller: Most people. Oh, yes, we were heart and soul in trying to get these study groups, get places to give them, get people to run them, get people. We used to serve lunch there, in the most inadequate kitchen. I never had anything to do with cooking, but it was simply terrible. But it was a new way of doing things at that time. We'd serve sandwiches and coffee. I've forgotten. But we quickly found the noon
Heller: hour was the right time to have most of these study groups, or small gatherings. There'd be somebody coming in, someone in international economics or something like that. You wouldn't put on a big affair for him but you'd have it in that funny little room, that could seat maybe fifty people, in a jam. It was our board room, it was our meeting room. We'd have late afternoon sort of cocktail things, nothing very much. I didn't go to those as much; it wasn't convenient. Those were the times we really had them: late afternoon, about five o'clock, or at noon.

Later on they started these young adult study groups, that, I think to this day are very successful. Lot of young people worked for almost nothing at the World Affairs Council. It was a good job to take after you finished college.

Chall: Doing what?

Heller: Stenographic, filing. It was almost volunteer. I really don't know what they pay Dick Heggie, who is now the chief executive of the World Affairs Council, but as I remember, Gene Staley got not more than $6000 a year, and his successor. Then things stayed at about $8000 a year. But I think it's quite a ways up now.

Chall: I only have it down as far as Calvin Nichols. I stopped checking names in 1955.

Heller: His is 1955?

Chall: Yes. He started in 1955, and was still the director in 1963. I don't know when he left.

Heller: He was a difficult one. He was difficult. Before him we had Garland Farmer, and Howard Cook, who then went to Washington. Very nice person. Garland was very nice too. Calvin Nichols was difficult, to put it mildly.

Chall: What was the difficulty?

Heller: Oh, he was very uptight. He had worked in the State Department, and he wanted it his way. I think that was the last. I think I went off the board then.

Chall: I wondered how long you'd stayed on. Why did you go off the board?

Heller: Because I felt I'd served a long time. I can't remember when I went off. I was certainly there when Calvin Nichols was. Dick Heggie's been there for quite a while now. He seems to like it. I have no idea what he's paid, but he's been there ten years at least. He's really stayed.
Heller: Then there was what's his name after Calvin Nichols.

Chall: I don't have anybody after Calvin Nichols. I didn't look it up.

Heller: It doesn't make any difference. His name was well known around San Francisco, too. He came later. Also difficult. But I think Dick Heggie's been very good.

Chall: The others stayed only a couple of years at the most.

Heller: Except Calvin Nichols. He stayed longer.

Chall: What went on during the McCarthy hearings?

Heller: Nothing so far as the World Affairs Council was concerned.

Chall: Did they come out and check the background of the people in the local IPR out here?

Heller: I don't really know, because it was so crazy, the whole thing. I think the local IPR had a clean bill of health from the beginning.

Chall: No FBI person ever came to see you?

Heller: Not that I can remember or ever heard of. Jesse Steinhart was on that IPR board and Alan Charles, Caroline Charles's husband. It's hard for me to remember, but it was a very proper IPR. McCarran and McCarthy always ignored the World Affairs Council.

   Actually, we had very good sponsorship from the beginning, strangely enough. Never got involved in that.

Chall: Is there anything else you want to add to this background?

Heller: I don't think so.

Chall: If you do, you can always put it in later.

Heller: Well, knowing there's going to be a whole World Affairs Council history--

Chall: You'll think about it more. All right, want to go to the Grabhorn bibliography? This is a big day. We have much here to discuss.
Fine Printing and Modern French Bookbinding

Preparing the Grabhorn Bibliography, 1934-1940

Heller: All right. The Grabhorn bibliography.*

Chall: How did your interest in printing in general and the Grabhorns in particular come about?

Heller: There's no question that my interest in printing was started when I was in college, when Albert Bender, Mickey, who's been written about often enough, used to come to Mills College. Aurelia Reinhardt, who was the president of Mills, was his friend. Parenthetically, there is a Bender room at Mills College library, which was started by his gifts to the college. That's also true at Stanford; it's true all over. He was a friend of my father's. I have no idea why they knew each other. I think they were possibly the same age.

When he used to come to Mills, he'd always come with a few books tucked under his arm. I can picture this little fellow. He'd always send word that he was looking for me—Mills is a comparatively small campus. He'd always bring me copies at that point of the Book Club of California's latest publications. I didn't belong; I was in college. I was very proud of those books and I loved them. I used to keep them in a very careful stack in my room at college. The Grabhorns came to San Francisco just about the same point when I was at college. He [Bender] began showing up occasionally with something printed by the Grabhorns as well as the Book Club books, of which a couple were being done by the Grabhorns then. I just was very taken with them. How can you explain it?

Chall: Did he give you an understanding of what it was he was giving you and why?

Heller: Not at all.

Chall: I understand he was a great gift giver.

Heller: Yes, he was a great gift giver. My mother always used to say—this has nothing to do with the Grabhorns. She and my father, especially my father, were friends of Albert Bender's. She never did admire anything, because the next thing she knew, it would be in her possession!

Once he was wearing a carnelian ring. And my mother was no jewelry person at all. She said, "Oh, that's a beautiful stone!" You know, in conversation. The next thing she knew, he'd given her a carnelian ring. I think my sister has it now. I don't know. That's the way he was. He used to bring these books to me, and that's how basically I started being interested in printing.

Ed Heller and I were married as soon as I finished college in 1925. We had tried to get word out—it was a big wedding—as you do nowadays, that we'd prefer books to anything else. We got some crazy gifts, I must say. You know, huge sets of things where they bought them by the yard. Some of the sets are quite good, as a matter of fact. I still have them. Very good. Some very nice ones. I think people mostly went to Newbegins in those days, sometimes to John Howell. And I think Gelber-Lilienthal had just gone into business. I think we got some books from there. So word was out that we wanted books. I assure you, we got plenty of things beside books, but we sort of tried to keep it to that. That's the basis of the big library we have.

Certain people gave me some very fine printing. A few, who understood printing. It's no use singling out, but I got some copies of Doves Press books as presents, and of Kelmscott Press.

My interest in printing started building up. Whether Ed Heller had been a member of the Book Club of California before we were married, I don't remember. He might well have been. His mother was always one for joining that sort of thing. At least my father-in-law would have been interested in the Book Club of California. He liked printing; he liked Californiana. We belonged right away, so these books would come in occasionally. This ties back, interestingly enough, to The Bancroft Library.

I had quite a number of well-printed books by the time we moved into this house. Jim Hart, who's now director of The Bancroft Library, was a student at Stanford when we moved into this house. The families knew each other. Jim used to come over, and we'd pore over these printed books. I began to know what I had, because Jim was so interested. You know, he started printing when he was still in Stanford. Jim gave me quite a feeling for printing. That's how far back his interest goes. He was not a librarian at all.

That is the beginning of it. Most of the Book Club books were printed by John Henry Nash. He had been the big San Francisco printer. And in my mother-in-law's library, there were a lot of John Henry Nash that my father-in-law had collected. She never was interested in printing, but he had collected some fine printing, and especially John Henry Nash. But he also had a Kelmscott Chaucer there, which is a little ornate, sort of like John Henry Nash. He had a few Doves Press books there too. That's sort of a later thing. They were all down here in Atherton at my mother-in-law's house.
Heller: I suddenly realized that I loved what the Grabhorn Press was doing, and I started haunting bookstores in San Francisco. Mostly Gelber-Lilienthal. Davey Magee had just arrived in San Francisco from England. David Magee. He was also interested in printing. I'd go into John Howell's occasionally, because my father-in-law had bought his books there. I began hunting for Grabhorn Press items. From all these people I discovered more and more about the Grabhorns and where there might be Grabhorn items that I'd never heard of. That's the way you get into collecting.

I'd gone to visit their press a couple of times, but they had no records. In the meantime, I was getting everything they were printing, but they had no record of what they'd printed at all. They were impossible. But then they'd think of somebody who'd once bought or ordered their books.

In doing that, I went to the Library of Congress looking at books; I went in New York, to Bruce Rogers, who was a printer himself. I went to all sorts of libraries. Francis Farquhar's over in Berkeley. I began to dig out some items. I began haunting the Grabhorns. They'd tell me about the Indianapolis materials that were printed before they came here. Bit by bit, I began turning some of this up.

They were all helping me, but Davey Magee got the most interested in it. He kept helping me ferret out books, and even got hold of some of that early Seattle printing—it's not books. It was called—I don't think it had a name in Seattle. In Indianapolis it was called Studio Press. Very simple things. Then they moved here about 1919, I think. So, is a collector born.

In doing that, it began to drive me crazy. There was a sort of checklist in one of the books on printers of the United States. It was no good at all. So, I finally got the idea that I was going to make a checklist. This thing grew and grew, until it went into a full-fledged bibliography. I got Davey Magee interested in helping me. I don't know if you realize it, but I had to make my own system for the bibliography. There was no set of rules of how you describe books of fine printing. The form I evolved has been used in all the subsequent bibliographies.

Chall: Of the Grabhorn Press?

Heller: Of the Grabhorn Press. The latest one was gotten out last year by Warren Howell.

I did the Grabhorn Press from 1916—1915, whenever it started as the Studio Press, to 1940. And I really spent hours on it. I had a secretary come in part time to help type. I measured every single book I had. I went through every leaf of every book to see how many illustrations there were, how many initials, how many copies, when it
Heller: was printed, if it had been sold—because they did a lot of private printing—how much it was sold for. Inch by inch, I would dig information out of the Grabhorns. It took me quite a few years, you know, about six years. They didn't have their name on half the things, much less for whom they printed it. I began to dig out all that information. I'd go in there about twice a week, and jog their memory with an item.

Chall: One of the Grabhorns who has been interviewed in one of our oral histories, said that he could change the text of this bibliography, and he did from time to time. Do you recall any problems from his changing your text?*

Heller: That should have been Robert Grabhorn, because Ed Grabhorn—you'll have to look that up. Robert Grabhorn lived longer than Ed Grabhorn. It could have been Ed Grabhorn.**

Chall: I'll check it.

Heller: Ed and Robert Grabhorn were jointly given an honorary degree from Berkeley when I was a Regent. Jim Hart presented Edwin Grabhorn, and I presented, as a Regent, Robert Grabhorn for the honorary degree. It could have been Ed Grabhorn.

Chall: I'll have to check. We did a whole series on the fine printers of the Bay Area.

Heller: They didn't change my text, because I had copies of my own text. I knew what I'd put in. Sometimes they'd correct what I had, and tell me about it. This took an awfully long time to put together. They were always remembering things for me. I'd put together every bit of the technical material, with of course their assistance. To dig out this information was a matter of six years.

Chall: I looked through it, and the detail work is so incredible, that I just wondered how you handled it all.

Heller: I did it. I did it right in that room in there.

Chall: Spreading it all out, and--


Heller: Yes. I went through every page of every single thing I had, plus all this ephemera that I had—Christmas cards—I've got them all here. It's really an excellent collection I have. In fact, I think the best.

Chall: I understand that you bought the Valenti Angelo collection before he went East, and that filled in a great deal of what you--

Heller: That's not true. I have no Valenti Angelo collection. When did I do that?

Chall: This is what I read in David Magee's oral history.* Valenti Angelo was wanting to go to New York, and he had a lot of the Indianapolis material of the Grabhorns in his library.

Heller: I may have bought some things from him. I may have filled in from him. I think Davey would be accurate. I wouldn't depend on the Grabhorn memory.

Chall: This is Magee.

Heller: He's probably right, because he'd get hold of these. I have drawers full of obscure materials, and proof sheets, and rejected things.

Chall: If any of them were for sale in one of the bookstores, would you be bidding against some of those other collectors like Farquhar, or Partman, or Henry Wagner?

Heller: Farquhar and who?

Chall: William Partmann, is that the name?

Heller: I don't remember him. Not really. Book dealers were very smart about helping everybody, so they did pretty well. Newbegin was the only one I had difficulty with. He was always picking up proofsheets, and binding them himself. That's why I had a terrible time running down what the Grabhorns really bound things in. John Newbegin was always selling these things that he had had bound up afterwards—proofsheets. I had a terrible time running down some of the bindings. Eventually it got put together. No, I was never in competition, per se.

Francis Farquhar had some things that I hadn't seen. Eventually I got hold—The hardest things to get hold of were the privately printed, of which there were a great many. Some were only ten copies, for example.

Chall: How would you get hold of them? Advertise that you wanted to see them?

Heller: Davey Magee would finally wangle out one of them from some member of the family that had it who no longer cared. You just have to keep working at it. You really need a book dealer doing that for you.

Chall: This collaboration carries both of your names--

Heller: Yes, that's right.

Chall: The division of work was really not a division of work. You did all of the basic labor.

Heller: Yes, it was a division of work.

Chall: How was it done?

Heller: Davey didn't come into it until later. He was just ferreting out these things for me, but he got terribly interested in it when I started to do all this work. Then when it became apparent it was going to get into real form, I asked him if he would be the publisher for me. I had no way of marketing anything. And I asked him if he would write the text with the notes, incidents about the things. Sometimes I provided the incidents, but he had a better facility for writing than I did by far. So he gave it its continuity, but we jointly decided how we were going to set it up. Then we worked with the Grabhorns a lot about what was going to be tipped in. There were extra pages. It was from their extra pages that we chose the examples. But I had the idea. For instance, I gathered, with great difficulty, all those different printer's marks that they used.

Chall: Is that what's called a colophon?

Heller: No, a colophon is different. These were printer's marks. They had to go through every book because they didn't know. They kept changing them. That was certainly my idea. I did all the indexing of it, and I did all the technical work. Davey did none of the measurements and the number of pages. As far as what the type was or the paper: Now some paper you can tell. You can hold it up to the light and see a good watermark. Otherwise, I'd have to go into Grabhorns with the paper. They wouldn't check out more than four or five at any one time. That's why it took so long. And on type. I had to take each item in so they could tell me what type it was printed in, because they used so many types.

So that's the way the whole thing evolved. Inch by inch.

Chall: My, what a labor of love that must have been!
Heller: I remember Ed Heller saying to me, "Are you ever going to finish this?" Not that he minded. He was at work. It really did take a long time to do. But I felt good about it.

Chall: Those were the years when your children were young and you were working with the League of Women Voters and other activities.

Heller: Yes. So I was really working here, basically. And I always made sure I was here when they came home from school. But they were in school during the day.

[Interview 15: November 2, 1979]

Chall: Who chose the Goudy type for the bibliography?

Heller: Well, Ed Grabhorn, really. That type had been made for the Grabhorns, and that's why we chose it. It isn't the world's most readable type, but it was certainly appropriate to do the bibliography in the one type they had ever had made for themselves. That was the only type that had ever been cut for them.

Chall: Was the choice of the paper again a choice of the Grabhorns?

Heller: I've really forgotten exactly what the paper is, but it was very good paper because that was important as far as I was concerned. The binding is terrible, because the Grabhorns always bound things very poorly.

Chall: They didn't really care, is that right?

Heller: It's really just poor.

Chall: I understand that you and your husband put up the money to print it, is that right?

Heller: Oh, yes. Of course, Ed didn't think this was ever going to come to fruition at all. I don't remember the exact amount, you could probably figure it out. All I remember was the books were going to cost us twenty dollars apiece. We paid the Grabhorns for them. We sold them at thirty-five dollars, which was considered an absolutely outrageous price to ask. There were complaints from some libraries about the scandalous price. It wasn't the mark up that was too big. Of course, they sold out.

Chall: Right away, almost?

Heller: Almost. There was a certain market that just took all Grabhorn things. And a bibliography had a bigger market. Like all libraries that had any interest in printing wanted a copy. It sold out very
Heller: quickly. Ed Heller, who never expected to see a cent of that money again, was absolutely stunned when it returned a profit. [laughs] I don't want to say it was an enormous profit, but it did. Davey got, of course, a share as the publisher.

Chall: Was he the distributor too?

Heller: Yes. He was the distributor. But there wasn't that much distributing. You send out announcements, and then you let a handful of book dealers handle a few.

Chall: When you say that David Magee made a profit from publishing it, what in fact did he do as publisher?

Heller: He wrote all the essay part.

Chall: But then you did all the other work. Why then would he need to receive a profit?

Heller: Because if you're a publisher, you receive a profit. It's just one of the facts of life. [laughs] I've forgotten exactly what the arrangement was on every fifteen dollars; I've forgotten how much came to me and how much went to him. But that's just one of the facts of life.

Since then there have been two more bibliographies done. I wanted to do the second one, but Davey Magee and his wife Dorrie [Dorothy] did it. It was when Ed Heller was first sick, and I just didn't feel I could devote the enormous amount of time that I would have had to. So Davey said, "Is it okay with you if Dorrie does it, then?" I said, "Certainly." They followed the exact same techniques. Now, Warren Howell did the third one. He didn't ask me. He just went ahead. I've forgotten how much the third one came out for. An awful lot more, though.

Chall: Times passes, and costs rise.

Heller: But the form has stayed exactly the same.

Chall: When you finally saw it all done up and bound, how did you feel?

Heller: I felt quite good. It was my one scholarly production, which I didn't know I had the capacity to do. I evolved my own method. I don't know how I felt. You know, it was a long period of time. I felt very good about it.

Chall: I should think so. I noticed in one press article, the bibliography was referred to, when it was published, as having been a collaboration between David Magee and Elinor Heller, "socialite book lover." [San Francisco Examiner, January 12, 1941]
Heller: Good Lord!

Chall: I just wondered how you would feel about that.

Heller: Some place I have a lot of press clippings about that book. I don't think in the best description I could ever be called a socialite. [laughs]

Chall: I just wondered how the press could come up with that kind of a description.

Heller: Joseph Henry Jackson, the book reviewer of the Chronicle, who was really awfully good, I think probably gave us a much better review.

Chall: This wasn't a review, I think. This was just a press notice.

Heller: There were a couple of good reviews. Very good reviews. They're around some place.

Knowing the Grabhorns

Chall: When you were working on this project over the years, you met of course the Grabhorns and other printers.

Heller: Oh, yes! It got so I went in there about twice a week, I guess.

Chall: Were these a different kind of people than those whom you'd been used to working with or knowing?

Heller: Well, to a degree. They were much more—what shall I say? If I say bohemian, that's taking it a little bit far. But they were that type. Edward Grabhorn was the leader, which I don't know that Bob Grabhorn at that time resented, but as time went on, his wife, Jane Grabhorn, resented it enormously. I don't know if you've stumbled across that. I had known Jane; she was a good friend of my sister's. Her name was Martha Jane Bissell before she was married. I can give you an example of her feelings.

At U.C., the decision to confer an honorary degree is always taken up in executive session of the Regents, but when Ed Grabhorn was proposed to the Regents for an honorary degree, the proposals for honorary degrees at the University of California came from the campuses from the academic senates. Always from the academic senates. And then, through the president of the University to the educational policies committee of the board. That's the way they came. Ed Grabhorn's name was sent and voted promptly for a commencement day. It was in the football stadium anyway; it wasn't in the
Heller: Greek Theatre. And Jane Grabhorn was lividly furious. She went after everyone including me and Bill Roth and everybody she knew. It was outrageous! Her Bob had contributed just as much. I have a feeling Jim Hart got pulled into that too. He certainly knew about it. Whether he went back to the Berkeley Academic Senate, who then added Bob Grabhorn's name. They were given their honorary degrees together.

Chall: Did you think that was correct? Were they both really responsible for the Grabhorn press?

Heller: Yes, they both were really very good. I didn't think much of it. I was delighted that Ed Grabhorn was being recognized by the University for what he had done. I must admit, I voted for it—I know Bill Roth did—without any quarrel. We were the only two that really knew them, I guess, on the board. But we were more than willing to include Robert Grabhorn. I only give you that as an example of the fact that Ed Grabhorn was always thought of as the leader. He was the older brother, and he had a flair to him. Bob was a very good craftsman, excellent. But he was grumbling all the time. They were very off-beat sort of people, you know.

Chall: Creative people probably are.

Heller: Oh, yes. Ed always complained that he didn't see why he had any income tax to pay. He said, "I don't have any cash!" I remember they were furious about income tax. Kept no books. It was impossible to get this information. That's why it took so long, you know.

Chall: Are they like other printers that you've come across?

Heller: I hadn't worked closely with other printers. I don't think anybody could be less organized than they were. When I was there I would meet—[pauses to recall] Sherwood Grover, who was working for them then. At the beginning, Valenti Angelo was around sometimes. You know, he did some of their illustrations. Lovely things. But he had gone off on his own, mostly. You wasted more time visiting the Grabhorns because Ed Grabhorn would be off on something else about the fine Japanese print he'd bought; he'd want you to see that. Actually, his Japanese prints were magnificent. He had an instinct for them. It was before anyone was really collecting them.

Chall: He was collecting?

Heller: Oh, he had a marvelous collection. In fact, they developed this technique for reproducing color prints of the Japanese. A lot of their books are of a great many of his prints.
Chall: I understand that you took some classes in printing with Magee, your sister, with Jackson Burke, who was a printer. How did that work out?

Heller: Well, badly. [laughs] Davey Magee and I decided we should learn how to print while we were doing business. We took a class with Jackson Burke, who lived up on Russian Hill, as I remember. He had a press in his basement. I have no facility with my hands at all. It was sheer torture, as far as I was concerned. I'm very awkward. Hand setting requires great facility with your fingers.

Chall: I don't know anything about it.

Heller: It's so tiny, you see, the type, to handle. But I did learn how to hold and set. You know, you do it line by line on that hand printing. I did get one thing done; I've forgotten what it was even. One page. It took me forever. But we chose the paper, and we pulled the press and did the whole thing. But I would say it was disastrous. I knew that it was good to learn how to do it. How to make your margins and how to place printed matter on a page. That part was fine.

Chall: Did that give you a greater appreciation for the technique of fine printing than you might have had before?

Heller: I had a pretty good appreciation because I used to go to the Grabhorns. Bob Grabhorn was a very quick typesetter. He'd be standing there talking and setting type at the same time. Almost all of the Grabhorn work was hand set.

Chall: Katharine Grover, I understand did most of the typesetting on your book.

Heller: That's who it was. She married Sherwood Grover. It was Katharine Grover who did it. That's absolutely right. They set up their own press eventually. I've lost track of them completely.

Continuing Interest in Collecting Fine Printing

Chall: Did you continue to collect Grabhorns right up until the time they stopped?

Heller: Yes, I still do. Well, I shouldn't say I still do. After Ed Grabhorn's death then Bob Grabhorn and Andrew Hoyem joined forces, and changed the name of the press to Grabhorn-Hoyem Press. Then, after Bob Grabhorn died, Hoyem had his own press, which is excellent now, and I get all of his printing. He calls it the Arion Press.
Chall: You continue to collect?

Heller: Yes. Which is very similar to the Grabhorn style. Oh, he does beautiful things. And he's going full force today. In my mind, he's the nearest competitor to the Allen Press in the Bay Area. Those are the two best that I know of.

Chall: Do you collect Allen Press material too?

Heller: Yes, I do collect Allen Press. I think I have a full collection of the Allen Press, and the Hoyem Press. There may be a little ephemera that I don't have out of those two, because I'm not that close to them that I know when they do any personal things. Whereas with the Grabhorns, I have all the most elusive little things. They did an awful lot of that ephemera work, and I think sometimes they did it for pure joy and others to make a few dollars. You know, tributes to people who had just died, that were commissioned by their company for their friends. They'd be paid about $250, $500. Certain people repeatedly had things printed by them. One was Oscar Sutro, and one was Alfred Sutro, and of course Albert Bender had a few. I guess Albert paid for them, I don't know. Francis Farquhar, and lots of odds and ends of people; but those were the repeaters.

Chall: Is that a practice that's still carried on?

Heller: Not very much. I don't see it. There are some beautiful, beautiful--They're single pages usually, the tributes. Sometimes it's a poem, sometimes it's about the person who died, or whose birthday it is. They did beautiful things. I consider them a part of the Grabhorn collection.

And then, in addition to that, the Grabhorns printed some bum books, you know. Some really unattractive books.

Chall: That means the printing and all of that is unattractive?

Heller: Yes. And occasionally that would be because somebody couldn't find a publisher, and would just pay to have poems printed or a biography printed. Those were for private circulation, you see. And some of them were really poor.

Chall: Is that because they didn't want to pay to have something nicely done?

Heller: No, I think the Grabhorns weren't interested. I think it would depend on the person who came to them. That's my theory. I can't prove that. Because they did do so many beautiful things.

Chall: In collecting the Allen and Hoyem Press material, do you get it directly from them? You don't have to go seeking it out.
Heller: Yes, I'm on the list. I get it just like the Book Club--automatically. I get a notice, but I don't have to send for it. I'm automatically sent the book. If I didn't want it, I could write and say I don't want that book. But it's never happened so far.

Chall: When people enjoy collecting, there is the fun of collecting and looking for things in bookstores and what not--they have to search around. If you have a collection like yours, what will you do with it? Will the items stay in circulation?

Heller: My will says that my executors, who are my children, should decide to what libraries they should be given. They have a choice of keeping them if they want. It's no great secret about it: My will says that please bear in mind the Mills College Library, The Bancroft Library. I decided not to name the library, for the fine printing, because somebody said, "You might hate The Bancroft Library by then." I said, "I doubt it." I think it's just as good not to absolutely tie it. Though of course, on these there's another consideration. Both Mills and Bancroft have quite a bit of Grabhorn material, so that will have to be decided.

Chall: But they will go to libraries as a complete collection.

Heller: That's what I'd like to have done, but of course that's understood in these things. I might be able to upgrade some of the copies that they have. Mine may be better, or mine may be worse. You get a broken spine occasionally on a book. I think that the ephemera that I have undoubtedly is not around with a few exceptions.

Collecting French Bookbindings

Chall: What about book binding. I know that you did show me some of your fine French bookbindings. How did you become interested in that along with printing?

Heller: Morgan Gunst in San Francisco was very interested in bookbinding and had acquired quite a few modern French bindings, and had shown them to us. I was very taken with them. I have a few good bindings that my father-in-law had of the English bookbinders, that are very different, older. Cobden-Sanderson, Sangorsky and Sutcliffe, I forget the other name. They're very well bound, but the French, what I call modern--it's hardly modern any more--related their binding to the contents or the illustrations. I was very taken with it.
Heller: We were going to be in Paris for quite a while in 1954 I think it was. I said to Ed, "Let's get the name and address of some of these bookbinders and an introduction to them from Morgan Gunst." Ed liked the idea, too. As it turned out, Morgan was going to be in Paris--Morgan and Aline Gunst--at the same period. So the two things went together. We were introduced.

Any history of the bookbinders of that period always mentions Mr. and Mrs. Edward Heller of San Francisco among the collectors. And the Gunsts are mentioned too. We suddenly became well known in the French bookbinding business. You could order them bound, or you could pick them up--either from the binders, sometimes they had bound them on their own--or from one or two book dealers in Paris. They've never been sold within the United States. There aren't enough of them. They liked to have--I think I showed this to you--especially illustrated fine printing. The illustrations were more important than the printing in these French books. They were largely printed in Switzerland. But the illustrations were all by the foremost of the impressionist painters, and they were plates that were specially made for these books and then destroyed, so they were limited in number.

Chall: There's more to them than the binding, isn't there?

Heller: You buy them unbound. One bookbinder would do five or six of the same book, and vary it on one theme. That was Bonnet that did that. Perfectly marvelous. Others just let their imagination go. But they always related it either in color or in theme to content. Either the narrative content or the illustrations, or both.

Chall: So each binding is an individual, practically individual binding.

Heller: Yes. There's no duplication.

Chall: That's most interesting.

Heller: It's also an enormous enterprise. I don't want to get into it because there's plenty been written about hand bookbinding. It's a great skill. They've gone up terrifically in price, can't get hold of them. I'm not sure who's doing it now, because just about all of those people have died.

Chall: What about the Americans? There seems to be a whole new movement in American binding.

Heller: A little. I don't know too much about it. The Allens have been doing some of their own binding, and rather good--some of their later works.
Chall: There was an exhibit of fine bindings—I guess most of them were European—at the Museum of Modern Art in San Francisco two or three years ago. Superior material.

Heller: Yes. Some printers, a few, and the Allens are becoming one, like to make their own paper. The first person that I knew of in the United States that did that was Dard Hunter. I have all of his books, too. He did every step of the process, including writing his own text. He didn't do illustration. He put in samples of the pulp from which the paper was made, and various types. They're beautiful things. He did every step, including cutting his own type, and making his own paper, writing his own text, binding his own books, and publishing them. He was the prime example. But you can't make much money, because it takes so much time.

Chall: What about a couple in the San Francisco area, Edna Peter Fahey and Herbert Fahey. Did you know them?

Heller: Yes.

Chall: She was a bookbinder, and I guess he was too.

Heller: I never acquired any of her bindings, which I didn't think were good, but she was knowledgeable about them. The way I got to know her was, she used to take care of my bindings for me. She'd oil them and she did a beautiful job. If there was any need for any sort of repair, which occasionally happens, she would take care of that. But I have none of their bindings.

Florence Walter did her own bookbinding, too. She worked in Paris with, I guess, Bonnet—I'm not sure. She did some lovely things, but she only did them for personal reasons. There was nothing sold out of her things. Stanford has almost all of her bindings. Mills has all her binding materials. In fact, they give classes in bookbinding. Her children gave some sort of endowment for these bookbinding classes.

Chall: Was there a Belle McMurtie Young in the local area?

Heller: Belle was one of the local bookbinders. But I never was that enchanted with them that I ever tried to get hold of them. I've seen them.

Chall: I guess nothing compared to the Bonnet.

Heller: Not to my taste. Florence Walter has a little bit more of the flair of it I thought. But as I say, I don't have any of those of Belle's.
A Few Recollections of Albert Bender

Chall: A couple of final questions about Albert Bender. He has been written about. I wondered if you had seen the biography of Bender that was written by Oscar Lewis and what you thought of it.

Heller: Oh, yes. I have it around the house some place.

Chall: Do you have any opinions about it?

Heller: I read it so long ago, I don't remember. I think it was probably true in Oscar Lewis's fashion of writing. He's a very easy sort of writer. I think, quite true.

Chall: Elise Haas. I don't know whether she wrote or just had published something called To Remember Albert Bender.*

Heller: I have it some place.

Chall: I'm just asking you these questions because I think people are going to want to know, as an old friend of Albert Bender, what you thought of how other people have considered him.

Heller: In a way, he reminds me of--it's a silly comparison--Arthur Fiedler, sort of a legend. [chuckles] He didn't live as long as Arthur Fiedler did, but he was awfully boring to be around in later years. Terribly boring. But I had known him since I was a young girl. He used to come here and just sit around. He had a lot of ego, and he wasn't a give and take conversationalist. You had to talk about whatever he was interested in at the moment. But he did a great deal of good for not only books, but artists in the Bay Area. Whatever has been written about these studio parties--I never went to any of them. But he was the center, and people loved him. He fed starving people.

Chall: That's very interesting that a person would take on this role.

Heller: Oh, he did. He loved it.

Chall: I recently read that he had also helped along Ansel Adams in the early stages of his career.

Heller: That is correct, and I knew that. The first time I ever met Ansel Adams was when he was a young pianist, and Albert Bender brought him down to the country next door, to Mrs. Sigmund Stern, Elise Haas's

*She had it published. [M.C.]
Heller: mother, one day, to play the piano. He was a gangly, very unattractive person who had quite some ability with the piano. That was the first time I ever met him. Lo and behold, he eventually re-emerged with his beard as a photographer, and the rest you know about. But Albert was the one who first had him under his wing. I believe Ansel Adams came from a fairly good family. I don't think he was a starving person at all.

There was another—she died young—very good photographer. One of the first of the—what do you call the photographers that just snap pictures instead of keeping their cameras in place?

Chall: Candids?

Heller: Yes, sort of. They were quite unposed. Her name was Consuela Kanaga. I met her through Albert Bender. She did a great many pictures of my children year after year. [pointing] Those over there are hers. I have some lovely ones. She had a great gift. She used to just come down for the day. That was the first I knew of the candid camera people. Unfortunately, she died very young. She had a studio in the same building as Albert Bender did, on Post Street. He certainly furthered her—getting clients, I guess. Oh, he did that to so many people. Of course, some of them that he picked turned out to be no good at all.

Chall: I guess you can't always judge them at the beginning.

Heller: No, that's true. He'd just be the enthusiast, you know, for anything. He liked—though I never paid much attention to them—he pushed some oriental things, too.

Chall: What kind of things would that be? Prints?

Heller: Prints, and silks, I think. I don't want to be too sure about that because I never paid too much attention to it. But he was a great gift giver, you know. He always came in bearing something. But, in a way, he expected something in return. He expected money for something that he was interested in. It wasn't for himself directly.

I do believe he completely built up his insurance business through this. He had a good business, and it still exists to this day under that name. I don't think he knew a thing about insurance; I think he just had a couple of good people working for him. I noticed last year that a large part of the Mills College insurance is still with the Albert M. Bender Company, which is a fine, flourishing company. It's not a huge one, but it's a fine one.
Albert Bender. I don't know if you've any descriptions of him. He was a very unattractive little man. He sort of breathed heavily and lisped. His words came out through his nose.

And with it all, he managed to create quite a spot for himself in this community.

He really did. There's no question of it. And that St. Patrick's Day birthday party. Of course, St. Patrick's Day wasn't his birthday at all. But he liked to do that. He had been born in Dublin, as, I'm sure, all his biographies say.

Probably they all go into that.

But he did know everybody. Good Lord! And he just never stopped moving around. He'd just announce he was coming. He did that all over.

He had a lot to do with the Book Club of California—in fostering that.

Was his taste in artists and art acquired, or had he—?

I'm not sure. That's also well documented. His cousin, Ann Bremer, was an artist. It was always said, and it was probably true, that he was very much in love with her. Why he didn't marry her, or whether they ever wanted to get married, or whether one did and the other didn't, I don't know. I do remember her, and she was a good artist. I think you'll find her things in a lot of the California collections—probably American collections. I think maybe she formed his tastes in art.

He also supported all sorts of musical things, too. There's so much been written about Albert Bender.

I didn't want you to add any more than what you knew personally.

I think I already told you about how he was always giving my mother presents. We dedicated that bibliography to Albert Bender. Which was quite proper. He had started me on my whole interest in books, and introduced me to the Grabhorn Press when they first came out here when I was in college. Not to them personally. So it was quite appropriate. He had been very good to Davey Magee, who started as a bookseller from England here, about in 1926 or '27. He had come over from England. Well, he had been a young bookseller, and he wanted to help him along. I think he got lots of customers to go to Davey's. We both felt it was quite appropriate.
Chall: I imagine that Mr. Bender was more than pleased to have this dedication.

Heller: Oh, I don't doubt it. He liked anything in which he was the center.

Chall: I have heard that Mr. Bender was called "Mickey" and that it was considered, at least by Ansel Adams, to be a name used derisively. Others doubt that. Do you know?

Heller: It was used affectionately, really. He was born in Ireland and very proud of it.

Chall: For those interested in the people in the book and printing trades, could you provide any further recollections of Gelber-Lilienthal, John Howell, Jack Newbegin, Warren Howell, even Paul Elder?

Heller: I've already mentioned Jack Newbegin. I only remember John Howell vaguely—he was very "stiff" with me. Warren Howell is one of the most famous bookdealers in the world today and I still see him frequently. Leon Gelber and Theodore Lilienthal opened a book store in San Francisco sometime in the twenties. In addition to the contemporary books on sale, they had in their basement, unknown to the casual customer, many fine books, fine printing, et cetera. The basement was very comfortably furnished and was quite a gathering place for people who were collectors.

I don't remember much about Gelber, but Ted Lilienthal had a magnificent personal library in his home, mostly fine printing, and he had probably the finest collection of Robinson Jeffers in existence. His widow (his second wife, Peg Lilienthal) who was a contemporary of mine at Mills, has since given many of his books to university libraries in the Bay Area. The main bulk of it is at the University of San Francisco, but she has also given to Mills College, Stanford, and The Bancroft Library. Ted's first wife was also my classmate at Mills—she left before graduating.
DEMOCRATIC PARTY POLITICS, 1928-1960

IV FORMATIVE YEARS IN CALIFORNIA POLITICS, 1928-1944

[Interview 5: April 28, 1978]##

Chall: All right. You want to tell me how you happened to become active in the Democratic party?

Heller: Sure. I have to go back to explain it--you don't mind that?

Chall: No. No.

Heller: Because I think I've said earlier that my parents were what were called Progressive Republicans. So from my childhood I used to hear some talk--not a lot of talk as we think of it in bull sessions--but talk about Teddy Roosevelt, and Hiram Johnson. My father in a very minor way was interested in the political process, and I emphasize this--very minor. He would always take me out to our polling booth on election night, to watch the votes being counted. And then he would take me downtown on election night, you know the Third and Market--I guess it was the Examiner building that used to flash the returns. The first time I really remember--though I wasn't involved personally in any of these things--I think it was the 1916 results, which were very inconclusive for a long time. Of course my father was for Teddy Roosevelt, who was a Bull-Mooser. But I don't think he was disturbed at the outcome; it was just the only way of getting any information, that was all. So it goes back there; and all through college I can't remember that I had any interest in politics at all. You know, I can remember early on, and I can remember my parents' dining room table--we were doing some sort of a mailer for--who was it? General Woods, was that a person who ran for something--for president.

Chall: He could have.

Heller: I can't remember. It doesn't matter.
Chall: General Woods?*

Heller: Woods. It really doesn't make any difference. What I basically remember is that we were at our dining room table, with a couple of people in, sending out mailers. And that's where basically I sort of had the very beginning of politics. And then all through college I can't remember, not the slightest interest, in anything, which takes me up to when I was married. I wasn't quite twenty-one when I was married, and if I thought about it I guess I thought I was a Republican—if I thought about it.

But of course Ed Heller, my husband, was an ardent Democrat, and his father was a very active Democrat in Northern California. There were very few Democrats around at that time, so that he was quite prominent within the minor activities that there were among Democrats. [chuckles] They never won anything, as far as I can remember. So Ed was very interested in politics.

The Democratic National Convention, Houston, 1928

Heller: Ed's father died in 1926, and the 1928 convention—I still emphasize how few Democrats there were. Ed was just twenty-eight, I guess, and he was asked to be an alternate delegate to what I refer to as the Al Smith convention in Houston. Of course I went along. I would say my interest in Democratic politics started there, combined with the fact that Herbert Hoover was the Republican nominee. To explain my not liking Hoover has to go back to when I was in high school, when he was head of reparations—

Chall: Yes, World War I relief.

Heller: --World War I reparations. After the war, the King and Queen of the Belgians came to San Francisco with Mr. Hoover, and the League of Women Voters, which was then the San Francisco Center, had a lunch for them. My mother thought it was an important enough event for me to miss school—I guess I was in high school then—to go to hear them speak at this lunch. Mr. Hoover, as I remember it, was supposedly the main speaker, because they couldn't speak English particularly, and—I've always remembered this—I took a dislike to him that day.

*Leonard Wood, American soldier and colonial administrator. In 1920, Republicans wanted to nominate him for president.
Chall: Dear me.

Heller: He spoke down, into his soup, and he muttered. You couldn't hear a word he said. I'd been so excited about going to this event, and then—he was just negative, as far as I was concerned. You see, I'd gone in very affirmatively, so you have to combine my sort of negative feelings about Mr. Hoover, which are only based on a very small episode of eight or nine years earlier. Isn't that funny?

Chall: Yes.

Heller: So that I was just ripe for the picking, with a husband who was an ardent Democrat, my general interest in politics, I guess, combined with the fact that Mr. Hoover was a very negative person, in my world. And this was going to be my first vote, of course.

It all went together. And we did go to Houston, and Ed was a very lowly, young, alternative delegate. But going to a convention in those days was very complicated because you went by train. Have you had a description of this Al Smith train?

Chall: Nobody's told me anything about that. You must tell me.

Heller: We'll put that in because I was on it. We left San Francisco, and we had a special train, you know, with a big sign on the back, The California Alfred E. Smith Delegation for President, or something like that. We picked up the Los Angeles contingent, and then I remember we went to Phoenix. This was all in one train. We all got off the train at Phoenix, and some group of Phoenix Democrats gave us a huge breakfast there at—I suppose it was the Biltmore Hotel, I've forgotten. This was the way you went across the continent on trains. And then from the breakfast we'd go back to the train. But from Phoenix they took us by bus up over what eventually became Hoover Dam.

Chall: My word!

Heller: It was called—what was it called then—I'll have to look that up. Before it was named for Hoover—it was being built then.

Chall: Boulder?

Heller: Boulder, Boulder—right. It was one of the hottest, longest days I've ever spent in my life. It was broiling.

Chall: Were you on your way to Texas? To Houston?

Heller: Yes. We were on our way to Texas.
Chall: By that route?

Heller: No, wait a minute.

Chall: It doesn't make--

Heller: Yes, we did. We went from Los Angeles on the southern route.

Chall: And then you went north to Boulder Dam? I thought Boulder Dam was just outside of Las Vegas.

Heller: Well, maybe. Now you may have been right. I may have my order reversed. Maybe we left the train and came down and maybe went into Phoenix, though I don't picture it that way, strangely enough, but I guess we did. But we sure took that trip, and somebody had a heart attack on it—the heat, and the altitude—and had to be taken off the delegation. We spent all day, and then we rejoined the train. We were at Phoenix for breakfast, whether it came after or before. I remember this very well.

Then we went on, believe it or not, to El Paso, where we stopped again. Now this part I know is true. Incidentally, I first remember Earl Behrens, "The Squire," who was on that train. I particularly picture him around El Paso. And that's how long my acquaintanceship, friendship with The Squire went—from that time.

Chall: Was he there as a press person?

Heller: Yes, he was there as a press person, very young. And so at El Paso—this was the way the train trips went—we got off the train again. And local Democrats, or whoever—I've forgotten who—arranged for us to go across the border into Mexico, to have a day of fiesta and food.

Chall: This is even before the convention!

Heller: This is on the way to the convention. And, of course there was lots of drinking, and lots of gaiety, and we were received by—let's see, that would be Juarez. And we were entertained there by the Mexican authorities. And then—I don't want to get my different trips mixed up—I guess those were the chief stopping places on that trip, and then into Houston, across Texas.

Chall: How long did that take you? Do you have any recollection how many days?

Heller: Oh, it must have been five or six days. We were always having time out to be entertained. This was a big do.
Chall: Some of those train trips—I've read about some that followed, not immediately, but there was always a great deal of politicking going on, and sometimes people would come out with different candidates before you got to your convention.

Heller: That was later on. This one, we were all, devotedly pledged—or all the delegates were, and I think the spouses too, everybody on it—to Al Smith. There were other candidates, then, and a lot of people didn't like Al Smith because of Catholicism. I've forgotten who the other candidates were; there were plenty in Houston. But there was no politicking in those terms on that train. Everybody was for Al Smith.

Houston was a tiny little town, you see. There were only two hotels there at that time. And the California delegation was not important enough to get into any hotel. Ed and I and other delegates—there weren't very many women along at all, even spouses—stayed in an abandoned apartment house that they sort of resurrected. In each room they put in two beds, and a chair, and a table. I shared a bathroom with seven men, I remember that. It just gives you an idea of how things have changed over the years. We went to Houston because Jesse Jones had agreed to build a convention hall if the Democrats would come to Houston.

Chall: First and last trip!

Heller: [laughs] Yes. And of course, there was no air conditioning, nothing like that. It was so hideously hot, I hate to think about it. It was just a nightmare the whole time, of heat. But what converted me was, I think—well, there were several things, you see. Herbert and Edith Lehman were there. Herbert Lehman was a first cousin of Clara Hellman Heller, a first cousin once removed of Edward Heller. They were very important in New York politics then. And Eleanor and Henry Morgenthau were there. Eleanor Morgenthau was a second cousin of Ed Heller. They were perfectly lovely to these California young cousins who appeared. They couldn't have been nicer.

They were great friends of Franklin Delano Roosevelt. And Franklin Delano Roosevelt gave the keynote speech. That's where I first met Roosevelt. I remember their taking us to meet him on the mezzanine floor of the Rice Hotel, which was the main hotel with all the politics going on, and his sitting there in his chair with that cigarette out, and greeting everybody.

I think it was a combination of these things: We were introduced sort of at the higher ranks of the party, plus a great feeling against Prohibition, which was a big thing there, you see. Smith, of course, was committed to the repeal of the Volstead Act. I think those were the things that made me a Democrat. Does that make any sense at all?
Chall: Oh yes.

Heller: It wasn't ideology, exactly. [laughs]

Chall: Just knowing the right people.

Heller: I did like Al Smith. A happy person in contrast to the way he became later. He was then governor of New York. And that's how I became a Democrat. It was very much simpler than--

Chall: Anything else.

Heller: --than anything else.

Chall: Do you remember who the people were who might have been coming down from the San Francisco area with you?

Heller: Maurice Harrison was certainly one, and--what was his name? Oh, Mayor Phelan's niece, who was married to Dick Doyle. He was one of the delegates, and she was along. With a phone call, I could establish the name of another person, who was very active then. I don't really remember the rest of the people. I just remember Justus Wardell from San Francisco.

Chall: Let's see, Maurice Harrison was the chairman of the party, in 1932. He may have been earlier, but I don't know that.

Heller: He was a lovely person.

Chall: Who was Maurice Harrison? I just have him as a name.

Heller: Oh, Maurice Harrison was a very fine attorney in San Francisco. Happened to be a great personal friend of my father-in-law who was also an attorney. How do I explain him? He was just one of the very fine citizens in San Francisco. A very good attorney, one of the few Democrats, as I say, again. I don't remember exactly who else was on-- that's an awfully long time ago to remember.

Chall: Yes, it is. It would just be interesting. I'm sure we can get that delegate list; it goes back so far that the archives would have it.

Heller: I don't even remember much of the usual Irish types that came along in the thirties.

Chall: I see.

Heller: There may have been, but I just don't particularly remember them. And actually, in Houston, we were much more with the Lehmans and the Morgenthau, as it came out. I don't think Tom Barclay was on that delegation. I remember him in '36, but I don't remember him before that.
Chall: We were talking about 1928, aren't we?

Heller: We're talking about 1928. Well you asked me how I became a Democrat and then I got into this long tale.

Chall: No, I'm glad you did, because that's a very interesting story. That's what I want--the background.

Heller: Al Smith was nominated. I've forgotten the other people who were running. But there was a big fight; it was really between the Wets and the Drys.

Chall: Do you remember what the convention was like in terms of the rules of order, or the enmities, the hostilities, the attempts to get the delegates lined up, any of that?

Heller: Not within the California delegation. You know, you get to a convention, and you're sort of lost. You're a nothing individual. The California delegation was just for Smith. I can't remember any party caucuses, either, at that point. It was all a simpler time of life [laughs] I would say. You know, really very simple.

Chall: So you actually came in almost as nothings, but because of your relationships, you were treated very well right at the top.

Heller: In New York, isn't that strange? Well, and also because of Ed's relationship to it, I mean because of his father, who was one of a handful of Democrats, comparatively speaking.

Chall: I see. But your father-in-law took his Democratic politics seriously then? He was an active Democrat?

Heller: Yes, but not to the degree that you think of being a politician. Nothing like that. He was just an attorney, and a good attorney, who had his own law firm, who was a Democrat. He was a Democrat--I've always been told, and I think this was true--because when his parents came from Germany to the United States, from Bavaria, they went to Atlanta first. So, though Ed's father, E.S., was born in San Francisco, his grandparents had lived in Atlanta before they moved here. And that's how they happened to be Democrats; they came via the South to San Francisco.

Chall: And the northeastern cousins became Democrats because--?

Heller: Well that Lehman family was split, right down the middle.

Chall: Oh, I see.

Heller: Eleanor Morgenthau was-- It's all Lehmans.
Chall: Oh, she was a Lehman.

Heller: Well, she wasn't literally a Lehman; her mother was a Lehman. Her name was, believe it or not, Fatman. Yes, her mother was a Lehman. But the Lehmans were split; part of them were Republicans and part Democrats. I wouldn't even try to trace why they were. One other famous Lehman—there were a whole string of them—was Irving Lehman, who became, I guess, a supreme court judge of New York state. They were all first cousins of my mother-in-law, Clara Hellman Heller.

And just to put Clara Hellman Heller in her political position, her father, I.W. Hellman, was a very important Republican in the state of California. Very much lined up with Southern Pacific Railroad. You know, he had lived in Los Angeles, and then came to Northern California. She had been raised as a Republican, but as soon as she married E.S. Heller, in 1899, she turned into a Democrat. And she was loyal—of course all her family were Republicans—when she was with her husband.

Chall: She became a Democrat because he was a Democrat?

Heller: Originally, yes, but she became very much so in her own right, later on. Fought many a battle, and lost many a friend!

Chall: Yes! You know, I would think so, as things get a little more heated later on, after Roosevelt became president. We'll talk about that later on.

Heller: Well, that's the origins of my being a Democrat, but I wasn't active, at that point.

Chall: You didn't come home and work on the campaign for Al Smith?

The Franklin D. Roosevelt Campaign, 1932

Heller: I can't remember anybody's doing anything, except saying I was for Smith. Of course, Smith lost badly to Mr. Hoover in that campaign.

If you want to go on with politics, then, in '32 there were three slates, and I know you know all of that.

Chall: No, I don't. No, I haven't started research on that part yet.

Heller: I'm beginning to feel awfully old. [laughter]
Chall: I just haven't really got into all that thoroughly. I was old enough to know something of that campaign.

Heller: Well, we were all for Franklin Roosevelt, who was running. John Nance Garner was another slate in California, and Alfred Smith once again. There was a big split in the Democrats, though they weren't so numerous then. So there were three primary slates in that election. Well, Ed had been asked to be a delegate for Franklin Roosevelt; we had become quite enchanted with him in 1928. So he had accepted, and he was on that slate.

They were so short of Democrats, around all of California—I can't remember which way it went—but my mother-in-law, Clara Hellman Heller, was asked to be a delegate, for, I guess it was Garner. And I was asked to be a delegate for Smith! Or vice-versa, I've forgotten, but we were—each asked to be on one, they were so short of people to put on slates. Of course, we both refused. We were for Franklin Roosevelt, and Franklin Roosevelt did not win the California delegation, you know. The Garner slate won. That was the delegation that went to wherever the convention was, Chicago, I guess. We didn't go, you see, in '32.

Chall: Yes, I think it was Chicago.

Heller: Yes, I think so. But we were for Franklin Roosevelt. I remember Ed Heller's fury election night. This is sort of incidental. Here was Al Smith, who had been his idol in '28, and Ed was so mad at him by '32, you know, for filing later—I mean toward the end of the campaign, and splitting what Ed thought was the Roosevelt vote. The day after the election Ed sent off the most furious telegram—Western Union didn't even want to accept it—to Al Smith, about what he had done, by being in this primary, because it enabled Garner to win.

[William Gibbs] McAdoo was really the head of the Garner delegation. As all history books will tell you, eventually McAdoo made an arrangement, and Hearst was supposed to have been in on that, whereby Garner released his votes to Franklin Roosevelt at the convention, and took the vice-presidency. I don't know this firsthand, but every history of that time tells you that, and Franklin Roosevelt was nominated.

The only part I remember about that Roosevelt campaign was two things: I remember that Jimmy Roosevelt, who was then young, married to his first wife, Betsy Cushing, by whom he had his two daughters—I think they hadn't been married six months at that time—she was pregnant—came to San Francisco to go to some lunch representing his father. That brought about the first assignment I remember—the first thing I ever did in politics. I was asked to take Jimmy Roosevelt's wife, Betsy Cushing, to see San Francisco. That's how much I was part of it. And then, later on, Franklin Roosevelt made one of his famous
Heller: campaign speeches. Of course I didn't hear it, because it was at the Commonwealth Club. I have some of the original manuscript of that speech. I'll show it to you sometime.

Chall: Is that right. How'd you get it?

Heller: Not all of it. Part of it's over at the Hoover Institution.

Chall: How can it be divided up?

Heller: Well that's a story; it isn't divided. Apparently, the clean copy was what Roosevelt took to the Commonwealth Club, but I think there must have been an original and a carbon, or two carbons. Roosevelt corrected them, sometimes on the carbon, sometimes on the original in his own handwriting. He, or his secretary, or somebody threw it all in the wastebasket, because he had the clean copy typed up. Among others, Rodney Yoell, who was a doctor in San Francisco, probably the only medical doctor who was a Democrat in San Francisco, grabbed some of this out of the wastebasket. But he didn't grab it all, and I'm not sure who grabbed the other part. I think it was--it's been said it was--whoever wrote part of the speech, or has claimed he did. Who was writing Roosevelt's speeches then?

   Rex Tugwell. He must have grabbed the other part—they must have each grabbed it. And Rodney Yoell, a few years later, was hard up, and he sold this thing, which was authenticated, to Davey Magee, a book-dealer.

   Ed Heller bought it as a present for me. So I have part of the speech. That's why I know there's a carbon, because two of my pages are the same.

Chall: Just whatever happened to have been pulled out of the basket by Dr. Yoell at the time?

Heller: Yes. And I've never gotten together with the Stanford people. I once told Glenn Campbell, who says he has the speech over at the Hoover Institute, "Well, you haven't got it all, because I've got part of it!" And we've always meant to compare the two, but I never quite have. It's only part of the speech, because in Roosevelt's papers—I looked it up—it was just really the beginning of it—the first five or six pages.

Chall: And you said you didn't go to hear him. Is that because women--

Heller: Women didn't go to the Commonwealth Club.

Chall: You couldn't even go as a guest? You couldn't go at all?
Heller: Well, maybe they used to let women in sometimes—come in after lunch and sit in the back of the room, but I didn't. I never did that sort of thing. That went on for years, you know.

Chall: I didn't realize that it was in the men's only category.

Heller: Oh, yes. Well I didn't go. But that's where he made that famous speech. It's a long speech; it's in his letters. Well, that's all incidental.

Chall: No, it's not.

Heller: But that's all I remember of the beginning of the '32 campaign. But then we got more and more involved in things as the campaign went on.

Chall: In that campaign?

Heller: Yes. Well, Hoover was very much disliked by that time. People were starving, and the banks were closing. There's been plenty written about that period without going into it. I can't remember. It's very hard to remember what you did in campaigns; not very much.

Chall: Did you address envelopes or stuff mailers?

Heller: I don't think so. I don't think Ed was treasurer until about '40, of a campaign. He was just very interested. People would meet, and talk. I guess there were rallies; I just don't remember any of them at all. That's why I say, my participation in politics was just sort of incidental.

Chall: It just came about gradually.

Heller: Yes.

Chall: Let's see; you were quite young then, and just beginning to have your family, weren't you?

Heller: Oh, yes. No, well not completely. My youngest child, my daughter Liz, was born in '31. So I had my children, but they were terribly young, so I was home.

Chall: And you were still living in San Francisco at the time?

Heller: We'd lived down here in the summer, and in San Francisco in winter. I don't think I was registered to vote down here until '40 or '44. We used to vote from Clara Hellman Heller's house in San Francisco, because our interests were sort of San Francisco. This was a nothing political area. And nobody thought twice that we were doing anything against the law; you weren't doing anything. I just voted up there always.
Chall: Well, I thought that must have been what you were doing, because the very, very old rosters of political annals, of one kind or another, list the Hellers. And I finally decided it was definitely you and your husband who were always listed at the address that I was sure was your mother-in-law's.

Heller: Yes, 2020 Jackson Street. I think we re-registered down here because they were short of spaces on a delegation. You know, you have to go by districts and at-large, and if I registered down here, it was easy for me to be on the delegation. They wanted me, at that point, on the delegation.

    Ed was a delegate in '40.

Chall: Also '36.

Heller: Thirty-six and '40. That's right. He hadn't re-registered down here because I remember that when we registered it was in order to put me on, which was in '44.

Chall: I see. Because he was always part of what was called the fifth district, and that was San Francisco.

Heller: That's right. Well, they ran out of space up there. Well, I don't say they ran out of spaces; it worked out better.

Chall: There were too many people who wanted to be on the delegation up there by that time.

Heller: Things were much more controlled than they had been.

Chall: Yes, by the head of the party.

Heller: Yes.

Chall: None of this wide open participation.

Heller: Oh, good heavens, no. Good heavens, no. But I went to the conventions.

Chall: You did go to the conventions of 1936 and 1940?

Heller: Oh, yes, that was really my big introduction to politics.

Chall: Even before 1936, maybe we can cover some activities in the state campaigns, Upton Sinclair--

Heller: Was that before '36?

Chall: Yes, that was 1934.
Heller: Oh, was it that early? Yes, I can tell you a little bit about that.

The Campaign for Governor of California, 1934##

Heller: Well, let me say, we did not support in the primary either Upton Sinclair or Sheridan Downey.

Chall: Sheridan Downey was running for lieutenant governor.

Heller: Oh, that's what it was.

Chall: Yes. There was somebody else running, I'm sure, in the primary against Upton Sinclair, but I don't remember who it was.*

Heller: Well, that's what I can't remember--whoever it was, we supported. Ed didn't know Sinclair; he didn't know Downey at that point, either.

Chall: There was somebody named [Raymond] Haight who lost the Republican primary but stayed in as a candidate for the Commonwealth party--kind of a Hiram Johnson progressive.

Heller: I don't remember Haight at all. Then Upton Sinclair began making worse and worse pronouncements in, I guess you'd call them economic terms.

Chall: Well, yes, he had the whole End Poverty in California campaign.

Heller: End Poverty in California (called EPIC). Ed Heller was never much for endorsing any Republican, but--you've got a clipping?

Chall: Well, I have one on Upton Sinclair.

Heller: Well, I'm sure I know what it is.

Chall: This really is a recent one about the dirty tricks that were played on Upton Sinclair during his campaign.

Heller: I'll tell you. What happened was Ed Heller was just going to stay out of the campaign. I guess he was going to vote for Merriam, but he was not going to declare for him. The Sinclair campaign, whoever

*There were George Creel, Justus Wardell, Milton Young, and a number of minor candidates.
Heller: was running it, made some sort of press release, saying among others, that Edward H. Heller was supporting Upton Sinclair. I thought maybe you'd read that press release.

Chall: No, I haven't seen that.

Heller: --which just infuriated Ed, because he certainly wasn't supporting him. And that's the only time that I can ever remember that Ed publicly announced for a Republican; the Sinclair people forced him into it. He announced he was supporting Frank Merriam.

Chall: I do have such a note here. Somebody once was planning to interview your husband, and took a lot of notes, which were left to me. This one I found from the Tribune, Oakland, probably, of September 30, 1934. It said, "Heller seceded from supporting Upton Sinclair and Sheridan Downey as did many other leading Democrats," and there is a list of the seceders: Judge Matthew I. Sullivan of San Francisco, Maurice Harrison, retiring chairman of the state Democratic Central Committee; Colonel William H. Nebbitt, law partner of Senator McAdoo.

Heller: Yes, I vaguely remember that name.

Chall: "Seceding from the Haight camp"--so that was the other camp--"was Tallant Tubbs."

Heller: Oh, I remember him; he was sort of a socialite around town.

Chall: And then we have other names here also seceding from Sinclair: Hamilton Cotton, Edward Heller, Thomas O'Neill--

Heller: Who?

Chall: Thomas O'Neill, president of the California Vegetable Growers' Union.

Heller: I don't remember him.

Chall: Lewis F. Byington.

Heller: I just remember the name, I think, of Byington Electric.

Chall: And Judge E.C. McLaughlin?

Heller: I don't remember him.

Chall: And somebody, I think, Abby Moore. He's listed as a Democratic candidate for Congress.

Heller: I don't remember any of those people. They didn't really secede. That's what's inaccurate about that. They were forced to announce for Merriam; they had never been part of the Upton Sinclair-Downey
Heller: campaign, but they were really forced to announce. Maurice Harrison was certainly part of it.

Chall: They must have printed all of these names, then, if these people felt that they had to renounce him.

Heller: Yes, they did; I would think so. I remember they thought they could do that. I remember Ed and Maurice Harrison just thought they couldn't be part of it. But they didn't secede. That would be the wrong way to put it; they were never part of it. But I wish maybe we could figure out who it was they supported. I don't think it was Haight.

Chall: Well, it's no problem; I'll find it. I'll just go to the right source book to find out who else was running.

Heller: And that was in '34?

Chall: That was in '34, yes.

Heller: Yes, that was sort of a nothing year as far as we were concerned in politics.

The Democratic National Convention, Philadelphia, 1936

Chall: All right. Then we come to '36.

Heller: Well, that was the convention that was fun.

Chall: Let me get hold of my notes down here. Preceding that, as I understand it there was a bitter controversy over the selection of the delegates. Maybe you didn't have anything to do with that.

Heller: Oh, I didn't know about it. I'm sure there must have been.

Chall: Democratic leaders in California, and F.D.R., and Mr. Farley had to work out the delegate list.

Heller: Could well have been; I just don't know about it.

Chall: You just know you went.

Heller: But we went. Ed was a delegate; and that was in Philadelphia. I don't remember the train trip there, but we always went by train on all these things. I don't particularly remember that trip except I remember when we arrived in Philadelphia. That I do remember. And
Heller: I remember Tom Barclay, you know, professor at Stanford, on that trip. It was a blazing hot day; it always is at conventions. We were met by a band that somebody had gotten together as we got off the train. We had to march uptown to our hotel, which was way uptown—you know, waving flags, and singing "California Here We Come" or whatever we were singing, all the way.

As I say, that was the convention that I look on as the fun convention because nothing had to be done. It was Franklin Roosevelt and Garner being re-nominated. So nothing happened except there were vast internal fights in the delegation that I knew very little about. It involved William Gibbs McAdoo. There were fistfights, at some party we had. That's what happens at conventions when there's nothing else to do. I really don't think I ever knew what it was about.

We were always marching behind bands, to the convention hall, and they'd give us an American flag, or a California bear flag. We'd be waving, each individual delegate. [chuckles]

We spent a lot of time away from the convention hall. It was so hot in those halls. Nothing was ever happening there, if I can remember. We spent a lot of our time that time, strangely enough, with Helen and Bill Knowland, and old Joe Knowland, from the Oakland Tribune, because they had waited over from the Republican convention as newspaper people, to cover the Democratic convention. Bill and Helen were friends of ours. He was a young—I don't remember if he was a state senator then, or an assemblyman.

Chall: I don't either.

Heller: Very attractive. Lots of fun; and of course, Helen, his wife, was very attractive. We were with them most of the time. It was the most unpolitical affair; you know, just parties, meals, places, and getting late to the convention, and a lot of drinking—everything considered, a lot of drinking—and paying no attention to what was going on, because nothing was going on.

Once again—I don't remember where we stayed there. I mean I don't remember the name, but once again we were not in one of the good hotels; the California delegation never was. Never did seem to get any good hotels those days.

Chall: There never were very many women who were delegates; I think there were two women delegates from California.

Heller: No, very few women.

Chall: I think I counted them on the list in the newspapers the other day. One of the delegates was Lucretia Grady, because she was national committeewoman at the time.
Heller: Was she in '36?

Chall: Yes. The back of your list has her name.

Heller: I can well believe that.

Chall: She looked as if she were an eight-year national committeewoman.

Heller: Yes, I guess she was; that's right. She sang the "Star Spangled Banner," or she made a speech. No, I think it was Helen Gahagan Douglas that sang the "Star Spangled Banner" at another convention. I guess Lucretia made a seconding speech, at one of these conventions, maybe 1940. She was always fairly prominent.

But really, it was just a playtime; I can't explain to you how unpolitical the whole thing was, in terms of what you think of conventions.

Chall: Did you have fun? I mean did you enjoy these?

Heller: I liked them. Except the heat; I always hated the heat, though I don't think Philadelphia was quite as hot as all the other conventions; I don't think that '36 one was quite as bad. The '28 one was dreadful, and the '40 one was dreadful. I don't think the '36 one was quite so bad. So really nothing happened.

It was just partying all the time. And, of course, occasionally going to the convention hall.

Chall: Who was Mr.--I think it's O.K. Cushing, who was with your husband on the delegation?

Heller: Oh, yes. Oscar Cushing. Let's see if I can place him. Once again, he was a very prominent attorney. He was--to get into something contemporary—he was the uncle of Ben Duniway, who's Judge Duniway. He (Cushing), too, was a great friend of my father-in-law, E.S. Heller. Very, very fine man. He and Maurice Harrison and my father-in-law were sort of the people that were very established in San Francisco, and were part of the small Democratic party. Of course, there were a lot of Democrats, I guess, by the '32 election. But in '36, they still hadn't come into a party structure, particularly.

Chall: I guess not, because I noticed that even Mr. Malone wasn't a delegate.

Heller: No, he wasn't then, was he?

Chall: No, he wasn't. No, I looked.

Heller: No. But he was starting to be active. Oh, yes, and before '40, I think, but certainly by '40.
Chall: And did you know who Mrs. Anna Brownyard was? She was a delegate from the Southern California area.

Heller: No.

Chall: She and Mrs. Grady were the only two women on the delegation.

Heller: In '36? Who was the second one?

Chall: Lucretia Grady and Mrs. Anna Brownyard.

Heller: I don't remember the Brownyard name.

Chall: There was the split between Northern and Southern California even then? You didn't know each other?

Heller: More or less. More or less, yes. I don't remember her; I remember Lucretia, of course, who was a great character.

Chall: Did you become a good friend of Lucretia Grady during the years that you were active?

Heller: Well, yes and no. Lucretia was quite a bit older than I was. We were temperamentally so completely different.

Chall: What was her temperament?

Heller: She was very emotional, dramatic--I don't know if she ever thought anything through, or tried to. I don't want to downgrade her--

Chall: No, I just want to get her personality.

Heller: --because she was really quite a remarkable woman. But we were so different. Actually, she and my mother-in-law were quite good friends. Clara Hellman Heller. I guess she was younger than my mother-in-law; I guess she was between us in age.

Chall: She must have been, because she died just recently, you know, four years ago or so, and she wasn't really that old.

Heller: And she was so different; she wouldn't be the sort of person who would be a personal friend of sorts. We were friends.

Chall: But it was a political--

Heller: Well, she was very hard to work with, once I got into politics, because--too prima donna. I'm saying this in a nice sense. She had every right to be, probably. She did things her way. Did you interview Julia Porter?
Chall: No, I didn't. She has been interviewed.*

Heller: Julia and she worked together quite a bit.

Chall: I think there was an article—I believe it was written by Art Hoppe, but I'm not sure—about Lucretia Grady running a meeting once. And it was sort of, "All in favor say aye—the ayes have it!" [laughter]

Heller: Oh, she had no idea of structure, or anything like that. I mean, the simplest way to put it is that she was a creature of her emotions, married to a very marvelous man who appreciated her for all her good qualities and didn't mind her crazy things. And I basically was a college trained, League of Women Voters type, which is quite different. We were never unfriendly, never. But that's the best way I can explain it.

Chall: That's good. All right, so, what have we done? [checking notes] Of course, there was no problem about getting Franklin Roosevelt elected in 1936.

Heller: Oh, no, there was nothing to it at all. I remember in '40—I should have kept it. After Ed died, I cleared out a lot of stuff, and I found his Northern California budget for the Roosevelt campaign. It was something like $36,000 for the whole campaign. I mean, money was not an element in campaigns.

Chall: Not until television came along; that seemed to make a difference.

Heller: And mailings weren't that expensive then, either.

Chall: No, that's right. It wasn't a three-cent stamp, but it was not too much bigger.

Heller: I've forgotten what it was. And we used penny postcards.

Things weren't very structured. They never were structured in California; I don't think they are yet.

Chall: Not too easily.

Heller: William Gibbs McAdoo, who I just barely knew, was married to, as you know, to President Wilson's daughter, Eleanor. And he had a big ego, too, I assure you. He was Senator, at one point.

Chall: Yes, he was. Downey defeated him in '38.

Heller: Well, I guess that's where we supported McAdoo.

Chall: Oh, McAdoo.

Heller: In '38. Until after the primary.

Chall: I see.

Heller: Well, maybe we've got this wrong.* It's terrible how you do forget things; you've got an awful lot down, but you don't have that, do you?

Chall: I didn't put down the candidates. I have them on another list. I don't have them here. So I'll have to check that. I remember McAdoo being involved in something else which the Democrats felt was unfair. He apparently supported somebody whom the rest of the party didn't want to support.

Heller: You'll have to look that up for me. Well, I think all this gives you an idea that I was not very active in Democratic politics.

Chall: But you went along.

Heller: Oh, yes, I went, and got to know people if they went along, I guess.

Chall: Something that I read indicated to me that, by 1936, Roosevelt was being hated considerably by Republicans at least, and by, I guess, others in the Democratic party, but mostly by Republicans.

Heller: No, but some of the Democrats had pulled away. Those were the names I was trying to think of. There were a couple of very famous ones that pulled away, including what's his name, Douglas, from Arizona. Well, there were a few very prominent ones that pulled away.

Chall: Nationally.

Heller: Nationally.

Chall: What about the state?

Heller: In the state? Well, I can remember the beginning of my mother-in-law's fights with her former friends in '32 and '33.

Chall: Republican friends or Democratic friends?

*Mrs. Heller was correct.
Heller: With her Republican friends, who hated Franklin Roosevelt. I can remember one saying to her, "He's just owned by William Randolph Hearst." Which of course, wasn't true. But I can remember that, and I can remember some friends that really had been her good old friends who would never speak to her, because she was a Democrat, because she was a supporter of Franklin Roosevelt. And that's really true. I don't really particularly want to name the people.

Chall: No, that's all right. But there was this really strong--

Heller: This really strong feeling on the part of people; they thought he was a radical, that he was turning against his own class. And that's just from what I observed around here, this hatred.

Chall: And you were living out here at the time. You must have been a rather rare person in this neighborhood.

Heller: Oh! nobody around here. [laughter] I was going to say nobody at the polling place, but I wasn't voting here!

Chall: No, that's right; there wouldn't have even been two votes cast on the Democratic side!

Heller: Even when I first registered down here, there weren't that many!

Chall: What about--oh, just social gatherings then among your own family? The Ehrmans, I'm thinking of, and the other Hellmans.

Heller: Oh, the Ehrmans, and Hellmans--it was dreadful. It was dreadful. Everyone of them were Republicans. Terrible fights between my mother-in-law, Clara Hellman Heller, and her sister, Florence Ehrman --oh, just terrible. And as I remember, it didn't have much meaning then. Her sister, Florence Ehrman, was a Republican National Committee-woman, somewhere in through there. No, I don't remember any activity. It was just a title that she had. I'm pretty sure she was. My mother-in-law never had any part of the structure of the Democratic party. Oh, how I hate to think of those family gatherings; they were so awful.

Chall: That was the time when you were still going to your mother-in-law's once a week for dinner? Sunday dinner?

Heller: Yes, either to her, or to the Ehrmans or the Hellmans. Oh, that was terrible.

Chall: Goodness sakes, it would have been awful!

Heller: Well, my mother-in-law was a remarkable partisan when she was one. [laughs]
Chall: Did you ever have to agree that that was one subject you didn't talk about when you were all gathered?

Heller: I don't remember. I don't remember. I think we tried to avoid it, though. But sometimes in the thirties, those things started to break up--Sunday night dinners. But even all of Ed's first cousins, I think all of them were Republicans.

Chall: Well, I've seen the names of some of the people who contributed to the Republican party. I don't think I brought that little list with me, but there were many of your relatives or your friends--people that certainly Ed Heller would have grown up knowing.

Heller: Oh, absolutely.

Chall: People in the Jewish community--

Heller: Were almost entirely Republican, the people we knew. Oh, I'm exaggerating; it was just when you'd get started after cocktails, and drinks at dinner. Those were people who were violently against Franklin Roosevelt, and we were just as violently for him.

Chall: Let's see, I've forgotten when his court packing--

Heller: The court packing was about '38, I think.

Chall: Yes, I think so. So that would have come after the '36 election.

Heller: Well, I don't remember that I approved of that. I thought that was a mistake. But I thought that he was a great man. Despite how you could feel how he bluffed, sometimes. But he was a great man.

Chall: Did you retain your connections with him through your relatives?

Heller: Not really. Not really.

Chall: After that first meeting?

Heller: No. I don't think I ever saw him except indirectly again.

Chall: And when you went to the convention in 1936, were the Lehmans and the Morgenthau there?

Heller: We didn't even stay. Yes, we saw the Lehmans and the Morgenthau. But, Ed Heller was of a temperament that--you had just enough, and quit--"let's get home." He wasn't going to stay over that extra day for the--I think Franklin Roosevelt, if I remember correctly, came into Philadelphia, breaking all previous rules, and spoke, at Soldier's Field.
Chall: Oh, before he was nominated?

Heller: After he was nominated. Yes, but we weren't there for that; we'd left. I think that day was also the nomination of the vice-president. Very dull.

Chall: When you say he came and he broke all the rules, what rules did he break?

Heller: Oh, unwritten rules. A candidate never appeared at a convention; he was notified.

Chall: Yes, they usually stay in the background somewhere in the city. I see, but he was there.

Heller: Yes. Don't you remember? Landon was nominated by the Republicans that year. I've seen pictures of him sitting on his front porch, and people coming. He was notified of his nomination.

Chall: Now they sit in a hotel nearby and give directions with walkie-talkies and telephones.

Heller: Oh, heavens. But you really don't see candidates at any conventions; I've been at enough of them to know that.

Chall: That takes care of 1936 and all the problems. Let's see; it was 1940 when Wendell Willkie opposed him, wasn't it?

Support for Culbert Olson and Sheridan Downey, 1938

Heller: Yes. Now, '38--

Chall: We had a state election in 1938.

Heller: Yes, Ed did support [Culbert] Olson.

Chall: Yes.

Heller: Culbert Olson, in '38, definitely. And it was Olson, who, just at the end of his term, appointed Edward Heller a Regent in '42. Ed Pauley had been appointed by him earlier. I'd sort of like to put it in, just because it's for The Bancroft Library. Olson had offered an appointment, when a vacancy was due, to Edward Heller earlier. The greatest thing in the world for him was to be a Regent of his alma mater, but it was to succeed J.K. Moffitt, you know, after whom Moffitt Library is named. He was another one of the great Democrats
Heller: of the establishment. Ed not only refused it, but he led a dele-
gation to Sacramento, of Cal people, mostly Berkeley people, to wait
on Governor Olson, begging him to reappoint J.K. Moffitt. And he did.
Isn't that interesting?

Chall: It is.

Heller: He was one of the great Regents of the University. I just sort of
like that in there, because that is something that has been lost.
I don't know what year that was; you'd have to look up the year of
Moffitt's second term appointment.

Chall: Well, it would have had to have been between '38 and '42; there
weren't many years that Olson had an opportunity to appoint people.

Heller: Yes. Oh, wait a minute; maybe Moffitt wasn't a Democrat. I may be
wrong. He seemed like one; he was a most wonderful person.

Chall: I'll have to find out who appointed him first; then we'll know.*

Heller: Well, yes; that wouldn't necessarily tell the story, but it might.
There were no Democrats in there.

Chall: In the Regents?

Heller: Yes, so he could have been a Democrat; I don't know. But it was a
nice story, and I always liked it.

Chall: Yes, it is. Well now, Olson did appoint your husband to--let's see,
he appointed him to the Golden Gate International Exposition Commission.

Heller: Yes, in '39. It was ornamental. It was honorary; they'd have meet-
ings over there all the time, and dinners, and drinks, and passes.
It was completely ornamental, as I remember.

Chall: Presumably they were supposed to be checking about the finances--what
was happening to the money that was being used?

Heller: I don't think so; but I can't remember anything very serious going on.

Chall: I see. William Malone was also appointed.

Heller: That's where I first remembered him.

Chall: I see. And Herbert Erskine?

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*James Kennedy Moffitt was appointed by Hiram Johnson in 1911 to fill
an unexpired term which ended in 1924. He was reappointed in 1924-
1940, and reappointed in 1941-1948 to fill the unexpired term of
Regent A.B. Miller.
Heller: Yes, who became a judge. He converted to a Democrat.

Chall: Phil Davies? These are San Franciscans.

Heller: I know who he is. We were never very intimate, but I know who he was. He ran for office at some point, for something.

Chall: Yes, I think you're right.

Heller: Who else?

Chall: Dr. Ed Johnson.

Heller: I don't remember him.

Chall: Christopher Merchant.

Heller: I remember his name. Was he the architect--

Chall: I don't know.

Heller: --who was president of the Mechanics Institute? I'm not sure; there was a Merchant, but I'm not sure of his first name.

Chall: L.E. Bontz.

Heller: No. But then there was--what's his name Fritz. Didn't his name come up there?

Chall: Yes, Eugene Fritz.

Heller: Whose daughter was Dolly Fritz, you know? They owned the Huntington Hotel. I can remember him, a miserable man.

Chall: I see. You must have remembered Paul Smith. He was the Chronicle person.

Heller: Yes, who was at the time a very promising young citizen of California. He was a Republican. Those weren't all Democrats, by any means.

Chall: I see. Then there was a man named J.C. Berenson, I think.

Heller: I remember the name, but I don't really remember him.

Chall: Frank MacDonald?

Heller: I don't remember him.

Chall: Kernan Robeson?
Heller: I don't remember him.

Chall: And Mrs. May Knox.

Heller: Oh, yes, that's the one I've been trying to think of. That's a woman who--well, in my mind, she was a Helen Hokinson-type club woman. She was always supporting different candidates than we were. We were so different. But she had one great claim to fame. I don't know what it was. Maybe in '32, maybe earlier. She wasn't national committeewoman ever, was she? Well, she got the national committee to change its rules—No, not the national committee; that's probably where I have it wrong. State committee. The state central committee, whereby there was equal representation of men and women.

Chall: She was responsible for that?

Heller: Yes.

Chall: Well, that's interesting. I think I once read something that Mrs. Mattison Jones had been behind that.

Heller: Well, they were a pair, Mrs. Knox and Mrs. Mattison Jones. They were not League of Women Voter types, I promise you.

Chall: Now, when you say they were a pair, do you mean they were a pair of Helen Hokinson-type women, or they were a pair on this particular issue?

Heller: Both. Mrs. Knox looked more the part. You know, the bosomy type, but they were the two. And I think, if you ever talk to Julia Porter, she would—maybe know. But she really did somehow get this through the state central committee. You know, I've forgotten what the structure was, but she got this equal--

Chall: Yes, we call it the fifty-fifty--

Heller: The fifty-fifty. She was the one. And she lived on that for a long time. And quite rightly; this was long before women's rights were thought about, really.

Chall: Yes, well that particular issue and the people behind it are sort of lost; I'm glad to pick it up.

Heller: That was before I was active.

Chall: When that law went through?

Heller: Yes. I've really forgotten when it went through. I would think it was late twenties or early thirties.
Chall: I see. The other woman who was appointed, I mean in Northern California to the Golden Gate Exposition Commission, or at least the Examiner printed her name, was Mrs. Jean Macauley. You must have known her pretty well.

Heller: Oh yes, yes, I do. She was married to Captain Macauley. Yes, she was a very definite type person, and really very good. Very good.

Chall: She was an active Democrat for years.

Heller: Very active. Came from, you know, it was a very good family, and, she just was very active. I don't remember the details of what she did. I remember that I liked her. She was years older than I was. A very nice person, though.

Chall: And then there were Captain P.W. Lewis, George Irvine, and George Killion. Those were other appointments to this Golden Gate Exposition Commission.

Heller: Yes, George Killion, who eventually became head of American Presidents Line. But at that time, I don't know what he was doing, but it wasn't anything like that.

Chall: Well, he was the treasurer of—that was later, when he was the treasurer of the party.

Heller: Yes, he was national treasurer; yes, that was later. George Killion stayed with the Democratic party for many years; he was quite conservative, I would say, in terms of—like he was for Lyndon Johnson, I remember, when John Kennedy was running. He and Ed Pauley were quite intimate. Yes.

Chall: Before we leave your husband in this particular period, he was named by Governor Merriam to the State Emergency Relief Commission. Now I think I see the connection, because he had supported him.

Heller: Oh, I guess so.

Chall: But what was that? Did he remain long on the commission?

Heller: Let's see—He only served for a short time.

Chall: That could have been a hotbed, you know, right there. State Emergency Relief.

Heller: I can't think of the name of the man who was head of that. I guess it that was during the Depression.

Chall: Yes, 1935.
Heller: 1935. I used to get bits and pieces of it—there was some woman connected with that, too. Somebody named [Robert] Hooker was very involved with that. He was a very attractive young man, Hooker. I never was clear what they did. They met a lot. It wasn't a plaything, but it was so vast. I'm not sure exactly what they did; I can remember some meetings down here, but it was something I was never terribly interested in. I'd sort of come in and out. I think maybe Julia Porter was part of that. I'm not sure.

Chall: I don't remember reading that in her interview, but I may have skipped over it.

Heller: Maybe not. I don't know if there is any history of that or not. Somebody named Hooker, who was, I guess, paid, you know, director or executive of it. I've forgotten everything about that. Well, I think they tried very hard, whatever it was.

Chall: Well, they didn't have very much money, to begin with.

Heller: [laughs] They certainly didn't.

Chall: And there were so many people needing help. It was a problem that Culbert Olson had when he came in, just keeping hold of it, and getting the right people in, to manage it.

Heller: Well, that's the main thing I remember; they had a lot of trouble with getting any personnel in. I don't know whether that was federally funded to the states or not.

Chall: Well, it may have been partially by '38, but not very much, and if the state decided not to give any money to it, as I think they did during Olson's administration, that pretty well took care of it.

Heller: It's just something I don't remember about.

Chall: It's all right.

Heller: Though I remember Ed spending quite a bit of time on this. That's all I do remember. I think probably the reason I don't remember was that they didn't get very far. It was all so hopeless then.

Chall: Yes. I don't know whether he remained on after Olson came into office or not.

Heller: I don't know; I really don't know. He could have.

Chall: I can check that out. You worked for, or at least you supported Olson, I guess, you and your husband.
Heller: Yes.

Chall: And Sheridan Downey against Philip Bancroft in the general election.

Heller: Oh, yes. That's where I think we first got to--Ed became quite friendly with Downey then, after that. Philip Bancroft goes back to my childhood. Well you know, he was a Walnut Creek rancher.

Chall: That's right.

Heller: It was a San Francisco family; it's part of the Bancroft family, of The Bancroft Library. He was a friend of my father's, strangely enough, who was one of the Progressive Republicans. Some Progressive Republicans turned very conservative.

Chall: And he was one.

Heller: And he was one. I remember this part very well. And then, another Progressive Republican who stayed progressive was Chester Rowell, of Fresno. You know, he edited, I guess, the Fresno Republican and eventually the San Francisco Chronicle. He stayed on the progressive side. And these were all my father's friends. I remember Philip Bancroft because when the fleet came in when I was a child, he had a house up on Broadway, and I remember, we went to their house, when I was a child, to see the fleet come in. I don't think there was a great intimacy, but they were friendly. No, that's the point at which everything got divided. We supported Downey. Ed got to like Downey very much--who began to move away from his EPIC ideas.

Chall: Some of those ideas in EPIC and the Townsend Plan were ultimately taken up by the administration--by the Roosevelt administration eventually.

Heller: Yes, in a way. I'd have to re-read about all of these. Those were all the sort of nightmares of the thirties. You could see why that went on with all the poverty there was.

There wasn't the poverty in Northern California, I don't think, that there was in places in the East. There was in these migrant labor camps, but things went along pretty much the same. That's when my children were all in school, and that's why I can remember it quite well. You wouldn't know people, basically, who were starving.

Chall: Would that be because your children were in private, rather than in a public school?

Heller: No, because Peninsula was not a wealthy school. Kids were there on scholarships, and it wasn't a private school as you would think of them at all. That's what Mrs. Duveneck was so wonderful about, getting
Heller: people from all different groups. I remember it because we visited migrant labor camps with Clary's eighth-grade class. Mrs. Duveneck and I took this class to see the migrant labor camps in the Sacramento valley.

The Democratic National Convention, Chicago, 1940 ##

[Interview 6: May 5, 1978]

Heller: I did begin to dig up a few things, that I had in the back of my head and couldn't bring forward.

Chall: From last week?

Heller: More for 1940, I think.

Chall: Okay, then we'll start today with '40.

Heller: There aren't many people left to check conventions with, really.

Chall: That's why I'm so glad you have the recollections. What do you recall of 1940 with respect to the delegate selection process? Were you or your husband anywhere near this?

Heller: It was sort of done out of the state central committee, as far as Northern California went. There were no gatherings; the whole process was entirely different. You know, a few people would get together. Bill Malone, as I remember, was state chairman—yes.

Chall: He didn't become state chairman until August, 1940.

Heller: He was active right in through that period. Paul Peek never did much as state chairman; very nice man.

Chall: Yes, I think Paul Peek was the chairman in the period we're talking about.

Heller: Yes. He was very nice, but, I know a handful of people would just get together; they'd check with the county chairman and with other active people, and there was not this pressure of thousands of people wanting to be delegates. They would just pick them.

Chall: Are you aware of the fact that Harold Ickes was in town, and worked out with McAdoo and with Olson a method of selecting delegates that would bring harmony among the factions? *

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*Outlines and notes used for these interviews will be deposited with the Elinor Heller papers in The Bancroft Library.
Heller: Not at all. But I don't doubt it for a minute. I did talk with Bill Malone, who remembers quite a bit about this. He said he never wants to be interviewed, because he is an attorney who wants everything perfect. But he doesn't mind my jogging him and talking to him about it. He reminded me of something that I had forgotten, that in 1940, Helen Douglas—No, Helen Douglas was not active at that point.

Chall: No.

Heller: Up to 1940, it was her husband, Melvyn Douglas, you know, who was active. Of course, Culbert Olson was governor, and was chairman of this delegation. Melvyn Douglas wanted to be vice-chairman of the delegation; it starts right there. Bill Malone told me he thought that this was a mistake, that it should be a Northern Californian. He said, "We want somebody who has really been active. I think Edward Heller should be vice-chairman." Now, I'd forgotten that Ed Heller was vice-chairman of the delegation, because it wasn't very--

Chall: It wasn't very important--

Heller: Not at all important.

Chall: That's what I don't understand about that story.

Heller: But it is the background into how Helen Douglas became national committeewoman.

Chall: Yes. I have talked to Bill Malone; he has agreed to be interviewed, and it is not going to be easy, as you say, because he wants every "t" crossed, and every "i" dotted.*

Heller: This is right, but he's very interesting.

Chall: I saw him the other day, and he has a very good memory of almost all the events.

Heller: Excellent.

Chall: So, we'll take it from what you remember, because he'll go over that again. He told me this story that you're telling me, about why Helen Douglas was selected.

*William Malone's edited transcript has been deposited with the Helen Gahagan Douglas papers in The Bancroft Library.
Heller: Oh, he did remind you of that.

Chall: But, you don't remember that?

Heller: Well, I don't remember about Ed Heller, who couldn't have cared less about this. But apparently, the Douglasses and Olson were working together at that point, and probably, might have been working with Ickes, you see. That's what I don't know. I was not conscious of Ickes being here, and working this out.

Chall: Yes, they worked it out over a couple of days while he was at the Mark Hopkins.

Heller: Well, that's sort of interesting, because Ickes was never considered a political person. You know, Jim Farley had been in there, then he became disillusioned.

Chall: Yes.

Heller: And Ed Flynn was the great friend of Bill Malone. He came from New York. Actually a very nice man. But that '40 convention, which I remember fairly well--

Chall: Well then, you remember mainly the convention. Do you remember anything about the primary battles? I mean, there were four slates.

Heller: In '40?

Chall: Yes.

Heller: No. Well, the Roosevelt one won. What were the other slates?

Chall: One was a Garner slate, and then a Patterson slate, which was the Labors Non-partisan League slate, basically.

Heller: Well, that was Ellis Patterson, who was misbehaving very badly.

Chall: Yes, he had been in on the original Ickes plan, and then defected. And then there was a Ham and Eggs slate.

Heller: They really weren't terribly important. I mean, it was Roosevelt the whole way, on that. I don't think there was ever any doubt of that.

Chall: Well, he won by such a large--

Heller: Yes, I don't think there was ever any question of it. But because of that, you know, the convention was really foregone, as it were. You know, it's Roosevelt running again--
Chall: For a third term.

Heller: --and indicating that he wanted Wallace as his vice-presidential candidate. There were some like Jim Farley on a national level who were opposed to a third term and naturally were opposed to Wallace along with F.D.R.--however, they got nowhere. We didn't have nominations per se of the delegation because the decisions had already been made--except that the California delegation met to choose the committeemen and committeewomen at the convention. They were not chosen ahead of time as they are now.

Chall: They were more or less picked ahead of time, but not elected?

Heller: Yes and no. Yes and no. But, it was just a playtime, really. A tremendous amount of drinking, fooling around, going to the convention when you felt like it. Nobody paid any attention, again--

Chall: To what was going on.

Heller: Really. And the only faint--I think, did I mention it last time? I remember Ed Heller and Donald Younger walking out, refusing to vote for Wallace, for vice-president.

Chall: Oh, is that so?

Heller: Well, they were just sick of having it—nothing happened. No decisions being made. It wasn't so anti-Wallace, though Ed always later claimed he was one of the original anti-Wallace people. It was just that they were fed up with just saying "Aye, aye" to everything. And that's the only excitement I can remember at that convention.

Chall: Well, there was activity inside the California delegation. I don't know how serious it was, or how upset people got about it, but Governor Olson was trying to become a vice-presidential candidate.

Heller: I can remember this. We all had Olson buttons, which we wore for courtesy's sake. But, the whole attitude really, though there was that slight movement, was unreal. You know, Franklin Roosevelt had sent word that he wanted Wallace as his vice-presidential candidate, and that was it.

Chall: The word was out, then, that Wallace was his choice?

Heller: The word was out, and Helen Douglas, and Mel Douglas, and George Outland, and a few people like that, were pressing for Olson. But, on the national scale, it just meant—you know, it just meant nothing. It was a little local pride. Olson was never considered, seriously; it might have been by a handful. But that's really true.
Chall: There was a petition campaign going on in California, to recall Olson, at the very time that he was being run, presumably, for vice-president.

Heller: He had plenty of problems. Well, I remember those Olson buttons: "Olson for vice-president." And I think, maybe the delegation put them on once, to be nice to him. But the vote didn't go within the delegation.

Chall: What was their general opinion about Olson in those last--well, even from '38 to '42, when he was governor?

Heller: I didn't know him very well. Ed knew him fairly well. Well, what can I say? There was nothing much to say about Olson; he was sort of an out-of-stater, who really didn't understand this state; he never made a big impression. Actually, when it came to '42, that was when Warren first ran, I remember, I never came out publicly, but I was for Earl Warren. Because I just didn't think that Olson amounted to anything.

Chall: I see. Were you in agreement or disagreement about some of the few major things we remember about him: pardoning Mooney--that was one.

Heller: Well, I have to go back to what I've said. It was a long time before there were lots of issues, there. I was perfectly satisfied with the pardoning of Mooney. I'd been brought up on that story.

Chall: I see.

Heller: It always seemed that that was a very dubious incarceration. What else did Olson do?

Chall: Well, I can't remember, and I didn't even make notes of everything. He had appointed Max Radin to the supreme court.

Heller: Oh, Max Radin.

Chall: That created a great deal of controversy.

Heller: I was for him.

Chall: You were for Radin.

Heller: It was outrageous that he wasn't confirmed. That was one of the first anti-Communist manifestations.

Chall: Yes. There was quite a bit of that during Governor Olson's term.

Heller: At that point, Max Radin was a superior, excellent person. I was very much for that appointment. It was absolutely outrageous that he was not confirmed. A first-rate person.
Chall: And then he appointed Roger Traynor when Radin was defeated.

Heller: Yes, Roger Traynor was also excellent. He was around, very much around; I think he made a marvelous judge. He was chief justice, wasn't he?

Chall: Yes.

Heller: He had a long, distinguished record. But Max Radin probably wouldn't have had as long a one, because he died. An excellent person. No, I was very much for that. That was a good appointment.

Chall: So there were some pluses in Governor Olson's term.

Heller: Yes. It's funny how little you remember of a short term like that.

Chall: Yes, it was short.

Heller: You won't believe one of the things I remember most about the '40 convention. It's all incidental, you know. We had always had such miserable accommodations, that Ed Heller took a long guess of a year or two before the convention, that Chicago was going to get the convention this time. It just looked to him that way. Though it wasn't in the national news. There were a few air-conditioned suites at the Palmer House. You have to remember, this is before air conditioning. Ed had reserved over a year ahead of time, a suite for the period of the convention. There were two bedrooms, and a parlor-sitting room, air-conditioned. And we had that. It was one of the hottest conventions on record. Everybody we knew on the delegation was always in our room! [laughs] To get away from the heat. And I knew lots of delegations stayed at the Palmer House, but it wasn't all air-conditioned, you see.

Ed and I had one of them. People used to come in, and we'd have --you know, liquor there, and we'd have food up, and it seems to me they just sat around all day and all night, to stay away from the heat of the convention hall, and the heat of Chicago.

Chall: And you listened to it on the radio? Did you do that, at least? Or nobody cared?

Heller: I guess. But nothing was happening. You knew everything that was going to happen.

Chall: I see. William Allen White covered the convention, and said something of the same thing: it was all sort of preplanned, it was dull.
Heller: And it was really—you really paid no attention. You had a party all the time. It sounds crazy, doesn't it? But it's absolutely true.

Chall: Well, what about the speech of Barkley's? Were you in the hall the night that--

Heller: Barkley was in '48.

Chall: It was also in '40.

Heller: In 1948 he made his great speech.

Chall: He made a speech in '40, in which he also, just in passing, mentioned Roosevelt. From the newspaper accounts, the convention had been so dull, that everybody just spontaneously burst out into the usual activity—stomping, and going up and down the aisles for fifty minutes.

Heller: I don't think I was even there; I don't remember.

Chall: I guess not. Because it did happen.

Heller: I don't remember that. It was just the dullest—you don't pay much attention when you're on the convention floor, anyway. You know, now, it's all so regimented. They fight for the alternate badges, and all that sort of thing. I had an alternate badge. I wasn't an alternate.

Oh, I'll tell you one thing. We were talking about William McAdoo. At that convention—well, let me back up to say that the outgoing national committee people, and that usually meant the committeeman, controlled the credentials. Did you come across this?

Chall: I remember reading about it yesterday. Yes, tell me about it.

Heller: It was William Gibbs McAdoo who controlled the credentials. He got up on his high horse, and he would not distribute them. He was mad at everybody, because nobody was paying any attention to him. Bill Malone and Ed Heller could take on the assignment—they were not unfriendly with McAdoo—to get the credentials for the Northern California part of the delegation. Not only the delegates and alternates, but for the guests. You know, because it was a matter of permits—admission passes and badges—and McAdoo just wouldn't give them up. This sort of tells you something about McAdoo. For no reason in the world. They went two or three times. Finally, they got them. It was just his wanting some power.

Chall: Yes, that's the last vestige.
Heller: Did you read about that?

Chall: Yes. I'm glad you recalled it, however, having seen it at first-hand.

Heller: Oh, that process ought to run extremely well, and here they were without any way of getting to the convention hall!

Chall: Were there many people who came on the train from Northern California who were not delegates?

Heller: Yes. But you know, there wasn't the demand, though. It was very easy to take care of all passes. As I say, I remember I had an alternate badge. It wasn't done very scientifically.

Chall: Well, it was a long trip on a train, and a relatively expensive trip. I suppose not too many people could go.

Heller: I do remember that we stopped in Omaha on the '40 train, where the local Democrats gave us a big breakfast. We may have stopped other places, but I particularly remember stopping at Omaha. That was one of those leisurely things, again.

Chall: Yes. But you had to take the time for it.

Heller: And those convention trains always went the same way with the Southern California delegates at one end, and the Northern Californians at another end. I think I described that to you.

Chall: I remember we talked about picking them up.

Heller: Well, when we went to Chicago, for example, they would come up to Ogden, and the San Franciscans, the Bay Area at least, or Northern Californians, would leave from San Francisco, and the two trains would join at Ogden.

Chall: Oh, I see.

Heller: The Northern Californians would be hitched on to the Southern Californian train. Sometimes maybe vice-versa; I don't remember which way. So that we were always physically separated as it were.

Chall: Even in those days, totally?

Heller: Yes. And there's another thing that I know Bill Malone will mention, because it's really true. At that time, Northern California was fairly well disciplined, due to people like Bill Malone, who had really understood the art of politics as it was then. He was not unfriendly with Olson per se, though he had not been a supporter of Olson's to start with.
But, on every roll call, if there was one, you know, for national committeewoman, or state chairman, or what--the roll call was not alphabetical; it was always by districts. He would start in the north, of course. And the northern delegates, with rare exceptions, all voted together. So we'd always come down to the break at the Tehachapis, with almost a unanimous vote on anything. The south would always be fighting. And so, whatever the north wanted, in the end, worked. Because the south would split, and the solid northern votes would carry the day. That's just one of the things that always happened.

Even though there were so many fewer of you.

Yes.

You were unified.

Well, it was just more unified. I don't want to say that that's a virtue; I'm just saying it's a fact. And this roll call that went by numerical districts, you see, instead of by alphabet or whatever, went that way.

Do you remember Mrs. Roosevelt's speech, when she really, without saying so, made it possible for the nomination of Wallace to go through?

Barely.

You don't think you were there?

I think I was there. But I barely remember it; she wasn't a terribly good speaker at that time.

You weren't impressed, then?

No. I was never one of the world's greatest admirers of Eleanor Roosevelt.

How come? There were so many admirers of Mrs. Roosevelt.

Yes, I know.

What was your difference with them and with her?

Well, strangely enough, and certainly the public feels very differently than I did, I personally never felt she was sincere. She was over-sweet, though she could zing in. I always felt she wasn't really sincere. And this is contrary to what most people feel. But this continued later on, too.
Chall: The same feeling?

Heller: I can't say why I had it, and even when I read her books which I have read, and enjoyed, I still get that feeling of--insincerity, insincerity.

Chall: That's very interesting. I assume you've read *Eleanor and Franklin*.

Heller: Oh, yes, oh, yes.

Chall: Which is just a fine history of the period.

Heller: I think I've read all of--and I've read her own, you know, books--what did she write--*My Day*?

Chall: Yes.

Heller: Yes, and *Eleanor and Franklin*, that's the last book, isn't it?

Chall: Yes.

Heller: Yes. It's a very good book.

Chall: You did have occasion to meet her, relatively often, didn't you?

Heller: I met her occasionally. I often wonder if the fact that she had to be re-introduced to me time after time, whether that affected me, though I doubt it; I'm quite used to that sort of thing. People don't remember you, and I wouldn't expect her to. She never remembered who anybody was.

Chall: She wasn't Jim Farley.

Heller: [laughter] No, no.

Chall: So, that was all you remember, basically, then, of 1940, of that convention.

Heller: Yes, you see, it's really hard to explain how little you know the mechanics of a convention when you're part of a state delegation. I think if you read books about delegates to conventions even today, you hear people saying, "What are they doing there?" and "They had no part," and this is another fact of life: you don't have any real part in a convention.

Chall: I guess the reason that the Californians have gone to what, one-half votes, so that they have large delegations going now, is so that the people who are there can feel that they were part of something, at least, and come back all enthusiastic about the campaign.
Heller: Well, some do. And there is pressure for places now. I think in '40 it was still one vote per person.

Chall: Yes, basically. Except for the—it was a half-vote—

Heller: Except for the at-large.

Chall: Yes. Except for the at-large. There were, I think, only forty-eight people who went in 1940. [looking at list of delegates] And there were four women. I think we talked about Mrs. Mattison Jones last week. She was from Glendale, I believe. I think she was called Nettie. Do you recall Nettie Jones?

Heller: Nobody ever called Mrs. Mattison Jones by her first name. I have no idea what it was. She was quite a bit older. I can picture her perfectly well. She was a typical club woman. I think she organized something called the Democratic Women's Forum, with which I had nothing to do. However, Lucretia Grady used to work with her.

Chall: Mrs. Robert McWilliams?

Heller: Yes. I remember her. She resigned, though, I think.

Chall: She was an officer in the state committee for a while. Julia Porter took her place.

Heller: I remember her.

Chall: Was she active in the north?

Heller: Somewhat, somewhat.

Chall: How did these people get picked, either for delegate at-large at that time, or for the state committee?

Heller: Good heavens knows. That state committee would just decide, well, she'll go on. They put very few women on. Who else was a delegate there? Helen Douglas?

Chall: No. Mrs. Margaret Workman.

Heller: Oh. I remember her very well. She came from an old Los Angeles family. Her maiden name was Banning; the town of Banning was named after her. She was quite a lovely person. But she got so emotionally wrought up. I remember she went home.

Chall: In 1940?
Heller: I think it was the '40, because I remember that Edward Heller was part of it, and Edward Heller was not at the '44 convention, because he was in the army.

Chall: Yes.

Heller: No, I think it was '40. She just got emotionally wrought up about the fuss with McAdoo, and all that. She really was a nice person.

Chall: And Garner was trying to be president, then.

Heller: Yes. And she was a very, very nice person, but she couldn't take the emotional strain.

Chall: That's interesting, because--

Heller: Well, it's ridiculous.

Chall: --you said there was nothing going on.

Heller: I think she didn't get enough sleep. I remember she just fell apart, and was weeping, and I don't know what about. Just sheer exhaustion.

Chall: That exhaustion didn't affect you in any way, or did you manage to get your sleep at some time or another?

Heller: No, you never got any sleep. You never got any sleep. Yes, you were always exhausted.

Chall: Mrs. George Knox we talked about last week.

Heller: Oh, yes.

Chall: Those were the only women.

Heller: There were very, very few. Margaret Workman was one of few Southern Californians that I knew at that time. I knew about her because of her family association. Her family and Ed's grandfather's family, I.W. Hellman, were the early Los Angeles families.

Chall: Yes, I see.

Heller: And that's what the connection was--it had nothing to do with politics.

Chall: I see.

Heller: I told you I wasn't going to be much good on women on these things.
Chall: Well, that's all right; I just want to know. You don't have to be anything but what you are. Did you ever know the Dockweilers? Or did they visit here?

Heller: Yes. One of the Dockweilers was on the '36--no, '28--

Chall: Yes, that probably was Isidore, because he was the national committeeman, and was head of the 1928 delegation.

Heller: Yes. He was there. That's another old Southern California family.

Chall: I see, yes. He was national committeeman for sixteen years.

Heller: Yes. I guess you'd describe him, if I can remember him at all, more as a--he was a Woodrow Wilson Democrat, as I remember. Very nice person; not tough politically, at all. He wasn't really a politician.

Chall: You didn't know too much about William McAdoo, then, I take it.

Heller: Well, I did know his wife a little bit--Eleanor.

Chall: Jack Shelley you knew?

Heller: Very well, but 1940, I think, was the first convention Jack Shelley went to. And then later on, he played more and more important roles. He was at the '40 convention; I can picture him very well. You know, he was an outstanding labor leader in Northern California. He had gone through the--he was very anti-Communist, in the A.F.L. labor movement. He went through all the beatings-up that you hear about, with the attacks on labor people. And he emerged a very tough, very respected labor leader. And because San Francisco is a labor town, he had great respect from business people, too.

Chall: And then Robert Kenny. Did you ever become acquainted?

Heller: Oh, yes, I knew Robert Kenny quite well. He was more active at the '44 convention. He was chairman of the delegation in '44. I don't particularly remember him in '40, though he may well have been there.

Chall: He was there.

Heller: He probably would have been there. I think he became attorney general, what, in '42?

Chall: Yes. I don't know whether you can read my writing, but you can look down this list of the delegates. I think probably that first page is all Northern California.
Heller: I remember Ivan Sperbeck.

Chall: Do you remember anything special about him?

Heller: No. I think he was one of the labor people. Francis Carr is from that old Redding family.

Chall: Yes.

Heller: They were very active in Democratic politics. Pat Brown, when he became governor, appointed James Carr to--it had to do with water.

Chall: Yes, it did. I'm trying to remember what it was, but I can't right now. [California Water Commission]

Heller: Alexander Wachtman; I remember him. He was an old Scotchman, quite old, tough labor man. Very nice, very nice. He was called Sandy. Tough guy. Of course, Max Radin we've mentioned.

Chall: Yes.

Heller: And Donald Younger I've mentioned.

Chall: Yes.

Heller: I guess from--

Chall: Santa Cruz.

Heller: Santa Cruz. Where he always had lived. Donald Younger was one of the few Democrats in Santa Cruz County! [laughter] He was sort of a wild-eyed guy, quite nice; some people hated him.

And Hugh Burns, of course was very well known. He was state senator from Fresno. I guess he was the pro tem of the senate for a while.

Chall: He was, yes.

Heller: Yes. He was a quite uncouth person. Told vile stories, used terrible language. Got very drunk. But he had great power in Sacramento, for a long time.

Chall: Yes.

Heller: He and what's-his-name, Senator [John] Tenney?

Chall: Yes.
Heller: You know, the leaders of the--

Chall: Oh, yes, the Burns-Tenney committee.

Heller: Or the Un-American Activities Committee, whatever it was called in Sacramento. [The Joint Fact-Finding Committee on Un-American Activities in California]

Chall: Didn't Burns move along in the same direction?

Heller: As Tenney?

Chall: Yes.

Heller: Yes, he did. He really did.

Chall: Weren't the Regents at one time, of the University, or Clark Kerr, affected by the Burns committee?

Heller: Oh, yes—a long list, called "dupes or dopes of the Communist party."

The Burns Committee

Heller: I was included too, at one time, earlier, well before I was a Regent, when I was national committeewoman. I can't remember the name now, of the man who wrote the reports for the Burns committee.

Chall: I'll have to get that.

Heller: He [R.E. Combs, Chief Counsel] wrote the following in his report: "Communists or Dupes and Dopes of the Communist Party," and among them I was listed. As was Ollie Carter, Oliver Carter, who had been a state senator, and was state Democratic chairman. Ollie Carter had been a fine state senator, then he became a federal judge, and heard the Patty Hearst case eventually. We and somebody else equally as non—not being fellow travelers, or dupes and dopes, or anything like that—fought it, in Sacramento. We got a Republican attorney to go, and we got a retraction out of that senate committee. There were four of us, and I can't remember who the other two were. I remember that Ollie and I decided that we would not let that stay unchallenged. We challenged it, and of course, it was absolutely untrue.
Chall: Of course, yes.

Heller: We got a retraction from the floor of the senate.

Chall: From the floor of the senate? Did Burns retract?

Heller: Well, if I remember correctly, Senator Hatfield, you know, who was lieutenant governor eventually, I think he was the one who got up and made the speech about that. We got a formal retraction. Well, we had to.

Chall: Oh, yes.

Heller: Those were the days where you couldn't let things go unchallenged. Well, this was probably around '48 or '49 that that happened. And you know Hughie Burns, if he had read the thing, really knew better, about Ollie Carter and me. You know, he just knew that that was ridiculous, but I don't think he even ever read all those reports. That's another period, but I was not very pleased.

Chall: No. This was probably, maybe between '48 and '50. You were national committeewoman, and Oliver Carter was the state chairman?

Heller: That was in that period. It was in that period.

Chall: You have no way of knowing why he would have put you on the list?

Heller: Oh, because the Burns committee was just going--well, the Tenney committee, whichever it was called--just going crazy at that point, against the Democratic party, basically, though Burns was a nominal Democrat.

Chall: Tenney at that time was a Republican, I think.

Heller: Tenney was a Republican, but he had been on the left wing of the Democratic party.

Chall: That's right, that's right.

Heller: Strangely enough. Then he switched to Republican. The whole thing is just a horror story of--emotional nonsense.

Chall: Yes, well, it must have struck you when your name appeared on something like this.

Heller: Oh, you just couldn't believe it.
Chall: Was it frightening? I mean, to you, as it was to so many people?

Heller: Well, fortunately, I was in a position where I could stop it, or I could get it stopped, as far as my name went. And Ollie could get it stopped. I think it was frightening in terms of a lot of people, who didn't know how to get this sort of thing stopped.

Chall: Did it give you any sympathy for many of those who ultimately got named by Tenney and Burns and McCarthy?

Heller: Oh, I always had sympathy for a lot of them, because, people were named nationally, and in the state, without any chance to clear themselves, or be heard. It was terrible. Terrible period.

Chall: It was.

Heller: I get the shudders—not personally, but the whole thing—oh, yes, it did. To see how easily those things could be done, and there was no recourse.

Chall: Were all four of you, then, cleared?

Heller: Yes. There were three or four of us. It was certainly Ollie Carter. I can't remember the others.

Chall: Were you all prominent Democrats?

Heller: Yes.

Chall: That's the top level of the party?

Heller: Yes. At that time, yes.

Chall: Okay, well that probably takes care of 1940.

Heller: I remember some of these other names. [looking at delegate list] I don't particularly recall Courtney McCracken, though I remember the name. And of course, Manchester Boddy, eventually ran for Senate, but that's a later period.

Chall: Yes, it is.

Heller: And Jerry Voorhis. John Anson Ford, yes, I remember all of these people. Margaret Workman. There weren't so many, were there, at that point.

Chall: No, there were only forty-eight of them. I see. Well, I can see why it might have been difficult!
Chall: What is your impression about the reason why Helen Gahagan Douglas was picked for national committeewoman?

Heller: Well, she was very attractive, and was interested in Democratic politics early through her husband, Melvyn Douglas. People liked her, and there was nobody really—particularly looking for that national committee spot, as far as I remember.

Chall: There was some balloting about it. Mrs. Mattison Boyd Jones.

Heller: Oh, yes, but I told you, she wasn't exactly part of—

Chall: But she did run, and got fifteen votes, and Mrs. George Knox got one, during the balloting, and Mrs. Douglas twenty-nine. So she was obviously a candidate.

Heller: Yes.

Chall: But there was opposition.

Heller: Certainly.

Chall: Now, as an alternate, you didn't attend the caucus meetings, when this kind of balloting would take place?

Heller: I think I did, I think I did. I think you attended them; you didn't have a vote, but, I think I attended them. There was no doubt that Helen Douglas was going to be elected, but I didn't pay that much attention to this at that time. I was along as a wife, but I did enjoy hearing the political conversation, which goes back to what you asked me last time. I would always—I wouldn't go shopping with the wives, or go to the wives' affairs.

Chall: You didn't.

Heller: I preferred sitting and listening to the men talk about politics. I found that much more interesting. And that's how I gradually began to be more and more interested, even though it was basically sort of trivial.

Chall: The talk?

Heller: Yes. But, Bill Malone, of course, was sort of disliked by people like Jimmy Roosevelt, when they came along.

Chall: Oh.
The Edward Heller-William Malone Friendship

Heller: Because Bill Malone was an old-fashioned, political person. Honest as the day is long. But he liked politics for politics, and had a natural instinct for it.

Chall: I see.

Heller: Bill never had any money; I mean, he had a law business, but nothing enormous. He was just a natural—and I use this nicely—Irish politician. He just was instinctively one. Bill Malone's code was loyalty; that was the number one code. And that doesn't mean that you supported crooks, or anything like that. But once you gave your word, in Bill Malone's lexicon of politics, you never could go back on it.

Chall: I see.

Heller: And it's not a bad code.

Chall: No. Did you learn that by working with him?

Heller: Yes, and hearing him. Because I heard the people that he never would support, once they had said they were going to do one thing, and went back on their word.

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Heller: He and Ed Heller had become great friends. Bill's whole theory of politics was your word is good. And you stood with the person if you'd given your word.

Chall: I see.

Heller: You could be against a person, but you had to be honest about it.

Chall: Honest about why you were against him?

Heller: Well, you couldn't play two sides at the same time. He felt very strongly about this as a code of politics. Though I know it was very hard for a lot of people to realize—money wasn't the important matter in Northern California. It was really the pleasure of politics. People who liked it. Now, at that period, especially with Bill Malone, issues never meant anything to him. He didn't care about issues.

Chall: Just wanted a winning candidate.
Heller: Yes. Well, not a winning candidate at all costs. But, he liked the mechanics of politics. As I say, issues were never anything for him. I became much more issue oriented, for example, than Bill did. And Ed Heller was more issue oriented, though he enjoyed Bill so much. It didn't bother him a bit that Bill Malone was not issue oriented. Bill began to lose his power later on, when Helen Douglas, who had been his friend, you see, or to whom he had been friendly, went against Sheridan Downey on the hundred and sixty-acre limitation. The water limitation. And it never bothered Bill in the least, once he had decided to support Downey, you know, the first time that he was elected. He didn't support him in the primaries, he didn't know him. It didn't make the slightest difference to Bill, whether he was for an acreage limitation or against it. You were for the person that you were for. And this is where the break came, in a way, you know, with Helen Douglas, going against Sheridan Downey. I'm a little ahead of the story.

Chall: That's all right.

Heller: But that is really true. And that's where issues first began coming up. I'm always talking about Northern California when I talk about it. Ed Heller felt the way Bill did about Sheridan Downey, who had become his friend, and he was supporting Downey.

Chall: I think you supported Helen Douglas in the primary?

Heller: I supported Helen Douglas. This was one of the times that Ed Heller and I split.

Chall: I see. Did that happen very often?

Heller: No. That was the main time. I liked Helen very much. I'd never particularly cared about Sheridan Downey, though Ed liked him. It wasn't very hard for me to go--well, I guess, go with a woman is the way to put it, though it's the only time I can remember its going that way. Maybe I felt I would have been run out of the party, if I hadn't supported a woman. I liked Helen, but I began to see later on what an ineffective candidate she was, after the primary. You know, against Nixon.

Chall: Was she ineffective--

Heller: And I'm not sure that I know the story of why Sheridan Downey pulled out, after Helen announced that she was going to run. I can remember Ed Heller telling her not to run. He said, "All you're going to do is let this fellow Nixon become Senator." We'd heard tales of Nixon against Jerry Voorhis just before that.

Chall: Oh, that's right.
Heller: He begged her not to. Ed stayed perfectly friendly with her. But he wouldn't support her. And I did support Helen.

Chall: We'll get into that later.

Heller: Yes, that should come later, really. Now you want to know how I became national committeewoman.

Chall: Well, yes. You might tell me now, because you were talking about Bill Malone and your husband's friendship with him. What was the so-called Heller-Malone team, or Heller-Malone machine, or Heller-Malone, whatever it was?

Heller: We never knew. That was one of the things we never knew. It always was in the papers.

Chall: Yes, it's always noted as such. What was it?

Heller: Well, they used to meet, after work usually, every afternoon, at Ed's favorite place, the Hoffman Bar. It's still on Market Street. It was right across the street from Schwabacher and Company, from Ed's firm. They'd sit there for an hour or so, and have a drink. Bill was a very small drinker; he didn't do much drinking. Ed probably had a couple more drinks. And they would talk; sometimes I would join them. Jim Smyth was a part of that. I suppose the fact that Sheridan Downey was Senator at that point—well, he was never part of that group, but they supported him. The point was that Bill was a good organizer. Ed Heller—oh, the sums of money were so small, that it makes you laugh—that he would give to support candidates.

Chall: Except it was important to the candidates at the time, or the party.

Heller: I guess it was important. I mean, the sums were so small by today's thinking. You know, if Ed gave $5,000 to all the candidates, that probably was—

Chall: To all of them together, or as individuals?

Heller: To all of them. But we used to read endlessly about the Heller-Malone machine and laugh about it, because there was no such thing. Except they were very good friends. And they did talk over politics, and whom they liked, and whom they didn't like, and were very effective in supporting or not supporting certain candidates, I guess.

Chall: Besides candidates, would they have decided who might get federal appointments, patronage matters?
Heller: Well, a little bit, yes. There wasn't that much patronage. Yes, I guess, in a very minor way. There would be an internal revenue commissioner. Harold Berliner was internal revenue commissioner.

Chall: Wasn't Smyth, too, at one time?

Heller: Smyth was, following that, and he got into trouble really through carelessness, more than anything. He back-dated his own return; he was a very careless fellow, very bright. And he forgot to put it in. The total sum amounted to nothing. But it was just—that was later on. I'll tell you about it later on.

Chall: Yes, it was, in '51.

Heller: The time of the Truman so-called mink coat-refrigerator scandal. They were just miniscule, these things. I felt sorry for Jim Smyth; he was really a happy-go-lucky, bright fellow who never really worked very hard at anything, sort of lived by his wits.

Chall: I see.

Heller: Money was nothing in his life.

Chall: Was he indicted? I never did follow it up to find out what happened to him.

Heller: He was indicted, but found not guilty.

Chall: Oh, I see. And your husband got caught up in that in a minor sort of way.

Heller: Oh, did he! In a way that really wasn't bad at all, but Ed had a fit, to see his name in headlines. He thought he could help Jim Smyth, because Jim had always been so honest. He (Ed) voluntarily went before the Grand Jury to testify that Jim had needed some money, oh, maybe $10,000, just for living expenses. Jim had asked Ed if he would help him borrow it, and he borrowed it from the Wells Fargo Bank, and Ed was the signer of the note. Jim had paid it back.

He thought he could help Jim, by saying this was the way Jim did things. He was always short of cash, but he never was taking money. Somehow, somebody leaked the fact that Ed had gone to the Grand Jury, and there were headlines all over the paper, that Ed was before the Grand Jury. This almost drove Ed up the wall.

Chall: It made it look as if he had been called before the Grand Jury because he was a partner to this scandal.
Heller: Yes, yes. It was a dreadful time. If you weren't there, you can't remember how miserable these things were. Ed just had a fit, and he was right.

Chall: To have the fit? He was right about helping Smyth?

Heller: He wanted to help Smyth. I think he did the right thing, for a friend of his, when he knew something favorable about the way Jim was always out of money. He was so careless. He never had any big paying jobs, you know. He'd do political campaigns, small sums, you know. But his reputation for paying back any loans was excellent. Ed felt he was helping him. I think maybe he did help him out, in the long run, but he surely didn't like the headlines that he got out of that. [chuckles] Ahh, that was one of Ed Heller's lows.

Chall: Who else went to the bar then, Hoffman Bar, beside Smyth? Was Harold Berliner a member of that team?

Heller: No, Harold was a friend of Ed's and Bill Malone's.

Chall: Was his appointment to the revenue commission part of the patronage given out?

Heller: Oh, it's so minor. Well, no, Harold did us a favor. I've forgotten what Jim was doing; it was during the war. After the war he had some job, and Harold said he'd take the job and hold it until Jim could get it. Harold had a perfectly good business; he was just doing him a favor. Harold liked to do politics in the--I think it was the Twenty-sixth Assembly District, where--what was his name was assemblyman, for years. [Ed Gaffney] He was an awful dope. But he would just do anything Harold would want, which was very minor. He was a strong Catholic, this fellow, and Harold would have him go to the churches all the time, because he was afraid to let him make a speech. [chuckles] This is all part of this so-called machine.

Chall: Yes. Who else can you recall being part of it?

Heller: Well, they had a lot of different--None with the same degree of friendship. There was a man in Oakland named Pat McDonough--

Chall: Oh, yes.

Heller: --who was sort of friendly with them. Oh, George Harris, who later became a federal judge.

Chall: What about Monroe Friedman? Was he ever a part of it?
Heller: Well, in general. But the East Bay never became part of the San Francisco thing. Not really. He was friendly. George Harris was part of that group. Ollie Carter was not, though he became eventually very friendly with him. You see, Ollie did not come—he always said he was a country boy, mountain boy. He came from Redding. And that whole Carr family, that we were talking about before; a very fine family up there. Carter, Carr—they were all interrelated. They all voted together up there, in any of these state affairs. They were really very nice people, all of them.

Chall: But the people who sat around in the Hoffman Bar together from time to time—

Heller: Yes. That was George Harris, and Harold; it was in and out.

Chall: I'm trying to recall some names that I saw. I didn't bring them with me, because I was going to talk about this another time. But I recall one of them being Callahan. These came out of Julia Porter's recollections. She also recalls Jim Smyth, Harold Berliner and occasionally, Albert Chao among the group.

Heller: Neil Callahan is a name I can't place, though.

Chall: I'll check it.

Heller: I do vaguely remember it. I may have the wrong person; he was very prissy. He was known as a sanctimonious Irishman. I think that was what Jim Smyth would call him. Well, this machine really didn't exist. Now, Bill Malone had the San Francisco County Central Democratic Committee. But Ed had nothing to do with that.

Chall: The county. Yes.

Heller: So that the county committee was separate. Ed really didn't know those people. Particularly. He might have incidentally known some of them.

Those were the intimates; people came and went. Jack Shelley to a degree, was part of that. And I guess—I think they'd talk over the appointment of judges, which half the time didn't go through anyway.

Chall: For a long time there were two Republican senators, and only for a short time was Downey there.

Heller: Yes. That's right. I only remember the judges after Sheridan Downey was Senator. And that's when I was committeewoman; I was much more conscious of it once I was committeewoman. But let me say that I personally took myself out of the judge business.
Chall: Oh, did you?

Heller: I said I didn't know anything about the law. I was not going to make it my business to recommend judges. You see, this was where I was a little bit more on issues.

Chall: I see.

Heller: I felt I wasn't going to recommend anybody because he was a friend.

Chall: What did you do with those questions of appointments--

Heller: I let Ollie Carter and others do it. Bill Malone still had his fingers in there, Sheridan Downey, but I just stayed out of it.

Chall: Just sent the letters on, then.

Heller: When was Clair Engel elected senator? That was later.

Chall: Fifty-eight.

Heller: It was that late. I just refused to have anything to do with judges, and I think I was right.

Chall: At least your conscience is clear!

Heller: Well, I didn't know about the law, or what a judge should be. It seemed to me like a good decision, and I think it was. But, you know, then, there was so little patronage it makes me laugh when I think about it.

Chall: Well, let's see, you were national committeewoman while Truman was in office, so there would have been some.

Heller: Yes, but there was so little. And let me say, Ed Pauley grabbed what little there was; he was the committeeman.

Chall: Oh, my.

Heller: Patronage in California has been greatly exaggerated. It's not like some of the eastern states. Very little. There were post offices. That was the main appointment now that I think of it. Downey did all of those post offices, and I never new one postman from another. He did that whole thing, quite properly, I think. I don't think I ever even suggested the name of anybody, or supported anybody. I don't even remember who was the San Francisco postmaster while I was committeewoman. I do remember the Los Angeles postmaster, Mike Fanning, but for different reasons. Patronage was not one of my things.
Chall: I see. Well, now we know. In 1942, there was a state race between Earl Warren and Culbert Olson.

Heller: Yes. I remember that very well.

Chall: You were still here, or you were in the East? You went East, you said, in '42.

Heller: Yes, we were East. But I voted for Earl Warren, I remember this very well, and Earl Warren knew I voted for him. I liked Earl Warren, always. He was the sort of person that I--

Chall: How did you become acquainted with him?

Heller: I met him around. I don't know. Earl Warren sort of moved in the same circles.

Chall: Through the Regents, when your husband was a Regent? Would that have been one place?

Heller: Well, you see, we're talking about a period now when Ed had just become a Regent.

Chall: That's right.

Heller: He went East almost immediately after he was appointed a Regent. He was appointed a Regent in March of '42, and by June he had gone East in the army. No, I just don't know--I just knew Earl Warren. I just always admired him and liked him.

**Boston and Washington, D.C. During the War, 1942-1946**

Chall: When your husband went East, what did you do at first?

Heller: Oh, now we're getting off of politics for a minute?

Chall: Yes, I've tried to take some of this in chronological order so that I cover your life story in a relatively orderly way.

Heller: Well, actually I moved East about a month later. He went to Washington to see about getting a commission in the army. He got one very quickly in the finance department of the army. He had hoped to be in the infantry, but he was forty-two at this point. He had been in the infantry, I think I mentioned, in World War I. Well, the infantry wasn't interested in him, in a forty-two year old. And they had established a special division of the finance department of the army, with one officer in charge of every Federal Reserve District.
Heller: I think Ed was the second one appointed, one of these twelve. He was told he could have any Federal Reserve District he chose, except his own, which would be San Francisco. Nobody was allowed in his own. And I think New York was taken, though I'm sure Ed never would have chosen New York. Ed happily asked for Boston, which was the First Federal Reserve District. So he went straight up to Boston, and I stayed out here for a month or so. Ed stayed in a hotel in Boston while I was busy getting my kids settled for the summer, you know, off in camp, or whatever they were doing. I remember that Liz was in camp, I think even then, maybe. The boys—Clary couldn't have been in camp then. But whatever they were going to do, I got them put away for the summer.

And then I went to Boston. We found a house in Cambridge. Clary, my oldest son, who was about to be a junior in high school, went to Menlo School right here in Atherton, which is both a day and a boarding school. He begged me not to have to go East. We were already getting the feeling at that age that he'd be in the army before too long; it was only two years off that he was in. He was not quite sixteen, then. So we agreed to let him stay out here and continue at Menlo. My parents were living in Palo Alto, and he was sort of, more or less, based with them, and I had somebody living in this house, and he could be in and out. He didn't have the best schooling situation. And you didn't want to shake up a kid at that age that had nothing but the army, or service, looming ahead of him.

Alf, my second son, had just finished the eighth grade, at that point. He was ready to go into high school, and Liz, my daughter, was going into the seventh grade. I wanted a house in Cambridge; I made up my mind on that, because I'd always heard about Shady Hill School. Not always, but I had heard for a long time that it was then, and to this day, probably one of the best private schools. Oh, I wouldn't even call it nontraditional. It was nontraditional at that point, maybe, a progressive school. It's an excellent private school, and I'd made up my mind that if I could get Liz into Shady Hill in Cambridge, in seventh grade, which went through the ninth grade, that that was where I wanted to live—in Cambridge. And then I began looking at all the so-called prep schools, for Alf, who was ninth grade. We were in a very fortunate position, in a way, because nobody wondered why we'd come into New England. Ed's army uniform explained all. So we were treated really quite nicely there. I looked at all the conventional schools, but I didn't really like them. You know, Andover, and Exeter, and—well, it doesn't matter, the names—

Chall: Choate.
Heller: No, I didn't look at Choate. Deerfield was the other one. I had heard from my friend Harriet Eliel, about Putney School, in Vermont, that sounded awfully good to me. She had a child there already, and she was very enthusiastic about it. I went up there, and I loved it, right away. It, too, was a progressive school, but it continues flourishing to this day. It was very, very good— all college prep. I got Alf accepted in the ninth grade there. To this day he's devoted to Putney. It was a great experience for him, a marvelous school. It was a farm school.

Chall: Putney, you said.

Heller: Putney, in Vermont. It's called The Putney School. Oh, just to give you an example of the student body—Quite a few people from all over went there. Jing Lyman, the wife of Dick Lyman, the president of Stanford, who came from Pennsylvania—she and all her family were there. I think she was two years ahead of Alf. Oh, it's had a lot of very well-known graduates. It was an excellent school, and all college prep.

Well, Alf had four very happy years there.

Chall: Oh, he stayed there after you came back.

Heller: Oh. Yes. Yes, he stayed there. Liz, after three years at Shady Hill School, went there in the tenth grade, and graduated from there, too, two years after Alf.

Chall: Graduated from Putney?

Heller: Putney. It was always interesting to me, because my children had gone to Peninsula School, which I think I mentioned.

Chall: Yes.

Heller: You know, down here. Peninsula School, which also flourishes today, was thought of as off-beat, and oh, they said terrible things about it, but I knew it was a good school. People claimed that the children didn't learn anything, and that they couldn't go on. But both Alf and Liz moved to New England schools, and did absolutely, you know, top grades, which proved something or other to me; I don't know what! And then went on to college and did very well.

So we lived in Boston for almost three years, in Cambridge, I should say, and had a very nice house, with a proper address, 225 Brattle Street.

Chall: Brattle?
Heller: Oh, yes; that's the famous street of Cambridge. I don't say we were looking for that, but that's what was available. I remember thinking the rent was high. It was a lovely house. Two hundred and fifty dollars a month!

Chall: For the whole house?

Heller: Isn't that funny?

Chall: Well, you weren't used to renting houses.

Heller: It was a very, very nice house, rented from people by the name of Plaut, Jim Plaut, who had gone into the navy just as Ed went into the army. He had been sent to Washington, to start with. He was the director of the Modern Museum of Art in Boston.

This is a diversion, but he had a very interesting career in the navy; they had him identifying all these lost objects that had been stolen and—you know, for pictures, and art objects and resurrecting things from pictures. He had a very interesting career.

Chall: Those were pictures and artifacts stolen abroad?

Heller: Yes. That's somewhat a diversion, but that's how we got that house. It was just pure luck.

Elinor R. Heller: Administrator, Massachusetts School Program, War Savings Bonds

Chall: What did you do while you were living in Boston?

Heller: Well, I had started working, before we went East, just before we went into World War II for the United States. The Treasury Department had set up what was called the Defense Savings Department, which later became the War Savings. Ed had been asked—this was before he went into the army—to be California chairman of this Defense Savings; it was done by states. Ed quite properly had said, "Nobody can administer anything for all of California. Divide it in two and I'll be Northern California chairman." We didn't know a thing about it.

I got interested, because they had an education section. Here's the education coming back in again! It's funny the way it weaves in and out. Ed, before we left, was trying to get as much information as he could. He told me to find out all about what was being done in the schools. You know there was a lot of that in the schools, and eventually in the colleges and universities—of selling saving bonds. So I just fell into this job.
Chall: Was it a volunteer job or a paying job?

Heller: A dollar-a-year. I have the letter I can dig out about my service as a dollar-a-year person, and that this was the end of it; there would be no more, because under treasury rules, or United States government rules, there are no dollar-a-year positions, except during wartime. Did you ever know that?

Chall: No, I didn't.

Heller: I can get that letter out. I think it would interest you.

Chall: All right. Yes.

Heller: There were a lot of dollar-a-year people, and we worked just as hard as if we were getting paid, and you do have civil service rankings with that. So I had been doing that for Northern California.

Chall: I see.

Heller: Helped, incidentally, by Harold Berliner, which had nothing to do with politics, per se. But Harold's business was some sort of school supplies, and chemicals. He knew all the superintendents of schools in Northern California. So he helped introduce me to all these people to introduce this savings program. Isn't that interesting?

Chall: Yes, that is.

Heller: Into the schools, He said, "You know, my wife used to be a very good secretary. Would you like her as your secretary?" We had no funds. And I said, "I'd love her." She became a very good friend of mine, as a result of that. She was a marvelous secretary. So we set that up in Northern California, very successfully. I went all over the state on that.

So when I went to New England, New England was very suspicious, Boston, of anybody. If you can imagine. The education department, school department, whatever it was called, was a mess. It had done nothing. I wanted to continue that work, and of course, they were very suspicious of this outsider.

The office, the paid employees were largely Irish, which would be true, there. The real Irish political types, what I think of as the New England political types. It's a nice introduction, to see them, although the chairman of the Massachusetts War Savings Committee was the vice-president of the First National Bank in Boston. Because of Ed's job, which I should describe, in the Federal Reserve Bank, Mr. Denio, I can't think of his first name, who was not Irish, had heard about Ed Heller, you see.
Heller: Then Washington sent up word. Peter Odegard was in charge of the—You know who Peter Odegard was; he became professor of political science at Berkeley. Peter Odegard had set up that education program, that school program, in Washington, nationally. They sent up word that Boston was to take me on as a dollar-a-year job. So they were very dubious about me. But they found out that I knew what I was doing; I had already done it. Then there was also a women's division. And as you know, I'm not much on women's divisions, and had done nothing out here. There was a women's division; I don't even remember who did it. They (in Massachusetts) were in such a mess that they came to me then and said, "Can't you find somebody to head our women's division?" I said, "How can I? I just came here." [laughter] They said, "Well, we can't find anybody." There were big fights, and all that. So I found somebody to whom I had an introduction in the League of Women Voters, of which I have always been a member, and talked to her. I asked her, did she know anybody who would come on, that this was going to be a paid job. She said, "I know exactly the person." So, this woman that she recommended came in and took over the women's division. All these people who lived in Boston had never been able to find anybody. She did a very good job. It's sort of an interesting career.

Chall: Very, very interesting the way the connections you have pay off.

Heller: Yes, it's funny the way it does, the League of Women Voters, and all that.

I haven't even described Ed's job, but I'll go on with what I did there.

As a result of that, I traveled all over Massachusetts. I was in every school district in the state of Massachusetts, in the public schools. I learned more about that state, as I would go into the schools. I also did the Catholic schools, though I knew very little about them. I found out there were three dioceses in Massachusetts, for example. I didn't know a thing about it. Dealing with the Catholic schools in Boston was really a scary thing for me. Not in the other two dioceses. There was the diocese in New Bedford, and one right across from Springfield, on the river there—I can't think of the name of the town. But the Boston Irish were against the war, because they hated the English so.

In the parochial schools, they offered every resistance possible. They didn't have the time; they didn't have the personnel; they didn't know how to do it; they couldn't get the money back and forth to the bank. I would get them volunteers that would do everything for them. I finally realized that they didn't want this in their schools.
And then did you just quietly bow out?

No. We got it by working through the other two dioceses, who were not that way at all. In New Bedford it was largely French Catholics. They set up a beautiful program, savings program, in their schools. They were marvelous to work with. And then I got set up in-- well, if it wasn't Springfield, it's right next to Springfield, in that diocese.

And what were the Catholic groups there?

They were mixed. They were mixed. But they were not anti-war. That was in western Massachusetts. Then I could go back to Boston and show them what I had done in the other dioceses. Of course, the public schools were all marvelous. You know, in New England, thrift is the greatest thing in the world.

I see.

So I didn't have to teach them thrift.

Just had to sell the bonds!

I just had to sell the bonds and switch them from their thrift savings accounts. The public schools had always had these little savings things, and switch them over. Oh, we had all sorts of rankings set up, and I got to know the schools and colleges. It was really a great adventure for me to meet all these people; they were marvelous. Just wonderful. So I am very devoted to--I don't want to say New England--Massachusetts. They were marvelous. So that kept me very busy, all the time.

Yes. And you were able to get around, because you had a war job, so you weren't compelled to ration gas so carefully.

Yes, they gave me the stamps. Or I'd go with some of these men, in the office, who would take me (mostly Irish). And, well that comes later, when I became national committeewoman, and was still working there. Then, they always wanted me to go to court houses or city halls, to talk business because in Massachusetts the committeemen or committeewomen had great patronage, and they thought I had equal importance in California, which I didn't. [laughter]
Edward Heller: V-Loan Officer, First Federal Reserve District

Heller: But just to finish up on what Ed's job was. He was what was called the V-Loan Officer. There was one in every Federal Reserve District. I think one for the navy, too, and one for the army. People with the Federal Reserve Bank, the two of them jointly approved loans to businesses in all the Federal Reserve Districts, which was practically all of New England. There were companies that would do things for the war—lobster plants that would convert to something. He was all over New England, getting loans, helping them to convert for war work. It was very interesting, at first. But as the war wound down, it got to be very dull. There was less and less work for them to do, because they were starting to reconvert, to look ahead to peacetime economy. But I had to get that in, because that leads to when Ed went to Washington.

Chall: Right.

Heller: And why. To become a member of the Surplus Property Committee.

Chall: Oh, I see. But that was after you'd become national committeewoman.

Heller: Yes. And I think maybe that's a good time to stop off, now, because it takes us a little time to explain how I became national committeewoman. But it's very simple, really.

Chall: We may be able to start. Let me see how much tape I have. We have enough tape to start.

Heller: Okay. It's really quite simple.

Chall: Let me just get out my own notes, here.
Election to the National Committee, 1944

Chall: Were you in Boston at the time that you were selected for national committeewoman?


Chall: I know that the delegates were selected out here in somewhat the same way they were selected in 1940. But you weren't even here to know about that.

Heller: That's right. It is so simple it's ridiculous. As I tried to tell you, I'd really never done anything in politics except go along.

Chall: Yes.

Heller: I'd never run—done precinct work; I'd never done anything. I just listened to the conversations but I loved it. I was interested. I remember—well, sometime early summer, probably—or into there, of '44, Bill Malone phoned Ed Heller at our house in Cambridge, and said, "I'd like to see Ellie be national committeewoman." And Ed said, "Well, I'll speak to her." And so Ed turned around and said, "How would you like to be national committeewoman?" And I said, "I just don't know what it's all about!" Ed said, "Well, Bill thinks it would be a good idea. Why don't you try it?" Now, would you believe it's that simple?

Chall: After I found out how Helen Gahagan Douglas was picked, I believe it's that simple! [laughs]

Heller: It is literally true. I knew some of these people because I had been at other conventions, you know. So Bill had me made a delegate. That was the first job.

*Portions of this chapter have been placed under seal.
Chall: An alternate is what I have. Were you actually made a delegate? Of course, you might have been, but I read that you had been made an alternate.

Heller: I think that's probably true. I think George Harris was the delegate. But he didn't go. I remember. I have a vague recollection of that. So I became a delegate.

Chall: Oh, I see.

Heller: I think you're absolutely right; I'd forgotten that. That's right.

Chall: All I know is what I read in the papers.

Heller: Oh, this is right. I'd really forgotten that. It's true. I was an alternate, but I ended up as a delegate, because of that.

Chall: I see.

Heller: You know, you moved up as an alternate if the delegate dropped out. And, so I came out here—that's why it takes a long time. I mean, how I was chosen takes no time at all. And then I had to go on this train and meet everybody. Now I did know some of the Northern Californians; that's why I wanted to identify a few of them.

[Interview 7: May 12, 1978]##

Chall: Well, the last time I left, you had been selected by the leadership to be the national committeewoman, and--

Heller: Well, not by the leadership; by Bill Malone! [laughter]

Chall: By Bill Malone. And you said you came back here to get ready to go with the delegation on the train.

Heller: Yes, that's right.

Chall: Now, did you attend the meeting at Monterey in June, just—let's see, it was about June 17th. There was the meeting of the delegation in Monterey.

Heller: I don't believe so. I don't remember that at all. No, I think I'd remember it. I remember the '48 pre-convention meeting, but I don't remember June, and it's probably unlikely, because you see, I was in the East, in Boston. It's probably unlikely. What date was the convention that year?

Chall: It was July nineteenth to the twenty-first.
State Democrats To Go Down Line With FR

By JAMES ADAM

California's Roosevelt delegation will entrain tonight for the Democratic national convention in Chicago, a little bit uncertain as to what they are going to do when they get there outside of helping renominate the President—and having fun.

Most of the delegates have no idea whom they want to support for vice president, and will wait to see what happens by the time they reach Chicago and caucus there.

It is generally understood that whoever Mr. Roosevelt wants as a running mate—and certainly no one will be chosen without his approval—will get California's 52 votes.

The Democratic County Central Committee of Alameda County is the only party organization in the state going on record in favor of retaining Vice President Henry A. Wallace.

KENNY AT HEHL

Attorney General Robert W. Kenny, as chairman, heads the delegates and alternates leaving Oakland pier tonight in special Pullmans on the Overland Limited.

Southern Californians will depart simultaneously from Los Angeles to join them tomorrow night at Ogden, Utah, if train schedules permit.

Nevada's convention delegation will board the Overland at Reno in the morning.

S. F. ALTERNATES

Traveling from the bay area with Kenny, who is also chairman of the convention rules committee, will be the following delegates: District Attorney Edmund Gerald Brown, State Senator John F. Shelley, William M. Malone, Democratic county chairman; Mervyn Rahn, San Francisco, San Carles, state secretary of the CIO; State Senator Thomas P. Keating, San Rafael; Patrick W. McDonough, Oakland, a vice chairman of the delegation; Clifton Hildebrand, Oakland; Herbert W. Erdman, Piedmont; Gordon F. (“George”) Irvine, Alameda, and Assemblyman Harold F. Swank.
Candidates for Delegate
to the
DEMOCRATIC PARTY
National Convention

The following delegates are pledged to,
FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

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Heller: No, I'm sure I would remember it, because part of that trip East really shows me that I wasn't there--when I think about it--but on the train.

Chall: Were you aware of the fact that you were not necessarily the choice as national committeewoman, nor was Pauley the choice as national committeeman, among all the delegates? Did you get a feeling for that?

Heller: Well, Pauley was pushing another woman.

Chall: Maurine Simpson?

Heller: Yes.

Chall: Was he pushing her?

Heller: Yes. And this is one of the strange stories of the convention, because Malone had told Pauley he'd back Pauley. But he said, "But I also want you, Pauley, to back Ellie Heller." And Pauley had said he would, and then he discovered that Pauley was pushing Maurine Simpson.

Chall: Is that right?

Heller: Bill Malone's fury was untold, you know, at that. Now, I never had much of an impression of Maurine Simpson, one way or the other. I didn't know her. I met her either at the train or at the convention. But, I knew a lot of the Northern Californians, one way or the other. The Southern Californians, as I remember, were on the back of the train that time. And I had to go back, and meet all the Southern California delegates, particularly the women. There were more women, then, back there.

Chall: Who escorted you?

Heller: I don't remember--whether Bill Malone did. Helen Douglas--I don't remember if Helen was on the train.

Chall: Yes, she was.

Heller: She was always very friendly to me. There was somebody named Esther Phillips; does that name show up, who was a delegate?

Chall: Well, let's see. Now, I'll give you a list of the people who were on the slate of delegates. But, of course, they didn't always go. So, I don't know who went. But these are the people, and these are the names of the women who had been selected as delegates. Now there was a woman named Esther Murray--
Heller: Yes, who was very nice.

Chall: But that was later.

Heller: Well, of course, Julia Porter was pushing me.

Chall: But she was already—she was on the Platform Committee, I think, so she had already left.

Heller: Yes. She was already there. I roomed with her in Chicago.

Chall: Did you? In the Palmer House.

Heller: We shared a room there.

Chall: Air-conditioned?

Heller: I think so. The hall was not air-conditioned, but I think the hotel was, by this time. It was a tiny little room. This wasn't particularly by choice; it was just we were very short of space. Remember, this was wartime. The number of people who went on the train were very limited in number, because, in putting the delegation together, and making the arrangements, they couldn't get many sleeping cars. So it was a smaller group of people. Wait until I look at some names and then I'll be able to think of something.

Chall: They're listed alphabetically rather than in congressional districts, so it's hard for you to tell maybe.

Heller: I see. Well, as far as I knew, Pat Brown was certainly supporting me. You know, you take it for granted on some of these things, and Frank [Francis] Carr, and I think Tom Carrell from Los Angeles, who was an assemblyman. You really never know who's really supporting you in all these things. [chuckles] And I think Isidore Dockweiler, if he went, would have been.

Chall: He was there.

Heller: Yes. And Herb Erskine, of course. Neil Haggerty, who was the AFL secretary. George Harris did not go.

Chall: Yes. That's right.

Heller: We discussed that last time.

Chall: That's right. You think you were appointed delegate in his place.

Heller: And Clift Hildebrand was sort of a maverick from East Bay.
Chall: What was his name?

Heller: Clifton Hildebrand. I don't remember if he supported me or not. Chet Holifield was probably doing whatever Helen Douglas was doing; I'm not sure. You know, he ended up as the chairman of the Joint AEC [Atomic Energy Committee] committee. But at that point, Chet Holifield was extremely liberal toward the left wing, and he ended up as a complete conservative, eventually, which is interesting how people change.

Tom Keating was one of our good friends; he was from Marin County. He later became, I guess a superior court judge. Don Kendall. I'm not sure where Bob Kenny was in this thing. He was chairman of the delegation. He seemed perfectly friendly, as far as I could tell. Cecil King was always friendly; he was a long-term congressman from Los Angeles. And Pat McDonough from Oakland; I think I mentioned him last time. Paul Mudgett was one of the Northern Californians, I think Eureka, or some place like that. Claude Nelson was from the valley; I don't know where Olson was in this whole thing.

And Pauley I've already discussed. Merv Rathborne, I think, was supporting me. George Reilly—you never know; he usually went along with the Northern California mood, but you never could tell. Al Robertson I had no idea. Bill Rosenthal was one of Helen Douglas's people. Jack Shelley. And then Harry Sheppard was the long-time dean of the congressional delegation from San Bernardino. And then Maurine Simpson, whom I didn't know at all. I vaguely remember Claudia Worswick, but not much; and Donald Younger, of course, was supporting me.

I'm making it clearer than it was. You know, I really didn't know. I was really a novice at this. All I had to do was to talk to all these people. I'm sure that Esther Murray had ended up as a delegate—very nice person from Southern California. And so they asked me all these questions, and I answered them as well as I could.

Chall: What did they ask you? What did they want to know?

Heller: I don't even remember. You know, you just don't know how vague this all was. You have to remember that I never done anything really in politics. You know, the only thing I can say about myself personally is, I always try to answer honestly or say, "I don't know." But I don't think that made a great impression on a lot of people. As I say, Bill Malone wielded a lot of power. When it finally came to the vote—I can remember the caucus in Chicago. We voted alphabetically. They voted for national committeeman first.

Chall: I understand that's typical.
Heller: That was typical at that time, yes.

Chall: Isn't it now? As you recall?

Heller: I don't know. I haven't gone to a convention [as a delegate] since '56. They probably have it all mixed up now. No, we did not vote alphabetically; we voted by districts; that's what I mean to say.

Chall: You voted by district. I see.

Heller: Yes. I correct that. So, the whole north voted first.

Chall: All right.

Heller: Now, I don't remember who was running against Ed Pauley for national committeeman. You may have that in your notes.

Chall: Helen Douglas, according to my notes, was opposed to Ed Pauley, and she--

Heller: Yes. She would have been.

Chall: --nominated Ray Files.

Heller: Oh, I vaguely remember it. But Ed Pauley got the votes. Part of the story is that the committeeman was voted for before the committing-woman. Bill Malone kept telling me all the way, "Ed Pauley has given me his word; he's supporting you, Ellie, but he's pushing that Maurine Simpson," to whom I had no personal objection. I didn't know her; I don't know what she'd done in politics. I think she had worked for Ed Pauley in something.

Chall: I don't know. All that I know about her is that she had been and was at that time the national committeewoman for the Young Democrats, so she obviously had a lot of background.

Heller: Yes, I just didn't know her. So, then came the vote for national committeewoman, and there were two nominations. Me, and don't ask me who nominated me; I don't really remember.

Chall: According to the newspapers—Helen Douglas.

Heller: I'm not surprised. Helen was really supporting me, and you know, she was very helpful on that. She really was, because she had a lot of friends on the delegation. I think she helped a great deal. And Maurine Simpson was nominated.

Chall: By somebody named Emily Burnett?
Heller: By whom I don't remember.

Chall: And, according to the newspapers—now, this is usually all from Earl Behrens—there were seconds, apparently, by Minnie Lou Eakin, who was from Berkeley.*

Heller: I don't remember her.

Chall: And Dockweiler.

Heller: For Maurine Simpson.

Chall: Yes. And others; I don't know who they were. Then, it says here, that "Malone and McDonough--

Heller: Yes.

Chall: "and a host of others, jumped into the breach with speeches in favor of Elinor Heller."

Heller: That's probably true.

Chall: Do you remember this as being something that was upsetting to you?

Heller: Yes, I do remember. Well, it didn't make enough difference to—

Chall: What was going through your mind?

Heller: It didn't make that much difference to me whether I won or not. [laughs] I know it's hard for people, frankly, to understand that. But you know, my heart wasn't set on this; I didn't really care that much. But when it came to the vote, just before the vote was taken on the national committeewoman, Ed Pauley had just been elected. He got up, in the caucus, and he said, "I am not going to take any position, because whoever is elected committeewoman, I am going to have to work with," which just infuriated Bill Malone. He had been suspicious that he was working both sides, and Pauley said, "As a matter of fact, I'm going to leave the room. Mike Fanning is my alternate." Mike Fanning was the postmaster of Los Angeles. Very decent, very nice man. And Pauley said, "He's my alternate. I'm instructing him not to cast a ballot for national committeewoman."

This is really a true story. I really think that Mike Fanning would have voted for me. And that's a story that doesn't quite come into the papers that way.

*Earl ("Squire") Behrens was a reporter for the San Francisco Chronicle.
Chall: No, it certainly doesn't.

Heller: This I remember extremely well. And I know that I won; I've forgotten --I think, fairly well.

Chall: Thirty-seven to thirteen.

Heller: Yes, I thought it was quite big, when it came to the point.

Chall: Also, according to Behrens, the state chairman of the party, [Alfred] Robertson, and several others passed.

Heller: Oh. I'm sure of that.

Chall: He was from the south, too.

Heller: Yes. So that was the story. As I say, it didn't make me nervous; I really didn't care enough.

Chall: In terms of all of the other activities with the California caucus that went on--and we'll discuss that--as I read Behrens, it would seem that he listened in, or sat in on the caucuses. Is that correct?

Heller: That's correct. They weren't--

Chall: Closed.

Heller: --secret. No, he was there, I'm sure. No, we didn't have closed meetings; the main part of the caucus was the vice-presidential thing, and I think that's been very well documented.

Chall: Probably so. I just would like to get some of your impressions of this.

The Democratic National Convention Nominates Harry Truman for Vice-President, 1944

Heller: Okay, I know. Well, this Wallace thing was a strange one. I didn't like Wallace particularly at all. I was terribly annoyed because Bob Hannegan, who was national chairman, and Ed Pauley, who was a power in the Democratic party--he had been treasurer of the national committee--were working over the delegates for the votes, one by one. I don't know if that's come out in any of your research. They had a room under the speaker's platform.

Chall: Yes. I've read about that.
Heller: And we'd be summoned there, one by one.

Chall: Oh, really?

Heller: Yes. Going in alone, and they worked over me. They weren't too clear about Truman or Douglas, but that it couldn't be Wallace. And I resented this working over. So I just kept saying, "I don't know how I'm going to vote."

Chall: Oh, is that right?

Heller: Well, it just annoyed me. They were, I mean Malone was just a local person compared to Hannegan and Pauley, who were the big, tough, national people. They really worked people over.

Chall: And how did they do it? What could they do or not do by, you say, "working people over?"

Heller: Well, you won't have any standing in the party if you don't do what the president wants, and this is what he wants. Of course, we'd had no word that this was what he wanted, up to that point.

Chall: I see.

Heller: He had indicated he didn't want Wallace again.

Chall: But hadn't he written a letter that Hannegan brought forth almost as soon as you all got to Chicago, which said that, if he were a delegate, he--this is Franklin Roosevelt--if he were a delegate, he would vote for Wallace, but he would allow the delegations at the convention to make their own choice.

Heller: It was very vague. The whole thing was very vague. And I really didn't particularly want Wallace, but I was just so annoyed at being pushed, that I remember calling Ed in Boston, Ed Heller, and saying, "I don't know what I'm going to do." He said, "When in doubt, stay with your friends; stay with Malone." I remember that. This was my first experience as a delegate.

Chall: Oh, that's right.

Heller: My common sense told me that I didn't like Wallace. In the meantime--this is my own personal account of this convention--

Chall: That's what I want.

Heller: California had the first few rows in the center section there, right in front of the platform. Maybe we had six rows; I've forgotten. And right behind us was the Missouri delegation. Harry Truman, the Senator, was chairman of the Missouri delegation. The chairman of the
Heller: delegation always takes the aisle seat of the first row, by the standard, you know. And so, that's where he sat.

Because I was national committeewoman, I was allowed to take any seat I wanted after the chairman of the delegation, Bob Kenny at that time. You see, we weren't assigned seats, the way they are now. Ed Pauley was always under that platform anyway.

Well, I didn't like those first rows looking up at the platform. Your neck was always up. So I chose the last row, the end seat, of the California delegation. As such, I was sitting in front of Senator Truman the whole time.

Well, I had met Senator Truman; he had been at the house for dinner once when he was head of that Senate investigating committee that he was doing. I didn't know him, well, but I knew him. You sit there endlessly at those conventions, and so I was talking to him all through the convention. He was strongly for James Byrnes, to whom he had been committed, for vice-president. So he kept talking about James Byrnes to me, you know, through most of the convention.

Chall: I see.

Heller: I've always believed that he was absolutely stunned when his name came in, and he felt he couldn't go back on his commitment to Byrnes. He didn't jump into this vice-presidential thing. So, a combination of things: not liking Wallace, and knowing Truman just barely, but having talked to him all the way through, made me very inclined to vote for Truman, though it had never been clear. In a second letter--

Chall: There was such a thing.

Heller: Wasn't it somebody in the CIO?

Chall: Well, [Sidney] Hillman--

Heller: Hillman.

Chall: Sidney Hillman and [William] Murray were very actively promoting Wallace--

Heller: Yes. Yes.

Chall: But when Truman's name came in, they apparently--

Heller: Yes. But I believe it was Franklin Roosevelt was supposed to have written a letter to Hillman, or a phone call saying that either--Either Truman or [William] Douglas were acceptable.
Chall: I think this was a second letter to Hannegan.

Heller: There was great argument whether it was Truman that came first, or Douglas who came first. Well, it happened that I had also met Douglas during the war. I thought he was very bright. But I couldn't quite picture him as vice-president; he drank a lot at that point, he was sort of--he was bright--but I just couldn't picture him; so that I landed on Truman, and that's how I eventually voted.

Chall: I see.

Heller: The labor people, I guess, were pushing very hard for Wallace.

Chall: They were. And they were strongly opposed to Byrnes. So that would have had some effect. Now that had some effect nationally.

Heller: Yes. But within our delegation, I do remember that Pat Brown, who had said he absolutely was going to go with whatever Franklin Roosevelt wanted, got tangled with the labor people, within our delegation, and got into a mess about whether he was supporting Wallace or not. He had it both ways. From one caucus after another.

Chall: Bob Kenny was in favor of Douglas. I don't know whether there were any others in the delegation who were.

Heller: I don't remember anyone; but Pat Brown got trapped. This is one of the cases where Pat Brown was being too nice to everybody, I guess. And I think he voted for Wallace but then switched his vote.

Chall: Yes, I think this is so.

Heller: Now, you know about the end of that convention, when the motion was made to make the vote for Truman unanimous? Have you got that information?

Chall: And some Californians wouldn't--

Heller: There were eight or ten--

Chall: Ten.

Heller: --Californians, and I remember Chet Holifield, and I remember Helen Douglas--

Chall: I have their names; let me see if I can find them.
Heller: They were all Southern Californians, as I remember. I particularly remember those two. I think Olson, though I'm not sure. They were standing on their chairs, in about the second row--

Chall: Oh, really?

Heller: They were shouting till the end, that they would not make it unanimous. It was that silly--it was the beginning of what I call emotionalism in politics.

Chall: Here they are. Helen Douglas.

Heller: Yes, I know it was Helen.

Chall: And Culbert Olson.

Heller: I've mentioned him.

Chall: Mr. Ed Izac.

Heller: I don't remember him.

Chall: Holifield.

Heller: Holifield I just mentioned.

Chall: [Thomas] Lopez.

Heller: I don't remember Lopez; he was a labor man, I think.

Chall: [J. Frank] Burke. I don't have their first names; I just didn't bother to jot them all down.

Heller: I don't remember Burke either.

Chall: Carrell, Tom Carrell.

Heller: Tom Carrell; well, I don't know why he was that way, but he was.

Chall: Somebody named [Vernelle] Long.

Heller: Doesn't mean anything to me.

Chall: [James] Ferrell.

Heller: Don't remember him.

Chall: [Fred] Crone.
Heller: That sounds like a labor man to me, but I'm not sure.

Chall: And a woman, Louise Darby.

Heller: I vaguely remember her name. Well, I can see why I only remember Holifield, Douglas, and Olson, out of that group. They never would give in. Just pure emotionalism.

Chall: Let's see. Did you vote first for Wallace, and then switch?

Heller: No.

Chall: You never voted for Wallace?

Heller: No, I never voted for Wallace; I voted for Truman.

Chall: I see. There was a statement in the newspaper which I couldn't understand that said, "Kenny had first voted for Wallace along with others in the delegation."

Heller: Yes.

Chall: "Elinor Heller, Pauley, Malone, Reilly, Smyth, Dockweiler, Sawallisch, and others from Northern California gave Truman votes on the second roll call before the final switch was made."


Chall: But the others all voted first for Truman, you think.

Heller: Well, I didn't listen to the list that carefully.

Chall: But you did, so that's probably good enough.

Heller: But I'm positive Malone voted for Truman on the first time. Who else have you got there?

Chall: Pauley; he would have.

Heller: Pauley would. Oh, I know he was working me over forever; of that I'm sure.

Chall: That's right. Reilly, Smyth.

Heller: I can't swear about Reilly. Smyth would certainly have gone for Truman.

Chall: And Dockweiler, because I think he opposed Wallace all the way.
Heller: I think so.

Chall: And somebody named Sawallisch from the south.

Heller: Oh, I would doubt--I vaguely remember. I won't say about that.

Chall: Well, I think then that it's just a difficulty in reading the news.

Heller: I think that that clipping is completely wrong.

Chall: It's my misreading it, I think, because it looks as if on the second roll call you had already voted for Truman, that's what I think it meant to say.

Heller: Was there a second roll call?

Chall: Yes, because--let's see. Truman on the first roll call [checking notes] I've got to find the right page. I've got it here. On the first roll call of the delegates of the whole convention--

Heller: Yes.

Chall: Henry Wallace had 429 1/2 votes, and Truman 319 1/2. And then there was a second roll call, and that's when the switches came.

Heller: Yes, well, there was no commitment for Wallace officially, on our delegation. I don't believe there was a roll call of the California delegation. There may have been. I think the roll call took place in the caucus.

Chall: I have two roll calls--

Heller: But you see, on roll calls at the convention, they don't call out the individual names unless the state asks for it. I do not believe that California went through that roll call thing. I think the chairman just announced what had taken place in the caucus. But I know I certainly voted for Truman, I know.

Chall: Right away. Okay.

Heller: Before that, as I said, I was so annoyed by being worked over so hard that I was inclined to go against, but, you know, logic took its form. By this time, I knew that Franklin Roosevelt did not want Wallace. That made sense to me. I just never had particularly liked him; it wasn't very hard for me to do this. Truman was a sort of unknown, but a very nice person. So--it's funny how you forget these details; one convention rolls into another. They're all almost the same, in a way.
Chall: In the caucuses, I understand that there was a tremendous amount of hostility between, well, I guess it all boils down to the Wallace versus the anti-Wallace people, but it took its form in many ways. Mainly, it was Olson versus Kenny and Helen Douglas sometimes. Do you remember any of those caucuses in which there was so much hostility?

Heller: Well, I just remember some very unpleasant caucuses.

Chall: Yes.

Heller: But wasn't Kenny for Wallace?

Chall: Yes, he was; but he was really for [William] Douglas--although it's hard to say. I'm not quite sure where he was.

Heller: Maybe he was for Douglas. He could have done that very easily.

Chall: He came to the convention in favor of Douglas, but he also had been a supporter of Wallace.

Heller: Well, Kenny could have done that very easily. But Olson was a very naive person politically. He really didn't understand California terribly well. He did not have a big impact, because by '44 he was no longer governor.

Chall: And he was going out as national committeeman, too.

Heller: And he was going out as national committeeman.

Chall: Olson presented--I think in one of your first caucuses, after you had elected the national committeeman and committeewoman--he presented a resolution in favor of Henry Wallace. It was supported by some of the CIO labor people.

Heller: I'm sure of that. I do remember that they did get the national committeeman and committeewoman out of the way before they got into the vice-presidential matter.

Chall: Kenny refused to allow a person-by-person roll call vote, so that the delegation would not go on record favoring any vice-presidential candidate, so it was done by a voice vote, which Behrens claims was a canny decision of Kenny's. Do you recall any of that?

Heller: Typical Kenny. I believe this absolutely. This is why I'm a little vague about who was for whom. This is the sort of thing that Kenny would do. This was his manipulating. This was the way Kenny always operated.
Heller: I'm really not trying to detract from him. He was a very difficult chairman; I can tell you that. We couldn't get him out of bed; he'd stay in bed all day. He was a heavy drinker. I don't mean that he was drunk; he was just a very heavy drinker. He didn't want to come to the meetings of the delegation; he didn't want to face all these arguments.

Chall: Oh, is that right?

Heller: Oh, he was an impossible chairman.

Chall: Well, could a vice-chairman take over, or did he always come to the meetings when they were called?

Heller: I think he eventually came. But he didn't want to. He really didn't like those things. Or he thought he could manipulate. It's very hard to read Bob Kenny very often. This led into what I told you before you had the tape on. Kenny always thought he could work minorities and control minorities, and by putting various minorities together, get what he wanted.

Chall: Yes, the coalitions.

Heller: In a coalition. But it didn't work on this occasion.

Chall: Oh, I see.

Heller: But I can remember being just disgusted at Kenny for not bothering about the delegation. But I think maybe the conclusion of Squire Behrens was probably correct. We must have had a roll call at some point, but not on the floor of the convention.

Chall: I see. The first one was a voice vote roll call, as soon as you got to Chicago and got settled.

Heller: Yes.

Chall: And then you chose the officers, and Olson was angry, apparently even angry with Kenny also, for having selected the various committee members without going through the delegation.

Heller: You have no idea of how unstructured all this was, and how little that I, as an individual, knew of what was going on.

Chall: Let's see, I wanted to ask you about two other things. On another day there, after the news had leaked out that Truman and Douglas were also acceptable to Roosevelt, and that seemed to be a way of doing away with Wallace, there was a lot of bitterness inside the delegation.
Heller: There sure was. But the bitterness— it was largely fermented by the labor people.

Chall: Those who had been the Wallace people?

Heller: The Wallace people, plus, I guess, Olson. It was bitter, though a lot of the delegation was not particularly involved in this, one way or the other. They were there, but didn't care particularly much.

Chall: There was a fight that day over the appointment of a steering committee to instruct the delegation on the vice-president, to keep the delegation informed, I think, is really what it was all about, on the possible vice-presidential choice. Well, now that's how the battle erupted. According to the plan—and maybe it was Kenny's plan; I don't know—there was supposed to be a five-person steering committee.

Heller: Yes.

Chall: One person was to be named by Kenny, Olson, Helen Douglas, Elinor Heller, and Pauley. You each, as I understand this, each would select one person. And these people would then be responsible for somehow finding out who was the real vice-presidential choice and reporting back to the caucus.

Heller: Well, it was very hard to find this out. That's true. But I don't remember the steering committee at all.

Chall: You don't remember too much about this whole hassle over the steering committee? Or it was just one more hassle?

Heller: I really and truly don't. It wakens vague memories in my mind. I have no idea whom I appointed; none, none. Well, what we were trying to do, I think was to ascertain—I can remember that, trying to find out. Because that was where I'd come down; I had to find out what Franklin Roosevelt really wanted.

Chall: According to Behrens, Malone pleaded for practical politics so that California would be with the winner.

Heller: That always happened. California has always messed up its delegations for years.

Chall: [laughs] But not this year.

Heller: For years. It always comes in late. It's early in the roll call, and it's a big state. But to the best of my knowledge, we never had roll call on the floor, which was something. You know, Massachusetts always used to have every half-delegate's name called out, and we never did go through that miserable process. But we were always too late to be the state that affected the outcome.
Chall: Now, I've read that before the first roll call, on the vice-president, that there was a secret California ballot on the vice-president, under the speaker's platform in Pauley's little office. It seems that there was such mistrust of the way the vote would be tallied, that each side had several checkers. It was preceded by a wordy row between Kenny and Files. Wallace got thirty votes, and Truman twenty-two. Now that, as I understand it, was the only time that California--the delegation--actually took a count. Do you remember this?

Heller: That may be true. It's funny how it all eludes you. Out of all that you just said, it is the mistrust that I remember. And I've already mentioned my own mistrust.

Chall: Yes.

Heller: I don't doubt that for a minute. You know, I've seen California delegations, not necessarily then, just give a guess at the number to the chairman. And you know, it isn't too far off, usually, but it's a lot of people to count. In recent years, that's been a little easier, because they seat the delegates. And they know when you're there, and only your alternate can sit in your space. But it wasn't that way; you were all over the place. Very hard to run people down.

Chall: At least you had a small group in those days; now there are a hundred some.

Heller: Comparatively speaking. But it was still fairly big. Everything's comparative. I'm sure that this is all true.

Chall: Susie [Florence] Clifton whom you probably remember--

Heller: Yes. I do know Susie.

Chall: She has said that after that vote on the vice-president, that Helen Gahagan Douglas was in tears; she felt that Pauley had rammed Truman down their throats, and they didn't like Pauley.

Heller: Helen Douglas hated Ed Pauley, and I think vice versa. Helen was in tears, and so was Holifield. They were really in tears. I'm not sure that Helen was right on that, though Ed Pauley was surely trying to ram Truman down. But I think it was an honest vote. There began to be a clarification that Franklin Roosevelt did not want Wallace. But he was being so indirect in the thing. And I think as that cleared up people made up their minds.

Chall: Do you remember some of the activity on the floor, after [Robert] Kerr had given his keynote speech, and after Roosevelt was nominated, all the stampeding and the parading in the aisles, do you recall any of that?
Heller: Oh, yes.

Chall: Did the California delegation go up and down the aisles, too? Did you?

Heller: I did at one convention. Only once did I do it. Because the heat and the mess is just simply terrible, the crush. And I think it was at that one that I did it. Never again. Always after that, I just stayed in my seat. You could hardly breathe in those crushes. You know, now, as I see them on TV, it's all planned, and there are outsiders brought in and all that, but it wasn't that way then.

Chall: How spontaneous were these demonstrations, or how ordered were they?

Heller: Oh, fairly spontaneous. And certain state standards wouldn't get into them, at first. And then others would grab the standard and it was just a horrible crush, horrible heat. I keep reminding you: no air conditioning in the halls. You just can't conceive of the basic misery of these conventions.

Chall: It took all the fun away.

Heller: Though I don't think that the '44 convention was the one where we had the worst heat.

Chall: No, you did mention an earlier one, '40.

Heller: Well, '40 was terrible, I remember. And '28 was terrible. If it's always hot in the convention hall, it's horrible.

Chall: Well, I think we've pretty well taken care of that nomination. How concerned were any of you about the issues—the fact that the South, for example, was threatening to bolt. I mean, there were other issues that were of concern to people as well as who was going to be vice-president.

Heller: Well, it's very interesting. When you get to a convention, in my experience, you're so concerned with your own delegation, that you hardly know what is going on in other states.

Heller: Your mentioning the southern delegations reminded me that Clary Heller, my son, who was just short of eighteen, came to Chicago for that convention. He was in army training at the University of Iowa. Also Harold Berliner, Junior, who was 4-F. He had asthma, and he was at Notre Dame. And he came in. The two of them used to wander around from one delegation to another. I remembered their saying that some of these southern caucuses were much more interesting than the Southern California fight that was going on. Clary could tell you a great deal more about the southern secession.
Heller: We were unaware of all this. Oh, I don't want to say unaware, but unperturbed by it.

Chall: It wasn't the problem that it became in '48, when they literally left the hall.

Heller: Yes, well that had some drama to it, but when you're in these big halls, you don't have TV; you don't know what's going on half the time.

Chall: I see.

Heller: You know, with the marching out—you'll hear it sort of second hand. It's surprising that you really hardly know what's going on. But I do remember their telling me that.

I want to make one thing clear. I'd mentioned earlier, not today, that Bill Malone was a great one for loyalty. Once you gave your word you kept it. However, Bill was not one to force you to do anything. He had never extracted a promise from me on this vice-presidential issue and he never pushed me to support Truman. He let me make up my own mind. He was very good about that. Now had I given my word to him one way or another, he would have held me to strict account. This is the thing that a lot of people never understood about him. He did not force anybody to do anything. But if you'd given your word, then he expected you to keep it. And therefore, I was left on my own to decide who I was going to vote for for vice-president. Well, I think it's important to explain the difference in him. I always thought that Bill Malone was a much greater power for good among Northern California Democrats than a lot of people recognized.

Chall: It's good to put that on the record.

Heller: Well, I think it should be.

Chall: I'm going to ask you a question and I think I already know the answer, but--

Heller: Okay.

Chall: Now, looking back to that convention, there are people who feel that this was a sort of watershed in a way for women, because two women were main speakers in the evenings—Helen Gahagan Douglas and Gladys Tillett—which had not happened before.

Heller: Yes.
Chall: Thenceforth, women were allowed fifty percent membership on both the Platform and Resolutions committees, which had not occurred before.

Heller: Hadn't that started already?

Chall: Not apparently.

Heller: Well, I remember Julia Porter was on the Platform Committee that year.

Chall: Yes, but that might have been just by reason of somebody's choice.

Heller: It's something I don't remember. Well, I don't know what your question is, but I'll make a comment.

Chall: Then, women were also given the opportunity to be a permanent secretary and a permanent assistant chairman, and that's when Dorothy Vredenburgh became permanent secretary. So the question is—were you aware of these activities going on on behalf of women, at that time?

Heller: Not per se. I do remember that nobody paid any attention to either Gladys Tillett or Helen Douglas.

Chall: I see. Well, they don't pay much attention to anybody!

Heller: When they made speeches. I remember Helen Douglas—whether she was late in the afternoon, or late in the evening—I remember the Californians staying so that there'd be some audience left to cheer her. I remember that. I don't even remember about Gladys Tillett's thing. The role of women—it was very minor. I guess—you see, I had never really paid much attention to the functioning of the national committee.

Chall: Well, you probably paid more attention for the next eight years than you ever had before.

Heller: Well, I did because I was on the national committee.

Chall: [laughs] You had to.

Heller: I guess it was a turning point to a degree. I don't even know how it came about. I guess more women were active.

Chall: I think they began to push it, groups behind the scenes.

Heller: And Helen Douglas was quite a glamorous figure at that point.
Chall: Do you think that people were surprised by the fact that she was really concerned about issues, and quite intelligent, as well as being quite beautiful? Was it considered, do you think, that she would simply be a glamor person, but nobody who cared much about issues?

Heller: I think people were a little surprised. But she made it very clear quite early that she was concerned with issues. I think this Wallace fight had something to do with that. Helen was not exactly a compromiser, as I saw her later on. And she did try to look at issues. I didn't think she always came up with the right conclusion, but later, we'll discuss it.

Chall: But she was concerned. This year, 1944, is the year that she ran for, and won a seat in Congress.

Heller: That's right.

Chall: Did you give her any support in this?

Heller: I don't really remember; I may have. It was Southern California—

Chall: Yes.

Heller: And there was so little money spent in all those races, that I just don't remember. I might have, if I had been asked; I just don't remember. I'm sure I was for her; I don't even remember against whom she ran.

Chall: I have the name at the tip of my tongue, and I can't remember. I'll check it out. [Philip Connelly]

Heller: I have no notion. I don't remember at all. But she was very attractive, very glamorous. She really was.

Wasn't Lucretia Grady at the '44 convention?

Chall: I don't know that she was a delegate.

Heller: I can't believe she wasn't, but I don't see her listed. No, I don't see her listed.

Chall: Of course, she might have been there.

Heller: I think she would have been if she wanted to. She was a great follower of Franklin Roosevelt. She and her husband were really comparatively close to FDR. But, maybe they were off doing something else—
Chall: That's right.
Heller: I just don't remember.
Chall: That was during the war, too; they might have been away.
Heller: Yes, they could have been. I just don't know.
Chall: What did you do when you came back from the convention?
Heller: I slept.
Chall: Did you come back to California or go to Boston?
Heller: No, I came back to California. Ed and I had agreed that if I was named national committeewoman, I would have to stay out here through the campaign. So I stayed out here until election day, I guess.
Chall: What did you do? After you slept?
Heller: I was working in Democratic headquarters in San Francisco for Franklin Roosevelt. There was an interesting little—oh, I don't know what it would be called—an episode, an anecdote, or something like that. I was persuaded by various people, like Julia Porter and others, that I simply had to go to Southern California and have a lunch meeting, a big lunch meeting, where people could meet me, because I was the new national committeewoman. And these are things I hate doing. I don't mean that I'm bashful; I just don't like those things. But they talked me into it, and so I finally said okay, I'd go. Then down to Los Angeles, and there was a big lunch meeting at the Biltmore.

There are two things about it I wanted to tell you: first of all, I had said, well I would go, but that I was not really a speechmaker. And though I would say a few words, they'd have to get another speaker to carry the speeches. And so, whoever arranged it, got Sheridan Downey, the Senator, to speak. Now, this is one part of the episode that always just embarrassed me beyond words. Here was Ed Heller in the army, in Boston. It was, I guess, September of 1944. And Sheridan Downey, who was a strange person, announced at that meeting where he was sort of introducing me, you know, that he had just suggested to Franklin Roosevelt that Ed Heller be made a member of the new Surplus Property Board.

Chall: Oh, really?
Heller: Well, I almost dropped dead of embarrassment. Ed knew nothing about it; I knew nothing about it; and it sounded as if a deal had been made. Typical Sheridan, to do something completely awkward like that,
Heller: without ever asking Ed if he wanted to be a member or not. Now I don't know if I should follow up the Surplus Property Board or tell you one other episode about the lunch.

Chall: Tell me about the lunch, and we'll go back to the property board. That's an interesting story.

Heller: Well, the other thing about it was that Helen Douglas was there, and introduced me as her successor. She was most graceful, and perfectly lovely. As you probably gathered, she had supported me, and we were friends. I've always remembered what she said to this group of people who were very dubious about this unknown Northern California woman, who hadn't done much in politics. Helen was very popular at that point; I always remember she said to that group, "Now, I ask you to remember one thing: Ellie Heller is not Helen Douglas, and Helen Douglas is not Ellie Heller. Don't confuse us, and don't expect Ellie Heller to do everything the way I did it. I don't expect her to do things the way I did it." I thought that was a very graceful thing that she said, considering her personality and her popularity.

Chall: Yes.

Heller: I always appreciated that statement on her part.

Chall: That was very nice.

Heller: I think it was quite perceptive.

Chall: Yes.

Edward Heller is Appointed to the Surplus Property Board, 1945

Heller: I couldn't wait to get to a phone after lunch, to phone Ed Heller in Boston and tell him what had happened. Oh, I just absolutely had a fit. And Ed, when he heard it, couldn't believe it. He said, "I've never heard of such a thing. I have no interest whatsoever in anything like this." Well, Ed knew he wasn't made for Washington. Here he was in the army, though admittedly getting a little bored with his army job, because it was phasing out. And I think Ed Heller had no thought of pursuing this thing. I was back in Boston, I think, in November. This surplus property thing just sort of hung around; then we suddenly got word that Ed Pauley, who professed to be a great friend of Ed Heller's, was pushing somebody else for that position.

Chall: Really?
Heller: His name was Jim Shepherd from Los Angeles. And that he was using all his pull to get Jim Shepherd appointed, while telling Ed Heller that he wanted him to get the job. And this is what really made Ed decide to go after that position. And so, Ed having thus far been very indifferent about it, suddenly wanted this job. He wanted to prove to himself that he would be more effective, I guess, than Jim Shepherd, in the job. It's probably one of the worst things that ever happened to him, because he hated Washington so.

Chall: He had to live in Washington during this period?

Heller: Yes. The hearings were perfectly horrible; we had to go down from Boston to Washington for them. That Surplus Property Board—it was a three-man board, and it was a brand new Washington agency, of course. Guy Gillette, the ex-Senator from Iowa, was named by FDR to be chairman of it, and the two other members were Bob Hurley, the former governor of Connecticut, and Edward Heller. The Senate was not concerned with Guy Gillette, who was really a very ineffective man—he had been defeated in Iowa—because he was one of theirs. But they didn't want Bob Hurley. Bob Hurley had rather a bad reputation around Washington for—oh, I don't want to say crooked, but he did drink an awful lot; he was a very heavy drinker, and he had not been a good governor. He had a bad reputation.

For reasons that only if you're in Washington can be explained, this was one of those fights that the Republicans decided to make a partisan fight out of. And so, though it was very clear that they were trying to get Bob Hurley out, the attack also went on Ed Heller. They almost killed Ed, the attacks that were made on him, that he just couldn't believe.

Chall: What did they say?

Heller: Oh, I've got a whole book of clippings I can give you. A few newspapers were okay about it, but for reasons that, once again, only the newspaper world would know, there was a reporter on the Washington Post named, if I remember correctly, Mary Spargo. I see her name mentioned in Washington Post history. She took out after Ed Heller day after day after day. They tried to get Ed connected with Bob Hurley.

Chall: I see.

Heller: The connection, which was really non-existent, was that Ed Heller, who was in the army in the first Federal Reserve District, which included most of Connecticut, had gone with the proper officer from the First Federal Reserve Bank, to some meeting in Connecticut of some manufacturing firm that they wanted to give a V-Loan to—if it would do the proper war work. Bob Hurley was an officer of that particular
Heller: Ed and this federal reserve officer had gone down and the
officers of that company had had them for lunch, which was normal,
in all these transactions. And of course, Ed had, in passing, met
Bob Hurley. Didn't know him at all except for that. And they tried
to build a whole collusion out of this. Oh, it was horrible. Oh,
how Ed hated this whole sort of thing.

But, in the end, people from California were marvelous, coming
to testify for Ed, for his character and ability, which was all that
was necessary. As to his character, they claimed he was the most
honest person you could ever find, and so on. Both Democrats and
Republicans came across the continent to testify, willingly. They
volunteered to come, as character witnesses for Ed. And of course,
he was confirmed in the end.

There were three or four Republicans who voted for him. Things
are done strangely in this world. His chief aide at the Federal
Reserve Bank, who came down to Surplus Property Board, eventually,
with Ed was Neil Tolman. He was from New Hampshire, from Keene,
New Hampshire. His best friend was Senator Bridges. And so, Neil
Tolman persuaded Senator Bridges that here was a very fine man.
Senator Bridges was not the person that Ed would have gotten on with
normally at all! He was very right wing, you know. But he voted
for him.

And then there was a Senator named [H. Alexander] Smith from
New Jersey, who was a personal friend of Herbert Fleishacker out
here. Mr. Fleishacker communicated with Mr. Smith, Senator Smith,
and he voted for Ed. But the interesting vote was Hiram Johnson.
He was an old, old man by now, very sick. He had known Ed's father,
he had known the reputation of the Heller family, you know, out
here. And Hiram Johnson, the day of the vote, came to the Senate,
to cast a vote for Edward Heller; it was the last vote he ever cast.

Chall: Oh, really?

Heller: Which I think is sort of an interesting story in itself. He knew of
course, the reputation of Ed Heller and the Heller family. Oh, it
was a horrible time.

Chall: I understand that Californians, regardless of party, were quite
concerned that Ed Heller be nominated because they felt that this
would give California an opportunity to build up some of its post-
war industries.

Heller: Well, nobody was very clear what the Surplus Property Act was about;
it was a very confused act. But Californians were, they were very
supportive; the congressional delegation. Ed was sworn in on New
Year's Day of 1945, into that job.
The surprise of their lives is exactly what Northern California Democrats—especially the big shots—are getting out of the fight against Senate confirmation of San Francisco's Ed Heller as a member of the Surplus Property Board. (Note: This battle—national in scope—is big—big political medicine. Very likely, its outcome will affect your future and your job.)

The local lads are amazed that anybody should attack Heller, a fellow of fine reputation in home pastures. But they're completely flabbergasted to learn that the shooting really is at Ed Pauley, rich and enterprising Southern California oil man, who is now treasurer of the Democratic national commit-tee. Until just a few minutes ago they were sitting on their hands, figuring confirmation a cinch—because Pauley was taking care of things.

For the boys have long held Pauley in awe—particularly since he became a Washington figure. They also hold Washington in awe as something like Heaven—a place where they have a fish-fry every day, and such a man as the democratic treasurer may see "de Lawd" almost as frequently as he sees his dentist. Isn't Pauley first assistant bullgoose—coming right after Chairman Bob Han-kenann in the national party or- ganization? Isn't he close in with remote Harry Hopkins, the assistant president?

Now those notions are suddenly out the window. The locals stand disillusioned about both Pauley and Washington. Such leaders as Atty. Gen. Bob Kenny and State Chairman Bill Malone have sounded boots-and-saddles. The faithful are riding to the rescue in all directions. (Note: In some Warhing-ton offices, as Republican big-shots, who want to see Heller in there for the good he can do California and the country in the already-beginning post-war period.)

Might Control Policy

What the local Democrats have learned is that certain high rankers in Washington are ready to cut down Heller—to get at Pauley. They're not concerned whether the Heller appointment is good or bad. Their theory is that Pauley is trying to put in both Heller and former Gov-ernor Robert A. Hurley of Con-necticut—two members of a three-man board.

Thus high rankers argue, pri-vately, that Pauley then might have something to say about the policy of the board—politics being politics. This idea is not be-littled in their minds, my agents learn, by the fact that Heller is directly the nominee of Senator Sheridan Downey, who comes right straight from Pauley's Southern California stamping ground. (Note: In some Washing-ton circles, Downey and Tarry Hopkins aren't too popular, either.)

Hence, when Tom Stokes said the other day that Pauley is "trying to worm his way into high political councils" he could have added that some very influential Washington figures are trying equally hard to worm him out. He has had a run-in or two, my men report, with Jesse Jones and other stalwarts. And it's only natural the secretary of com-merce should be concerned about the prospective operations of the Surplus Property Board. The mad-der in which the board disposes of Uncle Sam's surplus lands, fac-tories and goods may decide whether the country flourishes after the war—or does a nose-dive. (Note: Don't think that Big Business, Little Business, and Business aren't imp-ortantly interested, too.)

* * *

Statesmen a Surprise

So, you see, the idea that Pauley doesn't stand right next to the throne comes as a shock. But it is perhaps even more of a shock to local Democrats that great statesmen should be plunging into politics affair with all the vigor of alley cats. They're amazed that such upper-bracket figures should seem willing to skin Heller, a man they admire to get at Pauley.

But it finally becomes clear, even at this great distance, that these Washington old-timers—on Capital Hill and off—are gruesome fighters. The difference between the statesmen and California politicos, for instance, seems to be that the dignified Washington crowd uses longer knives. This may be because anybody who sticks around the White House long enough to become an old-timer in "high political circles" has to use self-defense like an eagle commando.

So they're shocked to think that anybody would fail to appreciate a man like Heller. And they're sur-prised to hear that Pauley isn't the big-shot they supposed. For they've always looked upon Pauley as Mr. Somebody—a man whose past is a secret element is that high stratum where the statesmen and the big campaign donors are, the kind of politico who can leave the speech-making and office-holding to the smaller-fry.

But the word has been brought them, direct from Washington, my operatives report, that they'd better get busy and save Heller from his friends—Pauley, Downey, Hopkins, and, particularly, Pauley. That's why they have begun to rally—why Kenny and others are heading for Washington. (Note: If Heller is kept off that board, California can't hope for another shot at it. And a person on that board who understands California's problem as a combined industrial and military frontier can mean plenty.)

ARTHUR CAYLOR

* * *

Fight on Heller Puts
Pauley in New Light

S. F. Chronicle Dec. 9, 1944
Navy Report
On Plant Used Against Hurley

By Mary Sparge

While former Governor Robert A. Hurley of Connecticut, now a nominee for the Surplus Property Board, was in charge of production for the Narragansett Machine Company of Pawtucket, R. I., the company delivered landing craft equipment which Naval inspectors termed "junk," according to an official Naval report introduced yesterday in hearings before the Senate Military Affairs Committee.

Hearings on the nominations of Hurley and Lieut. Col. Edward H. Keller of California, to handle the disposal of 100 billion dollars worth of surplus property are being held by the Senate committee.

Keller named by President Roosevelt to the Surplus Property Board, was vice president of Narragansett at a salary of $12,000 a year, specifically in charge of promotion. Keller is the War Department fiscal officer who passed on War Department guarantees for Narragansett.

The official Navy inspector's report scored Narragansett performance in connection with four different contracts and carried this general comment:

"Subject company has had an unusually high turnover of personnel in key positions, and they have been notably weak in the past in engineering and estimating. There has also been a tendency to solicit contracts for which their shop and personnel were unadapted."

"Narragansett Machine Co. has a well-equipped shop and their facilities could be very valuable to the Navy, but, as the record shows, this has not always been the case."

On two contracts for bomb racks for the Navy, the report declared, "these contracts have had a long disastrous history, the latest of which is a rejection of 2,645 racks."

A contract for confidential safe lockers had to be canceled, the Naval report said for failure to make deliveries.

A contract for aluminum lockers, amounting to $414,170 was canceled, the report detailed, because "no effort was made by the company to get into production."

The fourth contract, which resulted in what the report termed "junk," involved confidential safe lockers for LCI vessels, a part of the landing craft program.

The report reads:

"The company repeatedly broke delivery promises and when they finally did start shipping the quality was so poor that the assistant superintendent of ships at Lawley was forced to waive inspection and accept lockers which this office termed junk. After considerable inconvenience, an alternate source was located and the balance of Narragansett's order was canceled."

Hearings today will start with Navy witnesses, The Washington Post learned last night. First witness will be Lieut. J. M. Orr of the Bureau of Supplies and Accounts, Navy Department, here.

Banker Reads Report

The Navy report on Narragansett was signed by Lieut. Stanley C. Uter, resident inspector of naval material, stationed at Pawtucket, R. I., and was made to his immediate superior, Capt. John F. Hyland, inspector of naval material at Boston.

It was introduced yesterday during the testimony of Carl E. Pittman, vice president of the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, who was present to testify in support of Heller's nomination.

Pittman read the report at the insistence of Senator Warren R. Austin (R., Vt.), ranking minority member of the committee, who was bearing the brunt of cross-examination.

The bank vice president, with whom Heller has been associated in his official capacity as War Department liaison man for the last two years, protested that "this may be the final straw that breaks the camel's back."

Pittman was one of a list of witnesses summoned here either by Heller or Senator Sheridan Downey (D., Calif.), his choice for the surplus board post, to testify in Heller's behalf.

Pittman called the California banker a man of "a logical analytical mind, backed up by years of business experience."

Pittman said that the company had performed satisfactorily, for the Navy on other contracts, and he read numerous letters from prime contractors praising the Narragansett achievements.

The War Department, a week ago, stoutly defended its guarantee of loans to Narragansett and declared the company performed satisfactorily. The testimony was made despite a House Military Affairs Committee report which severely criticized the War Department for its dealing with Narragansett.

Pittmen disclosed that negotiations were now in progress to renew the Narragansett contract if the company gets more contracts, and said he would favor such renewal.

A long list of witnesses appeared yesterday to indorse Heller. They included Victor H. Bossetti, president of the Farmers and Merchants National Bank of Los Angeles; Randolph C. Walker, president of Aircraft Accessories Corp.; Fred A. Wickett, formerly vice president of the New York Life Insurance Co.; Ralph K. Davies, vice president of the Standard Oil Co. of California; A. K. Humphries, president of the Pacific Coast Aggregates and Pacific Intermountain Express, and William Wurtzer, San Francisco architect and dean of the School of Architectural Planning, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

All spoke of Heller as a man of the highest integrity, character and ability. Wurtzer added that he is "the millionaire banker's social consciousness."

State Senator John F. Shelley of San Francisco, president of the San Francisco Labor Council (AFL), added his voice to those of Heller's business associates.

Chauncey Tranutolo, San Francisco attorney, who recently resigned two unpaid Government jobs—those of special assistant to the Postmaster General and special assistant to the Attorney General—also backed Heller.

December 11, 1944
Washington Post
People of the Week

A predominantly conservative board has been chosen to manage the sale of war surpluses. From this fact, businessmen now are drawing reassurances that the vast store of surplus supplies—articles, plants and real estate—will not be used to promote the political or material fortunes of any special group. The three men who will make up the board are:

Senator Guy M. Gillette, of Iowa, is to join the board when his present term expires in January. Throughout his Senate career, he has been constantly at odds with the New Deal group and has opposed much Roosevelt legislation. Senator Gillette's conservatism led the New Dealers in 1938 to attempt to purge him in the Democratic primary elections, but he was re-elected. He was defeated, however, in the election of last month. President Roosevelt chose the Senator for the board at the urging of Harry Hopkins. Mr. Hopkins and Senator Gillette are old friends, who long ago repaired the breach that came in 1938. The Senator, however, has no previous business experience. His career has been devoted to politics, the law and farming.

Lieut. Col. Edward H. Heller of California, is the board's businessman member. He is a man of wealth and extensive business connections. When he entered the Army, he resigned from seven corporate directorships. He has been active politically in California. In 1940, he was the chief Democratic money raiser there. His wife is the present Democratic National Committee woman for that State. Colonel Heller's appointment is understood to have been urged upon the President by Edwin W. Pauley, another wealthy Californian, who holds the post of treasurer of the Democratic National Committee.

Robert A. Hurley, former Governor of Connecticut, is the board's liberal member, an old WPA associate of Mr. Hopkins. Mr. Hurley, an engineer by training and profession, was the Connecticut State Administrator for WPA. Later, he supervised a $21,000,000 State public construction program. He served as Governor of Connecticut in 1941 and 1942. This year, he attempted a political comeback, ran again for Governor, but was defeated in the election. Throughout, he has maintained a close contact with Mr. Hopkins, and the latter was influential in obtaining his appointment to the board.

Appointment row. These three men come to the board after a confused Washington row as to who should be appointed. Conservative advisers of the President suggested a group of businessmen. Mr. Roosevelt was impressed with the idea. The New Dealers, thinking of the war plants, machinery and many other items and the uses to which they might be put, objected. They aggressively opposed the businessmen board, and they won. The idea was dropped. But in the end they did not get the sort of board they wanted, despite the fact that two of the three are Mr. Hopkins' choices. The explanation is that, for the war period, Mr. Hopkins has dropped his extreme liberalism and, although the fact has not been stressed, he now is rated almost a conservative.

In any event, there has been much criticism of the appointments, assertions that politics and Mr. Hopkins were too deeply involved. And a Senate committee is investigating before acting on the Heller and Hurley nominations. Formal nomination of Mr. Gillette has not gone to the Senate.

Big job ahead. The three appointment have a tremendous job ahead. They must make policy covering the disposition of surpluses, and much of the machinery through which these surpluses will be sold. In carrying out this task, they are hemmed in by a series of restrictions imposed by Congress. They must formulate policy in a way that will help national defense, facilitate reconversion, stimulate small business, assist veterans, make speculation impossible, encourage foreign and domestic trade and get prices that are fair to the Government.

Several officials familiar with the surplus problem have asserted that these restrictions make it impossible for the board to function effectively. One of these was William L. Clayton, who has been in charge of disposal of surplus war property. The new appointees apparently think otherwise. Mr. Hurley, for one, says he intends to heed the congressional restrictions scrupulously, and, if he finds them an impediment, he will ask Congress for revisions. Senator Gillette, as a member of the Senate, had a part in formulating the law under which the board will operate.

Slow sales. The first task of the new board is to find out exactly what it has to sell. This may take some time. Combined with the restrictions that Congress has imposed, it obviously means that sales will be slow, that little of the Army-Navy surpluses can be used to fill the accumulated demands for civilian goods. That demand apparently will scarcely be diminished when industry turns to production for civilians.
Chall: What did that entail as far as where he lived was concerned?

Heller: We moved to Washington.

Chall: Oh, did you?

Heller: Yes. You see, we were in Boston, and once Ed was appointed to the Surplus Property Board there was no problem about his getting out of the army.

Chall: The war hadn't ended yet.

Heller: No, it hadn't ended, but because he was the head of a government agency there was no problem. His job was grinding down, there. And I can't say that Ed wasn't glad to get out of uniform, because he was. But he hated every minute of Washington, because he didn't understand Washington. He was used to the business world, and Washington is not the business world. Guy Gillette was a very difficult chairman in that he wanted all the prerogatives. And never came to the office. And nobody could open the mail, except him. And Bob Hurley didn't care. He was just--drinking away. And so everything fell on Ed; he would be the person who would be there all the time.

The mission of the Surplus Property Board was very, very difficult. It really ordained contradictory moves, and they just had to feel their way. They hardly knew what they were doing. Ed always said, and I think this is true, he felt the only thing he really did, in the eight, nine months on the Surplus Property Board was related to public agencies. He had suggested, and it was followed, that when surplus property was declared, that schools and cities, you know, could have the first bids on those. And that, I think to this day, holds true. You know, how school districts can get hold of surplus property for no cost. And that's the one thing he felt he ever accomplished.

It just didn't work well; the three-headed government agency was very, very difficult. As I say, Guy Gillette was never there. Let's see, Ed went in the first of January, and Franklin Roosevelt died in April. Harry Truman became president, and I can't remember if it was Gillette or Hurley that resigned from that board. Truman appointed Stuart Symington, who was from his own home state of Missouri, in his place. Ed liked Stuart Symington very much; he was a little suspicious at first, you know, when he came in but he got to like him. And then it became quite apparent that Truman's advisors, and Stuart Symington, thought there should be a single chairman of the surplus property. So, the word finally came that Truman was going to appoint Symington as the head. That just occurred right at the end of--less than a month after World War II was over.
Chall: I see.

Heller: So Ed, happily, and I, happily, left Washington and came home.

Life in Washington, D.C.

Chall: Where did you live when you were in Washington? Did you have a house or an apartment?

Heller: Living in Washington those last nine months of the war was a horror. We had no connections. When I say connections—you couldn't buy a piece of meat. You couldn't buy a cigarette. You couldn't buy anything unless you had "connections," in markets. It was almost impossible to get food in the house. And we had none. After all, it's a very transient city, and it was like a nightmare, there, the whole time.

We went to Washington and started looking for an apartment or a house, and before we could find one, we would have to switch hotels. We had to move every week; they wouldn't let you stay more than six or seven days. We'd move from the Mayflower to—I've forgotten the other hotel. It wasn't as good as the Mayflower. And then back again. You had to move every seven days; it was just terrible.

Well, I remember, it was one of the periods we were at the Mayflower, and—this is one of these light stories that always amuses me—anybody we met, we'd say we were looking for a house. We did see some huge monstrosities that you couldn't have lived in, they were so enormous. They were the only things available; the housing situation was really bad. One day, George Killion, who was then working for the national committee as—what was he, treasurer, or assistant?

Chall: He was treasurer for a while; I don't know in what year.

Heller: Well, I guess he was treasurer, or about to be treasurer. The Democratic National Committee had headquarters at the Mayflower. George Killion was friendly with Ed. He phoned up and he said, "Don't say where you heard this, but there's such-and-such a house on Woodland Drive; I'll give you the phone number. It's coming on the market today. Somebody's going overseas." And he said, "Don't say where you heard it; just get out there quickly." It was a Sunday. I remember Senator Downey was going to have lunch with Ed and me that day, and I had to just forget about Senator Downey. I dashed out. The second I walked in that house, I knew I was going to take it. if I could get it. The owner was a very nice man who had just been
Heller: widowed, whose name long since escapes me, who had just signed up the day before to go overseas with the Red Cross. So he wanted to rent his house. I guess by Washington standards, by today's standards, it was nothing. I remember, it was $600 a month. He had his real estate man there; I didn't have anybody. I just said, "I'll take it. I'll sign the papers." You know, I could just see I could do it, and so I signed the papers, and made out the first check. The owner shook hands with me. He said, "You don't know how relieved I am to know who's going to occupy this house, because I go overseas tomorrow. Because," he said, "I heard that one of those terrible friends of Bob Hannegan's was after it." And of course, Bob Hannegan was chairman of the Democratic National Committee! [laughter] I never batted an eye; never told him a thing about our connections.

Those days are a long time ago now, but you really forget the rationing, the heat—oh, Washington by February was getting hot that year. The discomfort.

Continuing Work in the War Savings Office

Heller: And then I transferred from the War Savings Office in Massachusetts to the War Savings in Washington, which was the national headquarters. And then, once again, I was a dollar-a-year woman down there, though it was a very different kind of job. But, I was the only one in there who had been in the field and knew what was possible. And so I think I made some small contribution. I was going to work every day there in just terrible heat, again. That's all I can think of, is the heat. We weren't very high in the hierarchy in war finance—it was part of the Treasury Department; it was across the street from the Treasury. We had a room that backed onto a ventilation court. The smell from the restaurant on the first floor kept coming up, and there was no air conditioning. There was nothing.

There I learned the facts of who gets water carafes, and who gets carpets, and all that, none of which I was eligible for. [laughter] Ed Heller over at surplus property got very good accommodations. That was one of the things Ed had to arrange, was headquarters, for surplus property. He had a terrible fight with Henry Wallace there, because there was space that Wallace wasn't using. He was secretary of agriculture, by that time. Ed wanted that space that wasn't in use, and Wallace wouldn't give it up; they had a terrible fight. I do remember that. But he (Ed) finally turned up very good accommodations; he had air conditioning. He was very well off. He didn't care about the heat as much as I did.
Chall: How did you get there from your house? Could you drive?

Heller: Well, you had your choice. Transportation wasn't very good; it was terribly crowded and very hot—you know, the streetcars. We had a car, and Ed made an arrangement with a cab driver—to get back and forth from the office—who picked up three or four people and went that way. And then, he'd pick Ed up in the afternoon. Ed had this very nice arrangement. So I could have the car. If I would have a carpool, I could get gasoline. It was really a mistake. Some days I thought I could never get home, driving that car. Also, remember, it was non air-conditioned, in that heat. I'd have to wait in the parking lot till everybody in my carpool showed up. And though they lived in my general direction, I had to go from one location to another, taking them home. Oh, it was terrible. And I had to pick them up in the morning. I think it was not one of my smarter moves.

Chall: And you actually then worked from nine to five? You had a whole shift, the whole day.

Heller: Yes. I worked from nine to five, and usually would go over to the treasury cafeteria, across the street, to have lunch. It had some air conditioning in it. And then if I was meeting any friend for lunch, which I often did—people would be in and out of Washington—I'd always go over to the Shoreham. Is that the name of the hotel? Yes. The Shoreham had a well air-conditioned dining room. Of course, it was expensive, and none of the people I worked with could afford to go over there. Oh, you'd do anything to get relief from that heat, most of the time. But when you work in a Washington agency, if you're not the head of it, you're a zero.

I had a little advantage, not much, in that because Ed had been Northern California chairman of this war finance, before he went in the army, he knew the people who were the head of it, in Washington. So they knew who I was. Peter Odegard, who was one of the heads whom I mentioned before, was not a government type at all, but he was down there running his whole E-Bond program. He was particularly nice to me. He had the air-conditioned office and the proper carafe, and the rug, and whenever he wasn't in town, he left word that I could use his office.

Chall: Oh, how nice. Did that create jealousies up and down the ranks?

Heller: I didn't tell anybody.

Chall: I see.

Heller: Well, I guess I told my boss, but I didn't tell anybody else. I would just go up there. Well, yes, you had to leave word where you were, though you weren't checked that carefully. You know, you forget that
Heller: period of time, and there was so much patriotism; nobody was trying to get off of work at all. And, as I say, you worked just as hard at a dollar as you did for the salary.

I learned about classifications in government then, and the petty jealousies that go on. I think it was good for me to find out that sort of thing. And here was Ed, head of an agency, of course. As everybody discovers when you go to Washington, I'm sure, you are completely involved with your own agency. So in the evenings and on weekends, I'd be involved with Ed Heller's agency. In the daytime, I'd be involved with mine, and never the twain shall meet.

Chall: I see.

Heller: There's no mixing.

Chall: And did you make friends in one or the other of the agencies? Would that be part of your social life?

Heller: Well, in Washington you don't really make friends. You make acquaintances. There were enough people in Washington that we knew, personally, that we would see occasionally. Ed Heller's best friend, Bill Goodman, from Memphis, was a colonel at the Pentagon, and was living in Georgetown. So we had a few very good personal friends there. Strange life, though. It's really unreal. The phone rang at home, and we were invited here, there, because Ed was head of an agency. We were invited to all the embassy parties, and cocktail parties, and dinner parties. And the day Ed Heller made up his mind to resign from the Surplus Property Board--word gets out in Washington before you even know it yourself--the phone never rang again. No invitation ever came. We never heard from a soul after all this pursuit of us, except from the few personal friends who were there. It's a strange, strange place.

Chall: Did you go to the embassy parties and all that sort of thing?

Heller: I went to one or two of them. Ed hated those things. They're really not very enjoyable. I went to a couple of them. Bill Goodman used to go, he and his wife, and I would go with them, sometimes, and say, "They're really awfully boring, really."

Chall: I see. [both laugh]

Heller: To me, none of this is very glamorous, at all.

Chall: It must have been even less interesting, maybe, because of the war.

Heller: And of course, by this time, I should say that my son Clary, had gone into the infantry, and had been at--why can't I think of it? It was our old ranch that was turned into the--Camp Roberts. Part of Camp Roberts used to be the Hellman family ranch, strangely enough. He
Heller: had gone through all his preliminary training, and had been sent to the Pacific. He was in Okinawa as a private, in the infantry. So I read the papers avidly, you know, every day; you just never knew enough of what was happening when you had a child in the service. And that's where the terrible fighting was going on. He was a replacement; he wasn't there at the very beginning.

One thing I must say was good during the war. The mail came very, very quickly from overseas. So if I'd read in the New York Times that Clary's part of his division was in a murderous crossfire, within three days, there'd be a letter there, from him. The air mail service was much better then. And so, you know you'd have about three days of--

Chall: Worry.

Heller: --extreme worry. So, V-E Day meant nothing to Ed and me when it came in Washington. Of course there was quite a celebration, most people had connections with people who were in the European theatre. But with Clary in the Pacific, we practically ignored V-E Day. But on V-J Day, it was quite a different thing. And we were still in Washington for that.

Chall: Oh, yes.

Heller: And naturally, not only the end of the war, but the end of the personal thing for Clary, seemed very joyous, too. We left Washington about three weeks after that, I think. So there's the horrible story of Washington. I ought to try to find that Mary Spargo book for you, to see what she wrote. My children collected all these things and presented their father with this horrible clipping service.

Chall: Oh, is that how you got all the clippings. Because I know you don't save them.

Heller: No, he did. That's the one thing I have. The children collected those. I think I used to send them to them. I think that's how, and they put them together.

Chall: There's an interesting article here. I'll leave it with you and you can give it back to me next week, but it's an interesting article about that whole battle on the Surplus Property Board. It's different from your--another point of view.

Heller: Oh, that's what's-his-name--Art Caylor. What made Ed Heller decide to get onto the Surplus Property Board was to counteract the appointment of Ed Pauley's man. This is my opinion, that this desire of Ed Pauley to put Shepherd in there, was that Ed Pauley thought there was something to be gotten out of it. And he knew that he could never
Heller: get anything through Ed Heller. I think that's what brought it about. I've always thought that; I can't prove it. But Ed Heller would just have nothing to do with anything that wasn't above board, under any circumstances. Once somebody left some whiskey in our room, and he made me personally take it back, he was so worried. Oh, he hated anything like that. I've always thought that Ed Pauley thought there was some hay to be made out of this. Is that on record?

Chall: Yes.

Heller: It's all right; it's all right.

Chall: Probably it should be. Because we'll be talking more about Ed Pauley later.

Heller: Yes.

The California Democratic State Central Committee, 1944

Chall: I wanted to get back a little bit. You stayed, I know, in California until the election.

Heller: Yes.

Chall: And you went to the Democratic State Central Committee meeting in August of 1944?

Heller: That's right.

Chall: Had you ever been to a state meeting before?

Heller: I don't remember that I had. I might have, but I don't remember that I had. You know, all these things, as I look back, were absolute nightmares. I never knew what was happening. There were wheels within wheels going around and I never knew what was going on. I was a young innocent, I think. I knew there were plots and counterplots going on, but I wouldn't know what they were. Nobody ever really told me what all the plotting was about, because it came out to be nothing in the end, probably.

Chall: This was your first meeting then; it just looked confusing to you.

Heller: Where was I--I remember being at the--

Chall: You made a speech, according to the papers.
Heller: Did I?

Chall: Yes. Well, you were the new national committeewoman.

Heller: Well, my speeches were always so short; I can't remember any of them. I always figured I was—that was one place I was welcome, when I had to make a speech, because I always ended them almost before I began.

Chall: So except for the fact that Bill Malone was appointed chairman, there was not too much problem that day.

Heller: I don't remember that. I remember all sorts of people in and out of people's rooms, and up to all hours, but I don't think for any particular reason.

Chall: Did it seem like a national convention in a smaller way?

Heller: No. No, they were quite disorganized. There were so many people you didn't know who a lot of them were. There'd always be platform issues. I unsuccessfully tried over and over at the state central committee—and I emphasize unsuccessfully—I said that we shouldn't have national issues in the state platform. But I got no place on that. I thought the state central committee should concern itself with California issues. But this was just as issues started to be a big thing. I got no place on that.

Chall: Where would you try to do this persuading?

Functioning as National Committeewoman##

[Interview 8: May 19, 1978]

Chall: You remember being a part of an audience that heard that you were not to be expected to be like Helen Gahagan Douglas.

Heller: Yes. That's right.

Chall: By that time, did you have any idea what the national committeewoman was supposed to be?

Heller: None, none whatsoever.

Chall: So how did you begin to function?

Heller: You made it up as you went along.
Chall: I see.

Heller: You really did. Because Helen Douglas had been in for four years; she was in Southern California; and of necessity, the way this state is made, the Southern California person functions differently than a Northern California person. And that doesn't mean any great enmity or anything, but the functioning is more depending on where you live. Before that, you see, it was Lucretia Grady, who was an original. Nobody could function the way she did. I'm not saying I wanted to.

So there was no structure of any sort. Remembering what I said last time, that Ed Pauley was my national committeeman, there was no programming possible with him. Because Ed Pauley went on his own, you see. He was much more in the national scene; he didn't bother about California very much.

Chall: Southern California, did he bother about that?

Heller: Not really. No.

Chall: Except for oil.

Heller: Well, I do remember that he sent a hundred dollar check to every Democratic candidate for the legislature. That's the only thing that I remember about him.

Chall: I see.

Heller: No, I never saw Ed Pauley at any state central committee meetings, any regional meetings, anything like that; he just didn't function that way. He was off in his own world.

Chall: Did he have power to control what was going on in California?

Heller: I don't think he did. I don't think he cared to. He really considered himself on the national level. He was much busier with Bob Harrnegan or whoever was the national chairman. So in that way, I had an entirely different idea of national committee, national committee-woman. I believe that you function at the state level to the degree that you could. But I did a lot with—I guess Bill Malone was the state chairman—

Chall: Well, he was, part of the time.

Heller: The first part.

Chall: He was the state chairman in '44.
Heller: Yes, but in effect, Bill Malone was really doing all the functioning up in Northern California at that point. He was very active at the '44 campaign. So in effect, through '46, he was really in charge, you know, of Democratic affairs in the north.

Chall: Was he in charge even when Mr. [John] McEnery was Northern California chairman?

Heller: I mean, to '46.

Chall: You don't think he had much control over Mr. McEnery?*

Heller: Yes. He and McEnery were good friends. But McEnery was—well, he had a very fiery temperament; very inconsistent. He'd love somebody and he'd hate somebody for no good reason. Oh, I got on pretty well with him, and he lived down this way, in San Jose. Jimmy Roosevelt was state chairman then. He had complete contempt for McEnery, would have liked to get rid of him.

Chall: Vice versa, I think.

Heller: And vice versa, and how. McEnery hated Jimmy Roosevelt with a deadly hate.

To go back to the functioning of the national committeewoman—

Chall: Yes. How did you start functioning?

Heller: Well, I started in '44 by just going to the San Francisco headquarters every day, basically. We had a combined headquarters, for Roosevelt—for FDR—and Franck Havenner was running for Congress. There was great activity in San Francisco for Franck Havenner for Congress. Is that right?

Chall: Yes.

Heller: And there was great activity for him in that campaign headquarters. You see, there was very little to do for Franklin Roosevelt. He was so well known. You didn't need a billboard, you didn't need an advertisement. The only media we ever used were billboards, and I remember a complete decision not to spend a cent on billboards for FDR. It would be just a waste of money. So that there was really very little campaigning. It was more get out the vote, which in Northern California, or in San Francisco, was really the haven of operation, combined with the whole election operation.

Chall: Now, let's see; you were still living in Cambridge, weren't you?

*John McEnery's oral history transcript covering California politics, from the Harry S. Truman Library, Independence Missouri, 1976, is deposited in the Manuscripts Division of The Bancroft Library. Catalogue number 84/11c.
Heller: But I stayed out here until election day—and then went straight back East. I went around the state to quite a number of meetings. Bob Kenny was very much a part of those meetings, too. He used to go, and he was a very popular speaker. I went to all sorts of county meetings, mostly in Northern California. Southern California, believe it or not, was even less structured than Northern California. Their county central committee was huge.

Chall: Yes.

Heller: And chaotic, as far as I knew. I could never make head or tail out of the whole thing. I would occasionally go down there and meet with a few people. But in Northern California, I went to quite a few counties. And I often went with Bill Malone, sometimes with Kenny, with others; whoever was active.

To give you the unknown role of national committeewoman, I remember one of the first trips I took with Bill Malone was to—-I believe it was Merced. Well, one of these old-time Democrats was sort of in charge of the county, and always was very faithful. I no longer remember his name. He had been county chairman for ages. Bill Malone had set up the appointment and told them that we were coming. I remember arriving there, and he greeted us effusively. When we arrived at whatever their headquarters were, he said, "Now Bill, I have my sister to take care of Mrs. Heller, and show her around, while you and I talk politics."

Chall: [laughs] How about that?

Heller: Isn't that marvelous? And, you know, more power to Bill Malone, he said, "What the devil do you think Ellie is here for, but to talk politics?" I will say, for Bill, he never was treating me as a woman, particularly. You know, he considered if you took a job, you did it. And that was my inclination, anyway.

Chall: I know. But did you find this to be true in other places where you went as national committeewoman, or even on the national committee, that you were treated as one of the policy makers?

Heller: Well, it depended on the people you were dealing with. A lot of them thought very little of women, and as I saw some of the women on the national committee, I wasn't surprised. Now, there were a few very good ones.

Chall: How do you suppose they were picked?

Heller: Oh, they were picked in varying ways in many states. I do remember that very well. Some places they had to run and be elected. In the southern states particularly, they had to be run. Others were just picked out, and told to keep quiet. Some would be picked by convention, some by individuals. There was a great variety of how they were picked.
Heller: No two states functioned the same. Ours were picked, as I already said, by the delegates to the convention, but that wasn't true of most of them. Perhaps some of the men did not regard the committeewomen as equals, though I found many who were terribly nice—who treated you just the same as they would treat anybody else. I never felt very second class as a citizen. The national councils—well, I never did know exactly what was going on. The national committee in Washington kept whatever it was doing pretty much to itself. There was very little openness.

Chall: Did you meet as a national committee several times a year? All of you together?

Heller: Well, maybe a couple of times a year.

Chall: I see.

Heller: Yes. It was a much smaller national committee group then. The state chairmen were not members of the national committee, then. It was just ninety-six people. Well, I guess there was Puerto Rico. But it was just basically committeemen. One committeeman and one committeewoman from each state. We'd meet in Washington. And of course, it was a Democratic administration, so they'd have various people from the national level who would speak to us. Nothing ever happened at those national committee levels. Even the discussion of where the next convention site would be, which is a function of the national committee, was really all behind the scenes.

Chall: Didn't you try at one time to get the '48 convention in San Francisco?

Heller: It sounds that way.

Chall: I see.

Heller: It sounds that way.

Chall: [laughs] How did it really happen?

Heller: That was the one time Ed Pauley was very busy plotting with me. And I went along; I didn't mind at all. That was not really true. But they wanted Philadelphia, I guess it was, to come up with more money for the national convention. At that time, Ed Pauley, and Bob Nannegan, asked me if I would help them out to the degree that I would arrange to have it seem as if San Francisco wanted the convention. Oh, I remember talking to Bill Malone; I talked to Ed Heller, my husband—had them talk to a few people—and they sort of went through the gestures as if they could raise the money. But it really was a fake the whole way through. We never expected to really have it. So you see how well the papers reported it. Because I think that was a pretty well-kept secret.
Chall: It certainly was. At least I haven't read anything else about it.

Heller: And that's where I got to be known, I guess, at the national level a little bit. Because, at that meeting, I was sort of the one who had to do all the speaking, and all the plotting, and be very mysterious about where the money was coming from—that it could be had. I was certainly wined and dined by certain groups--

Chall: In San Francisco?

Heller: No.

Chall: Where? In Philadelphia?

Heller: Not in San Francisco. This was in Washington.

Chall: Oh, in Washington.

Heller: People who were anxious to be on my good side, if it went to San Francisco. Philadelphia really wanted it. But, Bob Hannegan and Ed Pauley were determined they had to put up more money, which they did, eventually.

Chall: They really felt threatened by San Francisco?

Heller: I think they did. I didn't do any entertaining in relation to wooing the delegates, but the Pennsylvania delegation, and particularly the Philadelphians, put on an enormous party for all the national committee people and various Washington characters. A very, very lavish party, at the Mayflower. I've never been the center of such attention, because they were trying to get me to drop my bid to the national committee. [laughs] So they spent all the money; I didn't spend any. And they eventually came in with a larger offer. Of course, the amount of money was very small in those days. I can't remember what it was; something like $250,000.

Chall: You were apparently trying to raise a couple of million, I believe.

Heller: Well, I just don't remember at all, because it was a fake, from beginning to end.

Chall: Well, you did a good job.

Heller: I finally, gracefully, withdrew, after they withdrew the bid of San Francisco. And that was my show, because Ed Pauley had to stay out of that.

Chall: I see. Did you enjoy it?
Heller: Well, yes, mildly. Just because it was so funny to see how people pay attention to you when they think there's something coming.

Chall: What about national committee meetings later on? Was there a lot of entertaining after, as a part of the committee meetings? That would be, of course, after the war.

Heller: It varied. I remember in '46 that the--no, I think this was the executive committee. I was appointed to the executive committee.

Chall: That's a small committee, isn't it?

Heller: That was small. That was very small. Oh, I won't say it was because of me; they wanted a Californian on, and Ed Pauley wasn't in the best shape. Maybe he was still national treasurer. I just don't remember.

Chall: Either that, or he had another appointment. He was something in the administration.

Heller: And they wanted somebody from California. So, it was inevitable. But they had the same number of men and women, by that time, on the executive committee. That committee was wined and dined to a degree.

Chall: By whom?

Heller: Well, this was the one and only time I went to the White House, in that whole time. President Truman invited the executive committee for lunch, and had his complete cabinet there, except for Secretary of State Marshall, who he firmly believed should stay out of politics. And one other, who also he believed should not be in politics; I've forgotten who the other was. At that time, I met the whole cabinet, and we had lunch at the White House. I only had two big impressions from that, and they are not important in the history of things. But one was, I met Mrs. Truman for the first time, directly, and found out that she was a perfectly lovely woman. And her pictures never did her--what's the word I want?

Chall: Justice?

Heller: Justice. But she's a perfectly lovely, intelligent, educated woman, but never wanted to take the forefront. She was much better dressed than I'd expected. I had always thought of her as dowdy. And she wasn't at all. And that's one thing I remember very well from these things. These were all so formal; you sat next to--I don't even remember whom I sat next to at lunch.

The other thing I remember was, I couldn't eat because I had one of the worst toothaches I've ever had. [laughter] I had a dying nerve. Isn't that terrible?
Chall: Yes.

Heller: So I can't tell you about the food. Oh--it was just awful. I thought the lunch would never be over. But it was in that period when the national committee was very active. I met--not at that time, but through one of the meetings--I met Averell Harriman for the first time, somewheres in through there. He was one of the political people that I really adored. He is such a gentleman. This was before he became quite as well known as he did. He was a very quiet, very bashful sort of person. But I became quite devoted to him. A perfectly lovely man. Of course, I met everybody, I guess, on the national scene, on the Democratic scene, through those meetings.

Chall: But of the ones you remember, Harriman was one.

Heller: Harriman stands out. I've met plenty, but--

Chall: Who else? Do others stand out in different ways? I mean, were there some you didn't like at all?

Heller: Well, I couldn't rave about Tom Clark, for example, who was, I guess, attorney general.

Chall: Yes, he may have been then. [1945-1949]

Heller: I was never a great seeker of name people, just because, you know, they were big names. No, I guess, Howard McGrath was attorney general then. [1949-1952]

Chall: I see.

Heller: Then he became chairman of the national committee.

Chall: He had been, and then he became attorney general. I think that's the route.

Heller: Yes. Was he head of the national committee then?

Chall: Yes, sometime between 1948 and 1952.

Heller: I didn't particularly care for him. Well, all I can say is, Averell Harriman stood out, head and shoulders, over almost everybody that I met. But sometimes you'd go and very little occurred, really. After Ollie Carter, Oliver Carter, became state chairman, I would often give him my proxy, to go to the national committee meetings. [1948-1950]

Chall: Oh, really? You could do that?
Heller: Because I trusted him. I never would give it to others, but once Ollie became chairman, I trusted him; I knew whatever votes there were, that he'd--

Chall: Oh, that would be on the executive committee, then, that he would be functioning?

Heller: It could be on the executive committee. Mostly it was on the national committee level. We didn't have very many meetings. Maybe once or twice a year.

Chall: Was it an expense for a national committeeperson, going to Washington--

Heller: Yes. Yes.

Chall: --and staying in hotels?

Heller: It was expensive, the whole thing, because there were no funds for it in any way. I remember that Helen Douglas estimated that when she was national committeewoman, and that was for four years, that it cost her--well, I may have the figures wrong--I remember fifty thousand. I assume it's for four years.

Chall: Yes. Oh, I see, for the whole four years.

Heller: I think so. I think so. And I have no idea of what it cost me, because, I found I really had to, on the whole, pay for our Northern California Democratic headquarters, in between campaigns. There was very little money available, ever. And to pay for a secretary, and so on, there was a very small amount of money available. I don't know that there's that much available today.

Chall: Yes. Prior to that, somewhere along the line, Julia Porter says that your mother-in-law had paid for the staffing of the Democratic headquarters, or paid partly.

Heller: I wouldn't be surprised but what she had. But my mother-in-law never talked much about this sort of thing. I think Julia would go to her and get some money from her.

Chall: So, on the whole, then, the national committeemen and national committeewomen had to have enough money in their own right to be able to function in those positions. Is that true?

Heller: That is really right. It wasn't that there were terrific demands for contributions from them, but just to keep the thing going. Now that's changed, I guess.
Chall: Oh, I don't know.

Heller: Over the years. But, I think we just wouldn't have had an office if I hadn't, on the whole, supported it.

Chall: And that's supporting yourself as a national committeewoman, too--the cost of going back and forth, and paying for hotel rooms, meals.

Heller: Oh yes; oh, yes. There were never any funds for anything.

Chall: Did you ever entertain while you were at national committee meetings? Did you ever feel that you had to entertain, in any way, the other delegates, the other members of the committee?

Heller: I don't remember that I ever did. I did entertain; I think I gave a breakfast for the congressional delegation.

Chall: Oh.

Heller: Once or twice. No, I felt no compulsion to do that.

Chall: Did Mr. Pauley?

Heller: Well, I wasn't present if he did.

Chall: Does that mean that you and he had almost nothing to do with one another, unless called upon?

Heller: Well, you see, Ed Heller had known Ed Pauley at Berkeley. And--this story may not be true, but it's what Ed Heller always told me--that in the mid-thirties, Ed Pauley had gotten a divorce from his first wife--well, that really has nothing to do with this story. But somehow, he and Ed Heller, after not having seen each other for quite a while, saw each other again in some business affair. And Ed Pauley was saying he thought he wanted to go into politics, get into politics. He thought he'd be interested in it. Ed Heller always said that he said to him, "Well, why don't you register as a Democrat? There's a wide open field in Southern California; there's no Democratic leadership down there." And so Ed Heller always claimed that he was the one who told Ed Pauley to be a Democrat. I don't know if that's true or not, because sometimes Ed Heller could exaggerate stories a little bit. It may well have been true.

And so, I had known Ed Pauley. Ed Heller had brought Ed Pauley up to Tahoe in the mid-thirties, for a weekend once. He wasn't an easy-going person; he was rather silent. I never felt I knew him, though I'd known him all those years. But nobody really knew that I'd known Ed Pauley that long. He's not a person I've ever felt at ease with.
Chall: Did you trust him?

Heller: To the degree that--yes. Once, after we were both Regents together, I did talk to him more. We often didn't vote together. Then the last years of his being a Regent, he went downhill physically so much, that he didn't have too much influence. He had been very dominating on the Regents when I went on. But that fell off very much.

I always said that Ed Pauley never talked to me unless he wanted something. The only time I ever remember his phoning me was to ask would I suggest somebody for the--oh, that was just in the paper the other day--the, what do you call the territories after World War II; you know, with Micronesia--

Chall: Trust territories?

Heller: Yes. And he said he didn't know anybody. You know, it required a very specialized knowledge. And would I see about finding somebody to go on this trustee committee. California could have that job. I said, fine; I knew exactly the person who was one of the great experts in that part of the world, who was Felix Keesing, who was a professor at Stanford.

Chall: I see.

Heller: And, by God, Felix Keesing did get that appointment, and was tremendously qualified for it. But I just noticed in the paper last week, that in a year or two they're going to get their independence.

Chall: Yes. That's right.

Heller: I can't think of the absolute name of it, but they've always had a commission. That's the only time I really can remember Ed Pauley ever phoning me, was when he didn't have any particular name. You can't imagine the lack of communication. There was no fight, or anything.

Chall: Well now, if the national chairman wanted something done in California --he wanted money raised, or whatever it might be--with whom did he communicate?

Heller: Well, it always went north and south. That's what I mean.

Chall: I see. You mean, he'd write a letter--

Heller: There would be Northern California fund raisings, and southern. They were never done statewide, at that time. And the big fund raising, at that point, was the annual Jefferson-Jackson Day Dinner. You'd have to negotiate to get a speaker, of course.
Chall: Is that something you would do? Would you function in that area, to get speakers?

Heller: Yes. Or I would get whoever was functioning as executive of the headquarters for me, or the secretary, whatever you'd want to call him--Harold McGrath sort of ran the office for me--I'd get him working on it, too. I could have a veto on who it was, but we had people like--well Averell Harriman I think I was instrumental in getting out, though he didn't draw a big crowd, in the forties.

I wasn't a terribly visible national committeewoman, really. I went to meetings; I never made big speeches.

Chall: But you were on the road to make speeches from time to time, for the women's groups and--

Heller: I don't remember this at all, Malca. Where did I do that?

Chall: Well, let's see. [looking through papers] You were one of the speakers at a Jefferson-Jackson Day Dinner in 1950. Attorney General McGrath was the main speaker, and Cyril Magnin was the chairman of the dinner.

Heller: I would help choose the chairman of the dinner, always. But I don't remember choosing Cyril Magnin, particularly. I do remember getting others to chair the dinner.

Chall: In 1945, in November--this is from the Examiner--there was a Democratic strategy meeting for the 1946 congressional campaigns, in California. "They will be discussed by Northern California county and congressional district women's division chairmen at the Atherton home of Mrs. Edward Heller, Democratic National Committeewoman."

Heller: That could have been. That was probably imposed on me, somehow, someway.

Chall: I see. Out of Julia Porter's files came a couple of things of this kind.

Heller: Well, Julia Porter was very good about doing these women's things.

Chall: Yes. She would, and give speeches.

Heller: I'd usually turn them over to her. She was very good on that.

Chall: And all I have are those newspaper copies that are sort of truncated in spots. But it looks as if you at least had to make a presentation, or be present.
Heller: Oh, I was always present at these things.
Chall: Here's a southern one.
Heller: [looking at paper] You see, now this one doesn't have me present.
Chall: There's a half-picture of you there.
Heller: Speakers, oh yes, Mrs. Edward H. Heller. Yes.
Chall: I think I noticed, too, that you went to Alameda County meetings.
Heller: I went over to Alameda County quite often.
Chall: And around this neighborhood, too.
Heller: I went to quite a lot of those things.
Chall: How'd you find that?
Heller: I never made major speeches, because I wasn't capable of it. Nor had I any inclination to. I'd always see that somebody else did that. What you'd do, you'd get into these counties, and you'd get into the worst local bitterness. Oh, it gets so petty, it begins to drive you crazy.
Chall: Among the women or men?
Heller: Well, men and women. I don't remember doing much about the women, per se, at all. I may have, a few times. Ruth Dodds was another good [women's division] chairman. And I could give her, you know, assign her the women, too, as I did Julia Porter. I'd work with them.
Chall: But you did go into the office almost every day, then, as if it were a full-time job?
Heller: Yes, I did. Yes, I did. Almost every day. Well, there were always some things to unscramble, always letters to be answered. There were lots of letters, mostly complaints, people wanting jobs, which I certainly couldn't give them. And I think I mentioned, way earlier, that I had nothing to do with--I took myself out of appointing judges, or postmen--
Chall: Postmasters.
Heller: Postmasters. So that I had very little to do with any sort of patronage. Once in a while, when they couldn't find anybody, then they'd turn to me, to see if I couldn't find somebody. Oh, one of those price stabilization things, after the war, was very unpopular. They had a terrible time finding anybody to head it up. What was it?
Chall: OPA. Office of Price Administration.

Heller: Yes. It may have had another title by then.

Chall: Yes, by then.

Heller: Oh, nobody would take it. It paid very little. I finally got John Tolan, Jack Tolan, to take that job. But those were the only sort of things I'd get into.

Heller: I know this is very disillusioning about the whole--

Chall: No. It's not disillusioning; it's just that I'm trying to find out what you did. Everyone operated differently, I think.

Heller: Oh, that's right.

Attitude Toward the Women's Division

Heller: Well, in the meantime, there was a lot of pressure from the national committee—not right away, I think it was after the war—from India Edwards, to do women's division. This is where I became insistent. I wouldn't do women's division. I just didn't like it; I just didn't think it went far enough; I thought the women were downgraded--

Chall: In the women's division?

Heller: You know, by being put into a division. I would have to entertain India when she came out.

Chall: Was that a problem? I mean, was it a chore?

Heller: Well, to me it was. To me it was. Because she always wanted big meetings, and all that. I just—you know, I flatly told her I did not believe in women's divisions. I felt very firmly about that. And continue to feel the same to this day.

Chall: Do you think women would have much opportunity in politics, at any level, if it weren't required that there be, sort of fifty-fifty split on the national committee, and other areas? If there were not women's divisions?


Chall: But in those days. Do you think there would have been any women on the national committee if it weren't required?
Heller: I can't judge, because that was required before I went in there.

Chall: Yes.

Heller: So it was taken for granted. And some good women were starting to emerge.

Chall: Did they emerge because of luck? You could be considered a good woman.

Heller: Well--

Chall: But, if it hadn't been that you were Edward Heller's wife, and he was active at that time, politically, do you think anyone would have paid any attention to you? Or that you would have even been noticed by anybody who had an opportunity to make an appointment?

Heller: I have no idea. I just have no idea. You know, I'm not bashful in that way. I've always thought I'm—if anybody knows me—that I'm good enough to do jobs. But I don't go seeking them. I have no inferiority complex. So I can't give you the answer. I really don't know.

Chall: Now, when you got onto the national committee, would the chairman, like Hannigan, or McGrath, or Boyle, or any of the others who came along, pay any attention, much, to the women on the national committee? Or would they work with the men?

Heller: Well, some. They'd pay a little attention to me. But I don't think really. They were not rude, in any way.

Chall: But they weren't interested in whether you had a particular opinion on something or not? They wouldn't ask?

Heller: Not terribly. Not terribly. But if they looked at you just as a member of the national committee, I think you could express your opinion. The variety was so enormous that I guess they had to use a sort of even hand.

I did want to pick up one thing to give you an idea of another state I know something about. When I was selected national committee-woman, as you know, I was in Boston, and I already told you about being in that War Savings office, this stranger from the West, in which there were a lot of Irishmen working. They had really paid very little attention to me, though I think I did a very good job in this education division. But, Good Lord! When I came back and they found out that I was national committee-woman, those Irish politicians in the War Savings Department just fell over themselves.

Chall: Oh, I see. It was prestigious.
Heller: Oh! How did I get that? What had I done? I must be so important. And when I'd go with them to various communities in Massachusetts, because I'd usually drive with one or the other—you know, the gasoline was very short—they'd always insist on taking me to the city hall to meet their political friends, and introduce me as the national committeewoman from California, the Democratic National Committeewoman.

Well, the woman from Boston, whose name I've forgotten, was one of the greatest hacks that ever was. She was just dreadful. And I kept thinking, "Are they equating me with her?" Because Massachusetts is a very, very boss-controlled political state. I really had nothing to do with the politics there, except through this little touch. Also some of the national committeemen were very poor.

Chall: Yes; I wanted to ask you. There was just as much variation in their abilities as there was in the women?

Heller: Quite a bit. There was one I became very fond of. He was Senator [Theodore Francis] Green from Rhode Island, who lived into his nineties, and stayed a Senator. He was very well known. He was perfectly marvelous. I liked him, enormously. When I was on the executive committee, I was serving on committees with him. Very rational, good person, with lots of power through his seniority, in the Senate.

Chall: Did you have the feeling that there was a lot of power in this position, that, you know, you were somebody really important in the state, or in the nation?

Heller: No. No. No. Not at all. I felt I was committeewoman for California, and basically, Northern California, I guess, though I tried to do the whole state, but Southern California remained a mystery on the whole, to me. Well, there was no head or tail of politics in Southern California, at that time. Ed Pauley paid no attention to it, Jimmy Roosevelt eventually came along and made a mess of it. It really wasn't until Paul Ziffren became national committeeman that there began to be a little more structure down there. No, I never did feel important—because you weren't—for a very good reason.

Chall: What about Malone? Did you and he confer on Northern California activities? Would you be a part of whatever there is to the so-called team? Did you become part of that group?

Heller: Well, we conferred to a degree, and were always friendly. Of course, we split when Helen Douglas ran for Senator.

Chall: Yes.
Heller: We usually supported the same candidates on the whole.

Chall: His patronage, though—he didn't consult with you on that?

Heller: I'd know who he was interested in for a judgeship or something like that, but I just stayed out of it.

Chall: What was your husband doing during this period when you were so active? Was he doing in politics what he always had been doing before?

Heller: Oh, yes. He'd just meet with Malone and talk politics. He always loved it.

Chall: Did he talk politics with you, then?

Heller: Yes, but not in plotting. Ed was not a detailist; he never liked to figure out how you got things done. He just liked to discuss it. Ed was finance chairman, eventually, for some campaigns. He always enjoyed it. You'd have to have known Ed Heller. He hated to be bothered about details. Hated it. And he would not go to meetings. Oh, he would go to a finance committee meeting; he ran those very well at the Fairmont, where he usually had them. And he always had drinks there, that he provided for everybody. That was what he enjoyed doing. [chuckles] There was much less structure than anybody thinks there was.

Chall: Did you and India Edwards eventually come to the parting of the ways over this matter of women, or did you just ride it out until you left the office?

Heller: Well, we just went our own ways.

Chall: Did you stop providing big meetings when she came?

Heller: Yes; I just didn't do it.

Chall: Turned her over to the women's chairman?

Heller: Sometimes Julia, or--

Chall: Ruth Dodds.

Heller: Ruth Dodds would do it. But I always told her that I thought that was no way to do politics, and I believe it to this day. And I don't think you got more people active through doing a woman's division.

Chall: Did you feel that the women were relegated to second place by having special functions of their own?
Heller: Well, I just thought they weren't doing what they should be doing.

Chall: Which was what? What did you think they should be doing?

Heller: The sad thing about this role of women: women always expected, at that time, to handle sort of social dos, which I didn't care for. And except for that, I think, one lunch I had here—which we talked about—I never had political and social events at my own house. I might have some individuals here, but I never saw the need for doing that. I did not like doing it, as a matter of fact. No, I just felt women should be campaign workers, along with men in headquarters. A lot of them came in.

The first woman that really started working the way I like to work, was Libby Gatov. Libby came along—I think she must have just finished being a Coro Scholar. Libby's point of view was much more my point of view; she was the first one that actually felt that way. I got on with Julia Porter; I thought she was fine, but she would do this women's thing, and she was always telling me to do a few nice things. Like she'd say, "You just have to send out Christmas cards to everybody." And I'd say, "Okay, Julia, make the list, and pick out the card." You know, she really was very sweet that way, always telling me I had to do certain nice things. She was really very nice. I don't know if Julia ever mentioned Catherine Wurster? Did she ever talk to you about Catherine Bauer Wurster coming in and doing politics? Of course, Catherine was just as smart as they come. And Catherine, while no politician, enjoyed politics, was a very good Democrat, and she had lived in Washington, very involved in housing.

Chall: Yes.

Heller: And she did a little of this, sort of tongue-in-cheek. There's a lovely story about her; I always like to tell it. She went up to Canada on a housing thing, I think, once. She was put at the head table, because she was going to speak on housing. The man who was sitting next to her, introduced himself, and said, "Bishop so and so, Church of England." And she said for a minute she didn't know what to say, and then she said, "Catherine Bauer, Democratic Women's State Central Committee of California." [laughter] Which I think is a wonderful story.

I did, at one point—must have been right after the war—try to get a few women together—some of the best—the women I knew with the best brains, to try to work on some issues. Don't ask me what they were, anymore. Most of the men weren't very issue-oriented. And women, at that point, were more apt to be. I did get a very good group of women together. We met a few times, but it just sort of faded
Heller: away. They were all too busy. Women like Emily Huntington--we were probably getting her to do cost-of-living analysis. And Catherine Bauer Wurster on housing. I'm sure Julia Porter was part of that. I just don't remember who they were; there must have been eight or nine that were just quite outstanding.

Chall: This would have been under the auspices of the Democratic party?

Heller: As Democrats, yes. Under my auspices, probably. But I don't think it got very far. Harriet Eliel was included.

Chall: You had a good friend at the time named Sue Lilienthal?

Heller: Yes. Sue Lilienthal. I brought her into Democratic politics. Mrs. Ernest Lilienthal. She became very active in Helen Douglas's campaign, particularly. She was a good hard worker, very intense. I think maybe Sue was a little bit later than that; she was younger. But it really was very short-lived.

Chall: I see. Were most of these women in the League of Women Voters? Would they have been doing this anyway?

Heller: Basically. Well, I don't think Emily Huntington was, but certainly Harriet Eliel was--had been the state president of the league. Basically league types. Well, they make awfully good people, when they've had that training, I think.

The Death of Franklin D. Roosevelt and Reactions to President Truman

Chall: Do you recall where you were when President Roosevelt died, and the feeling that was around?

Heller: Oh, yes, everybody. I think, does recall that. I was in Washington, D.C., and I had gone from my miserable office, where I worked in Washington. I had the car, and I'd somehow gotten rid of the pool that day, or maybe I'd taken them home first; I don't know. I'd arranged to meet Ed Heller; we were going out for dinner. I parked over by his office, and went in, and Ed's secretary met me in the hall, weeping. She said, "The president's dead." I remember that weeping. You know, the world dropped out. I think to those who were not supporters of him, it did, too. It had gone, you know, so long. Of course, Ed and I didn't go out for dinner; nobody wanted to do anything.

The next night there was a national committee dinner scheduled. Though I did very little politics when I was in Washington--you'd think you would, but I was busy with my War Finance, and Ed was busy
Heller: with his Surplus Property—we had decided to go to that meeting, and of course, that was called off. I had very little to do with politics, the whole time I was in Washington.

Oh, that feeling at Roosevelt's death was—you would have had to have been there at—you know, I think, any place at that time. After all, elected four times. My office was right across the street from the Treasury, and of course, everybody went out in the street when his body was brought back to Washington. Watching that caisson go to the White House, which is right beyond the Treasury—there was really a pall.

Chall: Yes. Was there a concern about Truman taking over? Was there a fear that he couldn't do the job on the part of the people who were Roosevelt supporters?

Heller: I think so. Nobody knew that much about Truman. I knew as much about him, probably, as anybody else, and I couldn't conceive of him as president. But I will say he—well, I wasn't crazy about him while he was president, but as I look back, I can see he really showed an awful lot of guts the way he took over completely unprepared, you know, and made decisions. He had to make the decision on the League of Nations.


Heller: I mean, United Nations meeting.

Chall: Within about a month.

Heller: Within about a month. And he also, of course, had the atomic bomb decision, to make. But, I think I remember that he decided immediately to go ahead with the United Nations meeting in San Francisco. I notice you have that on your outline.

Chall: Yes.

Heller: We were in Washington.

Chall: So you weren't here at all?

Heller: I wasn't here at all for that, though Mrs. E.S. Heller, my mother-in-law, got very involved through the Gradys. You see, Henry Grady was quite well known in those councils, and they wanted to do a lot of entertaining of people from all over the world, and they didn't have the facilities to do it. So, my mother-in-law would do it for them, at her house in San Francisco. She had a wonderful time meeting everybody at those sessions. No, I missed the whole thing.
Chall: Well, Julia Porter, if I remember correctly, discusses at length the problems you had with the distribution of tickets.

Heller: I didn't.

Chall: I'll have to check back, but that's why I asked the question.

Heller: I wasn't here.

Chall: Okay, people's memories are different.

Heller: Yes, well, I was absolutely out of it.

Chall: All right, we'll get you back into California now, and see what's going on in politics.

Heller: Yes, that's better. But then, later on, Truman came back. I'm trying to think what year it was. There was a large lunch for him, when he came to San Francisco. It had something to do with the United Nations a year or so later. Let's see—the United Nations was '45.

Chall: Yes.

Heller: It might have been 19—well, I'm not sure when it was. It might have been 1950, five years later.

Chall: Yes; there was either a five or a ten-year celebration.

Heller: Well, this was while he was still president. I think it was 1948, for the signing of the Japanese peace treaty. I remember that well. All the men were fighting; they couldn't decide nationally who would invite people. I guess this was when Jimmy Roosevelt was national committeeman. And everybody was in bad repute, including Jimmy Roosevelt, and there was just this fight on. So, it was finally decided that I—this was decided at the national level—that I would issue the invitations to this huge lunch in honor of President Truman. So I was the hostess. Yes, I know it was; it was during the McCarthy period. That is right.

It was the first time I had ever come up against Secret Service, and all the planning. Every name, you know, had to be screened. I'd never had that before. One of my friends whom I had put on the list, who was not active in politics, was refused admittance, because she was one of the people—not that McCarthy, but people like him—accused of being red-inclined. I don't even mind saying who it is because it's been on the record for so long, and she was anything but. That was Martha Gerbode.
Chall: Oh, my. Is that right.

Heller: Some army general said she couldn't come to the lunch because she was a red. I had to stake my life to get her in, to guarantee her. Isn't that terrible, when you think about it?

Chall: Yes.

Heller: I mean, the rumors that were around. Everybody had to be cleared, but there were so many vicious rumors. I remember Martha hunting me up, weeping. Secret Service said she couldn't come in, because she'd been called a security risk.

Chall: And that was right at the time when she was walking in with her ticket, or before the luncheon took place that she was notified?

Heller: Just before the lunch. I can't remember whether you came and got your ticket ahead of time. It was just before, within an hour of the lunch.

Chall: Oh, my.

Heller: Oh, it was just awful. But I did get her in, thank heavens. I said I knew her personally, I knew her well, I knew her family--this is just nonsense. Just because she wasn't particularly traditional.

Oh, I know! She lived opposite the Russian consulate, that was it. And she was polite enough to be neighborly. That was, I think, the basis of the trouble.

Chall: Oh, my!

Heller: Oh, just nonsense. But that's the way it was, in those days. Mr. Truman was on my left; I was on his right. He was very easy to talk to. And then on my right, the chief political figure who was there, was Senator McCarran of Nevada. At that point, Senator McCarran had been taking off against the Institute of Pacific Relations, of which I had long been a member. He was calling them Communists. Of course, they were never even on the attorney general's list. There were some Communists within the eastern Institute of Pacific Relations. But he was out to destroy. So I couldn't talk to him about practically anything. I kept thinking, I didn't have anything to talk to him about. Everytime he'd see somebody he didn't know, he'd say, "Who is that? Who is that?" And I remember saying, "Oh, that's Mr. [Benjamin] Swig. He's the head of this hotel." You know, he was suspicious of everyone. I didn't know what to talk to him about. I had come down from Lake Tahoe for that lunch; I remember that. I had a marvelous sunburn. I finally said, "Senator, I have a Nevada sunburn." And I think that's all I ever said to him.
Heller: Well, that was the sort of thing that people were falling over themselves for to get invitations.

Chall: I see.

Heller: But I don't think I particularly made the list of who was there, except I put a handful of my own friends on whom I thought would like to go. Really a handful. President Truman wasn't that popular then, at that point.

Chall: Yes; this was the end of his term.

Heller: Yes.

Chall: People were there because they were commemorating the United Nations.

Heller: That's right. Well, though they were mostly political people, but not entirely. Of course, it went off without any incident.

Chall: You made a little opening speech?

Heller: Yes; I introduced the president, which is very easy to do. It's one of the easier things to do, because there is a complete formality of it.

Chall: That's right.

Heller: I would do that at any point.

California State Election Campaigns, 1946

Chall: Well, we'll move into 1946, when things begin to sort of fall apart in California, if they ever were together. I'm beginning to wonder.

Heller: Well, you're right. They never really were together.

Chall: I thought when I began studying California politics dealing with the year 1952, that that was special. But now that I'm going back to 1928 with you, I find nothing new at all.

Heller: No.

Chall: The more things change, the more they stay the same.

Heller: That's absolutely true. And that's why I'm glad to do this. I give you my own impressions, but I think they're honest ones.
Chall: Regarding the beginning of 1946, you were mentioning to me last week that you wanted to talk about a conference that Mr. Kenny had sponsored.

Heller: Oh, yes.

Chall: There was one; I checked on it in his own unpublished autobiography.* He talks about one in January fifth and sixth, 1946, at which he and Bartley Crum were co-chairmen.

Heller: That would be it, I think.

Chall: Would that be it? In Sacramento?

Heller: That's the one.

Chall: And it was called The Emergency Legislative Conference. He said that there were 699 elected delegates, in attendance from 366 civic, labor, farm, church, and veterans' organizations. And then he lists a number of sponsors like Joseph Ball and Pat Brown, and Professor Thomas Barclay, Colonel [Evans] Carlson, Philip Connelly, John Cromwell, Harriet Eliel, John Anson Ford, Jack Shelley, Mrs. Porter, Cyril Magnin, among many others.

Heller: That is correct; that's the one.

Chall: He said there were panels on full employment, social security, housing and community development, veterans' affairs, urban-rural relations, child care. They adopted resolutions in favor of the FEPC and the abolition of the Tenney Un-American Activities Committee in the state legislature, among other things. From his point of view, that sounded like a very good conference. So would you tell me about it from your own point of view?

Heller: Yes; I can only remember, basically, what I told you. We broke up into different subjects and my friend, Margaret Connor, went to one. That's why I think we went as League of Women Voters people. Maybe, unofficially; I'm not sure. We just thought it would be interesting. We found every committee was stacked, that we went into. Nobody wanted to hear what we thought or what anybody thought. It was all predetermined. Really predetermined, by, I don't want to say Kenny and Bart [Bartley] Crum, but those who were pushing, using Kenny and Bart Crum. That's why I wish I could remember the name of that gal

Heller: that seemed to be running the whole thing. The committees were stacked; nobody was allowed to talk. The outcome was completely predetermined, and I remember we walked out in the middle of the afternoon. We decided it was no place for us.

Despite the prestigious backing, those people weren't really there. There were people; there were lots of people. It was in that old Municipal Auditorium. But it was the left wing that took over that conference. I don't remember what they backed. Offhand, I'd probably think nothing wrong about FEPC, or whatever, but that was my first taste of complete manipulation by the left wing.

I was talking to Margaret Connor about it the other night. She remembers it just the way I remember it, that it was so distasteful to us. We were used to open discussions, if you were going to discuss the issues. You see, we had very little issue discussion in the Democratic party. We were more used to issues in a League of Women Voters type of situation. It was nothing like that; he whole thing was predetermined.

This is where I first saw what we called the left wing; what you could go further and say, Communists, or fellow travelers, beginning to try to get control of the reins. This wasn't an absolute Democratic party thing.

Chall: No, this was not; this was a coalition of all kinds of people, regardless of party.

Heller: Yes; that was the time that that occurred. At the same time, roughly --it was in '46--am I right?

Chall: Yes.

Heller: That's where for the congressional elections, the IPP, Independent Progressive Party, ran candidates for a lot of the congressional positions.

Chall: In '46?

Heller: Wasn't it in '46?

Chall: I'll have to check it, but it could have very well have been starting then.

Heller: Well, I think it was. I think this was the beginning. Yes, because '48 I think would have been too late for that.

Chall: No, they had their party in '48, because they ran Wallace. But they may have started before.
Heller: No, but their congressional people was '46. Then they moved into the Wallace thing.

Chall: I see. Oh, yes, I see. They started in Northern California?

Heller: I think they started in '46 in some districts. We had crossfiling then, which complicated things of course. An IPP candidate could be running against a Democrat and a Republican.

Chall: And crossfile.

Heller: And crossfile, and could take it, though I think none of them did take it. And this is where I began to have my fights within the Democratic party, because I was very angry at good candidates that succumbed to pressure. Democratic candidates who crossfiled onto the IPP ticket. Some of them were perfectly good candidates who got scared, you know, that they'd be knocked out. They filed a few good candidates and some very nasty ones.

Chall: Northern California, you mean.

Heller: In Northern California. You'll have to check me on my dates, but I think I'm right that this happened in '46. I remember in this district, the IPP filed Jonathan Rowell, who was the nephew of Chester Rowell, the great Fresno publisher who had been the Republican progressive from the Republican progressive people. And I remember a whole group of us determined that we would not be pushed into Jonathan Rowell.*

Chall: I see.

Heller: He, I think was bright enough, but was following whatever their line was. And we had a devil of a time getting a candidate. We finally got an engineer named [Oliver] Todd--I can't think of his name--who was just a dreadful candidate, but it was better to have something to hang your hat on than to go the IPP route. I remember in Berkeley we had a very good Democratic candidate, Dyke Brown, you know, who's now head of the Athenian School. He was a fine young fellow. He refused to file on the IPP, and they--the viciousness against Dyke Brown. This went on over and over again. Now, it's possible that was '48, but I don't think so. Have you anything that can tell?

*Rowell and Todd were candidates in 1948, as Mrs. Heller remembers later; page 314.
Heller: Oh, I'm pretty sure it was 1946, because Bud Burdick, Eugene L. Burdick, who later became very well known as the writer of *The Ugly American*, and other stories, had just come back from overseas, long war experience in the navy, and he was living in Palo Alto. I had just met him after he got back from overseas. There were a whole group of us who became very friendly at that time. I remember we had Bud Burdick running Oliver Todd—that's Mr. Todd's first name—Oliver Todd's campaign. He knew nothing about politics, but he had enthusiasm. And the reason I'm pretty sure it's '46 is that they were in Europe in 1948. He became a Rhodes scholar in '48, and I remember seeing them in Paris. So I'm pretty sure it was '46, that this IPP first emerged.

Chall: It may have in California; you may be right.

Heller: In California; I'm pretty sure. And that's where we began to see the moving in of the left wing, Communists, if you want to call it that, but the number of Communists were very small compared to the more left wing. I hate to use these expressions, because as I said, that was used on me, you know.

Chall: Yes, that's right. Well, they were left of center.

Heller: They were very left of center and could be—were—very much used. We'll put it that way, anyway.

Chall: And were labeled.

Heller: And so that's where I first established my fight. I would not support any candidate who crossfiled onto the IPP. That was the first stand I ever took. But I began to realize that I didn't very much like what was going on.

Chall: Did you have anything to do with the selection of the candidates, statewide candidates, for office in 1946?

Heller: Now, who was that?

Chall: Well, let's see. Robert Kenny ran for governor, and John Shelley for lieutenant governor, Pat Brown for attorney general, and then Will Rogers, Jr. and Ellis Patterson ran in the primary against each other for the Senate.

Heller: I had a lot to do with that.

Chall: And then Lucille Gleason was the candidate for secretary of state.

Heller: Was that '46?
Chall: Yes. Now, Kenny says that a group met in his office and made some of these decisions, although they'd started to make them long before that. And Julia Porter remembers that she, and you, and George Reilly, and Malone, were among those who met in Kenny's office to determine that slate.

Heller: That is correct.

Chall: In late February of '46.

Heller: Though I don't remember the time.

Chall: Yes, well, that's all right.

Heller: That is quite correct.

Chall: And how did you all come about doing this, making these decisions?

Heller: Well, I'll have to do them separately. Kenny said he would not run for governor. That was the first thing; under no circumstances. He was attorney general. Downey had wanted to run for governor, at that point. But he really didn't have a particular following for that position. There was a meeting of the state central committee in Fresno; it must have been before the meeting in Kenny's office, but it may not necessarily have been.

Chall: Yes, he says that it was. Kenny says that the Fresno meeting took place in late December of 1945.

Heller: Well, then, I'm right. Then I'm right. I thought it did. I went down there, and there was a meeting in, I think, Kenny's room at the hotel in Fresno. I guess, the Californian. I remember I was sent as one of the people to go to that meeting. I remember Franck Havenner was at that meeting, where we were begging Kenny to run for governor. And he was saying he wouldn't, he wouldn't.

Merv Rathborne was there also. I didn't know then, but I did learn later that he was once a member of the Communist party, because he went to the authorities and said he had been a member of the Communist party, and told the FBI everything he knew about the operation of the Communist party. He was a very nice person, by the way. He was, let's see, treasurer, I think, of the state AFL. I remember Merv Rathborne, whom I always found had been honest with me over the years, said to me, "Don't worry about it, Ellie; he will run." And I remember saying to him, "How do you know, Merv?" He said, "I know the pressures that will be brought on him, and he will run." And you see, this was the Communist pressure. I think I referred last time to the fact that Kenny thought he could manipulate minorities, but they manipulated him.
Heller: I guess I didn't want to see Downey run for governor; I guess that was part of the problem. Downey had no following; he wasn't going to get it. And that was where Kenny was endorsed, wasn't he, at that--

Chall: Endorsed by whom?

Heller: The state central committee, at that meeting in Fresno?

Chall: Oh, I don't know. I don't have any information except that Mr. Malone said some other technique should be used for endorsing than the central committee. I think that you were just plotting then.

Heller: Well, maybe we were plotting. It was a big meeting, though, in Fresno.

Chall: You think he was endorsed? Can the state central committee endorse?

Heller: Well, if it wasn't the state central committee, it was a big--

Chall: It was a state central committee meeting.

Heller: It was?

Chall: Yes.

Heller: Well, they did everything but endorse. And Downey pulled himself out as a result of that. But I remember beginning to be uncomfortable at that meeting—though I wanted Kenny, at that time, to run—because I didn't like the people at that meeting, in Kenny's room. I remember Malone and others were at the meeting, but they were Downey's group, particularly, and I never was that wild about Downey. But I felt very uncomfortable with the people who were sitting there, pressuring Kenny—it's very hard to tell why you get these impressions—and thinking, "Good heavens, Franck Havenner is the only person that I would feel at home with out of this group of people." Well, maybe Merv Rathborne. I just didn't like them. It's funny how these things come over you. I know I was very uncomfortable there.

Well, Kenny agreed to run at some point, anyway. And then there was a meeting in Kenny's office; I remember that very well. And I think the matter of Jack Shelley's running [for lieutenant governor] was not a great deal of plotting, one way or the other. Jack was very popular at that point. I don't think there was any big plotting on Jack. And Jack Shelley was always a political friend of mine, and of course, violently anti-Communist. Well, I don't want to say violently, but, known to be anti-Communist.

This was where Ellis Patterson and Will Rogers ran. That I remember about, too. Ellis Patterson was very much of the left wing. I don't know if he was a Communist; I doubt it. And Kenny, by the way,
Heller: was never a Communist, either, though a lot of people thought he was, eventually. But he wasn't. But Ellis Patterson fooled around with these people, with the real left-wing people. Before the meeting in Kenny's office, some of us, including Malone and Shelley--

I well remember Shelley in this--probably Julia, were determined that we would not have Ellis Patterson as our candidate for Senator, and couldn't find anybody who was willing to run. Who was he running against?

Chall: Knowland.

Heller: Yes, against Bill Knowland. That's right. Then I remember one day, Bill Malone said to me, "Will you go to Los Angeles and look over Will Rogers, Jr.? It's a good name; go to a meeting that's being held down there, and see what you think of him." This was sort of a desperation move. I don't think Bill was trying to keep himself out of it; it probably wasn't convenient for him to go down. And I went down and met Will Rogers, Jr., and thought he was a very nice young man. He turned out to be a terrible candidate, by the way.

Chall: He had been in Congress.

Heller: Yes, that's right.

Chall: And Patterson had his seat when Rogers went into the army.

Heller: That's right. Well, he was a very nice man. I remember coming back and saying that I liked him, and that I would support him, if he would run for the Senate. I told him when I met him. So it was agreed. Now, Kenny was not part of this, you see. He was playing both sides, there, that we would support Will Rogers against Ellis Patterson. And then came the meeting in Kenny's office, where Kenny was to decide if he would support Will Rogers. Now, Kenny doesn't put that out, I don't think, in his memoirs, does he?

Chall: Well, yes; he talks about this, too. But you tell it in your way.

Heller: Yes. But there was an expression that he used.

Chall: Yes, he did. He used an expression which I'll give you: "A package deal with an option."

Heller: That's it. He had said he would support Will Rogers before we got there. But then the pressure started coming in from the other side.

Chall: I see.
Heller: And of all people that I remember there--it's the one and only time I met him--I'd heard him speak--was Harry Bridges. And Harry Bridges was a delightful person; I must say he's one of the brightest people I ever met. But he sure was pushing Bob Kenny into supporting Ellis Patterson. You know, you never knew whether Harry Bridges was or was not a Communist. He certainly seemed to be a lot of the time, but he was too cagey to ever say.

Kenny backtracked and backtracked in that meeting, in his office. It ended up on a Sunday. I remember that perfectly well, for a strange reason. It may have gone on the day before. Jim Smyth was there; Jack Shelley was there. Was Julia at that meeting?

Chall: She says that she was, yes.

Heller: Oh, well, if she says so, she was. There were official negotiators sent from both sides; that was what it was.

Chall: Oh, I see.

Heller: I think Jim Smyth and Jack Shelley and probably Julia and I were the ones--

Chall: And Malone?

Heller: And Malone, to do the negotiating. And that was my first really coming face to face with the pushing, real pushing from the left wing. Kenny just did this package deal thing with an option, and I think it was Squire Behrens who picked up that expression and used it all the way through the campaign. But I remember I was going to come down here for lunch. What day--

Chall: Kenny says that it was late February, but he doesn't give a date for it. I haven't checked.

Heller: Well, it could well have been. I can't tell you.

Chall: And I don't know what day, or anything.

Heller: Mrs. E.S. Heller used to come down every Sunday--

Chall: Oh, I see.

Heller: And she'd always have people for lunch. And I remember on the spur of the moment inviting Harry Bridges to join maybe Shelley, or Malone, or I didn't know who, to come down for lunch. He was absolutely charming.
Chall: Did you have a pleasant lunch?

Heller: Yes, yes; it was delightful. It's the only time that I ever met him face to face. I don't think he could possibly ever remember this.

But that's where the decision was made, or not made, really. And that's where we split with Kenny, to a degree. And of course, Kenny ran the worst campaign that ever was, and was defeated. In the primary by Earl Warren. Isn't that right?

Chall: Yes, he was.

Heller: Yes. And he should have been. And Will Rogers was not so bad in the primary, because he had a position. And Ellis Patterson was not very well liked. He could get through the primary okay, but he made a terrible candidate after the primary. He just paid no attention to it; he was an impossible candidate.

Chall: You mean, he wouldn't do what he was expected to do? He wasn't organized?

Heller: He wouldn't show up at meetings.

Chall: Oh, I see.

Heller: He wouldn't show up to make speeches when he was supposed to. He was just impossible.

But before that, I remember Kenny just going apart, during the primary. We could see him drinking and drinking and drinking; we'd have meetings and he'd be drunk. There was just nothing to do with Kenny. That was the low spot of Kenny's life, I think. I've never been sure about this, but I'm pretty sure that that Communist group manipulated Kenny and he thought he was a manipulating man and it went the other way. He just was taking their program. He thought he was forcing whatever his program was and it went the other way. Well, that's why I remember quite a bit about the 1946 campaign.

Chall: Do you remember anything about Lucille Gleason being the candidate, or nominee for the secretary of state? Was that someone's decision?

Heller: Vaguely. Didn't seem to be very important. She was sort of nice, I think. I don't remember much about it.

Chall: Kenny says that he had hoped Evans Carlson would run for the Senate, but he was very ill. In fact, he died a few months after he had been proposed.

Heller: That's true.
Chall: Do you remember Carlson?

Heller: Well, I remember that Merv Rathborne asked Ed Heller and me, if he could bring Colonel Carlson to this house, you know, one evening to meet us, or one afternoon. What was he, a Marine Colonel?

Chall: I don't know.

Heller: He was very charming. But he turned out to be very much involved with the left wing, too. So I did meet him; he was quite charming, but had no—he was more a war hero than anything else. But I think this was part of a left wing, or at least the IPP, takeover plan.

Chall: I see.

Heller: But then he didn't run.

Chall: No.

Heller: And this is where this whole mess came around with Ellis Patterson.

Chall: Do you remember anybody considering Jimmy Roosevelt as a candidate for governor at that time?

Heller: No.

Chall: Kenny points out that he had thought about him.

Heller: Well, he may have. But I don't remember.

Chall: And even Manchester Boddy, he said, urged Jimmy Roosevelt to run, but he didn't want to.

Heller: Well, it's very hard to believe anything about Manchester Boddy, really, when you think about what evolved later with him. A very dignified looking man, but he was completely in the pay of the Hearsts, which we didn't know at that time.

Chall: And what about Pat Brown? Of course, he lost to [Frederick N.] Howser. He had come to your attention before, I'm sure, when he was district attorney.

Heller: Oh, yes; I had known Pat. It was not a Democratic year. That's all there was to it. There was just nothing. I went to quite a few campaign meetings with the troops—that's the word. You know, with Shelley, or Kenny, or Pat Brown. Pat always was sort of above all this, and I don't mean this in a very fancy way. Except Pat could never be accused of playing with the left wing. It just wasn't in him to do anything like that. And he just fumbled along; it never did him any harm, you know.
Chall: It brought his name up to the voters statewide.

Heller: Yes.

Chall: Because the next time he ran he won.

Heller: That's right. And that was the point at which we got Fred Trott, didn't we?

Chall: No. That comes in '50.

Heller: I don't know; I don't even want to think about that.

Chall: But there was the Democratic State Central Committee meeting in '46, and that's the time that Jimmy Roosevelt became chairman.

[Interview 9: May 24, 1978]#

Chall: I think that last week when I left, we hadn't got through the Democratic State Central Committee meeting of 1946, when Jimmy Roosevelt was elected chairman against Thomas Scully.

Heller: I don't really remember that.

Chall: You don't recall it. Okay. You used to go to those state meetings but didn't pay much attention. Is that right?

Heller: I never knew what was going on at them. Yes, I went to them.

Chall: Okay. We'll forget that one. Well then, we'll get into 1948, and those preliminaries.

Heller: There's one thing I should say about these state central committee meetings that somebody reminded me of this week. We'd discussed it earlier—about the fifty-fifty rule?

Chall: Yes.

Heller: But you know, it didn't work out, originally, for a long time, the way it was supposed to. All the men who would have gone, just had their wives appointed to be the woman. And then they took their proxies and they went in place of their wives.

Chall: I heard about the proxies in those days.

Heller: Oh, yes; I believe it's true.

Chall: And then the proxies, were, according to the critics of Mr. Malone, the proxies were all Mr. Malone's proxies, and they would do just what he said.
Heller: Well, the proxies weren't quite that way. But I have an example of it later on. He always took the San Francisco County committee, or San Francisco proxies. But various people had the other proxies, that he trusted; I can't say all.

Chall: That's a good point.

Heller: Though the south was always so split, that nobody trusted anybody particularly in the south. It was really very funny.

Chall: The north is so much smaller in that time; I guess it's easier to control fewer votes. Well, actually [that isn't so] it had more counties.

Heller: We had the state senate, up here. You see, the senate was absolutely Northern California.

Chall: That's right.

The Election Campaign, 1948

Chall: Well, 1948 looks like a year full of--

Heller: Well, I don't want to go to '48--without doing '47.

Chall: Oh, no, we can't; we have to start back.

Heller: Yes.

Chall: All right. That whole matter of the policy committee. Is that when things got complicated?

Heller: Which policy committee?

Chall: That's the one that the Democratic State Central Committee set up. James Roosevelt set it up.

Heller: Yes. Well, I don't have the exact date of that, but it must have been in the spring of--what, '47?

Chall: That's right. I generally have dates that say April to July, something like that.

Heller: Well, it's someplace in through there. And there's where proxies come in.
Heller: I'm just looking through some of your notes; it's hard for me to find all these notes, because I've got them in two places. But there was a meeting in Los Angeles, called by Jimmy Roosevelt, on this whole policy committee.

Chall: Well, I have a Los Angeles meeting on April 8. Does that seem about right?

Heller: That's a Los Angeles County Democratic Central Committee.

Chall: Yes.

Heller: Yes. Well, go back to March 12 on your own notes--

The Effect of the Truman Doctrine

Heller: --of '47, in which Truman asked Congress for military aid to Greece and Turkey, in the Truman Doctrine. Because I can sort of take it from there more easily.

Chall: Go ahead.

Heller: I guess that was March 12, as you have it. It makes no difference to me. It just came out of a bolt, as far as I knew. I happened to go to San Jose, late that afternoon, for one of these big meetings that was going on all the time, but I particularly remember this one because Eleanor Roosevelt was there. One of my few personal contacts with her. Just before the meeting, somebody said to me, "How do you feel about military aid to Greece and Turkey?"--that Truman had just proclaimed. And usually I need to know more about something before I give an answer, and I don't know why I said, "I'm for it." I've never understood why I was so sure at that point, because it was contrary to all the sort of FDR--more liberal thinking.

Then before whatever this meeting was, Mrs. Roosevelt came along and met with maybe twenty people, and had started talking about that. She was violently against this aid to Greece and Turkey. I remember--I don't know how I ever had the nerve to speak up, but I told her I thought she was completely wrong, and that I thought Truman was right to do this. She was not very pleased with me at the moment at all. She was very much against it.
Heller: And let me say that I don't think that Mrs. Roosevelt was ever—she always resented Harry Truman, in my opinion. You know, he followed her husband, and, I think in her mind, he was a very unimportant person. She just felt Truman didn't have a grasp of anything. And I think this carried over into Jimmy Roosevelt. I'll only speak about Jimmy Roosevelt, because the rest of the Roosevelts I only knew very casually. He was always resentful of Truman, too. I have to keep emphasizing this is my own personal belief. And so, Jimmy Roosevelt, you know, was easily had by people who were opposed to aid to Greece and Turkey. I noticed you mention George Outland who drew up a policy statement.

Chall: That's right.

Heller: Your outline says in June, you know, under the auspices of the Democratic State Central Committee. And it may have been June that we had this meeting in Los Angeles. That may have been when we had this Democratic State Central Committee meeting. It was in Los Angeles for sure. And I went down just loaded with proxies. I had almost all Northern California proxies, with a few exceptions. John McEnery had some; he was vice-chairman then of the state central committee.

Chall: Right.

Heller: Hated Jimmy Roosevelt.

Chall: Yes.

Heller: Didn't hate him so much to start, but hated him as it went on. Ollie Carter, Oliver Carter, came down from Redding with a group of northern valley proxies.

Chall: I see.

Heller: And we were all determined to lick this policy statement that Jimmy Roosevelt was trying to push through, against the Truman Doctrine. We licked him. We licked him badly. You see, all your note says is that--

Chall: In June twenty-sixth?

Heller: Yes. It picks up the matter of the policy statements. But, we had licked him right in through there, wherever the Democratic State Central Committee meeting was, and I can't establish that date. We beat him very badly.

Chall: Now, beating him means what? That you required him to make some changes in the statement?

Heller: That we supported the Truman foreign policy, that was all.
Heller: We defeated him in draft, which was to go on record against aid to Greece and Turkey in the Truman Doctrine. And we defeated that, and I think, ended up with a resolution that supported Truman foreign policy. I'm not sure about that; we certainly defeated that draft, that Jimmy Roosevelt was determined to get through. And then after we defeated him, Jimmy had this way—of Roosevelt—this way of turning around and acting as if he had won. I remember that. That was a bitter, bitter fight, and I'm happy to say we won. I always felt good about it. And then, I want to tell you something, because this fits in with the whole times.

We had a local club. This was before the Democratic clubs were organized, and some places had clubs and some didn't. We had what was called a Palo Alto Democratic Club. We had been increasingly bugged, a few of us by the left wing control that was being exercised, in those club meetings, on the most minor things.

Chall: In your own club meeting?

Heller: In our own small club. They just outsat us. They would just stay; they'd stay all night until we'd finally drop out and go home. And then they'd put through these outrageous resolutions on whatever they wanted to. There were about nine of us who had made up our minds we would not have anything more to do with this. Well, that club was meeting the night I was in Los Angeles. And though I wasn't present, eight of them walked out of the club that night and announced that I, too, was walking out. I want to give you their names, because it was quite a thing. It was one of the first real breaks that occurred.

Carol and Eugene (Bud) Burdick. They were living in Palo Alto at that time. Ted Kreps, Theodore Kreps, who was a professor at Stanford. Tom Barclay, you know, a professor of political science at Stanford. Bob Peckham, who is now a federal court judge. Frannie [Frances] Fisher—who subsequently married Joe Houghteling who came along just after that—and her good friend Trudy Moore, and Roland Davis. I think that's the list. Of course, I immediately was part of that group, and we set up another club, called the, let's see, the Palo Alto-Stanford Democratic Club.

The other group started falling apart, and by November, everybody had moved into our club except the absolute hard-core Communists. There were one or two that I think were members of the Communist party. Of course, they gave up by then. But this is the period where we're all beginning to find out what was going on.

Chall: I see.
Heller: And opposition to the Truman Doctrine—I don't want to say it was Communist per se—but it was adhered to by members of the Communist party.

Chall: Yes.

Heller: Well, that was why I wanted to go back to 1947, because that was all the beginning of the Wallace for president movement.

Chall: Yes.

Heller: And I must correct my facts about the IPP; it started in 1948.

Chall: Right. That's right. I looked into it.

Heller: You probably checked it, too.

Chall: Yes, I did.

Heller: It was all 1948. Well, the Wallace movement started first. Some people were attracted to it, and they went to a big meeting in Bakersfield, or Fresno; they were very taken with Wallace. But it didn't develop into a big thing, though some people thought it would. Then I saw people dropping away from it; they really didn't like it, because it came so, extremely left wing, Communist dominated, that people who joined it for idealistic reasons just had to drop out.

Chall: I see.

Heller: And out of that came the IPP—that we discussed before.

Chall: Yes.

Heller: Okay, that's what I wanted to straighten out.

Chall: Good. Well, there was a lot of ferment in the party.

Heller: Oh, it was horrible. You know, it was just a horrible time. It was the pre-Joseph McCarthy time. But it was the beginning of horrible times.

George Outland, Jimmy Roosevelt, and Langdon Post were all very intimate at that period. I was not intimate with any of them, though I didn't dislike Jimmy Roosevelt, in 1946. But this attempt to move the state central committee began making me feel not too comfortable with him.

Chall: I saw in our office files a final draft of this whole foreign policy report that was printed.
Heller: Oh yes.

Chall: I didn't read it all but I believe that what happened was that any statement that was critical of the so-called Truman Doctrine was deleted from it. But it was printed as if it were, you know, a finished document. I didn't make a copy of it; it was bound into an oral history volume.*

Heller: Oh, well that's what happened to it, then. I knew we defeated it, whatever it was.

Chall: Yes; I did see letters from various people who were opposed to it at the time it was being drafted and redrafted, when party leaders were reviewing it.

Heller: Yes.

Chall: But Pat Brown wrote to Jimmy Roosevelt that he thought it—that was the original draft—was outstanding.

Heller: Well, Pat never thought very much about these things.

Chall: It was kind of interesting.

Heller: He swayed back and forth. That was Pat. And I'm not critical of Pat Brown, whom I like very much. But he could move back and forth and around.

Chall: Of course there were some very strong stands taken by Will Rogers, Jr., and Pauley, and [John B.] Elliot and others, who really wrote rather long letters, indicating just exactly what passages they disapproved of and why.

Heller: Of course there were quite a number of Southern Californians opposed, also, to it. But I honestly don't remember which ones they were; I was much too concerned with the Northern California votes and proxies.

Chall: If you had most of the votes in the way of proxies, did you have to do a great deal to keep your votes in order during the debates? Were people swayed at all by the arguments?

Heller: No. I think not. There's always a lot of emotion in those debates, but I knew I had the proxies. I knew John McEnery had his, and Ollie Carter was very solid, very solid, with his proxies, very firmly knowing that he was not going to be part of this, either. But I don't think any of us wrote letters.

Chall: No, I didn't see any.

Heller: Oh, I think we told Jimmy what we thought of it. And ahead of time told him, probably. You know, George Outland never made his way back as a result of that, into party politics. I think he ran for Congress once, was badly defeated. That was the end of George Outland in politics. I don't say because of that; he just didn't have what it took.

Chall: I see. Another person who worked on policy, was somebody named Masterson.

Heller: Yes, I just vaguely remember that name. A big, tall, heavy guy. I don't remember him, though. I have a feeling he may have come out of Contra Costa County, and been a friend of George Miller, Jr., and the congressman who was very, very left wing, probably close to a member. What was his name?

Chall: Robert Condon?

Heller: Yes. I think that was where Masterson came from. I think it was probably Robert Condon probably getting Masterson to do this. It's very likely. That would be the one part of Northern California that would have, maybe would have gone along with that on the whole, as a geographic entity.

Chall: I see. So we get into December, when Edwin Pauley resigns as the national committeeman.

Heller: Well, he just had to. He was in so much trouble nationally on being appointed, what was it? Truman had to finally withdraw his name.

Chall: Yes, and I've forgotten the reason.

Heller: Something in the army or Defense Department? Something, because of his so-called oil deals and manipulations?

Chall: Yes. Dealings on the commodity market.

Heller: Well, I don't know. It was very unpleasant. He resigned, because he would have been ousted. He was just no use as national committeeman, as far as California was concerned. I think I mentioned that last time.

Chall: Yes. So it didn't make much difference if he resigned then.

Heller: No, not really.
Selecting the California Delegation

Chall: I noticed that you and Jimmy Roosevelt were supposed to take care of all of the business handled by the national committee in California.

Heller: Yes, I don't think we had a national committeeman until the delegation selected one.

Chall: That's right.

Heller: As far as I remember, that's the way it was handled.

Chall: So I suppose he took Southern California and you continued with Northern California? Was that how you might think of it?

Heller: Well, probably. And there wasn't that much that you had to do. Because, as you see, we had, for the first time, we had each congressional district choosing a list of delegates from whom a delegation could be chosen. And it was the fairest that there had ever been, up to that point, in a representative way.

Chall: And that, as I understand it, was simply a compromise because it was so difficult to make the choices that year—the factions were so strong.

Heller: Well, yes, I guess it was.

Chall: According to my notes, Susie Clifton said that Pauley wanted to name the delegation with the help of Tom Scully.

Heller: I wouldn't doubt it. He always wanted to name everything. I wouldn't doubt that for a minute. But there wasn't any way that he could, by that time. He was really out of it, from the point of view of the state. Oh, and Susie, I'm sure, would be accurate about that.

Chall: So this, I understand, was a compromise that you worked out with Howard McGrath.

Heller: As far as I remember, yes. It seemed fair enough, and it worked out pretty well, I think. In that way you could work with Jimmy Roosevelt. And I'm sure I let him, on the whole, choose the Southern California at-large, and we picked the Northern California.

Chall: With whom do you remember picking the delegates—with the executive committee of the central committee?

Heller: I did that so often that it's hard for me to remember.
Chall: Yes, which was which.

Heller: I have a tendency to be very fair when I do that sort of thing. And I think I was seeing to it that it was a fairly decent representation.

Chall: Well, it was supposed to be. According to Dean Cresap, it was a good cross-section of all the factions, and that's what made it so difficult to work with it when it got to the convention.*

Heller: Well, of course; it's impossible.

That is always my tendency, in anything I have to deal with. I wanted to be pretty fair about getting different factions represented. And I really and truly don't remember the details of it at all.

Chall: Well, somebody else has probably already remembered it.

Heller: Yes. I don't doubt it.

Chall: Now, the Examiner [February 1, 1948], discussing this, said that because it had all been so nicely worked out beforehand, I mean this whole compromise, "that it went through almost without debate, and with a neatness and dispatch that revealed James Roosevelt to be thoroughly in control of the Democratic party machinery in California." I wondered how you felt about that.

Heller: I think they were far removed from that. I just don't think so at all.

Chall: You don't think it reflected his--

Heller: I think he had been slapped down already on that platform, and I think he wasn't going to tinker anymore. The Examiner's political reporting, at that point, was very dubious, in my opinion.

Chall: I see. It really doesn't indicate his being in control at all, then?

Heller: I can't remember that he was at all. Maybe in the Southern California portion. I noticed that there's a note in your material that we added Will Rogers, Jr., and, who was the other?

Chall: Dockweiler, Henry Dockweiler.

Heller: Dockweiler, who would be from the very conservative group--Dockweiler in Los Angeles. Probably did that to balance it a little bit better, though I don't know who was put off.

Chall: Was Henry Dockweiler the son of Isidore Dockweiler?

Heller: I believe so. I believe so. He was a very meek sort of person.

Chall: Henry?

Heller: Yes. Very pleasant, meek, conservative. No troublemaker that I can remember in any way. Not very assertive.

Chall: Part of a political family--long standing.

Heller: Yes, I believe he was part of an old Los Angeles family, too, in which we didn't have many Democrats.

Chall: Well, then, there followed some difficult meetings of the delegates.

Heller: Oh, we had a--I don't know that I could give it to you exactly chronologically.

Chall: Just what you remember, is all right. The chronology isn't important.

Heller: Well, let me say that I didn't always know what was going on. It was very hard to know. But by the time we met at San Luis Obispo, where there was a delegation meeting, there were more little secret caucuses going on. I barely knew what was happening. The name of Ike had not emerged yet, because Truman was still, for all intents and purposes, heading our delegation.

Chall: But there were people pulling away from him.

Heller: Pulling away. I never was sure of what was going on there. But I first got an inkling that Jimmy Roosevelt and whoever else was working with him--Now the material you gave me, indicates that Helen Douglas was not part of a group, though she was certainly in on those inner meetings, that I was not a part of. There were plots and counterplots going on. We began to realize that Jimmy Roosevelt, and I put it on Jimmy, because he was the front person, whatever anybody may say, you know, who said that our pledge would not stand up in a court of law. We'd all signed a pledge, that regular state pledge.

Oh, I was just--when I think about it, it just makes me mad all over again. Typical. That's why Jimmy Roosevelt was no good ever. You know, I signed the pledge, and most people who signed the pledge, they just felt you had to honor the pledge, even if it won't
Heller: stand up in a court of law. But Jimmy Roosevelt kept saying, "I have no obligation to vote for Truman." But he did not have a candidate, to the best of my knowledge, at that point.

It was a messy meeting; it was a very uncomfortable meeting. However, they did elect the national committeeman and committeewoman at that meeting, contrary to what had been the precedent.

Chall: How come? How come they did it in that fashion?

Heller: I don't remember. I think it may have been a combination of Jimmy wanting to be national committeeman, and there being no national committeeman. He wanted to get elected before whatever he had up his sleeve became too apparent.

Chall: I see.

Heller: Before there was any revolt against him. It didn't make any difference to me, one way or the other, and it seemed okay to do it and not have to go through that nonsense at the convention; there's always plenty going on at the convention. There may have been more reasons, but this is what I, basically, think was the main reason—that we didn't have a committeeman, people were anxious to have one, Jimmy was anxious to get elected. He had no problem being elected committeeman at all. I think that's why it was done; it seemed rather orderly.

Chall: Yes, yes.

Heller: There were a few screams, probably, but not down there. It was an unpleasant couple of days.

Chall: Of the faction opposing Truman, did it come almost entirely out of the Southern California delegation?

Heller: Mostly. Because these were delegates, remember.

Chall: Yes, yes.

Heller: I don't remember—most who were opposing Truman were not delegates, as a matter of fact.

Chall: They were alternates?

Heller: In Northern California.

Chall: Oh. Oh, I see.

Heller: There may have been some.
MINUTES
MEETING, CALIFORNIA DELEGATION
SATURDAY, JULY 10, 1948.

The meeting was called to order by the Chairman at 2 P.M., Saturday, July 10, in Room 456, Benjamin Franklin Hotel, California Headquarters.

The Secretary read the roll and determined a quorum was present. 47 delegates were present -- 32 alternates were present.

At the suggestion of the Chairman, it was moved by Mr. Maurice Saeta that the caucus be in executive session of delegates and alternates, and California press travelling with the delegation, one member each of the United Press, Associated Press, International News Service, Mrs. Oliver Carter, Mr. Joe Bender and Mr. Morton Zeigler as staff members. The motion was seconded, and, after considerable discussion, it was passed.

The Secretary read the minutes of the previous meeting, which were approved as read.

Mrs. Ruth Lybeck moved that a second alternate be selected by the committee on vacancies to serve in the absence of the first alternate serving in the place of the delegate. It was seconded and passed.

The Secretary reported on the tentative existing vacancies in the list of alternates. The report was offered to the sub-committee on vacancies for recommendation. The Chairman announced that he had appointed Assemblyman Julian Beck and Mr. Chauncey Tramutolo to serve with him on this committee.
The Chairman made extensive opening remarks. He called attention to the general remarks he had made at the San Luis Obispo Delegation meeting. He reiterated his intention to work for the greatest amount of unity possible and the elimination of geographical division, so that the Delegation would be an effective unit at the Convention.

The Chairman explained the background and history of Section 2304, California Election Code, which sets forth the statement of preference, and in which he had been instrumental in amending at the 1939 session of the Legislature. He called attention to the opinion of the Legislative Council, Deputy Attorney General and several attorneys, both Democratic and Republican. He stated that the conclusion of these opinions set forth that there was no technical legal bind, it was a matter of conscience of each delegate as to his moral obligation.

At this point Mr. Edmund Brown raised a point of order and stated the remarks of the Chairman were not pertinent. The Chair ruled the point of order was not well taken. The Chairman continued his remarks and made a plea that differences of opinion be discussed on the basis of the issue rather than personalities. He also expressed the hope that this procedure could be followed in future, especially in matters of policy and platform.

Assemblyman Vincent Thomas asked for the floor to raise the question "Are we a Truman delegation?" After a short discussion, Assemblyman Julian Beck raised a point of order in that there was no motion on the floor. The Chairman ruled the point was well taken.

Mr. Saeta asked for a call for the order of business.

The Chairman suggested that the question of the next
caucus be settled first. After discussion, Mr. George Ballard moved that the Sunday caucus be dispensed with, and that the next caucus be held at 9:00 o'clock Monday morning. It was seconded and so ordered.

The Chairman then suggested that the agenda also include a discussion of the method of obtaining badges and the discussion of recommendations to the members of the Platform Committee on the general subjects of Taft-Hartley legislation, Indian affairs, Civil Rights, Central Valley, Palestine and Tidelands.

There were no objections to this order of business.

Mr. McDonough then asked for the floor and gave his reasons why he believed that the members of the California Delegation were Truman delegates. Mr. McEnery spoke to the same question, and, after extended remarks, called for the resignation of Mr. James Roosevelt as National Committeeman-elect. After a discussion of the form of the motion, the Chair ruled that the motion had not been properly made. Mr. McEnery then moved that the Delegation ask for the resignation of the National Committeeman-elect, James Roosevelt. The motion was seconded by Will Rogers, Jr. Mr. William Malone rose to oppose the motion. Mr. Patrick McDonough raised a point of order which was ruled out by the Chairman. Mr. Malone continued his discussion. Assemblyman Julian Beck moved that the motion be tabled. After some discussion of parliamentary procedure, the motion was seconded by Mr. Maurice Saeta, and a roll-call was called for. The motion to table was carried by a vote of 40 ayes, 7 noes, 9 absent, one pass, and the Chairman announced the motion was tabled.

Mr. George Ballard asked for reconsideration, and the Chairman ruled him out of order.
Mr. Malone moved that that this delegation go on record as voting for Harry S. Truman on the first ballot. It was seconded by Mrs. Adah Dodge. After considerable discussion, Assemblyman Thomas moved that the motion be tabled. The Chairman suggested a standing vote. Mr. Malone then asked that the motion be withdrawn. Mr. Irwin DeShetler raised a point of order that a motion could not be withdrawn after debate. He was ruled out of order by the Chairman and then Mr. DeShetler appealed the ruling of the Chair. The Chairman stepped out of the Chair and turned the Chair over to the Vice-Chairman, Mrs. Adah Dodge. After discussion, the Chair was sustained in its ruling. Mrs. Esther Murray gave a report on the work of the pre-Platform Committee. Mr. Dave Foutz called for the commendation of Mrs. Murray's work on the Committee. The following recommendations were made to the members of the Platform Committee from our delegation as guidance in their work on the Committee:

Will Rogers, Jr. proposed a plank on Indian affairs favoring complete civil liberties, vote, and adequate educational facilities. Francis Dunn, Jr., proposed that we support Federal aid to public education. Irwin DeShetler proposed that we sponsor the strongest plank possible calling for the repeal of the Taft-Hartley Bill, and that the California delegation make a vigorous effort to support this plank. Louis Warschaw recommended a plank on the subject of Palestine incorporating the following points:

1. Complete abiding by the United National decision.
2. Full de jure recognition of Israel.
3. United States extend a long-term loan to Israel, and
4. The transfer of all displaced persons of Jewish faith.
5. Full support to the State of Israel in its fight
against aggression.

Reverend Clayton Russell made the following recommendations on Civil Rights:

1. An FEPC law similar to Executive Order 880 as placed in operation by President Roosevelt.
2. The strongest and most out-spoken plank in favor of free speech.
3. That there be an end to racial discrimination in the Capital of the United States.
4. That the poll tax be repealed.

Mr. Roosevelt recommended the restoration of the public housing features that were eliminated by the 80th Congress from the Wagner-Ellender-Taft Bill.

Mrs. Beatrice Shilkraout recommended that we include the 1933 plank on the Central Valley project. Mrs. Jessie Sullivan asked about our position on the tide-lands question. After some discussion Francis Dunn, Jr. suggested further consideration at a future meeting. There was no objection.

The Delegation went on record as accepting all of the above recommendations as statements in principle of the stand of the California Delegation.

Mr. Daniel DelCarlo moved for adjournment.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted.
Chall: Now, what was your opinion, at that time, about Truman? Did you think he could be elected?

Heller: I don't have a list of the '48 delegates, do I?

Chall: I think I gave it to you. Anyway, I think I brought it. Yes. Here is my copy of the delegates who were selected.

Heller: Well, I don't see any, except George Outland, who may have been opposing Truman on the at-large. I can't remember the role of Amerigo Buzzani, though I remember he was rather active. Some of the Southern Californians I'm not sure of. You notice we're in alphabetical order, for the first time.

Chall: Yes.

Heller: We're not in--I'm not sure where John Anson Ford stood in this. But he was Southern California, anyway. I'm looking at the Northern Californians. S.C. Masterson, we've mentioned before. [Patrick] McDonough, God knows. Paul Mudgett from Eureka. I. Nielsen, Pat Peabody. I think there were some alternates that were very active. I think Lou Warschaw ended up supporting Truman. In fact, he helped in the long run, but he was back and forth, I guess, on Israel.

Chall: It was the Israel stance; yes, that was his concern.

Heller: I was not very conscious of the Israel thing. And he was helpful, once we got on that train. No, I don't see any Northern Californians, except I can't remember if George Outland was living in the north, then, or not. I don't think so. Well, whatever they would have felt, they would have honored their pledge.

Chall: What were you feeling about Truman at the time? Did you think he could win? Regardless of your pledge.

Heller: No, no. I doubted it very much. But I was going to support him. Well, I did like that aid to Greece and Turkey position of his. Truman only emerges in retrospect as being a much stronger man than you knew.

Chall: I see.

Heller: But no thought of having anybody else, as far as I was concerned. He had just—oh, when did he come? In '45, he had become president.

Chall: That's right.

Heller: No; no thought of anybody but Truman.
The Convention

Chall: So, on the train, I guess there was a lot of activity with respect to Eisenhower.

Heller: It was the worst train ride of my life; that's all I can say.

Chall: What were you doing? What were you able to do on that ride, and why was it so bad?

Heller: Well, Jack Shelley (who was chairman of the delegation) and I were leading the fight to hold that delegation for Truman. I know that you have an account someplace here of that dreadful train ride, and that the Los Angeles group met us in Salt Lake City. Or in Ogden.

Chall: Oh, I think they met you in Ogden, but I do have it on page four, here. It says that by the time the train arrived in Salt Lake City, a revolt had broken out against Roosevelt, on the Southern California train. That may mean as it was moving on to meeting the northern delegation. Then when the entire delegation got to Omaha, there was more trouble.

Heller: It was just simply terrible. We were on the back of that train. That time, I remember we were on the back. We may have been. Yes, I think it must have been Ogden. It had to be Ogden or Salt Lake, one or the other. Jimmy Roosevelt was being absolutely terrible. He was issuing press statements at every point. This was where he started publicity for Eisenhower. And he was aided and abetted by a man whose name you mentioned someplace in there, who was the local head of the retail clerks union.

Chall: The person who refused to vote for Truman?

Heller: Yes.

Chall: Joseph DeSilva.

Heller: Joseph DeSilva. He was a noisy, brash labor guy. Violently against Truman. To this day I couldn't tell you whether he was a member of the Communist party, or had nothing to do with it; or whether it was a labor thing; what it was. And he was just raising havoc all across the continent, day and night. You know, with signs for Ike—I don't think we called him Ike, then, did we?

Chall: No, I think not.

Heller: Eisenhower? Jimmy Roosevelt was—that train would stop quite often, and he'd be issuing press statements. The press would meet him at every station. And there were telegrams. And he would tell how he was getting the vote for Eisenhower.
Heller: Jack Shelley, who was chairman of the delegation, and I, both happened to have brought our daughters on that trip. My daughter, Liz Heller, was about sixteen, went with me, and his daughter went with him, and we had adjoining drawing rooms, you know, in the back of the train. And either in his drawing room, or mine, we kept bringing people back to talk from the southern [California] part of the train. And people kept crowding in, and telling us to hold the line. We never got any sleep the whole time, because it kept going on, morning, noon, and night.

Chall: Well, how else were you able to deal with it? Aside from bringing people back to your rooms?

Heller: Oh, we would just say, you know, that we believed once a pledge was signed, you had to honor it. And Louis Warschaw, eventually, was very helpful.

Chall: What did he do?

Heller: Well, he finally brought Jimmy Roosevelt back to talk to us. You see, we were sort of separated. He was holding forth at one end, and we were at the other. Jimmy, I think, got the word from Eisenhower around Omaha, or after that—

Chall: Yes, I think so.

Heller: That Eisenhower would not run. So, he began to capitulate.

Chall: I see.

Heller: That's where it all occurred. He really didn't have a candidate, but he did not agree to go for Truman. One picture I did find, which made me laugh, because we were barely speaking, all the time, was this on our arrival in Chicago.

Chall: No, this was Philadelphia.

Heller: In Philadelphia; I beg your pardon. Well, here's a picture of me and my daughter Liz with Pat Brown and Roger Kent, as we were leaving. Now that wasn't the one I was looking for. That was before our whole mess occurred. You can look at these clippings if you want to, some other time.

Chall: Yes. Yes, I will.

Heller: But this will make you laugh, because Jimmy had never said he'd come out for Truman, you see, by the time we got to Philadelphia. And here's a picture of Jack Shelley, Jimmy Roosevelt, and me, smiling,
Heller: shaking hands, as we arrive at the Philadelphia train station. And we're surrounded by signs: "Nominate Jimmy Roosevelt." "Welcome Jimmy Roosevelt." Well, by then we were speaking, which was more than we had done up to then. But Jimmy did not agree to go for Truman, yet. Now doesn't that look as if we're friendly?

Chall: Yes.

Heller: Here's another one. This is of Carl Borg and "James Roosevelt ouster rejected." But here—I'm not in this one, but this is the way we had to march up to the hotel in Philadelphia, from the train.

Chall: You always had to march from the train, didn't you?

Heller: [laughs] Yes. That's Jack Shelley and Jimmy Roosevelt. I thought those might amuse you. I have quite a few clippings.

Chall: All smiles. When you say you weren't speaking, you were really angry then, I take it.

Heller: Oh, yes. Very. But Jack Shelley was a tower of strength in this thing. Pat Brown was not, at all. He was always wavering all over the lot.

Chall: Yes, I think he had said before the delegation left, that he didn't think that Truman could be elected.

Heller: Yes, Pat was in one of those impossible wavering states.

Chall: Well, he really wasn't one of the California leaders, either, at that time.

Heller: Not particularly. But you can see that picture of Pat Brown, who I guess was district attorney then.

Chall: Yes.

Heller: And Roger Kent who subsequently became a very strong state central committee chairman. Now Roger was always for Truman, of course.

Chall: You finally got to Philadelphia and had your caucus.

Heller: John McEnery was just--

Chall: Yes, he was furious, wasn't he?

Heller: He was in an emotional—I can only say, and I say it nicely—Irishman's emotion. He was just—Well, John was not much of a drinker, but you would have thought he was roaring drunk all the time. And
Jimmy Roosevelt Asked to Quit

California's 54 vote delegation to the Democratic national convention at Philadelphia sped eastward today, feuding as they went.

Northern California delegates left by train last night from Oakland, to be joined at Ogden, Utah, by the contingent from Los Angeles.

As the bay area group departed, Delegate Patrick W. McDonough, Oakland steel manufacturer and longtime Democratic leader in northern California, declared that he would carry into a Philadelphia caucus his demand that Delegate James Roosevelt quit.

McDonough said the son of the late President had "dishonored the California delegation by renouncing a pledge to support President Truman."

Roosevelt has proposed the nomination of General Eisenhower. McDonough, prior to his departure, released this telegram to Roosevelt:

"In view of the fact that you have dishonored the California delegation, according to the newspapers, by publicly renouncing your sworn affidavit to the Democratic voters of California to support President Truman, I ask that you resign from the delegation so that confidence may be restored in the integrity of the California delegation."

Roosevelt was not available for comment before he entrained from Los Angeles last night, but, at an impromptu rally before departure of the southern California delegates from Los Angeles, he said:

"I am still convinced that General Eisenhower would respond to a genuine draft. Every poll indicates he is the people's choice to guide them in the four critical years ahead."
Cal. Demos at Philly

James Roosevelt (center) shakes hands with John F. Shelley, chairman of California delegation to the Democratic national convention, as group arrived at Philadelphia today. Left is Mrs. Edward H. Heller, nationally committeewoman of San Francisco. Signs surrounding them are carried by a welcoming contingent of Democrats.

—Associated Press Wirephoto.
Heller: he was determined to get rid of Jimmy Roosevelt—"that traitor," as he called him. He was so keyed up. I remember the first night in the hotel. I dropped into his room and there was a whole crowd there, and he just came up to me, and he ran his hands through my hair, mussed it up, he said, "I can't stand the orderliness of your hair!" You know, he had to just say something against anybody. Though he and I were perfectly friendly; I was trying to make some sense out of this thing, and John was past trying to make any sense. He just wanted to get rid of "that traitor Jimmy Roosevelt." And that's well on the record, that part.

Chall: Oh, yes, yes.

Heller: But that was turned down.

Chall: That's right.

Heller: That was turned down. Well, I'm sure I voted against getting rid of him. It made no sense, you know. I don't remember Carmen Warschaw at this meeting at all. It was Louis Warschaw, her husband, who was important at that time.

Chall: Yes. At that time.

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Heller: Well, just to go back, Oliver Carter was on that delegation, and he subsequently was elected chairman of the Democratic State Central Committee.

Chall: Right.

Heller: He was a tower of good, sound strength on that train. Excellent. I don't want you to think Malone wasn't there, but he didn't get into the day-to-day maneuverings. Maybe he was tired of it, or something. Shelley and Oliver Carter were very good friends. They were both in the state senate then. They were my towers of strength, which is a silly expression to use, but you needed something.

Chall: Well, you felt, in a sense, that you were carrying the ball; is that it? And they were helping you?

Heller: Well, in a way. And Jack Shelley had to run that delegation. But Ollie Carter had a great deal of quiet authority, a very able person.

Chall: Did you feel responsible because you were on the national committee? Would this have been what thrust you into this position? Or was it just because of the way you operate?
Heller: I think more because of the way I operate.

Chall: You saw a problem and wanted to--

Heller: I see a problem and try to solve it, if I think I know the right way to go.

Chall: I see.

Heller: I'm not determined to have things my way, but once I've thought it out and I think I'm right, I do my best to work it out. That's one of the best roles I can ever play that I've found in my life.

Chall: Okay; I just wondered what it was.

Heller: Before that tape ran out, I was just going to say that Jack Shelley made a particularly strong delegation chairman. We'd never had a strong one, in my experience, before. But you must remember that he was an AFL labor leader. He had been used to tough, tough meetings. And he knew how to handle a shouting, unruly group of people. He knew just how to handle it, and he knew every parliamentary way of doing it.

Chall: Yes, that background would help.

Heller: I remember he had made up his mind that I was going to make the motion which you referred to, here, that we take a vote saying how we would vote on the first round.

Chall: Yes.

Heller: We carefully worked this out, and this was basically Shelley and Franck [Havenner] working out what the motion would be, who decided I should make the motion. I remember Jack Shelley coaching me on this.

Chall: Is that right?

Heller: Not that he was afraid, but he said, "If you don't do this, Ellie, exactly as I say, I'll throw your motion out." And he said, "I will recognize you as I open the meeting." This was the second caucus. He said, "If you say one word except to say 'I move,' and make your motion, and wait for a second—if you say one other word, your motion will be out of order." Of course this is correct Robert's Rules of Order procedure. And let me say I've remembered that all my life, that you get a motion and a second before you have a discussion.

Chall: Yes.
Heller: It's very hard to make people abide by that. But that is the way to proceed. And I remember his coaching me. He said, "This has got to be in order, if I'm ever to manage this meeting. It's got to be run completely according to Robert's Rules of Order, or we'll never get through it."

Chall: He probably knew that somebody could call him on it, who knew the rules just as well.

Heller: That's right. That's right. He knew just what he was doing. I don't think we ever would have gotten through this whole caucus thing, if we hadn't had somebody that was used to the really rough, miserable things that were going on. As I remember, this was open to the press, wasn't it?

Chall: Well, I don't know, but I think it probably was, because the press was reporting on it all the time.

Heller: I think so. I think so. Yes, I think so. It wasn't exactly a very debatable motion. After all, we had pledged. It was our intent.

Chall: And generally this is done.

Heller: And then, you know, the law doesn't say how long you stay with your candidate. So I wasn't pushing it past one ballot, and I don't remember that there was that much discussion. You have the result of the vote there.

Chall: Yes, I do. Forty-nine to thirteen.

Heller: No, thirteen abstentions.

Chall: Abstentions, yes.

Heller: Because they didn't have a candidate yet, that was their problem. In the meantime, I knew they were rushing all around, trying to find a candidate. They were talking about Douglas.

Chall: Paul Douglas?


Chall: But he gave up around then.

Heller: Yes, but they were trying to get him; they were trying to get all sorts of people. They were just--when I say "they," I mean Jimmy Roosevelt and his small group of followers were still trying; they were digging up one name after another; not one would fly. And so finally, when they couldn't get a candidate--oh, Jimmy Roosevelt didn't give up until the last minute. Now, I know that somebody says here [research notes] that he was probably pushed.
Chall: Yes.

Heller: I'm not sure he was pushed at all.

Chall: I see.

Heller: I think he was enjoying every minute of it. Well, look at that picture I just gave you, with those huge smiles. I think he loved it. You know, Roosevelt in the limelight there.

Chall: That's right.

Heller: And what I think was his natural inclination against Truman, because of the circumstances of, you know, four terms in the White House; then Truman took over. I think I, personally, without knowing much about it, would tend to disagree that he was pushed.

Chall: That he was a victim of his followers, as it's been stated.

Heller: So we eventually had the whole delegation voting for Truman, except for this half-vote of--

Chall: Yes, of DeSilva's.

Heller: DeSilva, who was an alternate. Apparently Shelley announced it as fifty-four votes, anyway, which is completely Shelley. You know, he knew what he was doing; nobody could dispute him in that roll call. He just voted them. It was a horrible time.

Chall: You weren't used to that kind of in-fighting, were you?

Heller: No. I wasn't used to it and, you know, some very nice people and some dreadful people; a great mixture.

Chall: To be right in the middle of it was--

Heller: To be right in the middle. It gave me good training to be a Regent, I think. Which was a different sort of thing.

But you wanted to know about the convention itself?

Chall: Yes; whatever you can remember.

Heller: Well, I'm not going to tell you much. I'll only tell you a couple of personal things. I noticed you mentioned the heat.

Chall: Yes.
Heller: It was unbelievable, it was so dreadful, in Philadelphia. That hall --of all the hot places, to me, Philadelphia was the worst, probably, because I had to be the most active, you know. I don't think it was so bad the night that [Alben] Barkley spoke. And it was the most-- except for the Jimmy Roosevelt fight, and some of the southern delegations acting up, which we didn't know much about--it was a very lethargic, indifferent, campaign. And Alben Barkley just took the convention by storm. He made such a magnificent speech. Here he was an elder statesman. In my mind, there was never any doubt from that minute on that, well, he would be the vice-presidential candidate, that the convention would insist on him. And it turned out that way.

Well, the other part I remember was just going, as I say, across the continent for four nights with no sleep, no sleep in Philadelphia, the heat, and we were sitting in that endless--you've mentioned the fourteen-and-a-half-hour session.

Chall: That's right; fourteen-and-a-half-hours!

Heller: Oh--it was just dreadful. Well, at some point late at night, before Barkley was nominated, but Truman had been nominated, Truman arrived in a private room back of the stage. And all people, such as I, as Democratic National Committeewoman, one by one, were being taken back to say good evening to him, or hello to him. And so, I did that and told him I was glad that he had the nomination and pleased that it would be Barkley, or whatever you say in those circumstances. He was dapper and just the way he usually was. He never seemed much different, not a bit glum, or anything.

I went back, and sat around that hall again, and you'd go out, and you'd get a drink of Coke or whatever; you were just filled with dreadful food. You know, there's no time to eat; you'd get a hot dog. I just can't begin to tell you what it's like. And all of a sudden they started the nominations for vice-president.

You asked me what it was like when they started these marches around. The heat gets even worse, you know. And you're trapped, wherever you are. You can't get through the crowd. And as they started calling for the nominations for vice-president, I thought to myself--for the one and only time in my life even to this day--I thought, if I don't get out of here I'm going to faint. I'm going to pass out. And I'll be trapped. It was just the heat, the exhaustion, the lack of food, and all that. And you won't believe it --I didn't hear Truman's acceptance speech that night.

Chall: Where were you? Where did you finally go?
Heller: Well, because I was national committeewoman—some of the automobile dealers have always had a car at the disposal of each committeeman and committeewoman—I went out and found the person who was driving my car. There was special parking. This is the one great advantage of being committeewoman—having that car. And I found that car and I went back to the hotel, and I eventually heard it on the radio. I heard Truman accept. I just knew that I couldn't take one more second of it, through complete exhaustion. Isn't that hard to believe?

Chall: Yes, but I can understand it when I read about what it must have been like.

Heller: And Truman made a wonderful speech, you know.

Chall: I see. That fired up the delegates again?

Heller: Fired up the delegates, and he attacked the—what Congress was it?

Chall: Eightieth.

Heller: The Do-Nothing Eightieth Congress.

Chall: What about the little flurry for Helen Gahagan Douglas for vice-president in your caucus?

Heller: That was nothing; it was nothing. You know, that's one of those things that reads well. It was such a minor flurry. It started with her being put on to make a speech at the convention.

Chall: Yes.

Heller: And she was the last speaker of an endless night. There was nobody left in the convention hall, but the California delegation; most of them stayed there.

Chall: I see.

Heller: Because somebody had to listen, so that we could applaud. And I stayed there for Helen's speech as did almost all the delegation; that was out of state loyalty. We gave her fine applause, but the hall was almost empty. So practically nobody ever heard her speech, actually.

Chall: It was interesting the way Kyle Palmer alluded to it. [Los Angeles Times, July 14, 1948] I just wondered what your reaction to that was.

Heller: Oh, that she'd made such a marvelous speech?
Chall: Well, he said that she, Helen Gahagan Douglas, had stepped several years ago from the legitimate stage into politics and demagoguery. He used the term diatribe to describe her speech and claimed it was extremely more vehement and denunciatory than most of the others.

Heller: It was. It was; I can remember that. Helen was an actress; you always had to remember that. She really was, and she pictured herself in this sort of role. She had a very strong voice, you know, and could use it. Yes it was. But the movement for her was on the part of some people who thought it would be nice to make, instead of the usual, like the Culbert Olson [action] we talked about—that gesture. This was another gesture, but it was ridiculous. Nothing ever came of it. But I'm sure that Helen could easily have said—what was it you said she said—that some delegates from Kansas had suggested it. "If it comes, it comes." That was [Chester] Hanson of the L.A. Times. I can well believe she'd say something like that. You know, anybody has an ego. But it never came.

Chall: Yes, I understand she wasn't even nominated because there wasn't time to do it; there was such a—I guess a long debate on the civil rights plank.

Heller: Oh, well that endless thing.

Chall: That was that long night of meeting.

Heller: Yes.

Chall: Do you recall Hubert Humphrey that night? That was the night he was supposed to have become so well known on the national scene.

Heller: Well, yes; to a degree I remember. But, was that the same night?

Chall: I think it was that long night.

Heller: Yes, that's all the same thing; all July the fourteenth [on your notes]. California— I don't know if we forced roll call vote. But we certainly voted for that strong civil rights plank. There was no problem on that sort of thing at all, with the California delegation. I mean, we'd unite on that very easily. I don't know if there was one who didn't vote for it, but it was long and endless, and I can picture these huddles around Hubert Humphrey, various delegates. Hubert Humphrey was at his most strident, at that point. He'd just come on the political scene. No, he had come on earlier, I guess.

Chall: I don't know; I think he'd recently been elected mayor of Minneapolis.

Heller: I think so. And he was chairman of the ADA, Americans for Democratic Action.
Chall: Yes.

Heller: I always liked Hubert, and I didn't like him. It was a mixture. I really liked what he stood for, but he was so voluble and so talky. He'd come out here fairly often, and I'd have lunch with him, dinner with him—I don't mean just in the big things. And he did amuse me, but he never amused me on a platform, except for the first fifteen minutes. And he'd go on—he was endless.

But his civil rights plank was fine, and I think it was the proper time to do it, because Franklin Roosevelt would never do that sort of thing, you know. And that's the sort of thing that Truman would stand on; he was very good on those. It was really the right time, I believe. But when you're sitting all that long time, you know what's in the thing. So you don't sit and listen to it. You wander around the hall, and you talk to people. There's no place to go; you can't go outside the hall, and the heat is so terrible, anyway—oh, it's endless. That's one thing that T.V. has done.

Chall: [laughs] What was your daughter's opinion of all of this?

Heller: Well, she had a wonderful time. She went to Putney School in Vermont at that time, and one or two of her friends were there; a couple of boys; I've forgotten who. One of them lived in Philadelphia outside, and he was taking her all over to all the events, and different caucuses. She learned a lot about politics and became quite active later on, in Democratic politics in San Francisco.

Chall: She didn't have to stay in the hot room, then?

Heller: Well, she could be off the floor more. And she went out with these couple of boys; I've forgotten who they are, even. And had a great time.

Chall: She had the fun of it.

Heller: She had the fun of it. Though I remember, she and I flew home; we abandoned the train and we got a flight home. And I remember she slept all the way across the continent.

Chall: Those were long flights, then.

Heller: Yes, they were pretty long flights. Yes, we did not come home with any delegation group. I think we left a little ahead.

Chall: You must have been tired yourself.

Heller: And I wasn't there when Jimmy Roosevelt spoke to the convention. That was probably more putting himself into the limelight, since he had been the chief opponent of Truman. So there you are.
Chall: What about the campaign?

Heller: Well, I can't tell you much about the campaign.

Chall: What were you doing?

Heller: Because I was in Europe.

Chall: Oh, really?

Heller: Well my husband, you know, got so wrought up during campaigns--Ed Heller. I think way back earlier, I mentioned about how mad he was in 1932, when the Garner delegation went against the FDR delegation, that he sent Al Smith a furious telegram, that he had wrecked the whole situation for Franklin Roosevelt. Ed just got himself worked into a state over elections. And of course, it went all right while Roosevelt was running for four terms, so there was no great tension. Well, by '48, he said, "I'm just not going to take another campaign." He'd get mad, he'd get into fights--

Chall: Really!

Heller: Oh, he just got himself into a state. And he said, "We're going to Europe." So after Ollie Carter was installed as state chairman, he agreed to run the state campaign and take care of it. So Ed and I left a check to help toward the running of the campaign. And off we went. We were in Europe for, I guess, September and October, a large part. Because I remember we came home on the Queen Mary, and we were held up by fog outside of New York. And more of Ed's excitement—it was election day, you see. And we were held up. We couldn't go into New York harbor.

Chall: That would be November.

Heller: Beginning of November.

We were with friends of ours from Memphis, who were also good Democrats, but not as intense as Ed Heller was. So, the morning of the election, after the votes were starting to be counted—I guess we were a day out then. No, we weren't held up—it was later. We were on the high seas. I remember Ed said to me, "I don't feel very well. I have a sore throat. I'm going to stay in bed all day." I knew that was Ed, because it was the election, that he was nervous. He didn't want to see anybody, even though it was a very unfriendly ship and you really didn't talk to people. I said, "Well, I'm going upstairs to the lounge and see what I can find out." It was a huge
lounge, and it was early in the morning. And I went up there, and there were some people huddled around a radio. I joined them and I said, "Have you heard anything about the election yet?" And they looked at me; they were all Americans (and obviously Republicans). They said, "We've lost the House and the Senate." Of course, that meant that the Democrats had won. So I rushed down to our cabin, and I remember rushing in and saying to Ed, "We've won the House and the Senate!" And Ed said, "I'm getting right up." [laughter]

He came up and listened all day. Of course, we didn't know for quite a while how it came out. I think we were the only ones on that ship, except for some English people, and our friends, the Goodmans from Memphis, who were for Truman. We had voted absentee in London; we had our ballots sent to us in London. You know, they didn't count absentee ballots until three weeks after the election, at that point. We had sent them in. But Ed just couldn't stand the strain.

But my son Clary, my oldest son, was very much involved with the campaign in San Francisco. He was around on election night; he always said he was the only one around with faith in Truman. But that wasn't really quite true. It wasn't a matter of faith or no faith, it was just nervousness. It did look as if Dewey would win.

Chall: Yes, apparently there were very few people who really thought that Truman would win.

Heller: Oh, we really didn't leave because of that. It was just the strain; Ed couldn't stand the strain of thinking of Dewey.

Chall: And if you were touring in Europe, he didn't think about it too much?

Heller: No, he didn't think about it, because you don't see the headlines day to day. That was the year we were in Italy for about six weeks.

Chall: I see. Where were you when the news came that Truman had won?

Heller: Still on the ship. And that was where we were having a terrible time. That's why I remember the fog. We couldn't get any communications. And I kept, on our ship to shore phone, trying to locate people. I couldn't find anybody. We wanted to know how California had gone. We'd found out that Truman had won, but we had no idea what had happened in California. I just couldn't locate anyone; everybody was probably out celebrating. I finally—my sister isn't terribly interested in politics, but I finally located her, and found out from her that Truman had carried California. Because naturally, New York news wouldn't carry what California had done. That's where we were held up by fog.

Chall: In the New York harbor.
Heller: Yes. Later on. Very exciting time, but I don't think Ed Heller would have lived through it if he had been here; he would have been in so many fights. So that's where I was. But before that, it was a matter of Ollie Carter--

Chall: That's right. That's the Democratic State Central Committee.

Heller: Yes.

Chall: There wasn't much of a problem, was there?

Heller: No. Ollie Carter was a very popular state chairman. Excellent choice. You know, they said that the new chairman would be Oliver Carter, if he will accept. His wife, who died long before he died—he remarried—they were country people. Ollie was always very proud of the fact he was north county, you know, Redding. And she really didn't want Ollie to get involved in this thing. She really and truly didn't. Ollie was not running for the state senate again. She was really very apprehensive about Ollie's future; what would happen? She wasn't used to city living, and they had to live in San Francisco if he was going to do this job. And that's where the reluctance came, was from her. I remember this very distinctly.

But Ollie was a very popular choice, and an excellent state chairman, in my opinion. He was very sensible. He was the first person, I think I mentioned before, to whom I ever would give my proxies on the national committee, because I knew he'd always vote sensibly, whatever the vote was. He was a very good person. Very, very good.

Chall: So the battle was really over the Southern California vice-chairman?

Heller: Yes, and you know, we never involved ourselves. We let Southern California decide. And then, the north would usually go along with the Southern California decision. It seemed by far the easiest thing to do.

Chall: Certainly.

Heller: You never could make head or tail out of Southern California. That was when George Luckey, an unlikely character, became chairman of the southern division.

Chall: Did you get to know him at all?

Heller: But he did make the magazines, you know. He used to dress up as a cowboy.

Chall: Ride a white horse, or something.
Heller: Ride a white horse. He was quite well to do, if I remember. Whereas Ollie Carter was really much more of a country boy, in his own way. But you know, once these choices are made, then they're made, and you go on. But Ollie ran that campaign. It was awfully hard to get even a chairman, for the Truman campaign. Nobody wanted it. Nobody thought very much about the state chairman for Truman. Was it George T. Davis?

Chall: Yes.

Heller: You know, that's the attorney, the quite flamboyant attorney. He's taken a lot of flamboyant cases. Well, nobody else would take it. Ben Duniway agreed to be San Francisco chairman; he was first class. He's now a Federal State Court of Appeals justice. And Julia Porter. Julia's right to say the campaign was very difficult to head. I see you quote Julia Porter here.

Chall: Yes.

Heller: It was; it was. But I wasn't here for the campaign.

Chall: You just heard about it.

Heller: But good old loyal Julia kept going. It was almost impossible to run a campaign. It was Truman himself who did it, and Dewey who lost it.

Chall: Well, it must have been a great surprise to all of you, except for the few who didn't give up hope.

Heller: Well, I have friends who really had decided they would vote for Dewey, because they thought the Democrats had been in long enough. And they did. They've told me since that by the time the returns came in that night, they forgot they had voted for Dewey, and were out celebrating for Truman. Well, it was such a sort of a nice surprise, and Truman was so happy.

Chall: Yes. India Edwards claims that only Truman and India Edwards, in that campaign, were sure he was going to win, that even the national committee chairman and others would say, "Why are you working so hard on this campaign? He's not going to win, and there's no point in ruining your health"—things like this, because even they didn't believe it.

Heller: Well, it was very hard to raise money for that campaign. But Truman really did it himself. I don't think you can put it down—I'm sure India Edwards worked hard for him, but I don't think anybody's work had anything to do except for that of Truman himself, who had a national platform, after all, whenever he spoke.
Chall: Yes, that's right. No, I think that she just had such confidence in him, that she was sure he would win.

Heller: Yes. I think that could well be true.

Chall: But other people felt that he couldn't make it.

Heller: Oh, I don't want to say that people exactly gave up. I think my son Clary Heller thought he would make it. But, you know, you can make claims like that. For instance, well, I had points in '52, when I thought Stevenson could make it. Had he made it I would have said I believed it. If you see what I mean. It's very easy retroactively to say what you thought.

Chall: Now how did you get along in the interim with James Roosevelt as national committeeman? Was it different from working with Pauley?

Heller: A little bit different. He was around more, and he did not have the national problems. You would think he might have, but he didn't. He was not particularly well liked, nationally. He was not unpleasant to work with at all, except Jimmy had no real principles, he could switch around quite a bit. He spoke well, almost automatically. He sounded like his father. I don't think he thought things through very well. There were all sorts of rumors starting about Jimmy Roosevelt around that time, you know, about his dealings in Boston when his father was president. He was not considered great on the national scene.

Chall: And of course I'm sure Truman didn't have much respect for him.

Heller: Truman had very little respect. Having a strong chairman like Ollie Carter, I didn't have to worry particularly about Jimmy Roosevelt. I left that to the south, really. We were perfectly friendly, but I don't remember anything about patronage, as far as Jimmy Roosevelt goes. I just don't remember it; that's all I can say.

Chall: So you just continued to operate the way you always had, then.

Heller: Well, Downey was still Senator. He would consult with Bill Malone to some extent. There's so little patronage, really. There wasn't that much.

Chall: You still weren't interested in it, whatever there was?

Heller: No.

Chall: I mean, you didn't have any place in it.
Heller: In these documents--1950, or a little later--there's a letter from Justice William Denman, to me as national committeewoman, saying it was outrageous that Federal Judge Erksine's spot had not been filled.

Chall: That was that long period when nobody would fill the judgeship.

Heller: And asking me in his most courtly manner to please do something about it. And the carbon of my answer is there. So it will corroborate what I've told you. I said, since Senator Downey's no longer Senator, I had told the congressional delegation that I wanted nothing to do with patronage, and it would be in their hands, and I couldn't do a turnaround and try to get into this. You can see the letter, which is there.

Meeting Adlai Stevenson, 1949

Heller: While Ollie Carter was still chairman--I just want to mention one part that leads to the rest. It's hard for me to place everything, but I know this was when Ollie Carter was chairman--there was some sort of a big meeting held by the national committee. I don't think it was an actual national committee meeting--it may have been--in Chicago. And though it may have been on many subjects, I remember it mostly as being a matter of health insurance. You know, Truman was always very interested in health insurance, and Oscar Ewing, who was his secretary for health, known as Jack Ewing, was pushing that very hard. You can read articles about how Jack Ewing was taken on as being for socialized medicine, and all that. The meeting probably had other subjects that were being discussed, but I particularly remember that subject.

Ollie Carter and I decided to go to it. We went back by train; we were still all riding trains, believe it or not. And then we found that, on the same train, though we didn't know they were going to be on it, were John McEnery and Pat Peabody, who had been active. You see his name as a delegate occasionally. And Pat actually was from Chicago. He lived down this way, and his family was the Peabody Coal Company of Chicago. They were on the train, too, and so the four of us went back. It was in Chicago, at that time, that I first met Adlai Stevenson. And at that moment, I knew who I wanted my next candidate to be, for president.

Chall: He was the governor, then, of Illinois.

Heller: He was the governor, then, of Illinois, the new governor. And I was enchanted with him. I remember after I came back, people would say, "Well, who have you got to run?" And I'd say, "Adlai Stevenson," and they'd look blank. I'd say, "You've heard of the new Democratic
Hon. William Denman, Chief Judge
United States Court of Appeals
San Francisco 1, California

Dear Judge Denman:

I would like to give you a statement of the facts in regard to my position in the matter of the vacancy on the Federal Bench caused by the death of Judge Herbert Erakine.

Almost immediately following Judge Erakine's death I told the Northern California Democratic Congressmen that any recommendation for filling of the vacancy was in their hands, and I wished to have nothing to say in the matter. Having given my word to them I do not feel that under any circumstances I can break it.

For your information I have followed the same procedure in regard to all so-called patronage appointments ever since Senator Sheridan Downey went out of office - at which time I told the Congressmen that all matters of patronage were in their hands as far as I was concerned.

I, too, regret that the vacancy has not been filled, and can understand the feeling of the Ninth Circuit Court judges in relation to this.

Sincerely yours,

Elinor R. Heller
Heller: governor of Illinois." "Oh, yes." And from then on, and I think that must have been probably '49—we'll have to look to see Adlai's terms—

Chall: Yes, he started in '48.

Heller: Yes, then it was in '49, I think. It was from '49 on that I was for Adlai Stevenson. I just thought he was the greatest thing that ever came along, and I saw him quite a bit there. He was the sort that made friends, you know, quite nicely, if he liked you. He was standoffish in some ways, but we always hit it off terribly well. He became a great personal friend of Ed Heller's and mine. He stayed at this house often when he came out this way, and stayed with us up at Lake Tahoe twice.

Chall: So you began to push for him early.

Heller: Yes, but nobody knew who I was talking about, of course.

Chall: What about in the national committee? Were there ever any discussions?

Heller: Not particularly. I just—you see, Truman hadn't really said if he was going to run.

Chall: That's right.

Heller: He was eligible for another term, literally.

Chall: Yes.

Heller: Because he'd only served a part of a term. But I was always personally of the opinion that he was not, literally, going to run again, so that—there hadn't been too much preliminary. Well, Estes Kefauver had come onto the scene, later on, in the primaries.

Chall: But it's interesting that so early you would recognize him.

Heller: Yes. Well, I just wanted to get that in, because it's just one of the nice things that happened out of politics.

Chall: I knew that you had become interested in him, but I didn't know just how. Elizabeth Gatov talks about a luncheon meeting.* I picked that up also in a newspaper article.**

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**San Mateo Times, May 5, 1952.
Heller: Well, I had him here for dinner. Early on.

Chall: In May of '52; that's the only news article I saw.

Heller: That's right. That's right. I think, of all people, Pat Brown brought him down.

Chall: Oh, really?

Heller: Yes.

Chall: But hadn't you invited him for dinner?

Heller: Yes. But I think it was Pat Brown who let me know he was coming.

Chall: I saw this in the San Mateo Times [May 5, 1952]. "Adlai Stevenson conferred with top California Democratic leaders, including Attorney General Brown, at the Atherton home of Mr. and Mrs. E.H. Heller. Among those present were members of the delegation pledged to Brown. Brown, known to favor Governor Stevenson for the party's nominee..." and then there's a quote here from you: "Just a pleasant dinner engagement. We didn't even ask Governor Stevenson if he was planning to change his mind and enter the race. But the group would be delighted if he would change his mind and enter the campaign," according to Mrs. Heller.

Heller: That's a correct quote. That's correct.

Chall: Present were Roland Davis, George Killion, Ben Duniway, Dr. Dan Collins--

Heller: Yes; you know, the black dentist in San Francisco. Marvelous person.

Chall: Also present Mrs. Libby Smith, and Brown; a small group.

Heller: That's about right. And it was just the gayest, liveliest--that's what Adlai always did. You never talked politics with Adlai; you talked about anything. You know, you didn't sit down and have a discussion about whether he was going to run, or what the delegation is doing, or anything like that. That wasn't Adlai.

Chall: Did you ever have the feeling, at any time, during that 1952 campaign, that he really didn't want to be the presidential nominee?

Heller: No.

Chall: You think he really wanted to be--

Heller: I think he was just bashful; I think, at that time, it never entered his head that he would be chosen.
Chall: In May.

Heller: Yes, I really think he didn't. He thought that he hadn't entered any primaries—though he never said this to me. But I just think he thought it was not in the cards. But of course, he just stampeded the convention by his welcoming speech as governor of Illinois, which was absolutely the best political speech, the finest. It was too fine, maybe, in the long run.

Chall: You weren't there, of course.

Heller: No. I guess we were having T.V. by then.

Chall: Yes, I think so.

Chall: You lost.

Heller: Our delegation lost. I could have gone because I was still national committeewoman through the election. But after all, the delegates were not my friends, you know—the Kefauver delegation. National conventions are barely bearable, and if you don't have a few of your friends there, they are not bearable. But I could have gone, had a seat on the platform, but I chose not to.

Chall: Yes, so you gave Clara Shirpser all of your prerogatives.

Heller: I gave her all my things. I want to make it clear. I had announced, in 1950, that I would not seek another term as national committeewoman.

Chall: That's right.

Heller: I didn't know whether you had that or not.

Chall: Yes, I do.

Heller: It was very clear.

California State Election Campaigns, 1950
[Interview 10: September 20, 1979]##

Helen Gahagan Douglas, Candidate for United States Senate

Chall: I'd like to talk about Helen Gahagan Douglas's Senate campaign.
Heller: I have much more opinion on this than actual facts.

Chall: Well, I think that's all we need to get, really, because the facts are pretty well known, or a lot of them are.

Now, you had told me a while ago that you had supported Helen Douglas and your husband had supported Sheridan Downey first.

Heller: That's correct. Did I tell you about the meeting that Ed Heller and Bill Malone and I had with Helen?

Chall: I'm not sure whether that's on tape, so you might tell me that now.

Heller: Which was sort of the beginning of it. I had decided to support Helen Douglas. They weren't antagonistic to Helen, per se, as a person, but felt very strongly and undoubtedly properly, that if she went in against Sheridan Downey--she had one issue, which was acreage limitation—that she would cause a split that would make the Republican candidate, who was Nixon, win. They tried to persuade her not to run. Now I don't know if I ever put that on tape or not.

Chall: Why did she stay in?

Heller: Because she objected to his, Downey's, trying to lift the 160-acre water limitation. You know, the Central Valley Homestead Act. She believed in it. And there are people fighting that to this day, as you know. And that was her issue.

Chall: Was that her only issue, or was that her main issue for getting him out?

Heller: That was her main issue, especially when she decided to go against Sheridan Downey.

But I liked Helen well enough, and I don't think I ever thought of supporting Sheridan once she decided to run. I think there was a little of the woman's thing in there, not much. You know—that I would have been a traitor to the first woman who was running state-wide. I think that was an element probably in my decision. And a lot of my friends were supporting her to start with.

Chall: They were?

Heller: Oh, yes.

Chall: And were they supporting her for the same reasons as you were—because she was a woman, or because they believed in her issues?
Heller: No, they didn't particularly care for Sheridan Downey who maybe was his own worst enemy, in a way. He was sort of a loner.

You know, when he first ran for Senate, Ed Heller opposed him. So did Bill Malone.

Chall: They were with MacAdoo in the primary?

Heller: Yes, it was MacAdoo. But then they became friends with him after he was elected, and got to like him. He was not a mean guy, by any means. I never knew him that well, but I knew him to some degree. I remember when we were in Washington during World War II, Ed and I would see him from time to time.

But that was Helen's real issue. And I suppose it was her own ambition maybe. Very hard to say. That was her issue. And what happened was that Sheridan, for reasons I've never been sure of yet, eventually did not file again. He said it was health; he said different things. I think I remember saying this to you once before.

Chall: You might have.

Heller: I've always felt he had some sort of a poll taken. I have no basis of fact on this, that showed him not doing too well against Helen. But I have no facts on that.

Though by this time, the die was set. A lot of very solid people were supporting Helen. But she was attracting a lot of the fringe people at the same time. Those who had been backing Downey just had no taste for the way she was campaigning or the people she was attracting. So they looked for another candidate. And that was where Manchester Boddy came into the picture. They filed him for Senator in no time at all after Downey withdrew.

Chall: Did you know how come? Did your husband have anything to do with bringing him in? Did he talk about him?

Heller: I suppose so. It was all done very, very quickly. He was a name that was known in the state. He was the only Democrat who was editor of a large newspaper. What was the name of that paper in Los Angeles?

Chall: News--Was it the News?

Heller: The Daily News. And it wasn't until long, long after the campaign--did I ever tell you that?

Chall: Yes, that you found that the Hearsts--
Heller: The Hearsts owned that paper. And nobody could understand the positions Boddy was taking. Ed, I remember, got very discouraged with what he was saying in that campaign. Couldn't understand him—why he was doing the things he was—and discovered that probably the Hearsts were—

Chall: Did he discover that later, or during the campaign?

Heller: Well, Ed only discovered during the campaign that he was making strange statements and taking strange positions.

They got very discouraged with that campaign, so that Helen could really walk away with that primary. Boddy just wasn't doing the sort of campaigning that you might have expected he would have done.

Chall: Do you recall his being a red-baiter during the primary?

Heller: No. I really don't. He might have been just because he campaigned very poorly. So, Helen lost her acreage-limitation campaign.

Chall: What do you mean?

Heller: Her issue.

Chall: She lost her issue?

Heller: Yes, when Downey withdrew. But she was attractive and was attracting people, just as Jimmy Roosevelt was attracting a certain number of people in that primary.

Chall: What do you think drew people toward her to work as hard on her campaign as they did?

Heller: Well, it wasn't that many people. You mustn't exaggerate.

Chall: But those who were for her.

Heller: Well they thought she was attractive. There was a certain amount of hero worship going around at that point. Certain ones were worshipping Jimmy Roosevelt at that point, too. And she did get some loyal supporters who worked their heads off. But the working was not in terms of issues. It was in terms of getting her from one place to another, trying to raise money, of which there was not too much available, scheduling her; she never was on time. But, I remember more of the general campaign than I do of the primary.
Heller: But let me say that most, almost everybody, who supported Boddy turned around and did support Helen in the general election. Not with wild enthusiasm, but they did support her. Ed Heller certainly supported her and contributed to her. They really did.

But she was a terrible speechmaker. The only one I knew in politics who made longer speeches was Hubert Humphrey! She had no terminal facilities. She'd go on, and on, and on, and on, and her audiences would start to wander away from her.

Chall: What about other aspects of the campaign? Do you think she could help organize it well?

Heller: No. I don't think she was any administrator or organizer at all. She was a personality person. And I mean that in a nice sense. No.

Chall: Was she good as a campaigner--meeting people and shaking hands?

Heller: She met people very well. She had a sort of glowing enthusiasm. But, how far does that get you? She did have loyal people working for her. But she was not what I would call an organizer. A campaigner in the sense that she was willing to devote all her energy. She was exhausted all the time. She'd get very little sleep.

Chall: People say that she was able to close her eyes between one schedule and another--whatever she might be doing--where she had a few minutes to herself she would close her eyes and go to sleep.

Heller: Oh, probably.

Chall: You didn't see her doing anything like that?

Heller: I've forgotten it. I've seen her change her clothes in one minute. She had one black long dress, very good looking. I think it had sleeves and a high neck. She'd yank it out of her suitcase--this was before permanent press things. Yank it out of her suitcase and throw it on and she'd look like a million dollars even if it hadn't been pressed. At anybody's house; I've seen her do that.

That's why I say my impressions of the campaign are very general. It got to be a very distasteful campaign for me, because I didn't like a lot of the people she began attracting eventually.

Chall: What kind of people were they?

Heller: More of the emotional left.

Chall: I see. The IPP people whom you ran into?
Heller: Yes, if there were any IPP left. Yes, more like that. She never did get a really solid base.

Chall: Well, what about the people on her campaign literature, here? You have these names. Let me see.

Heller: I think Monroe Deutsch would have just been—I didn't remember that he was in. But he must have been in for only one reason: that he admired her and that he probably didn't like Sheridan Downey's position on the acreage limitation. Monroe was not a very political animal, you know. Monroe Deutsch. And I can't think of any reason other than that that Monroe would be there. He was a very solid citizen, certainly.

Chall: He was the chairman of the Sponsors' Committee of Northern California.

Heller: Well, somebody must have gotten him. Very respectable name, one of the best names. These are all fairly good names.

Matt [Mathew] Tobriner, well—Matt Tobriner is Matt Tobriner.

Chall: [laughing] What does that mean?

Heller: I can't explain it. I've known Matt since I was six years old, when I lived across the street from him. He's an emotional guy. And sheer emotion—he loved her; he thought she was great. Nothing wrong about it at all. That was Matt. He'd plunge into some of these campaigns.

Mrs. Christopher Connor I brought in. She was one of my very good friends. Margaret Connor, with whom I had gone to Mills. She lives here in Menlo still. We had to have a Northern California woman chairman, and hadn't found anybody. She was never well known in the party at all. She was a strong Democrat, still is. But she took the chairmanship.

We were a little short of campaign names up here. I don't remember why Bill [William] Newsom was in there. He was very close to Bill Malone. It's not quite clear to me why he's in there, but if he was, he was.

Chall: Yes, you can't deny his name is on the letterhead.

Heller: Oh, there's no question. There's no question of it. But I'm not sure what his motives were. I just don't know.

Chall: One of the things I have to say is that I really don't know whether this is a primary campaign letterhead or a final campaign letterhead.
Heller: I would say that it's basically a primary, but it could have turned into a general. I just don't remember. It's just one of those things, I don't remember. In the general, in a way, her campaign was separated from Jimmy Roosevelt's. I really don't remember. Margaret Connor could probably tell me whether she was women's chairman in the north, through the whole campaign, or just the primary.

Now Sue [Mrs. Ernest] Lilienthal absolutely adored her. Sue was a hero-worshipper. All the political campaigns she went into were that way. But she worked like a tiger. She spent more time with Helen than anybody in Northern California. She took her every place. Had her stay with her at her house if she possibly could. And really put her heart and soul into Helen, whom she believed in completely, and devoted all her time to her.

Bernie [Bernard] Witkin—I'm not sure how he got in there. He had a wife who may have persuaded him to go in. He was a sort of emotional guy at that time too.

Monroe Deutsch was not nor was Bill Newsom.

Bea [Beatrice] Stern was one of the marvelous people around. She had League of Women Voters training; she'd lived in Washington. She was brilliant. And liked Helen, as far as I remember, very much. She probably knew her when she was a congresswoman in Washington. She lived there.

And why Leonard Dieden is there I'm not sure. Maybe he thought that was a way to getting an appointment as a federal judge. Leonard Dieden was a—he's still around. Was one of the Alameda County leaders with Monroe Friedman.

You know, it's so long ago. I do remember certainly about Margaret Connor and Matt Tobriner, and Sue Lilienthal, definitely.

Chall: You mean the statewide committee for Helen Douglas? She told you that that committee never met?

Heller: No. She has a 100 percent memory, too, for anything like that, that she's done.

Chall: They were just on the letterhead, then, the names?
Heller: She had the title, no question about it. She doesn't even remember any committee. She said as far as she knows, she was functioning through the whole thing to the degree that she functioned. But Helen never wanted people really. Well, you know, it was just letterhead stuff.

Chall: What you're saying is that Mrs. Connor says that Helen Douglas really didn't like to take advice.

Heller: She didn't ask for it. She didn't say she didn't like to. She never met with any of these people.

Chall: But she must have wanted to take some advice on her campaign in Northern California from somewhere.

Heller: Yes, but not from any in her formal campaign in any way.

Chall: Did Mrs. Connor ever meet with Helen Douglas personally?

Heller: No. She might see her once in a while if she came up, but with a group. No.

Chall: That's interesting.

Heller: That doesn't mean she didn't take advice. But certainly not from anyone in terms of structure or committee.

Chall: Or campaign tactics, or anything like that, as far as you know, from here?

Heller: Not as far as I can remember, nor as far as Margaret Connor can remember. It was really a title without anything. She might show up at a general meeting if there was one up here, something like that.

Chall: Do you think she campaigned primarily in Southern California, more than up here?

Heller: Oh, basically, I guess. It's a much larger place; it was her home base. But I think to know more the workings of Helen's campaign you've got to go to Los Angeles.

Chall: The interviewers who have been working on the Helen Douglas project have done most of their interviews in Southern California with Southern California people.*

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Heller: It was the most disorganized campaign in the world. You asked me about the red-baiting. I don't really remember it. Boddy could have. You know, he did so little, that he could have done that. That was the time right after that aid to Greece and Turkey. Not right after, but--

I really don't know. She did attract some of the left-wing people. But her campaign was just not a successful campaign in my opinion once the primary was over. And she never could develop issues in the general campaign. She was limited by this one thing. And when Nixon started that dreadful attack on her, which enough has been written about, she just spent all of her time trying to answer him from day to day. So she never developed the real issues.

Chall: In Congress, she had worked for citizens' control of atomic energy, and some social security measures, and various measures that were really not too far out in those days. She had quite a bit of support there.

Heller: Well, I think they never really developed in the campaign, if I remember.

Chall: Do you think it was possible to develop anything with a person like Nixon after you on a red issue all the time?

Heller: No, any more than I think it was possible for Jimmy Roosevelt to ever develop a real campaign. That's really true. I don't remember too much about the finances. They certainly were not enormous.

Chall: For Helen Douglas.

Heller: Yes. You asked the question, did the usual Democratic party support go to Boddy? No, that was in the primary. He was through.

Chall: And after that, where did it go? Do you think it came to Helen?

Heller: You have to put yourself back to those days. The support was quite minimal in all campaigns. You can go back to the [Franklin D.] Roosevelt successful campaigns. There was very little spent in this state. It's hard to remember.

Chall: It didn't take much.

Heller: She probably got some. I don't really remember. But it did not go to James Roosevelt, I can assure you. What went, went to Helen, rather than Jimmy Roosevelt.
Heller: Pat Brown was being well supported, because, for one reason or another, Helen and Jimmy Roosevelt were not too much to the taste of some of the financial contributors. But they were small contributions! And Pat Brown did get some support. That was for attorney general.

Chall: Some people have said that Malone was responsible for drying up the funds and some people even say the "Jewish funds."

Heller: There were none! Whose were there?

Chall: That's what I have to ask you.

Heller: I think this is apocryphal. Ed Heller gave, but he certainly gave to Helen Douglas, too, after the primary. Who were the big contributors? There weren't--you know--I can't even think of their names, some of them. And big--$2500 would be enormous. I'm not talking about Southern California.

Chall: No, just northern. That's all you could know about.

Heller: This is all Northern California. But I really and truly don't remember about the funds. There wasn't much. She couldn't do much in publication. She appeared all over. Didn't she have a helicopter or something?

Chall: I think so, yes.

Heller: Somebody probably lent it to her.

Her positions weren't that radical, Helen's. It depends on how you look at it. There's no question but that she and [Vito] Marcantonio voted together, but Chet Holifield voted with them too at that point. But he wasn't running for statewide office. Chet Holifield, who ended up as a terrific conservative, as chairman of the joint AEC committee, was very, very liberal in those days.

Chall: Do you think being a woman would have made it difficult for her to campaign for statewide office? It may be one thing to be in Congress from a smaller district, but a statewide office in those days--was that a handicap?

Heller: I don't know how to answer that, because I've seen too many congressmen decide to run for statewide office. Now I'm not using congressmen generally there, I'm using the men in Congress who got lost when they ran for statewide office. I think a lot of those who were very successful locally never did know how to run statewide. And I think that's true of Helen. I think being a woman maybe had something to do with it. But she may have attracted as many votes as she lost because of that. I never felt the woman thing was a huge factor in this. She certainly was prettier than most people who ran.
Chall: Of any sex!

Heller: Of any sex. I just think Helen just didn't—she had lived in her congressional district in Southern California and she probably could have gone on there as congresswoman. You've seen that happen to others.

Chall: Oh yes. India Edwards has said that a lot of people were devoted to Helen without knowledge or feeling for politics, that they allowed their admiration and worship to carry away any common sense they might have had.*

Heller: Well, that's partly true, what India said. She did attract people who hadn't been particularly active. Monroe Deutsch is one, but I don't think he did much. And Margaret Connor is another. She did attract people who didn't know too much about politics. They liked her. I think that's a fair enough quote.

Chall: India Edwards did go on to say that she had seen many women who had a very secure position in the House of Representatives, who were doing a good job, and who decided to run for the Senate and lost. And she feels that that's just, as you say, the same with men. It's the same problem.

Heller: This is what I'm saying. It applies to men as well as women.

Chall: It's the problem of moving up. Whether you can do it or not. All right, then we'll leave Helen Douglas and her campaign behind.

Heller: I'll tell you I was glad when that campaign was over. It was almost a burden.

Chall: To be helping a sure loser, or because of the emotion that was attached to it?

Heller: Well, almost a sure loser, but I'd backed sure losers before.

Chall: It was a nasty campaign.

Heller: It was a nasty campaign.

Chall: That, I guess, would hurt.

Heller: And she never could get on top of it. But I still say it's because all her thinking went on that acreage limitation. And she never could draw a breath once it got going, to really, I think, map out any sort of a campaign. I don't think she could have anyway, against Nixon.

I'm looking on your outline at some of these statements that others have made. I don't agree with those statements either.

Chall: About—?

Heller: "Helen's line was the only intelligent line." I don't know what that means, even. "The indiscriminate attack was making it difficult to identify the real Communist."

Chall: Yes, I don't know what that means either. I just read it.

Heller: And then, "Fear defeated us. How do you counter Nixon's red-baiting? Is there a way to counter demagoguery?" Well, fear didn't defeat them. It was the nature of the campaign. But her problem was she just had to answer everything he said. And she got really more and upset by his attacks. She was not a Communist, or anything like one. And every time she'd speak, she'd have to go after the last statement. That doesn't get you very far. You're on the defensive the whole time.

I don't know anything about this phone blitz. There may have been, but I was not conscious of it. I doubt it. I don't think there was Catholic opposition per se to her. Leonard Dieden was a good Catholic, for example.

Chall: I think that was Southern California where it showed up to some degree.

Heller: There may have been something going on in the Catholic church. You know, word of mouth. I don't know. Margaret Connor is not Catholic, but her husband is. I think she would have known, because she's a great churchgoer. I think there may have been. You know, you used to hear rumors about a priest says, "vote this way, don't vote that way." I never know whether it's true or not.

And I never heard of Nixon's flying squad of women. If they were around, they didn't make any difference. I don't know who they were, do you?

Chall: They were in Southern California. I don't know that they were up here.

Heller: I don't remember anything about them.
James Roosevelt and Earl Warren, Candidates for Governor

Heller: All right, your first question on James Roosevelt's campaign for governor in 1950. "What did the Hellers do with respect to his campaign?" The answer is nothing.

Chall: Nothing at all?

Heller: Not a thing. Ed contributed to Earl Warren. I was very friendly with Earl Warren. I thought he was a fine governor. I liked him enormously.

I never did like Jimmy Roosevelt. It had nothing to do with what was implied about Malone and power or anything like that. Jimmy Roosevelt just couldn't ever talk straight and I think his whole career has been the same.

I went to one event that was sort of for him. His wife—which wife was that at that time? Well, there was sort of a women's reception at the St. Francis Hotel for his wife. And I went to that because I felt sort of sorry for her. I never did another thing. I see you quote Langdon Post.*

Chall: Yes.

Heller: "Malone and the Hellers were Ollie Carter people. And when Jim came into the picture they pulled out." That doesn't make any sense! Oliver Carter had become a federal judge!

Chall: Yes. Post, however, thinks that Oliver Carter was considering being a candidate for governor himself at one time and that Roosevelt moved into it, leaving Carter and his supporters angry with Roosevelt.


Chall: Yes, he said he and his whole family worked for her--

Heller: That is correct.

Chall: --as soon as the primary was over and he was finished, I guess, with being state chairman.

Heller: That is correct. That's absolutely correct.

Chall: He wasn't finished, but he could then work in the general election.

Heller: But Lang Post ran Jimmy Roosevelt's campaign in the north. I don't know if by title, but he did.

[reading outline] "It may have something to do with the Eisenhower thing?" I don't know what he's talking about.

Chall: Well, I suppose that he means when Jimmy Roosevelt went for Eisenhower during the '48 campaign?

Heller: Oh. Well that was one of the things I disliked about Jim Roosevelt. And this is where my original quarrel with Jimmy Roosevelt came. I feel that when you sign a pledge of intent, as we did for Truman in 1948, though maybe in a court of law it wouldn't hold up, you have to stay by that. And Jimmy said, "Not at all." He could beat it in court. And boy, Ollie Carter and Jack Shelley and I just fought him straight across the continent on that one. And that's where I got to disliking Jimmy Roosevelt because I thought he had no honor. That's really the beginning of it.

Chall: And the same with Malone too?

Heller: Oh, Malone would feel that way, absolutely. But it wasn't that he was running for governor. It was that I--

Chall: Well, these things hang on, don't they?

Heller: These things hang on. You know, I forget a lot of things in politics. But I've never forgotten that about Jimmy Roosevelt. Because I thought it was completely dishonorable.

So that's the background of why I didn't like him. Bill Malone didn't work for Roosevelt; neither did I. I don't remember about George Davis. I remember George Davis had done the Truman campaign in '48. We couldn't get anybody to be chairman in the north. But I don't remember. George Davis was not the most desirable chairman. Then he resigned?

Chall: I don't know all the minor facts. I think he did.
Heller: Now here's one thing--and that's why I want my memoirs still sealed!

At the end of the campaign, Miggs Post, Lang's wife, phoned me, in tears, and gave me a sobbing tale of woe about how Lang had signed a note to Jimmy Roosevelt so that Jimmy would have (I've forgotten which one of the savings and loan banks) a trailer for Northern California. And that he was responsible for it. I think it was about $8,000. And that they were broke, and that Jimmy Roosevelt wasn't doing a thing.

I really felt sorry for Langdon. Lang is sort of a fool; he never had much sense. He had been a young promising Democrat in New York, I understand. He never had much sense. And he should never have done that. But he did. So I just took care of that note. So, indirectly, I guess, I was helping out Post because it was such a terrible bind they had gotten themselves into through Lang's stupidity. You know, it was a losing campaign.

Chall: This is when he'd already lost that she called you.

Heller: After the election she called me.
Heller: I don't remember. You see, Susie Clifton says that Langdon Post, Gertrude Clark, and Elinor Heller worked up north. Elinor Heller did not work up north.*

Chall: Yes, so I think that's what's important to get on the record.

Heller: I did absolutely nothing. And Gertrude Clark may have worked for him, I'm not sure. She came from Amador County. Langdon Post did. But Ollie Carter didn't like Jimmy Roosevelt as I remember. He worked for Helen. It was a terrible campaign. Dreadful.

Ed and I had always been great admirers of Earl Warren. And just at that point, to run ahead on the University thing, it was when Ed Heller was a Regent, the loyalty oath thing had come up. And that strengthened our admiration, because he was one of only six Regents who were against the loyalty oath. He and Ed Heller were two of the six. And it took a lot of political courage for Earl Warren to do that. So that strengthened our feelings for Earl Warren.

Earl Warren always knew we were supporting him. As a matter of fact, the fact that Ed contributed to him was not particularly known because those things were not--names didn't have to be published then. If I remember correctly, Ed gave the money to Walter Haas, Sr. You know, to put in the campaign. But those things were just done commonly.

Is that enough of James Roosevelt?

Chall: That's enough, I should say. Just wanted to clear up some of these various contradictory statements.

Heller: Boy, they sure are! That's why I say, different perceptions are certainly different. I like this one the best. Who is the graduate student Ross?

Chall: Oh, Ross--I don't know his first name. He wrote a paper, as a graduate student, on this campaign. It's tucked away somewhere.

Heller: "Democrats, among them Elinor Heller, didn't want Roosevelt to gain power." Well, it wasn't a matter of power; I didn't want to see him as governor. I didn't think he had any truth in him. That's quite a difference, don't you think, from gaining power?

Heller: And whatever that means. "The older leadership of the north prevented Roosevelt from formulating an effective grass-roots auxiliary organization." It just doesn't mean anything to me.

He always had big crowds. He always got fooled by the size of his crowds. But he sounded like his father, you know. But crowds don't tell the story. That's why I'm laughing at all these things.

The Democratic State Central Committee Elects Fred Trott as Northern California Vice-Chairman

Chall: You went to those Democratic State Central Committee meetings, didn't you?

Heller: I was at the big one. I can tell you some of the Fred Trott, to start.

Chall: Were you at this one where Fred Trott was elected?

Heller: I certainly was.

Chall: Okay, well you can tell me how all this came about as you recall it.

Heller: I never was crazy about George Miller, Jr. We became fairly friendly in the end of his life. But George Miller, Jr. was fooling with the left wing at that time, and I think that can be documented in many ways. And he was under the strong influence of Bert Coffey who was his partner over in Richmond. And Bert Coffey was reputed to be a member of the Communist party. I can't swear he was. But George Miller never did a thing independent at that time of Bert Coffey.

I didn't want George Miller in there. I just didn't like this left-wing thing. I was turning very much against the left. I had been for Roland Davis. He was my candidate, for reasons that I don't even remember. Bill Malone was very opposed to Ro Davis. He never understood him. Ro was not a very effective person. He was awfully nice. He lived down here in Palo Alto. He was a hard party worker. He was an attorney in the law firm that Gerry Marcus is now in. It did a lot of labor work. He was not a labor person himself. And I was for him, but among others. I remember Bill Malone didn't like him. A lot of people didn't know Ro. Ro never made too much of an impression, Ro Davis.

And we were stuck. That's all. Nothing was going in any direction. I don't remember about Frank [Francis] Dunn. I don't think it was ever in the cards. He came from the East Bay someplace didn't he?
Chall: Yes.

Heller: An assemblyman.

Chall: Yes. Hayward area, San Leandro.

Heller: It wasn't between Miller and Trott to start. It was really between Roland Davis and Miller, with the others sort of peripheral. Now whether George Miller was backed by Jim Roosevelt and Helen Douglas made no difference. Because at that time, the northern state central committee elected the Northern California chairman. It might have made some difference, but not much, because they didn't have that much effect.

Chall: Unless their own supporters, of whom there apparently weren't too many, would have voted for Miller.

Heller: But I just don't remember any role that they played. The thing was, we were getting no place fast. And it looked as if George Miller might win. And I felt quite firmly about this left wing, Communist-oriented influence that was coming. We thought we had kicked it out of the party and here it seemed to be seeping back. My perception of George Miller's part of it may have been wrong. But I believed it then. As I say, later on in his legislative career, he seemed to get away from it. But I've always firmly believed that's why he never ran for Congress. He was going to be left alone if he stayed in the state senate.

There was a congressman over there who was very close to the Communist party too.

Chall: Condon? He was accused—Robert Condon, I think, had been accused.

Heller: Yes. He was sort of involved too, as I remember. George Miller didn't end up that way in the long run.

Well, at the height of this mess—if you've never been to a state central committee meeting, don't ever go. It was terrible. Hated them. It was always hot and miserable, no sleep. In the midst of all this maneuvering back and forth, Harold McGrath came to me—he was our so-called paid executive up here—and he said, "Why not try to go with Fred Trott?"

And I said, "Well, I hardly know Fred Trott." I've been thinking about this, this is why I can remember it.

And he said, "Well, he's really a good guy from the lower valley, and I think that's good to go to the valley." Harold always knew the valley people. I don't remember how he knew him, but he had worked with him in some minor way in the campaign.
Heller: He said, "You're stuck as is." Harold had been for Ro Davis. So I checked around and a lot of people agreed to compromise. If Ro Davis would get out, they would go for Trott. That was exactly how it happened.

But then the emotion of Ro Davis getting out was just terrible. He was just rigid—undone by all of this.

Chall: By people coming to him and asking him to withdraw?

Heller: Men don't usually go to pieces the way he did. He just got emotionally undone. And it took hours for him finally to agree. My word was to Ro, and I couldn't go back on it. So he either had to get out or I would have to support him.

Chall: Were you the main one who had to go to him and ask him to withdraw, or were there others?

Heller: I guess there were others. You know, you always remember your own role very well. I'm sure Harold McGrath had something to do with that.

Ro wasn't known to too many people. So a great many people agreed to a compromise candidate then. And that's how Fred Trott got in. We didn't know him. Isn't that ridiculous? That's how we elected him, which just shows how badly you can do when you're trying to block somebody.

Chall: The dark-horse candidate.

Heller: And my reasons, at that time, I thought were quite valid for going against George Miller, Jr. And that is exactly how Fred Trott got elected. By Ro Davis finally agreeing to withdraw.

I don't remember Frank Dunn's role, if any, in that. Monroe Friedman, I'm sure, was one of those. Monroe was sort of a gentle person, and he probably could see the logic of it. He was no great political strategist. I really don't remember exactly.

Ruth Dodds, I think, was elected northern women's vice-chairman, I think it was called. You'll find that she and I acted together very often. We saw things very much eye to eye. She came from Sacramento. A very fine person.

Now, the second part of this, I think ought to wait until you read that pile of papers I just gave you. Do you mind?

Chall: No, no, we can hold that out.
Fred Trott's Stormy Term##

Chall: What do you think motivated Fred Trott in the way he dealt with the party and the party leaders?

Heller: I think you have to go back to the fact that he was suddenly thrust into this state vice-chairman ship, which, when you're vice-chairman for Northern California, you really are, in effect the chairman for Northern California. He had just done local politics, as far as I remember. I think I already told you, didn't I, that Harold McGrath was the one who suggested him as a compromise candidate when Ro Davis was getting no place. I may be wrong, but I think it was basically, almost that simple.

Chall: That he just was inexperienced, and naive, perhaps?

Heller: Yes. And suddenly, he found Harold McGrath tapping him, and loved it. Loved the idea. But he was a very small-minded person, with very little experience, who had no money at all. I mean, not as much as the average person in politics, which God knows, wasn't much. He was a schoolteacher. He had no savings to amount to anything. Those letters, I think, tell that story. It's really a sad episode when you think about it.

The reasons that I can guess at, but I'm not sure about, he got the idea that he could make money out of politics. Now when you say money, you have to put it in the perspectives of those times, which is very little, anyway. During all this mess, Harold McGrath showed me a letter, that Fred Trott had written to him early on, after he had been elected. Because I haven't seen a copy of it for years, I just have a feeling of the contents in which Fred was suggesting ways that he and Harold could make some money off the Hellers and Malone. Now this was in small amounts, maybe a thousand dollars, I don't remember.

Chall: By doing what?

Heller: I can't remember. By handling the recording of these small amounts that came into the state central committee. It was really small stuff. But he had it in mind, this is all I'm trying to say. It was never done by Harold. However, he did not show me the letter at that moment. I think he was more embarrassed than not. Eventually he did show it to me.

This is where Fred got some crazy idea: Harold may have said something to him originally. He indicates that. [reading] "We'll take care of that when we come to it" about when we get the money. Didn't he say that Harold said that? That was no commitment, obviously. If anything, it was Harold just brushing something aside.
Heller: Let me say that I worked with Harold for years, and he was a very
difficult person to work with. He'd drink and be obnoxious, if he
drank. If he didn't drink, he was okay. But he was honest as the
day is long. Everything I've ever known. Really honest. Loved
politics. Of course, he never ran for office; he didn't have the
temperament for it. But he was honest as could be. I'm convinced
that Harold never had any thought of getting money out of the Hellers
and Malone.

Chall: Even if he weren't interested in getting any money, Trott was placed
in a position where he claimed just being state chairman was an
expense; people were calling him, he was dealing out of his home.
He felt it was necessary for him to give up his school position until
after the election. He had no income. He tried the insurance business
and it didn't work out; he was using up his savings; he mortgaged his
house.

Heller: But he didn't have to do any of that. This is what I'm trying to say
to you.

Chall: How would it have been done in any other way?

Heller: Ollie Carter came in as state chairman, who had no money either. He
did have a profession of law, but he was not practicing. He had been
a state senator. He did not live in San Francisco, and he managed it.
And Ollie Carter had a great political sense. What I'm saying is, it
was Fred's own nature that was wrong. Ollie never got into debt, he
never felt he had to be present. He never felt he was being taken, he
never felt he was being used. He never threatened people. He was
one of the best state chairmen we ever had. If I didn't have the
other comparison, I might listen to what you are saying. I'm saying
it isn't necessary, and it wasn't at that time, necessary.

Chall: It's really a matter of trust among the people who hold these offices,
more than anything that you could write down.

Heller: I think so. I think that is true. It's a matter of trust and feeling
secure. Ollie and Harold McGrath just worked together beautifully.
Ollie wasn't around half the time. But people liked Ollie, I think,
because Ollie was never looking for money. The state central committee
and Malone, who though he was chairman of the San Francisco central
committee, always did raise an awful lot of the money for that office.
But Ollie was always willing to have all these expenses which were
minimal, paid. But Fred tried to get all the money for himself.

Chall: So you think that the reason that he separated his office from the
office that you had, might have been an attempt to deal with the
finances himself and get something out of it? Or did he really just
distrust the rest of you? Was it the "ins" versus the "outs?"
Heller: It was a combination. I think he felt that if he split with Malone, particularly, sort of with me, you know that letter keeps saying he asked Ruth Dodds and me, that we were the ones who had made the break. Of course, I just know it isn't true, that he thought that he could raise money. You saw that letter that he sent out. I believe that was before he split off, wasn't it? To the different counties, asking $100 each.

Chall: I don't think I've seen that letter.

Heller: He wrote to individual county chairmen, I believe, asking for $100.

Chall: Just a hundred dollars from each county chairman?

Heller: It was so small, the whole thing. You know, for the office. There are quite a few letters in here someplace. It was all on such a small scale that it's really painful. But he did not trust Malone. He got to hate Harold McGrath, by the way. He really did. Because I think he felt Harold had led him into this.

I got to hate Fred because I was so uncomfortable when he started to decide to sue people. I didn't care if he sued me, particularly, but when he was threatening Tom Lynch, to get the receipts of the Jackson-Jefferson Day Dinner that was beyond the pale as far as I was concerned. You know, a respected public citizen and an elected official. And that's where I never wanted to see him again.

Chall: That was very early, that was in May. There are letters that follow to you, even when you had--

Heller: I don't think he had moved out of the office by then.

Chall: Late May he announced he was going to move out, and in early June he moved out.

Heller: I think right after that.

Chall: Well, that's-- His letter was May fifth to Tom Lynch, and that's about a month before he moved out. When this letter came to Tom Lynch--his letters usually had carbons to you--and when he decided to move out of the office, what did you and Tom Lynch do? You were national committeewoman, and you were raising funds. What all did you do?

Heller: Tom Lynch had nothing to do with the fund raising for the Jackson-Jefferson. He was elected--he was city attorney, I guess.

Chall: District attorney.
Heller: District attorney. And Tom had had as much to do with raising the money as you would have. He had agreed to preside. We couldn't have Fred Trott preside at this. We had a terrible time even getting a speaker. We got Jonathan Daniels, I remember that very well. He was quite a nice person. But the fortunes of the Democrats were very low at that time.

I remember talking to Tom Lynch; I guess he came to the office— I've forgotten, and saying, "Tom, you're out of this. You have nothing to do with these funds, you don't even know what came in, and I'm going to put that in writing." And Chauncey Tramutolo, who was sort of a nut, I didn't feel as strongly about. What was Chauncey's job?

Chall: I don't know what it was.

Heller: I think he was U.S. Attorney. I wasn't as close to Chauncey. He was sort of a nut. He was okay, but his reputation was not wonderful, and I wasn't too worried about him. He wasn't such a figure as Tom was.

And Tom said, "Ellie, we're in this together. You don't think I'm going to duck out, even though I didn't [raise the money]. He knew he didn't raise the money. He said, "I know I'm a part of this, and I'm not going to get out of this. We'll fight this together." Which I always liked him for.

The fight was essentially, as you can gather, internally, from those letters. For years the San Francisco County Central Committee ran what little it had to do out of the funds of that committee. Of course, it was known by everybody that Bill Malone, and a couple of his people, like Jim Rudin, who's still going strong, were raising that money. Fred wanted to have that money to take over to his office. But he wasn't going to get it, that was all. That just wasn't the arrangement. You can see, I wrote to what's-his-name, whom I knew well from the national committee—

Chall: Neale Roach.

Heller: Neale Roach. Putting this on record. I have a feeling I had a little legal advice about what I did, but I don't remember who.

Chall: Did your husband give you some help on this?

Heller: Ed? No. He never got into details like that. I'm sure—I'm trying to think. Tom Lynch, I don't think he would want to do it. Not Malone; Malone wrote his own letters.

Chall: Yes, that was quite a bit later. This went on from May until October.
Heller: Yes. But I know I got the advice of Joe Paul, who was in public relations at that point. I got some advice, but I can't remember from whom, about how I wrote that letter. Because I wanted the facts to be perfect.

Chall: Well, it certainly spells it out.

Heller: It was all a matter of squabbling. I wasn't squabbling. I was just keeping Fred from grabbing this money that he wanted to use. This Doris [Mestre] he refers to, I don't remember much about her except he picked her up someplace as his secretary. Maybe she came from Visalia. I think she may have.

Chall: Yes, she did.

Heller: Nobody was ever in his office except a few malcontents. And of course Ruth Dodds and I stood firmly together. She is a fine person, who was northern women's vice-chairman, one of the women I got on with very well, from Sacramento. We just weren't going to have anything to do with Fred Trott and that was all.

Chall: Among yourselves, were there little ad hoc meetings, telephone calls, worried behind-the-scenes meetings to see what you do here?

Heller: I guess there must have been.

Chall: Of course, he does say, "It seems that Bill Malone, who has called the shots in Democratic state politics since 1932, was too strong. He insisted that the state women leaders stay with him, and they did." This is one of his news releases. [June 1, 1951]

Heller: That was untrue. That was untrue. We wanted to maintain that office. Bill never came in that office. I don't mean that he couldn't use it, but he never really came in that office. Never. Bill Malone had nothing to do with any of that. Very little. He wasn't even--I had supported Ro Davis, but Malone wasn't for Davis. He just pulled out of politics at that point. He was sick of it.

Chall: Well, he had a lot of trouble there.

Heller: But he did help raise the small amount we raised. Look what a piddling amount it was.

Chall: Fred Trott indicates in one of his letters that after the dinner you had said that you really hadn't anticipated sending much money back to Washington—maybe $5,000—and the rest of the money would stay in your headquarters here, the combined headquarters. But after he pulled out, he feels, that then you decided that you would divide that money in half and send half of it to Washington.
Heller: I don't really remember that. I really don't.

Chall: That he states in his letter. And of course, he felt too that you pressed very hard to have that $5,000 loan returned. And ultimately it had to be returned from the state office funds rather than national.

Heller: I really and truly don't remember. Every time we'd have a Jefferson-Jackson Day Dinner, we'd have a different arrangement with the national committee. And the national committee was responsible for getting us a speaker. Whether I wanted to send half of that to the national committee because of the unpleasantness with Trott, to keep it out of his hands, I don't remember. God knows I didn't want any of it, I probably put half of it in myself. I'm exaggerating. It had nothing to do with that. It was to keep it from Fred Trott, who by this time I had discovered was desperate for money for himself, not for the Democratic party purposes. Though he thinks they're for Democratic party purposes. I think he felt he was doing the right thing. But he had a very warped mind. It was sad; it was pathetic. Nobody liked him, except a handful of malcontents. He was disliked on every side.

Chall: It seemed to me that what we might have had here was the beginning of a movement which finally came about by 1952-53, when the Democratic clubs were formed. That is, an "in" versus an "out" situation. A valley person wanting his friends to get some power in the Democratic party, but the people in San Francisco had it. Some of the letters indicate that he was really pushing.

Heller: They may indicate it, but don't ever forget that one of the great valley characters was Oliver Carter. Had been right at the top.

Chall: But Oliver Carter had been an experienced member of the Democratic party, and he was in the legislature--

Heller: But he was valley through and through. He was upper valley, but through and through a valley person.

Chall: There's a feeling that I get from reading these letters that's something like what I got from Clara Shirpser—that here was somebody who was inexperienced, who got thrust into a position where you needed experience and you needed to have a feeling of trust among all these people. As you say, it was casual about how you divided the money. You did it one way one year, and another way another year. And if you didn't really trust what these people in those offices were doing, then you might feel hostile, you might feel bitter, you could feel hurt, and you could try to gain your own place in the spectrum there. I get the same feeling when I read this material.
Heller: My impression of Clara Shirpser is different than yours. Mine is of a very warped person.

Chall: Do you see both these people as having the same problem?

Heller: No. Clara wasn't bad until she got this ego about herself. She wasn't bad before that, and I sort of liked her. I thought she was sort of amusing. And then she changed. Whereas Fred I think never really had the strength to do any of this.

You can't say "valley" felt out of San Francisco. Ruth Dodds was from Sacramento. She was very much a part of active Democratic politics. She had no San Francisco connections at all. I don't think she was friendly with Malone in any way. That's why I laugh when Fred Trott said that Malone had influence over the women, because he--

Chall: He perceived it as such.

Heller: He perceived it that way. Somehow, he had thought that you made money out of politics, whereas nobody makes money out of politics, at least in Northern California. I never saw anybody make any money out of politics. And I never heard of any illegal use of money in any way. The most you could say is some people, who were attorneys, probably got some business which came their way, including Malone, including Herb Erskine, who was an attorney. East Bay--Monroe Friedman, Leonard Dieden--any number of people. You mentioned Sam Gardner, who was an attorney over in Marin. That is the only way--I never saw anybody making any money out of politics.

Chall: Did he think he might make it that way in his insurance business? He tried it, but it failed within a few months.

Heller: Well, apparently, he didn't know anything about insurance.

Chall: No, he didn't.

Heller: He was a sad person.

Chall: How were you able to maintain what appeared to be friendly relations with him? I think he thanked you for lending him Kon Tiki which he said he read and enjoyed. He went on and wrote you a long letter.

Heller: I'm not one that quarrels with people very much. I don't like to be rude or mean to people, or call their faults to their attention, the faults I see. I'm just not that sort of person. I'm willing to try to make a go. I'd had unpleasant experiences before, but in a different way. Like Jimmy Roosevelt, whom I could never get on with. Or Ed Pauley. But they were of a different caliber.
Heller: I can't think of any instance in Northern California of people stealing money or making money from the Democratic party. Now there may have been some that I didn't know about, obviously. There was so little money involved, that I doubt it.

Chall: Every now and then he would send you a letter saying, "I think we should sit down and have a long talk." This was sort of a recurrent theme. Did you ever sit down and have a long talk with him?

Heller: I can't remember that I did. I have a feeling an attorney was dictating these letters for him, trying to build a case. Perhaps I have some recollection of an attorney in Visalia.

Chall: He did have an attorney working with him several times. The first time when you made a decision how to split the money that was done by being signed quite legally with Mr. Lynch and Fred Trott's attorney. Were you in on that meeting?

Heller: No.

Chall: That was done just by the lawyers.

Heller: I remember Tom went down to Visalia. Who went with him? Monroe Friedman?

Chall: I'm not sure.

Heller: I have a feeling it was Monroe Friedman.

Chall: The letter mentions Thomas Lynch, William Newsom, Joseph Curley, Chauncey Tramutolo, and Mr. Ron Davis. I don't think he was there.

Heller: William Newsom was a character around town. Loved politics.

Chall: I think he was the treasurer of the Jefferson-Jackson Day Dinner.

Heller: He could easily have been. He was a good friend of Pat Brown's, and Bill Malone's. His son is now superior court judge with the state court of appeals. He was not appointed by Pat but by Jerry Brown. A few sons of people whose parents were friendly with Pat Brown!

Chall: I think only Mr. Newsom and Mr. Davis were at that meeting. It says, "This letter is being written for the purpose of setting forth the substance of a conference and the resultant agreement reached this day with Mr. Newsom and Mr. Davis." And it's signed by Fred Trott and his attorney Leonard Ginsberg.
Heller: Well, that could be. See, Ro Davis was an attorney, so that would have been normal.

Chall: And he was also the treasurer of the Democratic party.

Heller: Yes, and he was probably willing to do that. He didn't feel very kindly, I think, to Fred Trott. There was never any question in my mind but what Fred was trying to get his hands on that small amount of money--

Chall: It was only $12,000.

Heller: --to use for his own debts or what have you. He was a very unhappy guy. I think he would have been put into some sort of a psychiatric rest home until he pulled out of it--in this day and age.

Chall: You think he would have been?

Heller: Oh, yes. I'm being very un-medical when I say this, but he was as close to a nervous breakdown as anybody I ever saw. It was sad, I must say. I felt bad because I felt responsible in that I had talked all my friends who were supporting Roland Davis, and people who didn't know Ro Davis or didn't like him, to go for Fred Trott and solve this thing. It was a great mistake, which shows that you should never just support somebody that you don't know. I didn't know him!

Chall: Out of that--I'm not sure that it was totally a result--but by 1952 and by 1954, I notice that specific committees to finance the headquarters were developed. I don't know, I'm just guessing whether committees of this kind came about in order to avoid the sort of problem that you had with the chairman thinking that whatever money was raised on dinners might come to him in some form or another.

Heller: I can't tell you for sure. I think it was more a fact that Bill Malone, who was a great fund-raising factor among Northern California Democrats, not only in San Francisco, and had just handled it so easily before, was no longer in politics. I think something had to fill the hole. And the Democrats, after Adlai's defeat, as you know, were in very bad shape.

It's hard to say, because, you know, you think of San Francisco and Bill Malone, but everybody in Northern California who was active in politics seemed to trust Bill Malone, with a few exceptions outside of San Francisco. When I went down to Los Angeles, as I think I recounted, with all those proxies against Jimmy Roosevelt, Bill Malone had written to everybody suggesting that they send their proxies to me. And they were happy to.
Chall: But there must have been a great amount of ill will against Malone, or did Trott create it? He indicates that he's become the focus of the anti-Malone group, Elmer Delaney too—

Heller: Elmer Delaney, who had been a law partner of Bill Malone, just hated him. That was a dreadful broadcast. Joe Houghteling would probably remember more of those broadcasts. He was the only person I knew in the world at that time who had a tape recorder. I'd ask him, if I wasn't going to be able to hear them, to record those for me. They were vicious attacks with no meaning.

Jimmy Roosevelt found it very convenient when he was state chairman. I remember he used to say, "I went to that county central committee meeting. It's a disgrace the way Malone runs this." It was nothing; it was Malone and a lot of mostly Irish, that loved it. It was a game for them. I'd laugh to myself, because I'd think, "Los Angeles county committee is an absolute shambles. It's falling apart." But Jimmy started some of this talk about Bill Malone, too.

I think when a person, in a way, has power—it was a minor degree of power, really—people grow to resent it after a while. I think this is just a normal process. Bill, in his own way, was smart enough to realize that.

Bill loved to name people for marshals, and internal revenue, and all that. Of course, Jim Smyth his great friend, and Ed's and my good friend, got caught up in one of those sad affairs in which he did practically nothing. He ante-dated his income tax, because he forgot to file it on time. He paid the full amount. It amounted to something like $500. It was just nothing. But it was sad, to him, because he went downhill after that.

Chall: Well, it dragged a lot of party people into the whole thing.

Heller: Oh, yes.

Chall: In terms of another aspect of the Trott affair besides the money, there were his attempts to name people for particular positions. There was a judicial vacancy. Judge Erskine had died and Trott went around the state having decided a man named [Ralph] Brown should be named. He also had people he was interested in for various other positions, and this I think was irritating to Congressman Shelley and others, who felt that it should be a cooperative activity.

Heller: I never wanted to name judges, as national committeewoman. I felt I was unqualified to recommend. I went to our congressional delegation for the Democrats, of course, and said as far as I was concerned, since we didn't have a Senator then, it was their job. This was after
Heller: Sheridan Downey pulled out. It was '50, I guess. It was up to them to make recommendations, and that I wanted nothing to do with it in Northern California. So it was a carryover, I think, from that, which I pulled myself out of. Now, Bill Malone loved to name judges; as long as Sheridan Downey was there, he had a vehicle. But he stopped that after--

Chall: That was after '50, anyway.

Heller: Yes.

Chall: I don't know exactly what happened with this whole matter. Fred Trott said that it was a real battle. He was interested in naming Brown.

Heller: Brown, I can't think of his first name, was from Modesto and he was the author of the Brown Act--against secrecy in government.

Chall: Ralph Brown.

Heller: Was he chosen?

Chall: I don't know.

Heller: I don't remember.

Chall: There were, under consideration, Sam Finley, and Judge Foley, and Victor Wagler--

Heller: He [Brown] had a good reputation.

Chall: Yes, Jack Shelley said he was all right with him. I think Jack Shelley was concerned because Trott was going around the state and trying to determine who would be the candidates for judge, and for openings in the Department of the Interior; and other vacancies. Shelley writes to you that he thought we were all supposed to work these things out cooperatively.

Heller: Yes, because I never wanted to name anybody to anything, you know!

Chall: But he writes to you as if you were working with him.

Heller: I had gone to congressional delegations and said that they should be the ones.

Chall: But for all positions?

Heller: I can't remember ever recommending anybody directly.
Chall: Let me put it this way. Patronage seemed to be a problem.

Heller: Patronage never meant a thing to me. It was not a problem to me.

Chall: Trott trying to make the decisions and the congressmen concerned?

Heller: You're thinking that that was a big plus. But I'm sure I wasn't working against him. I was just working with the Congress with the understanding I'd had before Fred Trott came along.

Chall: There was an attempt to get somebody to run against William Knowland in 1952, and there again Fred Trott wanted to set up a very large state convention to endorse a candidate. That was nipped in the bud, and a small committee chose Clinton McKinnon and he lost. That was another problem that Trott had with the state people.

Heller: I don't remember that. Clinton McKinnon had been an editor—

[Daily News]

Chall: He was active in Southern California.

Heller: He was a sort of decent guy who eventually sort of went to pot.

Chall: I guess I'm pointing out that Fred Trott tried a lot of ways to be chairman.

Heller: He tried a lot of things as chairman that I certainly wasn't interested in doing, and that I can't remember the past chairmen had been particularly interested in doing.

Chall: There was an attempt to get [John] McEnery in as the director of the Mint. The newspapers claimed that the Heller-Malone team was trying to get John McEnery in as director of the Mint, but because you were having all the problems with Smyth that you couldn't get your person in. Trott wrote a letter to somebody, opposing McEnery.

Heller: I would guess that it was not nearly that big a thing. I vaguely remember that. I guess that McEnery wanted that job, and we were glad to endorse him. McEnery was an emotional Irishman, let's put it that way. A pretty decent guy, but very emotional and wound up. You know, director of the Mint, what does it mean. I think we would have said we'd gladly endorse him.

Chall: Apparently you did, and it just didn't move anywhere.

Heller: Well, that wasn't going to be done at that point. I can't remember any big battles on these, except that one U.S. Marshal from San Mateo County. I knew about him, because he lived down here in Redwood City, and I heard about him locally. I remember saying to Malone,
Heller: "Malone, you're going to rue the day that you wanted to get this--whatever his name is--in as U.S. Marshal. He's no good." He just got into mess upon mess.

Chall: You were right.

Heller: Bill Malone liked to control this minor amount of patronage if he could. I never cared about this at all.

Chall: What about the press. Mary Ellen Leary wrote an article based on a speech of Fred Trott's that the Hellers and Malone weren't interested in having a Senator, because if there weren't a Democratic Senator, then they could control the patronage in this area.

Heller: That was untrue. Mary Ellen, whom I like well enough, would get some of these crazy ideas sometimes.

Chall: She took it from a speech of Trott's.

Heller: [laughing] That's where she got it from! Bill Knowland was a very strong Senator. It was very hard to find a candidate who would even run. I don't know whom Fred Trott wanted.

Chall: He was talking at the time of wanting to set up the committee and run McKinnon, or Dan Kimball, or anybody. He may have had somebody else in mind.

Heller: I can see that. I remember vaguely talk about Dan Kimball. He didn't want to do it. It was easier said than done to get a candidate when there's no money and a very strong opponent. It's very hard to get anybody to say he'll run. Just like George Miller afterwards couldn't find anybody to run for governor, until he found Dick Graves.

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Heller: Because it isn't that simple about Fred Trott moving his headquarters.

Fred Trott's Stormy Term##

Chall: What do you think motivated Fred Trott in the way he dealt with the party and the party leaders?

Heller: I think you have to go back to the fact that he was suddenly thrust into this state vice-chairmanship, which, when you're vice-chairman for Northern California, you really are, in effect, the chairman for Northern California. He had just done local politics, as far as I remember. I think I already told you, didn't I, that Harold McGrath was the one who suggested him as a compromise candidate when Ro Davis was getting no place. I may be wrong, but I think it was basically, almost that simple.

Chall: That he was just inexperienced, and naive, perhaps?

Heller: Yes. And suddenly, he found Harold McGrath tapping him, and loved it. Loved the idea. But he was a very small-minded person, with very little experience. He didn't have the money either that the average person in politics had and he didn't realize that it takes quite a bit of time and perhaps some personal expense—especially if you plan to run a separate headquarters as he eventually decided to do. He thought he could raise the money for the office himself.

Chall: Yes. He was placed in a position where he claimed just being state chairman was an expense. The phone calls to and from his house in Visalia, for one thing. He felt it was necessary for him to give up his school position until after the election. He had no savings; he mortgaged his home.

Heller: But he didn't have to do any of that. This is what I'm trying to say to you.

Chall: How could it have been done in any other way?

Heller: Ollie Carter came in as state chairman, who had no money either. He did have a profession of law, but he was not practicing. He had been a state senator. He did not live in San Francisco, and he managed it. And Ollie Carter had a great political sense. What I'm saying is, it was Fred's own nature that was wrong. Ollie never got into debt, he never felt he had to be present [in the headquarters in San Francisco]. He never felt he was being taken; he never felt he was being used. He never threatened people. He was one of the best state chairmen we
Heller: ever had. If I didn't have the other comparison, I might listen to what you are saying. I'm saying it isn't necessary, and it wasn't at that time, necessary.

Chall: It's really a matter of trust among the people who hold these offices, more than anything that you could write down.

Heller: I think so. I think that is true. It's a matter of trust and feeling secure. Ollie and Harold McGrath just worked together beautifully. Ollie wasn't around half the time. But people liked Ollie. Ollie also never tried to raise money for the office—headquarters and he never questioned the payment of the expenses, which were minimal.

Chall: So you think that the reason that Trott separated his office from the headquarters that you had all shared—the San Francisco County Committee, the Democratic National Committeewoman, the Northern California division of the Democratic State Central Committee—was that he wanted to deal with the state central committee activities by himself? Or did he really distrust the rest of you? Was it the "ins" versus the outs"?

Heller: It was a combination. I think he felt that if he split with Malone, particularly, sort of with me, that he could finance his own headquarters. You know that his letter keeps saying that he asked Ruth Dodds and me to come along with him—that we were the ones who made the break. He thought he could raise the money. Before he split off he wrote to individual county chairmen, I believe, asking for $100.

Chall: Just $100 from each county chairman?

Heller: It was so small, the whole thing. It was all on such a small scale that it's really painful. But he did not trust Malone. He got to hate Harold McGrath, by the way. He really did. Because I think he felt Harold had led him into this. We were not going to give up the funds we had raised for our long-time mutual offices and there wasn't much more to be had in Northern California.

Chall: In terms of his dislike or distrust of Bill Malone, Trott does say in one of his letters that it was Bill Malone who insisted that the women leaders stay with him—you and Ruth Dodds—and that, therefore, you did.

Heller: That was untrue. That was untrue. We wanted to maintain that office. Bill never came in that office. I don't mean that he couldn't use it, but he never really came in that office. Never. Bill Malone had nothing to do with any of that. Very little. I had supported Ro Davis, whom he wasn't for. Bill just pulled out of politics at that point. He was sick of it. He did help raise the small amount we needed. What a piddling amount it was.
It seemed to me that what we might have had here was the beginning of a movement which finally came about in 1952-1954 when the Democratic clubs were formed. That is, an "in" versus an "out" situation. A valley person wanting his friends to get some power in the Democratic party, but the people in San Francisco had it.

Don't ever forget that one of the great valley characters was Oliver Carter--had been right at the top.

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But he was valley through and through. He was upper valley, but through and through a valley person. You can't say valley felt out of San Francisco. Ruth Dodds was from Sacramento. She was very much a part of active Democratic politics. She had no San Francisco connections at all. I don't think she was friendly with Malone in any way.

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Out of that—I'm not sure that it was totally a result—but by 1952 and certainly by 1954, I notice that specific committees to finance the headquarters, were developed. I don't know, I'm just guessing whether committees of this kind came about in order to avoid the sort of problem that you had with the division chairman thinking that he had claim to certain funds that were raised for the joint headquarters.

I can't tell that for sure. I think it was more a fact that Bill Malone, who was a great fund-raising factor among Northern California Democrats, not only in San Francisco, and had just handled it so easily before, was no longer in politics. I think something had to fill the hole. And the Democrats, after Adlai's defeat, as you know, were in very bad shape.

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Chall: Trott was interested as northern vice-chairman in naming a judge to the vacancy left by the death of Judge Erskine, but he seemed to think that he couldn't override the power of Bill Malone. He had in mind other federal positions too. But Congressman Jack Shelley thought that Trott was not cooperating as he should with the congressional delegation—trying to push candidates on his own.

Heller: I never wanted to name judges, as national committeewoman. I felt I was unqualified to recommend. I went to our congressional delegation (the Democrats, of course) and said as far as I was concerned, since we didn't have a Senator then, it was their job. This was after 1950. Now Bill Malone loved to name judges, but he stopped after Sheridan Downey pulled out in 1950. So I was working with the Congress with the understanding I'd had before Fred Trott came along.

Chall: Fred Trott also tried to organize a big convention in order to endorse a candidate to run against William Knowland in 1952. That was nipped in the bud by party leaders who chose Clinton McKinnon as the candidate. He lost, of course. I guess I'm pointing out that Fred Trott tried in many ways to be a state chairman.
Heller: He tried a lot of things as chairman that I certainly wasn't interested in doing, and I can't remember that past chairmen had been particularly interested in doing.

Chall: What about the press? Trott did get quite a bit of press coverage. Mary Ellen Leary wrote an article based on a speech of Fred Trott's in which it was stated that the Hellers and Malone weren't interested in having a Democratic Senator, because if there weren't one then they could control the patronage of this area.

Heller: That was untrue. Mary Ellen, whom I like well enough, would get some of these crazy ideas sometimes.

Chall: She took this from a speech of Trott's.

Heller: [laughing] That's where she got it from! Bill Knowland was a very strong Senator at that time. It was very hard to find a candidate who would even run. I don't know whom Fred Trott wanted.

Chall: He was talking, at the time he wanted to set up the convention, of McKinnon or Dan Kimball. He may have had somebody else in mind.

Heller: I can see that. I remember vaguely talk about Dan Kimball. He didn't want to do it. It was easier said than done to get a candidate when there's no money and a very strong opponent. It's very hard to get anybody to say he'll run. Just like George Miller afterwards couldn't find anybody to run for governor, until he found Dick Graves.

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The Election Campaign, 1952##

The Selection of Delegates Pledged to Harry Truman/Edmund G. Brown, Sr.

Chall: There seemed to have been some trouble getting that 1952 delegate slate selected.

Heller: Yes, there was. But I don't believe I was in on that early maneuvering. I was certainly not at the Palace Hotel meeting.

Chall: You were not?

Heller: The meeting that I remember was later than that at San Luis Obispo.

Chall: Yes, all right. That would have been--?
Heller: Probably February or March. I can't place it exactly. I really didn't know what was going on half the time.

Chall: But you were the national committeewoman!

Heller: I know, but you often don't know what's going on. There are caucuses behind the scenes. See, I didn't know about this Eisenhower move.

Chall: In '48.

Heller: Oh, that was '48. Excuse me, I'm mixing up the '52. You're right.

No, I don't remember too much about that delegate selection, strangely enough. Have you got a list of the delegates there?

Chall: In '52? No, I didn't bring it with me.

Heller: It seems to me it was quite a conventional delegation.

Chall: What I gather from reading this material is that there were the problems again with Jimmy Roosevelt. Of course, that may be again somebody else's perceptions. Heller and Malone, that's always considered the "old guard," wanted delegates who were not so much in the pocket of James Roosevelt. It looks from these notes that Glenn Anderson, and Trott, and Roosevelt were on one side and you and Malone were on the other with respect to the choice of delegates. And some other problems.

Heller: Well, it says here: "Mrs. Heller and Malone wanted to go unencumbered."* [by the pro-Truman label] That's just the opposite. We were for Truman.

Chall: Did you have any idea at that point that he might withdraw?

Heller: Not really. We went in there thinking that he was going to run. You see, he could legally do it because he had only had part of one term, and the second term. We really thought he was going to run.

Chall: It isn't correct that you wanted to go unencumbered?

Heller: Absolutely not.

Chall: And do you think anybody else, like Glenn Anderson, Trott, or Roosevelt had any difference of opinion?

Heller: I never knew what they were thinking. If they did, I don't know who they were for. There was a Kefauver group, but they were not part of the Kefauver group.

*San Francisco Examiner, January 25, 1952, in a column by Fulton Lewis, Jr.
We may have taken that note down incorrectly, but that's what I have.

I don't see how that could be. We were all pledged to Truman—whichever was on that slate.

You don't remember then, Frank McKinney coming out here and setting up this committee of twenty-one people to choose the delegates?

I really and truly don't. It could easily have happened.

Something caused that.

I knew Frank McKinney, but was never particularly friendly with him. From Indiana. I knew him because he and Ed Heller had served in the same branch of the army in World War II. That's the only reason I knew Frank McKinney, which is a strange way to have met him. He was a bum politician.

They could easily have set up a twenty-one man committee. I just don't remember.

At the time you were on it, because you were the national committee-woman.

Yes, I was on it. I was on it, definitely.

It's really not unlike many of the other pre-campaign matters where somebody had to come out from Washington and help the California politicians set up a slate.

That happened in '60, too.

That happened before this, so I'm not surprised you wouldn't remember it.

I don't know what "control of '52 delegation" really meant. You see, it all fell apart when Truman decided not to run.

After eight years of doing this stuff, I had firmly announced, over a year before, that I would not consider being national committee-woman again.

Whom did you have in mind?

I didn't have anybody in mind! All I had in mind was that I would not be national committeewoman.

Because if the delegation pledged to Brown had won, there would have been a national committeewoman whom you might have been able to choose.
Heller: Never gave it a thought. Never gave it a thought. It wasn't likely that the Brown delegation was going to win, you know, under the circumstances.

Chall: You didn't have anybody in mind? The reason that I press you on this is that Elizabeth Gatov recalls that Sue Lilienthal told her that she thought you had promised it to her.

Heller: Sue wanted to be national committeewoman and I knew she'd be terrible. She was a very emotional gal and I was devoted to her personally. You're right. I tell you Libby has a good memory. She's quite right. Sue wanted that job. And, inside of me, I knew she'd be a terrible national committeewoman.

Chall: Did you in any sense promise it to her?

Heller: No, not one way or another. Sue, I was very friendly with, and could well have thought I did. But we didn't have that much conversation; didn't get that far, really.

The interesting part of that '52 thing was, of course, the Kefauver slate was in, made up of the greatest mixture that ever was. They had a hard time pulling it at the time. But George Miller quite properly saw it as his opportunity, maybe, to come back. Though at the time he agreed to head it, Truman was going to be the candidate as far as I knew. But the thing was that Truman pulled out with not many days of notice.

Chall: He pulled out on March eighteenth and on April fourth you had to get your new list in.

Heller: That was it. And to qualify a new slate of delegates was one of the most harassing things that we ever did. And they put Don Bradley in charge of that. Don came into the office one day, I didn't know him very well, and just volunteered his services free, to help do it if we should get a nominal head. We couldn't find a nominal head.

I had a lot to do, I will say that, in persuading Pat Brown to let his name be used. Pat was a very ambitious politician at that time. He was our only statewide officeholder. He thought it might not help his career. And I remember saying to him, "Pat, you're never going to regret this. You've got a lot of good people that will be backing you. The chances of winning are minimal, because you're not a candidate, but you're never going to regret helping out the bulk of the Democratic party, because I don't believe Kefauver will ever be the nominee of the party."

So I had quite a bit to do with that. But this all had to be done in the tightest amount of space. We got that petition signer—what was his name?—Joe Robinson? He was a professional. I don't know how much they charge now.
Chall: So much per name. Is that what you had to pay?

Heller: Yes, it was so much per name. But nothing compared to what it is now, maybe.

But he didn't do much. He made a lot of speeches to us about what he could do, and we found the petitions weren't coming in. Don Bradley really farmed those out in every county and all over, and we got them back in, just in time to qualify. It was really something. And there was very little money spent, really, to qualify that delegation in such a short time. I always thought it was a miracle that we had qualified it, and I never was sorry.

And then we had that trouble with certain ones wanting to drop off because they wanted to be on the Kefauver delegation because they could see that that was going to win. But most of us never thought of switching. Libby Gatov I'm sure never did.

Chall: No, I'm sure she didn't think of switching.

Heller: No, no, we just never dreamed of it. We didn't win that time, that was all. So all right, the end of the world hasn't come.

It was at that point that, as some of the background that you gave me before shows, a lot of national people came into the state to try to help the Brown delegation. You probably have forgotten how much Kefauver was not liked and not respected.

Chall: He was not?

Heller: No. I don't mean in this state, I mean all over. They knew more about him outside the state than in.

Chall: And these people nationally came out to help you so that Kefauver would not win?

Heller: Yes. There was very little that could be done, but they did. And among them was Adlai Stevenson. I had met Adlai in 1950 for the first time, and really did like him. Always thought he was great. I think he notified Pat Brown that he was coming to help in any way he could. Somehow Pat Brown, I remember, phoned and said, "Do you want to have a dinner in Atherton for Adlai Stevenson?" And I said, "Sure!" I must have had twelve or fourteen people here for dinner. And from then on, he was my candidate [chuckles] even though he wasn't a candidate! He was always my candidate.

Chall: Were there people behind the scenes moving for him? He did really become a candidate at once.
Heller: Well, he made a tremendous impression in '52.

Chall: It was at the convention; he gave the welcoming address.

Heller: Yes.

Chall: Was that enough to tip the scales if things weren't already moving?

Heller: It really was because things were so messed up. Kefauver was to me a very poor candidate. Very distasteful to me and I think, to a great many other people.

Chall: Yet he had a loyal following all along.

Heller: Yes, but look what happened at the convention. It wasn't so much a pro-Adlai, it was just anti-Kefauver to start with, and Adlai just swept that convention. What he had in his own mind, I don't know.

Chall: You weren't there at all, and no members of your family were there?

Heller: No, we heard it on radio, I guess. Maybe T.V., I can't remember. Certainly--radio.

No, I wouldn't go. Part of that thing was resentment of people who went and had the passes. I was entitled to one because I was still national committeewoman. But I refused to go. That isn't my sort of thing, to hang on. I could have sat up on the platform the whole time, but I saw no reason to. I didn't have a delegation.

There were three or four people on the Kefauver delegation that I liked but I didn't know most of them, to tell you the truth.

What that maneuvering is prior to it, I think Malone could tell you some of that, if he'll ever talk to you about it. I never thought of asking about that. I don't really remember.

Chall: Well, it really doesn't matter, because most of it is in the public record. But it's always interesting to clarify what is in the public record.

Heller: I don't know why Roosevelt was one of those pledged to Truman. He always hated Truman.

Chall: I see. So maybe it's the other way around.

Heller: I guess so. We were always referred to as the "old guard" by certain types of people. Nobody understands that really, Malone really didn't want anything out of this. And Ed Heller wanted even less. He enjoyed politics.
Chall: Malone is supposed to have wanted patronage from Helen Douglas and refused to support her because she wouldn't give it to him. And other people later on say that Malone walked away from the Stevenson campaign because Stevenson wouldn't promise him patronage. I don't know what that means.

Heller: Malone never really liked Adlai Stevenson. They were from an entirely different background. And Malone never understood Adlai. They were so different.

    Malone really belonged to the Irish-Catholic type of background which was leading the national committee all those years. You know, Bob Hannegan--

Chall: Probably McGrath and McKinney.

Heller: Howard McGrath and Bill Boyle, whom I never knew very well. Ed Flynn, who was really the nicest of those people, in my opinion, from New York.

    He never could understand Adlai. And Malone, just at that point, got sick of politics, and he pulled out of it.

Chall: Was Malone pulling out because of all of that bad publicity over the Smyth affair, do you think?

Heller: Well, probably. He would never say so. It was very unpleasant at that time. What was it, Frigidaires and mink coats or something? It was all puny graft, whatever it was. The Smyth thing was very unpleasant to him. Smyth was his very good friend.

Chall: Did it hurt the party in any way? I mean, that's one of the reasons Fred Trott claimed he left the headquarters.

Heller: It didn't hurt the party because Eisenhower was always going to be elected, in my opinion. It didn't help, but it didn't literally hurt. Smyth was a very decent person. I think I gave you that background already.

Chall: Yes. I just wondered whether it had hurt.

Heller: But Malone got a distaste for politics. His close personal friend getting into this stupid mess. Actually, Ed Heller didn't like it either, but he liked Adlai so much. He was very, very strongly for Adlai, very strongly. So Malone sort of withdrew from statewide politics about that point.

Chall: He told me that he had.
Heller: He did. He really did. It wasn't the comfortable politics that he was used to.

Chall: Well, a new group was coming in—I don't know how well one could see it until afterwards—but a new group of people was coming in and working for Stevenson.

Heller: Oh, sure. It was entirely different. But I was very active for Stevenson.

Adlai Stevenson's Campaign

Chall: When he was the nominee of the party, then regardless of whether you were national committeewoman you got into the campaign, is that right?

Heller: Oh, strongly.

Chall: What did you do?

Heller: I worked with Harley Hise, who was Northern California chairman. And Ed was Northern California finance chairman, if I remember correctly. I did fund raising mainly.

We organized the big Cow Palace rally for Adlai. That was one of the big things we did here. It was just the most enormous success that ever was. We knew Adlai didn't have a prayer. But those who loved Adlai really loved him. And it was a breath of fresh air, compared to everything we had been having.

You see, I was not a great admirer of Truman's. He's become a later-day saint. That's really true. I didn't hate him, but I certainly wasn't crazy about him. I thought he was right on certain things he did. You know, aid to Greece and Turkey, I thought he was right. Marshall Plan. He showed some good common sense.

Chall: But where did you not like him? Can you recall?

Heller: I just didn't think he was a big man. Though he's been known now as that. He had so many funny people that were his cronies.

Chall: But Adlai, you felt, was sterling all the way through?

Heller: He really was. I'm not convinced now that he would have made a good president. I'm not.

Chall: I wondered about that. Was he a good candidate?
Adlai Stevenson's Campaign

Chall: When he was the nominee of the party, then regardless of whether you were national committeewoman you got into the campaign, is that right?

Heller: Oh, strongly.

Chall: What did you do?

Heller: I worked with Harley Hise, who was Northern California chairman. And Ed was Northern California finance chairman, if I remember correctly. This is--another reason to seal--where I got to hate Clara Shirpser. I didn't till then. She wouldn't let me come in that office. I used to have to sneak into Harley Hise's office the back way. She was impossible! And Harley couldn't stand her; nobody could stand her. That was the funny part of it. She always talked about [nasally] "Estes." I don't know if Libby would be as brutal. I think she would if she were going to be really honest about it.

Chall: Well, Clara did indicate that there were very many people in the party who were really not very nice to her.*

Heller: Well, she was not very nice to them.

Chall: She felt quite upset.

Heller: Every time we appeared--you know, showed an interest in Adlai--she would complain. If I'd go to a rally, she'd complain. Oh, she was terrible. I don't take these things very personally. I put it down to her character, not mine.

Chall: Why do you think she did those things?

Heller: I don't know. I really don't know. You know George Miller's--

Chall: Well, I know he threw her out of the office and copied her speech, but I don't know anything else.

Heller: This is where George and I became more friendly. Finally, he came around one day, he said, "I don't make many mistakes in politics, but when I make one, it's a beaut!" That was Clara he was talking about. She was impossible. I can't tell you. Whining. That's why I don't want all this stuff published.

Chall: She was quickly given short shrift by most of the people from what you call quote-unquote old guard.

Heller: George Miller put her in!

Chall: I know he helped her.

Heller: He nominated her. He didn't know her. Up to then, we thought she was very nice, and after she was elected national committeewoman I was most welcoming to her, and tried to give her any information I could and make it easy. It was all right until the convention, when Adlai got nominated. And then she just got impossible. I didn't mind her up to then so much. But it wasn't the old guard, she's wrong. It was the new guard that couldn't stand her--the people who elected her.

Chall: Yes, I'm probably stating that incorrectly. But I know there were many times when she felt that you and Pat Brown and others had snubbed her; not introduced her, when she was a national committeewoman.

Heller: Oh, she got so naggy and so difficult. Nobody ever wanted her around very much. It was terrible. Kefauver was her love. That's about all on that.

Really, the job of committeewoman was almost nonexistent while Clara Shirpser was there.

Chall: Just because of--

Heller: Of her personality.

Chall: You mean in California, is that right?

Heller: Yes. Well, she went around to meetings, I guess. I didn't follow it that much then.
Heller: The first time, yes. In '56 he was not. But in '52 he was a superb candidate. He was something completely new on the scene. You know, writing all his own speeches and polishing them, having every word correct. He had conceptions and a philosophy which we hadn't seen for a long time.

But it was always impossible. The people were ready for a change, a new administration. Eisenhower was a great hero. And Adlai had a very poor vice-presidential candidate, John Sparkman, who did not contribute to anything. But we did raise money, that's for sure. We were starting to get a little bit more money contributed. But it still was very small compared to what's done now.

Chall: It wasn't needed the way it's needed now.

Heller: No. This was before the T.V. commercial times.

Chall: And high postage rates.

Heller: But we spent a lot of time in Northern California on that Cow Palace rally because it was for all of Northern California. We organized in all the counties to have busloads sent in, and we organized a lot among different nationalities in San Francisco.

Have you run across Milla Logan, Mrs. Tom Logan, in any of this research that you've done?

Chall: I think so, the name seems familiar.

Heller: She has tales to tell you about politics too from her point of view. Milla had a genius with these minorities, whether it was Armenians, or Italians, or whatever. She'd bring them all together for Adlai. That was the biggest effort besides raising funds.

Helen Milbank came in on the scene then, who was one of the best, the only good speaker I know.

Chall: Oh, really?

Heller: Superb. You could put her in when she believed in something. Magnificent public speaker. Beautiful presence. She was very active in that campaign. She had known Adlai well. There were a lot of good people. Ben Duniway, who's now on the circuit court of appeals. He became a federal judge and an excellent one. First class. He started with the Truman-Barkley clubs, so he had no organization. Because people didn't like Truman very much. And he was active in Adlai's campaign, too.

People just flocked to Adlai. Not the kooks. But you did get the intellectuals, as you know.
Chall: It was a whole new Democratic party when it was finished, wasn't it?

Heller: Oh, completely. Which was fine. Libby Gatov was very active.

Chall: Yes.

Heller: That's when she started to be very active. And was excellent. She became committeewoman in '56.

You don't know how good it is not to have to go to all those state central committee meetings, or county committee meetings.

I remember when Libby went in in '56 as committeewoman. I said, "Libby, you're going to love it for four years, and you'll like it for two more years, and then all of a sudden—you watch." And that's exactly what happened to her. You get sick of it. I don't mean you get sick of politics, you get sick of that petty type of thing.

You asked who was Gertrude Clark. Did you find out?

Chall: Well, I knew who she was. Did you think that she would have made a good national committeewoman if she had been appointed, or wouldn't it have mattered at that stage?

Heller: I never thought about it. Gertrude Clark was a pretty nice gal. Very good family. She had a sharp tongue. When she liked you, she was fine. I liked her.

Chall: She was Clara's opponent for national committeewoman.

Heller: You see, I wasn't there, I don't remember it at all. I'm sure I would have liked her.

Chall: I get the feeling that you knew Eisenhower was going to win.

Heller: I would hardly admit it to myself. But all the logic tells you that. A great national hero!

Chall: Any other factors besides the fact that it was Eisenhower, do you think, that were responsible for the loss in '52?

Heller: Well, no, I think it was more in '56 than in '52 that Adlai's own hangups began to show. He had to weigh questions so carefully that he could not come to decisions. He was always tortured. It had a charming trait to it, but it was difficult, too. He used to stay here with us and he used to stay with Helen Milbank, who was then living in Hillsborough. We were all really, really, close personal friends. Became very good friends. But that starts to go also into the '56 campaign, if I remember correctly.
Chall: During the '52 campaign, you were appointed to an advisory committee by chairman McKinney—that was in November of '51—to represent the West.

Heller: That was called an executive committee.

Chall: Oh, it was?

Heller: Well, maybe not. Maybe not. Maybe it was something else. I don't remember.

Chall: This was an eleven-person committee. That seems small for the executive committee; I don't know.

Heller: It was small. Maybe it was an advisory committee, or maybe a combination. It was when things were starting to look so bad.

Chall: This was in November of '51, so I guess it was when the party was beginning to wonder if it would hold up.

Heller: I don't remember much. I really don't remember much about that, to tell you the truth. I remember—'51? [pause] You forget the times. I don't know too much about that. I remember going to lunch at the White House, but I'm not sure if that was then for the special committee.

Perceptions of the Democratic National Committee

Heller: Listen, whatever it was, the national committee was a fraud and a delusion. It really didn't do anything. It really didn't. It had no power. It had power to select the next convention site and to select the new chairman, which was really foreordained if there was a presidential candidate. They didn't have meetings terribly often; it was very dull. I met a lot of people that way, you know, on the national scene.

Chall: The wheelers, the movers and shakers?

Heller: We were not movers and shakers by any means. You get into certain places and it seems important. Some states thought that job was big, but California didn't mean much. Or nationally, it meant nothing, really.

Chall: You were on an executive committee, though, weren't you, on the national committee?
Heller: Yes, I was on the executive committee of the national committee.

Chall: What were they doing between conventions?

Heller: They used to have a big national committee meeting all the time, and we didn't meet very often. I remember being called in once, when the price of meat had gone so high. I think that was in '46, wasn't it? What to do about it? It was all programmed ahead of time; it didn't mean a thing. This is really true. I think certain people could use the national committee. I think Ed Pauley used it.

Chall: Do you think the men were using it more than the women, or the men had access to it? People like Ed Pauley could use it because he was in business?

Heller: Could be, but Jimmy Roosevelt got no place with it. Yes, I think Ed Pauley maybe did.

Chall: But it isn't necessarily that one could, just because one's there.

Heller: No, he could have been just as close to Truman without that. Remember he was what—treasurer of the national committee?

Chall: I think for a time he was.

Heller: Which took him into a different level, really. He and Hannegan were very intimate. And the succession of national chairmen were really poor stuff. They never did understand California. They all came from states that had ward politics. We didn't know what it was. There was no patronage out here; there was really nothing.

Chall: Yes, the parties were just not allowed to exist as most parties did in the other states. It's hard to understand, I'm sure.

Heller: Well, all I would say is I met a lot of people as a result of that.

Chall: What good was that? Was it just interesting, fun?

Heller: Sometimes, but often not. [chuckles] No good, I guess. I suppose it's all part of your eventual growth, learning how things are really done and what the semblance of things is.

So, basically, I'd just go to national committee meetings; sometimes I wouldn't go. But, at that point it wasn't as big as it is now, and members were national committeemen and national committeewomen. State chairmen were not members.

The whole period I was national committeewoman, the only person I would give a proxy to myself was Ollie Carter. I wouldn't trust Ed Pauley, I wouldn't trust Jimmy Roosevelt. I wouldn't trust anybody.
Chall: You had to go yourself.

Heller: I went myself, or didn't vote, that's all.

Chall: In 1952, when George Miller, Jr. was elected state chairman, did you attend that meeting? Clara Shirpser, in her interview, claims that you had urged her to support Roland Davis rather than George Miller, in 1952. Did you not attend but simply work in the background?

Heller: No. I did not attend. I think Shirpser has mixed up 1952 with 1950.
VI CONTINUING ACTIVE INTEREST IN PARTY POLITICS, 1954-1972*

The Election Campaigns, 1956

Chall: Now, in '56, you were still interested in Stevenson, I take it.

Heller: Oh, yes.

Chall: And you had him here as a guest. Once in a while it would hit the press, that's why I note it here [in the outline].

Heller: Yes. When he came to Tahoe in '56, Bill Blair, who was his right-hand man, had become a good friend. Still is. I just heard from him about a week ago. I continue to hear from him. Bill is a lovely person. He had been up at our place at Tahoe, so he knew what it was like. He just phoned and said, "We want to give Adlai a vacation, so nobody knows where he is for a few days. Could you put him up at Tahoe?" He knows how our place is isolated, and nobody had to know he was there. And I said, "Sure!" So, that was the only vacation he had in that '56 campaign, that summer. He flew surreptitiously into Nevada, to the little town of Genoa. Do you know where Genoa is?

Chall: No, I don't!

Heller: It's right at the foot of the Sierra, on the other side of--I forget what pass comes into Tahoe. It's a charming little old Mormon community there. I think it was the chairman of the Nevada Democratic Committee, I'm not sure, who was a personal friend of his--very nice man. He had arranged for a private plane from wherever Adlai had been to fly in there, because there are only 250 people in the town to this day. We went over and picked him up and brought him to Tahoe. It just happened that the people I'd asked up that weekend ahead of time, all happened to be Democrats, and adored him. Most of the summer, it was business people or other friends.

*Portions of this chapter have been placed under seal.
The Bill Roths were there at the time. And my daughter Liz was there. She was unmarried, of course, then. One of the fellows she used to go out with was there—Herb Packer, who was at Stanford Law School. He was very controversial when he came to Stanford. He used to be taken on day after day by Fulton Lewis for being a red, which he wasn't. He became a very prominent law school person. He died young, of a stroke. And Catherine and Bill Wurster were there. Bud and Carol Burdick—you know, Eugene Burdick—were there. That was who happened to be coming up that time. We had an hilarious four or five days up there. Just wonderful. Adlai being his most superb and most fun. Nobody except Bill Blair knew where he was. So that was one of the nicer things about that campaign year.

He came up after the '60 campaign, too, when I hadn't even been supporting him. We were good friends, despite that.

Chall: How did both you and your son [Clarence] happen to get on the delegation, one as a delegate, one as an alternate to the 1956 convention?

Heller: Because alternates were very easily selected. There was no formal stuff the way there is now. Ed had sort of gotten out of the habit of going to conventions. He had been the delegate for a long time. It was not his lack of interest, he just didn't want to go through that campaign. I was selected as a delegate, I'm sure, at-large. Helen Milbank was a delegate. Oh, there were a lot of good campaigners at that convention.

Chall: This list is all done in alphabetical order, so I don't know whether you were an at-large or not.

Heller: I'm sure I was at-large. Clary was an alternate to somebody else in this district.

Chall: Somebody who couldn't go at the last minute. I have her name, somewhere, but it doesn't matter.

Heller: I don't remember. And of course, at that time, Kefauver had run again, but was well defeated in the primary here. So there was no controversy about the delegation that time. These were all Stevenson supporters.

The alternates were just picked very casually. I remember Jim Thacher was my alternate. That's why I must have been at-large, because he was from San Francisco.

Chall: There were some Kefauver delegates who were put on that delegation. About twenty-one, I think.
Heller: Yes, that's right. To keep it--

Chall: To balance it, to keep it fair.

Heller: Yes [chuckles], we were much better than Ronald Reagan delegates, but there weren't too many. What do you want to know about that?

**John F. Kennedy's Campaign for the Nomination for Vice-President**

Chall: I want to know how it came about that you had John Kennedy in your suite at two o'clock in the morning after Stevenson had thrown the selection for the vice-president to the delegates.

Heller: I'll tell you exactly how. First of all, Clary Heller and Joe Houghteling, who was a delegate, were great admirers of John Kennedy. He came out to speak to the World Affairs Council at Asilomar. It was arranged by Joe Houghteling and Clary Heller.

I just got on with John Kennedy, that's all you can say. He was a person I got on with. I did like him, extremely much. But actually, that had nothing to do with his coming to my room. I had taken a suite because Clary Heller was there and my son Alf was there too. We had two bedrooms and a living room in this Morrison Hotel, where most people had terrible accommodations. I had foreseen. I've been to too many conventions, and knew how uncomfortable it was. And not only did I do that, but I had rented a car with a driver—one of those big cars that you get in all the cities—because transportation was so terrible in Chicago. I had been there before, so I knew. Awful, and the heat is awful.

The night that Adlai threw it open, it happened to be Clary Heller's birthday—August sixteenth—I can tell you right now when it was. So I had said to quite a few of my friends—our friends, "Whenever the session ends, come up to his and my suite and we'll have some sandwiches and coffee, and drinks, and birthday cake."

I was in the habit of picking up whoever was around, and giving them a ride back to the hotel. And among others who happened to be in the car that night, sitting in the front seat, and I was next to him—we were squeezed in, three of us in the front seat—was Pat Brown. You see, Pat was an official of the Democratic party at that point.

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Heller: We were driving home and Pat Brown and I were in the front seat of this rented car, I've forgotten who was in the back seat. And believe it or not—this is one of the coincidences that sometimes happens—
Heller: as our car was stopped at a stop light on the way to the hotel from the convention hall, another car drew up beside us on the right, and this voice said, "Hey, Pat, where you going now? I want to talk to you." And it was Jack Kennedy.

I remember Pat turning to me and saying, "Say, what's the number of your room?" I gave it to him. And he told Jack Kennedy, he said, "Come up there, we're going right there." I don't think Jack Kennedy knew I was in the car.

Chall: Really?

Heller: No. That's really the truth. You don't believe it, but it's true! [laughs]

Chall: I have to settle things going around in my mind a moment. But Jack Kennedy was in the running for the vice-presidential nomination at that time and somebody must have known it. Before he came up, was anybody talking to you about this?

Heller: Not too much. Well, by then, everybody was buzz-buzzing. The California delegation was sort of split. I had always taken the position that I would support whomever Adlai chose, never dreaming of this open convention, so I was completely uncommitted. Quite a number of us had taken that position. I remember Helen Milbank was one who had taken that position. Jim Thacher was another who had taken that position, and Joe Houghteling had taken that position. Quite a number. Pat Brown was not committed. I've forgotten exactly how it was.

Others had pledged themselves to Hubert Humphrey to get away from Kefauver. Libby was one of those. And I think Roger Kent may have been one of those who had pledged to Humphrey. But it was really, basically to get away from the Kefauver pressure. And then x number had pledged themselves to Kefauver either because they wanted him or from pressure. But I was completely uncommitted, as were quite a few of the people who came up to my suite, including Malone.

And it just happened that they came, that's all I can tell you. So we were the first place that Jack Kennedy went after that nomination was thrown open.

There'd been some talk about him, but I felt firmly that I would do whomever Adlai chose. There was talk that it might be Kennedy. But I was completely uncommitted.

Chall: Had there been talk that it might be Kefauver?
Heller: Not by Adlai, ever. To my knowledge. I doubt it. There may have been talk, but rejected. Adlai and Kefauver couldn't get along.

Chall: Even though Kefauver had thrown his delegates' strength—whatever it was around the country—to Stevenson?

Heller: Adlai just shuddered every time Kefauver would come into a room during that campaign.

So Kennedy came up and started talking to everybody and everybody was charmed with him. And almost everybody there was not committed. I don't think Libby was; I can't remember if Libby was.

Chall: She was for Humphrey.

Heller: Yes, I know she was. I don't know if she was up in my room that night.

Chall: She said she was, otherwise I wouldn't have known anything about this.

Heller: Yes. I would think I would have asked Libby and Roger up there. You ask very informally, but you know, people go in all sorts of different directions.

I remember going into my bedroom with Bill Malone and Jack Kennedy, and maybe one other. And then and there Bill Malone committed himself to Kennedy. And I was glad to, because Clary and Joe Houghteling were the hot Kennedy people on that delegation. A lot of the people there that night committed. Joe Houghteling and Clary stayed up all night, rounding up delegates to try to get them to vote for Jack Kennedy in caucus the next morning.

Chall: These were California delegates they worked on?

Heller: Yes, California delegates. Really, you don't remember what these things were like.

Chall: Well, I only know what I read and what I've seen on television, because I haven't gone to one.

Heller: I remember going to bed exhausted. I'm sure Jack Kennedy was up all night. I know Clary and Joe were, if not others. I remember being awakened by Clary Heller on the phone. He said, "They're going to vote! Get down here!" You're so tired. All I can remember, I said was, "Let Jim Thacher vote for me, my alternate; he's for Kennedy." [laughs] So I never actually got to that delegation meeting to put in the vote. But Jim Thacher cast it.

Chall: Kefauver actually got more votes than anybody on that first ballot.
Heller: That's right, there had been pledges.

Chall: And Humphrey got the next number, and then Kennedy.

Heller: That's correct.

Chall: On the second time around, Kefauver picked up a few more. Kennedy picked up quite a few more, and Humphrey lost out there.

Heller: Well, we had a little trouble with Pat Brown at that point. I can remember certain Humphrey people and even some for Kefauver who had been talked into saying, "Tell Pat to pick a number, and we'll support him." You know, for Kennedy. Pat kept trying to poll the delegation. You just can't poll a delegation of that size on the floor. It got messier and messier. And Pat, who was chairman, passed on the first roll call, if I remember correctly. He couldn't get a poll. He never could get a count. A lot of people kept saying, "Pick a number." Put the delegation in for Kennedy." These were people who had not been Kennedy supporters in the caucus, because they had made commitments ahead of time, mostly to Humphrey, but who now felt their commitment had been filled. There was great sentiment for Kennedy by that time.

Chall: I have two interesting bits of information which I'd like to pass on to you. See how you react to this. This was told to me by somebody who was there, that Ben Swig, Bill Malone, Ellie Heller, Jack Shelley all started working on Pat Brown to announce the delegates voting unanimously for Kennedy. He was ready to announce, and then he was almost wrestled to the ground by James Roosevelt, George Killion, Peter Odegard and Chet Holifield.* Some of those were Kefauver people.

Heller: I don't remember a thing about Ben Swig at all. I know I was among those—I don't think I said to announce it unanimously, but I said, "Pick a big number. Here are all these people who have told me they'll switch to Kennedy."

Chall: And do you remember that he was not permitted to do so by some of the people or that some altercation took place?

Heller: All I remember is he wouldn't do it. I don't remember about being wrestled to the ground. But he wouldn't do it. Oh, you couldn't get near Pat. He was surrounded by people; I do remember that.

Chall: I have another note here from a textbook.* I don't know where he got his information. "The California delegation with Pat Brown as its chairman were divided on a vice-presidential choice. Ben Swig urged a vote for Kennedy, and Kennedy's strength in California increased on the next ballot." That was probably the second one. "Brown, at the climactic moment in the race, announced California's votes as almost three to one for Kefauver. The manner in which the attorney general arrived at this count was never made entirely clear." Kefauver was nominated.

Heller: I don't remember.

Chall: Now, it is true that there was a switch vote at the conclusion of the second balloting. You say it was never done on the floor. Never announced?

Heller: I don't know.

Chall: The switch vote was--for Kefauver fifty, and for Kennedy eighteen. I wondered whether you were one of those eighteen.

Heller: I don't remember. I think that's one Pat probably pulled out of the hat. I can't remember any--

Chall: Have you any idea why Kefauver finally got it?

Heller: Because they worked harder getting commitments. See, Jack Kennedy was late. A lot of people just got sick of being hounded, and, in a way, figured the way I did, that Adlai would pick his own and it would work that way. But, I didn't commit to anybody whereas they thought, "Well, I'll say I'm for Kefauver and then Adlai will choose and we'll all disappear." That was not a Kefauver delegation.

Chall: Why didn't Adlai Stevenson make a choice? What was the reason for throwing it out that way?

Heller: Probably, his nature. I don't think he quite knew whom he wanted. Bill Blair was very much for Jack Kennedy, as I remember. But Adlai was just going back and forth. I remember being at one time in his suite, and he was just going back and forth and getting no place. Adlai had those moments of not being able to decide.

Humphrey I don't think was distasteful to him at all. And that's why I say that I, for one, and Roger and others had always liked Humphrey. They were getting away from this Kefauver pressure for sure, in my opinion.

Heller: That's sort of correct. I don't know about wrestled to the floor. I think that's a figment of a Kefauver supporter's imagination. I was sitting right there—and have no recollection of it. It's a typical California Democratic delegation—they can't get their act together! It's so big, that you can't handle them on the floor.

Chall: Do you want to wait until next week to finish up the 1956 campaign?

Heller: Okay.

[Interview 11: September 25, 1979]##

Chall: There were just a few little other matters about that 1956 convention I wanted to ask you about. There was a great deal of controversy within the California delegation about the civil rights platform. Have you any recollection of that?

Heller: No. I think Libby would know as much as anybody.

Chall: Yes. I like to have everybody's perceptions, though.

Heller: Have you ever talked to Julia Porter?

Chall: Yes.

Heller: I don't know if she was in that campaign, but she was always involved in platform.

Chall: It isn't that we don't have some information, it's that we like to get it from different people. If you don't remember it, that's all that matters.

You had said to me as I was leaving [last week] that you had gone into Adlai Stevenson's suite when he was uncertain about what to do about the vice-presidential nomination. I didn't ask you at the time—did you urge upon Adlai Stevenson any particular candidate?

Heller: No. No, I never did.

Chall: You were just trying to find out what he wanted so that you could pass the word?

Heller: Get what he wanted, so that I could at least try to get the word to the uncommitted delegates. Helen Milbank and I were very friendly with Adlai and Bill Blair, and we would go over there, because we knew there were a lot of uncommitted delegates.

Chall: And you weren't urging him to make a decision. Were you trying to dissuade him from Kefauver?
Heller: Didn't have to. He didn't want Kefauver. That was always known.

Chall: Do you think that the reason for throwing it open was in order that he didn't have to tell Kefauver that he didn't want him?

Heller: Well, I think it's part of Adlai's nature. Just that, that he just hadn't come to grips with it. I do believe that Bill Blair, who was very intimate with the Kennedys, was urging Jack Kennedy. But to what degree I can't tell you. I do know that Bill Blair wanted Jack Kennedy. No, I wasn't in there for any special reason.

It was chaos in that suite of Adlai's, too. But I don't remember too many of the Californians over there, except Helen Milbank and possibly Paul Ziffren. I can't remember.

Chall: He was national committeeman. There was a Perle Mesta party. Did you ever go to any Perle Mesta parties when you went to national conventions?

Heller: No. Well, there was one great big party—I didn't go to too many of the parties, except in 1960. I went to a big Ed Pauley party, which was quite an affair. I was at some big party. As a matter of fact, they're no fun at all. There are too many people. And I can't remember if I was at a Perle Mesta party—nothing in any way that wasn't huge.

Chall: I know her parties were big. Since she was considered such a great party-maker, I just thought I'd ask you.

Heller: Well, she was a party-maker, but I wasn't particularly—

Chall: If you were invited, would you go?

Heller: It would have depended. Would have depended. I have some recollection of a Perle Mesta party and Paul Ziffren somehow, but really I don't think I could have gone. I think I'd remember. There was some huge reception. I really don't know.

Adlai Stevenson, Candidate for President

Chall: What was Stevenson's campaign like in 1956? Were you beginning to wonder about his ability to be president at that time?

Heller: I don't think I analyzed it until later on. But I could see that he was not improving his campaign techniques. The people still adored him, and he had throngs of people. But his speeches were less good, less precise, less carefully worked over than they had been. I thought
Heller: the only thing he did well—it went like a dud, but it was awfully good—was the huge meeting in Oakland where he began talking about the dangers of the atomic bombs. It was a big meeting at the Municipal Auditorium in Oakland. And it did not go over.

Chall: It was full of people, but his message didn't carry?

Heller: They were there just for a rah-rah rally. People rarely listened to these things. It's very hard to—unless you've gone to many of them. It's unbelievable how little is listened to at these huge rallies. They're more for the radio, or T.V., or the press.

Chall: Or for people to feel that they're involved.

Heller: Yes.

Chall: Richard Graves has said that during the time that he was campaigning, in 1954, Adlai Stevenson came out to help him. Graves recalls a discussion in his hotel room during which Stevenson said, "My problem is that I'm disqualified from the presidency because I see two sides of every coin, and I cannot make those decisions in the same way that a president must make them. I would be an indecisive president."*

Heller: He could well have said that. Adlai always had reservations about himself when he talked to me. He had an ego, but it wasn't the secure ego.

Chall: Was it insecure in some things and secure in others?

Heller: I think there have been many better analyses written than from my personal viewpoint. He was charming, he was delightful, but he did look on all sides of the question, and really, except at that atomic speech, he didn't zero in, though he was more an an analytical person than a lot of people had been. It was very hard for him to come to a conclusion. I can well believe he said that to Dick Graves. Well believe it.

The Campaign for John F. Kennedy, 1960

Chall: Well, comes 1960. Of course, that was Kennedy's year. Walter Cronkite has said that the exposure that Kennedy received in 1956 when he almost made it to the vice-presidency probably pushed his campaign for presidency ten years ahead of its time.

Heller: I think it's possible.

Chall: I've forgotten when it was you were host to Joseph Kennedy at Lake Tahoe. Was that before '56?

Heller: That was before 1960.

Chall: Before '60, so it was after '56.

Heller: Yes, definitely. I would think it was maybe '59.

Chall: I see. And how did it come about?

Heller: It came about because of where our place at Tahoe is, on the north shore of Lake Tahoe, on Crystal Bay, which is now hugely populated, by what is called Incline, which you've heard about. At that point, nothing was developed over there. Just along the lakefront were the only homes there were. And as I remember, and I may be missing it by one or two, there were only eleven families at that whole north end. It was sort of a neighborly thing, though our places were far enough apart that we were sort of isolated.

One of the people who owned property and had been there before we had was Norman Biltz. Norman Biltz was very wealthy himself, and had access to a lot of other money, besides. I think he was called the "King of Nevada." He was all-powerful at that time. He was what you would call a real rough diamond, a highly attractive man, who really controlled Democrats and Republicans in Nevada. He was the only person I ever met who could tell Senator McCarran what to do. Though I think Biltz himself was a Republican it didn't make any difference to him. And how we met him: I guess because he was a neighbor and somebody said you should meet him. You know how you meet people.

He used to drop into our place quite often. He was fascinating to listen to about Nevada politics and what was going on, as I say, in both parties. He'd been married two or three times, but his wife at that time, and until he died—I think it was at least his third wife—had been an Auchincloss, and was related in some way to Jackie Kennedy, through her stepfather. Now you can take the next step; therefore he knew Joe Kennedy. I guess he and Joe Kennedy had lots in common in their great power and their great drive. Biltz was only known Nevada-wise. They were charming pirates, I guess. I don't think Norman Biltz ever had the money Joe Kennedy did, and certainly he didn't have the national exposure.

So, he phoned or he came over one day and he said, "I want to bring Joe Kennedy over to meet you. He's staying at Cal-Neva." Which is just three miles away. Cal-Neva, which you know is a big gambling place at the north end, had a few cottages at that time. And Joe Kennedy used to go up there; his wife never came up there with him. The time we first met him, I think Frank Sinatra and Peter Lawford were there with him and I think he came to Cal-Neva, because at that time, Frank Sinatra had some sort of interest in Cal-Neva. This is somewhat incidental to the whole story, but that's why he was there.
So, Ed Heller and I said, "Fine. We'd love to meet him. Would you want to bring him over for lunch?" Well, it quickly developed that Joe Kennedy took no meals any place and never drank. He wouldn't come for cocktails, because he didn't drink; he never came for lunch. I remember Clary, my older son, went to pick him up the first time. He could tell you that story himself, over at Cal-Neva. Word got around that "who were these snooty Hellers who wouldn't have Frank Sinatra and Peter Lawford over?" [laughing] We had no interest in people like that! He can tell you that story, I've forgotten the details. Anyway, I remember Clary coming back with Joe Kennedy. He came over two or three times; he enjoyed it. We'd sit on the porch for hours, and he'd talk and talk and talk.

But he wouldn't eat?

No, never ate, and he never drank. Maybe he took a Coke, or something like that. No.

He was very full of ego, telling tales of himself. But then, he'd always say, "Well, my son Jack is going to be president of the United States." That must have been '58, come to think of it. It seemed so remote, at that time. I think it must have been '58.

Among other people (we always had a crowd staying with us up at Tahoe), Bill Roth was there at that time. And Bill just abhorred, detested Joe Kennedy. Everything he stood for; he just would curl up. And this leads to the fact that Bill never would support Jack Kennedy, until the last minute, down in Los Angeles, although he was a delegate, because of the dislike he took to his father. He was mentioning it the other day.

On the other hand, Ed and I and others were quite amused by Joe Kennedy. We didn't take his tales quite that seriously. But he always said his son Jack was going to be president some day. And he'd imply that—oh, it would be no trouble with the regular politicians, that he could control that. I never heard him say, "I'll buy these people off." I think Bill Roth thought he was implying he would.

But Jack Kennedy was in fact running for president at that time, and you all knew it. This was after '56.

No--

Don't you think in '56—?

Well, yes. There was nothing formal. We really didn't know it, because I think it was only in '59 that I knew for sure he was going to run. I think there was a lot of background work going on that I didn't know about.
Chall: This may have been some of it.

Heller: Undoubtedly. Undoubtedly. And I'm sure Norman Biltz said, "The Hellers are up here and they're active in politics in California, and you'd better meet them." That's the way the Kennedys moved—in all directions.

Chall: And what about your son Clary and Joe Houghteling? Were they still working for Kennedy?

Heller: I don't remember that Joe was up there at that time, but Clary from '56 on, was always strongly wanting Jack Kennedy to run. Always.

Chall: Were you impressed with whatever you saw of Jack Kennedy during those years, from '56 on?

Heller: Yes. The first time I really saw him after the '56 convention was I believe in the spring of '59, but it might have been winter. I think I referred to it and had the wrong time when I was talking to you the other day, when he came and spoke to a World Affairs Council meeting at Asilomar. I was on the planning committee of the annual meeting, and sometimes they had those in December, and maybe they had changed it to the spring. So, it was in through there. For some reason I've forgotten the subject even—it had something to do with foreign policy, obviously—they must have tried five, or six, or seven Senators who were active in foreign policy. It's awfully hard to get people to come out to those meetings. All of them turned it down, not for any reason except they were otherwise occupied. And I remember saying, "Why don't you try for Jack Kennedy? He's very interested"—in whatever the subject was. And they said, "Well, how do you know that?" I remember referring to the position he had taken on Algeria, which was very good. I think it was the main thing he had done. But it was a good position. Well, because they couldn't get anybody else, they finally said, "Do you think you could get him?" I said, "Well, I'll see."

I got hold of Clary and Joe Houghteling. They can tell you the details, I've forgotten, but they brought him down to Asilomar. I remember going to meet his plane, his private plane, when it landed at Monterey. I had a marvelous time with him in the short time he was in Asilomar. Ted Sorenson came with him, that I remember distinctly. Ted really fought Jack Kennedy's battles on issues at that point, which he always did. He was very good on that sort of thing. Kennedy was not much of a drinker; whether we had cocktails I don't remember. I do remember having dinner with him in the big dining room where he was seated by the most stodgy people. But he was charming.

He spoke in the evening. I remember this very well. There was somebody else speaking before he did. I sat way in the back of that big assembly hall at Asilomar with him. And we talked almost all the time back and forth. And he said, "How do you think I should handle
Heller: this audience?" He always asked questions like that. And I said, "Well, in general I know this audience pretty well." It was about 800 people, the usual size—a full house. And I said, "It's a very well informed audience." I think I called him Jack at that point. "If I were you, I wouldn't speak more than twenty minutes, and I'd take questions." I said, "They're all full of questions, they'll be good questions, and I think everybody will be more satisfied." That was the time I had the best long conversation I ever had with him, and liked him tremendously. There was just something in him, that, although very different from Adlai, I liked enormously.

I must go back to the fact that I was ready to support him because, good friend though Adlai Stevenson was of mine, Adlai had sat in the living room of this house more than once after the '56 campaign and said, "I will never run again under any circumstances." Ed and I really believed him, and decided he didn't have the heart for it, and was not going to do it. So we decided to support Jack Kennedy. There were people who said I was a traitor to Adlai.

Chall: Did he say that ever?

Heller: Not Adlai, oh no. To go ahead of the '60 campaign, Bill Blair had stopped here on his way to a party at Clary's before the convention—not to do with the convention, he just happened to have a big party. Bill Blair loved to show up at everything and Clary had invited him. He was going to Los Angeles a few days before we were. I remember saying to Bill, "Bill, I'm just not going to see you and Adlai in Los Angeles," because this draft Stevenson was sort of on. I said, "It's just going to be too painful." Bill understood exactly. Bill Blair. You know how he felt about Adlai. We had told Jack Kennedy we were going to support him, and Adlai had told us he wasn't going to run. I said, "I'm not going to try to see you down there, it's just going to be too painful. And Adlai has all these emotional people floating around, and it just isn't worth it as far as I'm concerned." And Bill said, "Big Party out in Pasadena," I think, which you probably picked up on, in 1960, for Adlai. A few people said I should go, you know, urged me to it. I said, "I just can't do it. I'm just not going to go though this emotional wringer that they're putting Adlai through." And people were saying, "You're a traitor," and, "What have you done to your friendship?"

We left for Tahoe the last day of the convention after Lyndon Johnson had been nominated for vice-president. The phone rang the next morning up at Tahoe. It was Adlai. "Have you got room for me up there?" And he came straight up to Tahoe and stayed with us for about three or four or five days. He brought Marietta Tree and also his son, John Fell.

Chall: He unwound.
Heller: Well, that's what I mean. He never resented our support of Kennedy. It did no damage to our personal relationships at all.

Chall: Have you any idea why he put himself through this?

Heller: The last John Bartlow Martin book, the name of which I've forgotten, really sort of explains this quite well.* I don't know that it sets out to explain it, but it does. The pressures from all these people who adored him, and the emotion. He was never going to get that nomination in my opinion. Never.

I wasn't a delegate at that '60 convention. Ed Heller was the delegate. I guess Clary was an alternate. And my son Alf Heller was in the press corps, because he had his weekly paper up in Nevada City. He was there with his press credentials and he could go on the floor. And my daughter Liz was assistant to the secretary on the delegation, and she was on the floor running around for him. I had to sit up in the balcony, which I didn't mind at all, but they were very strict that year.

I remember sitting up in the balcony with Herbert and Edith Lehman—he was governor of New York—who were devoted to Adlai. Never gave up on him. Herbert Lehman was a cousin of Ed Heller's. They were just furious at me. They would hardly talk to me up there because we weren't supporting Adlai. And we'd been good friends. Just furious! That's the way some people looked at me. I'm just giving you my personal opinion of the '60 convention.

Chall: That's what we want, because a lot of personal views make a big view.

Heller: Anyway, we agreed to let that convention go as an unpledged delegation. You have all that about the different delegates.

Chall: Yes, that's right.

Heller: And, of course each candidate fought for x number of delegates. But some were delegates that had never really said where they were going to go. We got some surprises out there, you know.

Pat Brown was the head of it. Pat had absolutely committed to Ed Heller that he was going to support Jack Kennedy. It was right in this room, which used to be Ed's bedroom. On the phone. He had phoned about it. He was absolutely committed to it. He never could bring himself quite to say it out loud, but he had phoned and talked to Jack Kennedy. But that was the nature of Pat. He was torn by all these conflicting things.

And Clair Engle--well, I don't want to say double-crossed us--but Clair would never say whom he was for for the nomination that year. And when the caucus, not at the convention, but at Los Angeles, finally met and polled, out came Senator Engle for Stuart Symington, who had no adherents in the delegation. He was sort of sidestepping all the issues, which didn't please anybody very much. We fought for every single delegate, just about.

There were some very good delegates for Kennedy, from the north--Bill Orrick was there. Gene McAteer and Tom Lynch. We really had a bad time getting Gene McAteer to go for Jack Kennedy. This was the catholicism issue in reverse. He was a strong Catholic; he was convinced that a Catholic could never be elected president.

During the primaries, Senator Ribicoff came out and we had dinner here at our house on behalf of Jack Kennedy. Ribicoff had dinner here, and I must have had twelve or fourteen people. I remember among others was Gene McAteer. And there was a free-for-all almost between McAteer and Ribicoff. McAteer was a delegate, but he just wasn't going to be for Kennedy because he believed no Catholic could be elected. Then somebody came to me with a plan—I think probably Tom Lynch, possibly Jack Abbott, who now started to be very active in politics. John Abbott was a good friend. He was really the unofficial person for Kennedy working in selecting the delegates, working with Larry O'Brien, who was out here trying to get Kennedy delegates. Jack Abbott took over that role. I think they sat in San Luis Obispo or someplace, I wasn't there, fighting for these delegates.

Jack Kennedy was flying in to San Francisco. We were going to have a meeting at the airport with I guess some finance people. Either Tom or Jack came to me and said, "If I could manage to get Jack Kennedy alone with Gene McAteer for five minutes in a room at the airport, Gene McAteer would be converted." And that's how it came out. I had a little hand in that, I remember that very well.

Ed Heller was very much, by the way, for Jack Kennedy. After that Asilomar meeting the next day, Ed Heller had a lunch at the Fairmount Hotel in San Francisco for maybe twenty-five or so leading Democrats in Northern California, to meet Jack Kennedy, including those who were for Humphrey and others. I'm sure Libby was there; Roger Kent I'm sure was there. It was a mixture of people. I thought he was delightful. That's where Ed Heller first got involved in the Jack Kennedy thing. He was strongly for him.

What was appealing to the two of you about Jack Kennedy?

Well, I thought he was--it's an old quote, I guess—he was a new generation with a fresh view of things. I thought we had been living in the old generation with Eisenhower, and Truman, and even Adlai. He was young, and I thought very, very bright.
Heller: There were a lot of people seeking the nomination that year. I can't say Adlai was seeking it; I don't know. I knew Stu Symington. Lyndon Johnson I really didn't know. Lyndon Johnson never remembered anybody. He didn't want to remember. There was no percentage in his remembering me. But Stu Symington was a good friend of ours. He's a very nice person, by the way. Hubert Humphrey I had known for a long time. So I knew an awful lot of the candidates that time. But I really never wavered. Of course, Kefauver I really didn't know. And didn't want to know.

Chall: He was out by then, of course, by '60. I don't think he was interested.

Heller: Sometimes I mix those campaigns, but I'm not confused about who was in the '60.

Chall: It was Kennedy, Stevenson, Symington, and Johnson basically, I think, toward the end.

Heller: But wasn't there Hubert Humphrey?

Chall: I'm not sure. I don't see it here at that time.

Heller: Maybe not.

Chall: There are some people who say that the maneuvering for Stevenson support came from anti-Kennedy, pro-Johnson people.

Heller: I think it did to a degree.

Chall: Did you sense that at the time?

Heller: I could sense it in the California delegation; oh terrific maneuvering. Actually, Liz Heller, my daughter, Liz Mandell, could tell you some of that because she had to keep the records of the voting. She had those sheets of these switches of votes. You know, Ed Pauley and people like that would go on so-and-so and switch. They'd try Johnson, they'd try Symington, they'd try even Stevenson, to stop Kennedy. And she had the records of those switch votes that went all over, any place but on Kennedy.

Chall: It would have been very difficult for Governor Brown to control that delegation!

Heller: Oh, it was impossible! He couldn't do a thing! [laughs] Bill Roth, by the way, did cast his delegate's vote for Kennedy, just to catch up with it.

Chall: Just at the last?
Heller: He held out for a long time, sentimentally, for Adlai. To this day, he will tease and say, "Ed Heller bought my vote." This had to do with the fact that we had some friends out from the East that we thought the Roths would enjoy. You get tired of that convention every once in a while, you know, all that stuff. So we decided to ask the Roths to go with us and this couple from New York, who were for Kennedy as it happened. But it was business—business friends. We had dinner at Perino's. And Bill said, "Ed Heller knew my weaknesses and he bought my vote with a dinner at Perino's." He'll tell you that story, but you have to know Roth to know that there's a big twinkle in his eye. But he did cast his vote in the first caucus for Kennedy.

Chall: How did it happen that Ed Heller that year was the delegate? You had been in 1956, and then in 1960 it was Ed Heller. Was it his turn in the family?

Heller: No, it wasn't exactly that. Ed had discovered he had cancer in April of '60 and had surgery. He took this very well. He was just great about it. By the time of the convention, he knew he'd be feeling okay again (it was twenty months until he died), though he knew he had eventually hopeless cancer.

I'm a little mixed up about how this went, but he said, "Well, I want to be the delegate. I haven't gone for a long time. I like Jack Kennedy and I want to be the delegate." The Hellers usually were in a position, over all these years, where they could get an at-large position. Ed had done all these state finances for all sorts of people. Today, you couldn't guarantee that anybody could be on the delegation! But up to the '60 campaign, it could be done. So he decided he wanted to be a delegate. I'm not sure if that was before or after he discovered his cancer. But he definitely wanted to go. And Ed Heller was not one who would go and sit in the balcony! [laughs] He loved it. He really thoroughly enjoyed it.

I must make it clear somewhere along here that Ed Heller never wanted one thing from politics. He just enjoyed it. He liked the people and the discussions and all that. He not only didn't want anything, he never took anything except when he got nominated to that Surplus Property Board way back. I think I went through that already—by F.D.R.—and in his right mind would never have taken it. But he was so bored with what he was doing in the army! He had a decent excuse for getting out. But it wasn't that he wanted it. He hated it. Ed was not made to live a political life, in terms of Washington or Sacramento. He just enjoyed all these things. I just want to be explicit about this, because it's hard for people to understand, but it's true.
Chall: One of the other major controversies at that convention was the appointment of Stanley Mosk or Paul Ziffren for national committeeman.

Heller: Don't remember a thing about it. You see, I didn't go to the delegation meetings.

Chall: I just wondered if you'd picked up any of that controversy.

Heller: I just don't remember anything about it.

Chall: There was in 1956 among the delegation an attempt that year also to oust Paul Ziffren. I think it was by Elizabeth Snyder and a group of her followers.

Heller: She was never friendly to Paul Ziffren. Ed Heller never knew Paul too well. I knew him some; I liked him pretty well. My problem is I always had trouble understanding Southern Californians in relation to politics. And Elizabeth Snyder was somebody whom I really didn't know at all. We just didn't seem to have anything in common. So I really don't know about that, though I was a delegate in '56. I don't remember anything about it.

Chall: It flared up briefly, and then she and her supporters, who were anti-Ziffren, lost out.

Heller: I'm sure I would have supported Ziffren as against Liz Snyder. That I'm sure of.

Chall: Any special reason?

Heller: I knew Paul better. I was comfortable with Paul Ziffren. I never understood Liz Snyder. She was a hard worker, I remember that.

I tell you, I never knew all these fights and counterfights were going on!

Chall: It didn't bother you not to know about it, because it was some other bailiwick?

Heller: No. I think as far as I can remember, we all agreed on Libby Gatov. We had had this northern committeewoman-southern national committee-man thing going on for so long, I don't think we questioned it much, and I didn't get into the southern fights very much.

Chall: And that was a southern fight with respect to the national committeeman, I guess.

Heller: Oh, it was, I'm sure. I don't know how well a lot of people in the north knew Paul at that time, I just don't remember. But I did know him.
Chall: You got along with him all right with respect to your work as committeeperson?

Heller: I wasn't committeewoman when he was committeeman.

Chall: Oh that's right, of course. It was Clara Shirpser who started out with him, or finished with him.

Heller: We got on. Compared to what I'd had on the national committee, wouldn't he seem pretty good?

Chall: Well, he was considered a very bright, active person.

Heller: He's become quite a citizen in Southern California now. I notice his wife has written a book.

Chall: I've been told that.

Heller: I took a look at it, and decided it just wasn't worth buying.

Chall: What did you do during the campaign for Kennedy?

Heller: I want to go back to one thing before the campaign. Among many events I had gone to, I remember Stu Symington and Jack Kennedy were both in San Francisco for a big dinner. I can't remember if it was a fundraiser, it probably was, but in a minor way. Those dinners didn't used to bring in a lot of money. But Jack Kennedy was paid a good deal more attention to at that dinner by the people there than Stu Symington.

Jack Kennedy was moving around from one table to another. I remember his coming to my table and he asked whoever was next to me to get up; he wanted to talk to me. Jack Kennedy had a very easy way with him, in that way. And he said, "I just wanted to be sure you knew one thing--" He always called me Mrs. Heller. He was very proper about that. And you know, in politics everybody calls you by your first name. He always said, "Mrs. Heller." "I just want to be sure that you're clear on one thing: that if I get this nomination and election, I am not going to take Adlai Stevenson as my secretary of state."

Chall: Really? He told you that?

Heller: I wanted that on the record somewhere, because I don't know if he ever said it to anybody else.

Chall: There were so many people who strongly believed, and I think Adlai Stevenson was one of them, that he would be appointed.
Heller: And he said, "I'd appreciate it if you don't discuss it now, because it's too early." He said, "I just wanted to be sure you and Mr. Heller understood that I would not want him as my secretary of state." Don't you think that's interesting?

Chall: I think that's very interesting.

Heller: I had forgotten that little episode.

Chall: There must have been a reason why he told you, and not a lot of other people.

Heller: Well, he knew we were friends of Adlai's, and I think in his own way, he liked to be very straight that way. He didn't want us to think—I don't know why, but he did tell me that.

Chall: But he didn't tell Adlai Stevenson that.

Heller: I don't know. I certainly didn't.

Chall: I don't know either, but it seems from what one reads that he didn't.

Heller: Well, you know, Adlai would get pushed always by his friends for secretary of state. You never knew if Adlai wanted it, or didn't want it. But that really did occur. I've always thought I should get that somewhere on the record.

Chall: This is the place!

Heller: I think I'm right about the timing of when it happened.

You just asked me when the tape ran out what I did during the campaign. I was in the finance end of the campaign, definitely. I, thank heavens, had grown out of the day-by-day campaigning. Ed Heller was Northern California finance chairman for Kennedy. I really worked on finances. That's where I worked with Jack Abbott a great deal. Ed Heller got Jack Abbott. Ed had a way of doing these things. He needed somebody to do the day-to-day thing. He would just rent a small office space, and would pay somebody a small amount that he trusted, like Jack Abbott, whom he trusted completely with money, to take care of it. He was quite right to have always trusted him. Also he hired a secretary for Jack Abbott. That's the way the finance office was run. And that's the way he did things.

Chall: So he could go about his own business.

Heller: It was a separate office, he didn't take money out of the campaign, that was collected. That was part of his contribution, which made a lot of sense. Ed didn't have to be bothered with all the campaign
Heller: rigamarole; his job was trying to raise money. And Jack would arrange the finance committee meetings, if we'd have them, and whatever we had to do.

One of the things he had to do was--and I worked with Jack on all of this--one of our biggest events was a big dinner at the Palace hotel at that time, which preceded a huge Cow Palace event for Kennedy. I was very much involved with that, with Jack Abbott, deciding on all the details. One of the details was, we would have no head table, which was very successful. I've been through too many head tables in my life. They're either too big, or you insult somebody. It was much easier not to have a head table. We assigned people to tables. I think Jack Kennedy was assigned to sit at the table where Ed Heller was. But he moved around that way. It was a very good touch, really. And then out to the Cow Palace.

There's a funny side story on this. Jack Shelley, a congressman who was very much for Kennedy, was to introduce him at the Cow Palace. They were all tired, they'd been going around the state, and Jack Shelley, then a congressman, later mayor, was drunk as could be! Which he would do. He'd go off on these drunks every so often. He was just furious at me, because I said, "You're not going to introduce Senator Kennedy at that Cow Palace rally." I haven't mentioned Jack Shelley very much over all of this, but we were always quite friendly. We always seemed to be on the same side on a lot of the fights. We fought a lot of good fights together. He was just furious at me! And the drunker he was, the more angry he got at me. I just said, "You're not going to do it. I'm going to find Tom Lynch," who was then--

Chall: He was district attorney.

Heller: Tom was a strong Kennedy supporter, and very well known in San Francisco, of course. He'd been a state senator before that. He was very well known. I said, "I'm going to go find Tom Lynch, and I'm going to have him introduce Jack Kennedy. You're in no fit state to do it." Because when Jack Shelley got drunk, and I'd known this from past experience, he'd get up talking and he'd never stop! Couldn't stop him. And I don't think Jack Shelley ever really forgave me for that. His brother, Dan Shelley, who was a huge man just as Jack Shelley was, was a San Francisco policeman. He was there in uniform, I remember. We were up in some suite in the Palace Hotel. I remember asking him if he would take care of his brother. He was in no state to come out. So Tom Lynch introduced John Kennedy at the Cow Palace.

That was the night that he made his great Peace Corps speech. It really had great effect. That's why I keep comparing Adlai in his Oakland Auditorium speeches and Jack Kennedy. I remember that
Heller: famous A-bomb speech of Adlai's that got him no place. Jack Kennedy just wowed everybody with that Peace Corps speech. I don't know why I keep comparing them, but he just had a way with him. I think Adlai had a sense of humor, as did Jack Kennedy, but it was a more elite, more intellectual thing. Jack Kennedy was plenty smart.

The sort of thing I did during that whole campaign, was finances --going after people, following up on people who had half committed. Of course, we dealt in very small finances. I don't remember exactly what we raised that time.

Chall: Kennedys at that time could spend as much of their own money as they wanted I guess.

Heller: I guess so. He had a plane.

Chall: That would make it quite a bit easier on local committees.

Heller: Well, we worked awfully hard to get money for bumper strips, headquarters, et cetera. I can't remember how much we raised. I remember a fund-raising lunch. He came to the airport, in a private room--I think it was the old restaurant upstairs in the airport, that we had gotten in the middle of the day. We put in as many people as we could get, all of whom had to promise to do some pledging of money. They weren't there to fill places. There were enough people. There were many people who wanted to pledge to Kennedy at that point.

I guess Ed wasn't feeling too well that day, because I had to go in his place I remember and pledge for the Heller family.

Have you ever read Red Fay's book on Kennedy?

Chall: No.

Heller: Well, it's highly inaccurate all the way through. He is a playboy, but he was a friend of Kennedy's. He refers to that lunch. I know Red Fay, I see him down around here all the time. He never gets people straight. I suppose if somebody said to me, "What's Red Fay's first name?" I'd have to think twice. And he refers to "Mrs. Walter Heller" who made the pledge. Well there are two, but they weren't Democrats, and they weren't active in politics, either! [laughs] Well, I suppose I'd do that with the Fay family that I never could keep straight.

Those are the things I did during the campaign. I was no longer--I didn't do much precinct work. Over the years I did a little to know what it was like. But I was in the finance office almost daily. The phones keep ringing; the people come in even though you have one small room.
Chall: It's an exciting place to be if you're interested in politics.

Heller: The campaign was going on. That finance office sort of operated by itself. Then there was the regular Stevenson headquarters.

Chall: Stevenson or--

Heller: I don't mean Stevenson—-Kennedy-Johnson headquarters. Then there was the, what did they call it, Volunteers for Kennedy? No, they had another name: Citizens for Kennedy? It was supposed to be nonpartisan. That was Red Fay's operation. What was the admiral's name who was his good friend around here? He had served in the navy with him. He was down there.

And for reasons that were not clear to me, my daughter Liz worked in that Citizens' one, the Kennedy one. And Mary Abbott. She was Mary Walsh then. She came from Missouri, and she had been a friend of Liz's. I don't know how Liz met her. I think she worked in some campaign out here. She moved all over, but she came from Kansas City. Stu Symington was a great friend of their family. She had gone, I guess to Los Angeles, if I remember correctly, for Stuart Symington, and quickly realized that Symington was going no place, and came to San Francisco to get a job in the Kennedy campaign --to see if she could.

Jack Abbott was then married; his wife eventually died. Mary Walsh worked with my daughter Liz, and they became fast friends. And they stayed friends, and it was through Liz that she eventually married Jack Abbott. She had never married. She and Liz were the sort of "bachelor girls" around. They worked in that Volunteers for Kennedy or whatever it was. Every nonpartisan group gets a new name. I've forgotten what it was. It was a three-ring circus, with nobody ever checking with anybody else much.

But the Kennedys themselves had a pretty firm hold.

Chall: They had their own campaign organization, didn't they?

Heller: Really, they did. Larry O'Brien had been there for the selection of the delegation, and during the primaries. But then he didn't come to the state anymore. Teddy Kennedy was the resident Kennedy. He was very young. We were up at Tahoe during the summer of '60, as I told you already, relating to Adlai, and somebody—I don't know if it was Clary or who--invited Ted Kennedy up for the weekend. That was my first knowledge of Ted Kennedy. He was married then, but he came up with his sidekick from Texas, an overgrown adolescent. You know, just boisterous, full of physical activity. I have pictures someplace over there of Ted Kennedy up there, who in his own way, I guess,
Chall: We hope he's grown up a bit since!

Heller: The only other one of the Kennedy family I got to know, because he was assigned more to the finance end, was Steve Smith, the brother-in-law. Very nice person. Very nice. Steve was obviously chosen as the person to contact the Hellers or for the Hellers to contact. I think they did that all over--assign people that would take any calls or get in touch with people. And Steve Smith was obviously our contact person, and a very nice person. Very quiet, smart, unassuming guy. He was our Kennedy contact.

Chall: So the Kennedys always knew what was going on.

Heller: I think so. Because Ted Kennedy was a flop out here. He was much too young and too irresponsible. That's the only word I can say. But there was a Kennedy here. He rented a house up in Hillsborough, which you probably realized, during that campaign. I don't know if he did his brother any good or not. But I suppose a Kennedy presence, in a way is a Kennedy presence.

    I don't think there's too much more to tell you about that campaign. I never met Jackie, and I never met Rose Kennedy.

Chall: Never? Or never in this campaign?

Heller: Not to my knowledge. I did not go back to the inauguration. It was when Ed Heller was sick, and I don't like inaugurals very much anyway. Clary Heller went to the inaugural, and to all the rounds and all the places. That was when the snow fell and nobody could get from one thing to another. He went to that. But I am not particularly an inaugural-goer.

Chall: What was your assessment of Kennedy in his few years as a president? This is your personal feeling about it, if you can recollect.

Heller: I think it's a little foolish of me to assess him. I always liked him. I don't know whether he was president long enough for me to know how good he would have been later on. There was never any doubt to me that he would run for a second term and I would be supporting him. I
Heller: admired his position after the Bay of Pigs. I know a lot more about the Bay of Pigs now than I did at that time, but I did admire his taking responsibility immediately and saying, "This is my fault and my decision." I chalked a good one up to him on that.

Now how hard he would or could have fought for his programs—which Lyndon Johnson then could implement so easily, because of the emotional circumstances of it—I don't know.

I liked him. I was always anxious to have the T.V. on when he was going to speak, because I liked the way he spoke. I loved his humor. I loved his press conferences. He may have been coached, but you never felt he was coached. It was all so easy. And after the tortures of Adlai, it was great to have somebody.

Of course, I never did think the Catholicism was any barrier.

Chall: Why do you think he lost California to Nixon?

Heller: To Nixon? Perfectly good reason: Nixon was a Californian. I think in Southern California there was still, I think—your mind went to Catholicism. I think there was probably some of that down there. Northern California, on the whole, really had Nixon's number. That's why I say on the whole, because, of course, a lot didn't. Southern Californians didn't seem to have it. If you look at the votes, Kennedy carried San Francisco, if I remember correctly. I think the fact that Nixon was a native Californian may have had something to do with it. I never thought he was much of anything.

Chall: Can you recall where you were when you heard of Kennedy's assassination?

Heller: Yes, I certainly do. Everybody does. I was right here in this house. My son Alfred Heller and his wife and, I'm not sure if his fourth child had been born by then, but the three little girls were down here. They lived in Grass Valley, Nevada City, at that time. They had come down that day because the Big Game was going to be the next day, if I remember correctly. In fact, I'm sure it's true. We were having lunch, or breakfast. I know we were in the dining room, we wouldn't have been there any other time. The phone rang, and it was a friend of mine named Tamara Brown, which is neither here nor there, a delightful person but somewhat crazy. Alice Adams, my secretary took it, and she said, "Tamara Brown's on the phone, and she said, 'Jack Kennedy's been shot!'

And I said, "There's Tamara, imagining things again or making up stories." When I got on the phone, she said, "Ellie, I heard it on the radio!"
Heller: So, of course, we dashed for radio and T.V. And those little kids! We had them in on all these gory details. It gripped you so. You just sat on the T.V. and radio. It really was unreal. Our whole family, except for Liz, happened to be right here in the house that day. Two days later, I was watching T.V. in my room, and Miranda, that's my oldest granddaughter, who was little then—that was 1963, she must have been about six or seven—she came into the room just as I saw Lee Oswald shot on T.V. I happened to have it on. They all stayed in the far wing of this house; we didn't have an intercom then. Maybe we did, but I didn't think of using it. Miranda came in, and I said, "Miranda, run tell your parents that Oswald's just been shot!" It's all unreal, isn't it? It was awful.

The fact that it was useless was the thing. Despite all the tales of Kennedy's illnesses, you felt he was a virile, healthy person.

But he had done one nice thing, I don't know if I put it in. Ed Heller had died in December of '61, late one afternoon. You know, word spreads pretty quickly. The next morning, Stella, my maid, who is still here, came in and she said, "Mrs. Heller, the president is on the phone." I thought it was Clark Kerr, the president of the University of California—wouldn't you? He was a very good friend of Ed's, and it would be a normal thing. I took up the phone, and there was President Kennedy, no secretary, nothing. And he said, "Mrs. Heller, I've just heard about Mr. Heller." Isn't that something? That's the way he did things. And I said, you know—what do you say? "It was so nice of you to phone." He said, "He was my friend." And he had that knack. It was amazing. It was right after his father had a heart attack, I remember that, because I remember trying to ask him how his father was. But he did things like that.

I didn't see him much after he was president. He came to a Charter Day at Berkeley. It was when I was first a Regent, obviously. I think it was in '62. Probably March of '62. He had lunch at University House with the Regents. He came in, he was greeting; he didn't know too many people. He spotted me, and he just threw his arms around me. I made my mark with certain Regents. [laughter] I don't have to name them. There were a couple who were mighty impressed, who thought they were close to him. It was really quite amusing.

You know, that's the only time I can remember, for an event at the University, that every single one of the twenty-four Regents showed up. Were you there?

Chall: No, I wasn't.
Heller: You know, it was in the stadium, the football stadium. It was a dramatic event. But I can't remember any other time. I've seen Eisenhower come to the UCLA campus; I've seen Lyndon Johnson both at UCLA and Irvine campus; Truman, before I was a Regent, came to the Berkeley campus, to Charter Day--or commencement, I guess--when Ed Heller was a Regent. I'd never seen all twenty-four Regents show up for an event before. Or since.

Chall: Kennedy really struck the imagination of everybody.

Heller: He did. I don't want to overrate him; he might not have been a great president at all.

Chall: All you can know is what you saw and felt at the time.

Heller: Most of us were very let down when Lyndon Johnson was named vice-president, and had no knowledge of it until just before we were going out to the convention hall for the vice-presidential nomination. I remember--I think it was Pat Brown--had been meeting with whatever Kennedy strategists there were. I remember his coming to that stupid hotel we were staying at in Hollywood. The California delegation was pretty good about staying in the same hotels even if they weren't good. I remember his coming in and saying, "Well, it's Lyndon Johnson." I don't know, we were just let down. I don't think we wanted anybody especially. But just that let down feeling. I can remember riding out to the convention just feeling depressed. I certainly wasn't pulling for anybody, you know, for vice-president. It was all done very quickly.

Chall: Well, at least they made up their minds.

Heller: Of course, looking at it, it was a very wise choice strategically, for the South. But it just didn't seem right to any of us. I'm talking about the Kennedy supporters. It was very depressing. I didn't really have anything against Lyndon Johnson. That was when Ed Pauley, also at that convention, had one of his enormous parties at his home.

Chall: Was that for Lyndon Johnson?

Heller: That was for Lyndon Johnson. He didn't quite say so. I've forgotten whom he said it was for. But it was for Lyndon Johnson. He didn't ask practically anybody from the California delegation. But he did ask the Hellers and the Roths, I remember that very well. Ed always enjoyed Ed Pauley's parties. He gave great big marvelous parties. You know, we don't give them up here like that. I've been to parties there since, too. You remember that Ed Pauley was a fellow Regent. I remember Bill Roth said, "I'm not going to that thing."
Heller: And Ed said, "You're making a mistake, Bill." Bill enjoys parties. Ed said, "He gives good parties." And by God, it was a knockout of a party! Politicians from all the southern states were there. India Edwards, I remember, was there. It was all this Lyndon Johnson plotting. We just had a good time, that was all. But he had people from all over the country. There were a lot of big names there. I've forgotten who was there, except I remember Lyndon Johnson was there. George Killon was there. It was quite a party. Everybody had a good time.

California State Election Campaigns

The California Democratic Clubs

Chall: Well, I think we've wrapped up almost to the sixties. I did want to back up a little on the state politics briefly. What about the formation of the California Democratic Clubs in '52 and '53?

Heller: I had nothing to do with it.

Chall: Did you attend any of the conferences?

Heller: The only time I ever went to a CDC meeting, as I remember--I may have gone once before, but I don't remember it--was in '56. I flew in a small private plane with Adlai Stevenson from the San Francisco airport. He had spent the night that time at Helen Milbank's. I flew down to the CDC with him, and he was to speak to them.

He had been the darling of the CDC four years before. And by God, we got down there, and all they would talk about was Kefauver. I had never been turned on by the CDC, and I was more turned off than ever, because they were so emotional all the time. Kefauver had made a speech that appealed to their emotions; they paid no attention to Adlai. He wasn't making one of his rip-roaring speeches that day. It was sickening to see how they changed their position. I had nothing to do with it.

Chall: Why not?

Heller: No reason. I had had eight years of very active politics; I had had enough. I didn't have to particularly do it anymore. I think, actually, George Miller did a good thing. The party was in a shambles by '52, and I think he did a perfectly good thing. But the CDC ran away from its own original ideas.
Heller: I never thought the CDC was the backbone of political activity. It thought it was.

Chall: It did bring many new people into the party.

Heller: But how many is many?

Chall: I don't know.

Heller: That's the thing. It really doesn't add up to terribly much. And it fell apart so easily. It got less and less real. I had always belonged to a Democratic club down here. I don't anymore, not for any reason, except that I just had enough of it. They kept changing where our Democratic club was. We used to be in Palo Alto, and they moved over to Menlo Park. It got narrower and narrower, and I just stopped. Nothing against it. But that county and club politics is just not for me, that's all. I did a lot of individual club thing when I was committeewoman.

Chall: But that was before the formation of the CDC.

Heller: I will just say that I think George Miller did probably the only possible thing by forming that CDC.

I got my distaste, though I've overcome it, for Alan Cranston at that point. Alan Cranston had no sense of money. I can't remember—was there a county CDC organization—Santa Clara County?

Chall: There might have been. It was sort of hierarchical.

Heller: Yes, sort of that way. He walked out of that—I've forgotten what he did next—just leaving the debt behind for everybody else to pay off.

Chall: Is this when he was president of the CDC? He was its first president.

Heller: That was later. But they were always very careless about money. I don't mean to imply anybody taking any money at all. Just plain careless about debts, not balancing. Now remember, I was raised in an era of politics, at least here, where we paid our debts and felt obligated. We never walked out on commitments. This, by the way, to go back to Bill Malone, was one of his strengths. He never created great debts at all. He was very careful to raise the money if he did. But CDC was very careless of its finances, about overspending. I keep saying I want to make clear, it was nothing of anybody's taking any money at all.

Chall: Just overcommitted their—
Heller: Just didn't think. I think the clubs played a role, I'll say that. They were not tasteful to me.

Chall: Did you belong to a CDC club down here when they organized them as such?

Heller: I suppose. But I, about that time, ceased to be active in club activities.

Chall: That was in '53.

Heller: Yes. I was active up to then. You just get tired of those things after a certain point. We had what we called the Palo Alto-Stanford Democratic Club, or something like that, which grew out of the Palo Alto Democratic Club, which had gone over to the then left. So we had to form a new one. I think I told you that before.

Chall: Yes, you did.

Heller: No, I never was part of that.

The Gubernatorial and U.S. Senate Campaigns, 1954

Chall: The very first endorsing convention that the CDC had was the year when they endorsed Richard Graves for governor. He was a brand new Democrat. He was supported by George Miller, Jr., and Roger Kent, and the Hellers, and the Ziffrens in the south.

Heller: That's right.

Chall: And I know that you gave some type of luncheon for Graves that George Miller and Don Bradley had arranged.

Heller: The trouble was we couldn't find a candidate. When I say we, I mean George, or Ed, or anybody. I don't care. Nobody would run. Republicans had always been riding high in this state for a long time. Goodie Knight was going to be the Republican candidate. He was the incumbent Republican. We just couldn't find a soul who would run. I notice you said there was some talk of Killion. There may have been some talk, but he certainly never was going to run! There was just no candidate. George Miller, Jr., who was state chairman, with whom we were on perfectly good terms, kept saying, "Don't worry, I'll get you a candidate." Meaning, not me, but the Democrats. "Don't worry. Don't worry."

If I remember correctly, the lunch was at my mother-in-law's in San Francisco. We may have given a big lunch later on, but I remember lunch or dinner at my mother-in-law's at 2020 Jackson Street
Heller: in San Francisco, when George Miller, Jr. unveiled Dick Graves for us. Whom we liked, he was a very nice man. But he was no candidate.

Chall: But you supported him anyway, is that right?

Heller: Oh, yes. I didn't like Goodie Knight. Goodie Knight, in a way, is like Harry Truman. People didn't like him at the time and then he became sort of a legend.

Goodie had been impossible about the Regents of the University. As you remember, Earl Warren was our friend. I can remember going up to Sacramento, I don't know why. I was up in Sacramento and I went into the legislative chambers and he was presiding as lieutenant governor. I have no idea of why I went there that day. He was sitting there telling me what a terrible guy Earl Warren was, whom I liked very much. So I had taken this personal dislike to him. He was Earl Warren's lieutenant governor, and I didn't think he should be talking to me, a Democrat, about Earl Warren. He just annoyed me. And then, of course, Ed got very annoyed once Earl Warren resigned to go to the Supreme Court, at Goodie Knight's attitude to the Regents. He was going to show these faculty people. It was during the Loyalty Oath suit and the aftermath of it. We didn't like Goodie. So we were anxious for a candidate.

We did give whatever sum of money--you turned it up [in research] and I believe that's probably about right.

Chall: Well, it was in the newspapers.*

Heller: That sounds all right.

I made some good friends out of the Graves campaign. We were for Graves, but there was something to do. But whoever said money dried up is ridiculous. There never was any money. The Hellers probably wouldn't have put in that much if we hadn't been going to Europe! [laughter] Probably would have been less money, rather than more! There was no way of raising money for Dick Graves, as I remember. But we did do that. I guess Ed wanted to salve his conscience for going away.

I made some good friends out of that. And one of the friends was Pierre Salinger, who used to work, I think, free, if I remember correctly. He was working for the Chronicle then. Pierre was plenty of fun at that time. Harold McGrath was part of that campaign. Gene and Jane Lee. Eugene Lee. The [William] Orricks.

*The Examiner. June 24, 1954, reports that the Hellers contributed $10,000.
Heller: Yes. Jack Abbott. That's the first time I remember him in politics. There were so few of us that we all became great— Oh! Tom Lynch. Bill Orrick started then having these election-night parties. These continue to this day, even if he's a judge. He always had dinners—parties. It was small, the first one. It was before they moved to Presidio Terrace. He always had basically that same group for election nights that grew out of the Graves campaign. That shows the very smallness of us. Even though I was away, we were there for the whole general campaign.

Chall: Yes, that's right. You came back after the primaries.

Heller: But there was no way to raise money. Graves never had an issue. Pierre was the one who'd dig up these little scandals on Goodie Knight. He'd dig up these funny little scandals, and poor Dick Graves would try to have an exposé, and nobody paid any attention. It reminds me a little, and I have no basis for knowing anything about it, like these things that are coming out about Hamilton Jordan. I really don't know about Hamilton Jordan. I've never met him. But it was the same sort of little nebulous things that probably had some vague truth, but they never got any place. But Pierre Salinger was forever digging these things up. [laughs]

Dick Graves was no campaigner, you know. And his wife was impossible.

[Interview 12: October 1, 1979]##

Heller: She didn't like it at all. It was almost an easy campaign, because it was so impossible. [laughs]

Chall: I had made a note that Peter Odegard had thought of running for the United States Senate that year and that Edward Heller had talked him out of it because he didn't think he could raise the finances. I wondered what was the concern there?

Heller: Ed and I, and Ed especially, did talk him out of it. He was a good friend. But it had nothing to do with finances whatsoever. It had to do with the fact that Peter was an idealist. He had lived sort of in an ivory tower in the academic world, though he was in the Treasury Department in war finance during the war. He had just come down not too long before from Reed College, where he was the president, before going to Berkeley. Theoretically, he was always interested in politics. But it was all theory, and no practice. He got caught up with the excitement down at, I guess it was Fresno. I wasn't there.

Chall: The first CDC convention—the founding convention?
Heller: Yes. He was just the sort that attracted the CDC. Really a delightful person. But Ed and I both felt, and I can attribute this to Ed too, that he was too ivory tower. He had never been in the real world, and he didn't know California per se, except in theory. He had only lived in Northern California for a few years. He didn't know it. We told him that he was just crazy—that this was an idealistic dream, and he wasn't going to get to first base, even though he could possibly get the CDC endorsement. That was all that was.

But I do remember the phone calls from Peter down in Fresno to Ed. I think the only thing to do with financing was that Ed said, "Well, if you run, I'm not going to give you a cent." It had nothing to do with general financing. Peter was reluctant to give it up because he got so excited about it. He finally decided not to do it. It wasn't a question of general financing, it was Ed trying to really tell Peter he was going to murder himself by doing it. He was saying, "Don't expect any money from me." Or something like that.

Chall: You were great contributors, and if you were going to back out, I'm sure that was important in the long run.

Heller: Well, we never said we were going to back him! [laughs]

Chall: Not backing him is a problem then! [laughs]

Heller: But it was really because we thought—we loved Peter and we just thought he would murder himself, and be so unhappy. And that's what that was all about.

Chall: What about [Samuel] Yorty? Did you have much interest in Yorty?

Heller: No, I never could stand him. I once said something to a friend of mine when Nixon ran the second time—and I always hated Nixon—very good Republican friend of mine, Lu Packard the wife of Dave Packard. She was going to run this Nixon telephone campaign in Santa Clara County, and she said to me one day, "I asked people for the list of the best possible volunteers in northern Santa Clara County to help with this whole telephone organization, and you were at the top of the list!" And of course she knew I was a Democrat, she knew I hated Nixon. It was typical of the way you get names thrown together. [laughs] I remember what I said to her at that time, to give you an idea of how I felt about Yorty. Yorty was then threatening to run for the Democrat nomination for president. Nobody took him very seriously, but he was saying he was going to run. I said to Lu Packard, "Well, Lu, there's one circumstance in which I would help you with Nixon's campaign, and that is if Yorty were to be Democratic nominee." [laughs] I think that tells you enough of what I thought of Yorty. I just couldn't stand him ever.
Heller: He never would recognize it. I'd see him; he'd come to meetings in Northern California, you know, "Hello, Ellie!" And I loathed him! But he was so thick skinned; he didn't know anything. He was a glad-hander. If you've ever seen him in action--I think a horrible man. I was against him always.

Chall: So you didn't like him even when he was not a right-wing candidate.

Heller: No, I never--

Chall: You just didn't like him personally.

Heller: He started out close to the Communists, if I remember correctly, when he was in the legislature.

Chall: He was very liberal at that time.

Heller: He was very liberal. No, I just never liked him. I didn't like him in any way. Did the CDC really endorse him that year?

Chall: Yes, they endorsed him in 1954, and then in 1956 they did not endorse him; they endorsed Richard Richards.

Heller: Oh, yes. I'd forgotten that.

Chall: Yorty then said that the CDC was "wired, stacked," a phrase that fellow Democrats came to hate.

Heller: The CDC never knew what it was doing when it endorsed Yorty.

Chall: 1954 was a difficult year for endorsing. That was their first time and they had Richard Graves and Sam Yorty.

Heller: Yes. [laughs]

The Gubernatorial and U.S. Senate Campaigns, 1958, 1964

Chall: But in 1958 you finally had a candidate for Senate.

Heller: That is correct.

Chall: And that was Clair Engle.

Heller: That's right.

Chall: How long had you known Clair Engle?
Heller: I'd known him as a congressman. It's hard for me to spot exactly why I knew him. I remember he was a good friend of Harold McGrath's; he was a good friend of Jack Abbott's. I always admired Clair. He was a very solid citizen. And I thought he was one of the few congressmen who could grasp the state issues, and knew how to work in a bipartisan way when it was necessary.

Ed Heller backed Clair Engle, but I was really the enthusiast because Ed Heller was so much for Pat Brown for governor at that time. He certainly was very good about helping Clair. But Pat was really his candidate, and mine too. As a result of that, and Libby Gatov may have told you, I worked quite a bit in the Engle campaign headquarters. Not as much as she did. She was there day by day.

Chall: She had some official position and title, whatever it was.

Heller: That's right.

One thing was sort of interesting; I think everybody's forgotten it. We had planned a strategy for Clair Engle. I kept telling whoever was doing it—Jack Abbott, Libby Gatov, Don Bradley—I've forgotten who was doing it, that Clair's name wasn't known. The thing we should do is a massive billboard campaign. Clair could take care of his own issues. He knew them. He didn't have to have a strategy committee working on issues. He really knew the issues as well as anybody that's ever run, I guess. He was a great friend of Tom Kuchel, who was Senator. They worked beautifully together for the state. So we developed this quite simple billboard strategy. I said to Ed Heller, "Will you contribute to this?" And he said, "Well, let me see what I can do," or something like that. Then, I'd have never known that he had lent some money to a billboard company at one point, and they owed him this money. So he took it out by—They repaid him by letting him— I think it was Outdoor Billboard Company, but I wouldn't be positive. So because of this, we got strategically spaced billboards up and down the state.

Helen Milbank was very interested in Clair Engle's campaign, and her husband, Robbins Milbank, had worked—I can't remember the name of the firm now. It was in graphics. And they had very distinct ideas of how these billboards should look. They were sort of in charge of producing a perfect billboard, which was very, very simple. Nothing on it. It said something like "Engle—Senator." There was a little "for" [laughter] You saw that big name Engle, and that was the whole strategy of Clair's general campaign.

Chall: Is that the one where it showed just his head, basically, because he was a rather small person?

Heller: Yes. He was small, but he had a strong face. It was very good. It was some firm in Seattle—I'd have to ask Helen Milbank, she'd probably remember—which helped with the graphic work with this, that Robbins had worked with.
Heller: Well, it worked. It really did work. Of course, part of it worked, because, if you remember, Bill Knowland was the Senator then. And then there was this big tangle in there.

Chall: Oh, yes. This was '58.

Heller: Goodie Knight was going to run for governor again. Then, after some manipulation Bill Knowland was the candidate for governor and Knight the candidate for Senate.

Ed and I had known the Knowlands quite well before they went to Washington, when we were all younger, and spent a lot of time with them. Helen was absolutely what made Bill.

Chall: Helen Knowland?

Heller: Yes. There's just no question in my mind, and I think in many people's minds. I've often discussed this with a couple of mutual acquaintances. Then he got to Washington, and he got sort of big shotty, and didn't use Helen's advice at all. I think she was very hurt about this. Helen became miserably unhappy; she returned to California. I've observed over the years, that when people are unhappy, they are good prey for the extreme left or the extreme right. This is my conjecture. And here was Bill Knowland, the Senate majority leader at that point. Was he majority?

Chall: 1958--?

Heller: Well, either he was majority or minority, who might well become president someday, and at odds with his wife. I do know that the right wing took up Helen Knowland and she was very miserable. They persuaded her to persuade him to move out to California, and give up his Senate seat, and run for governor.

Nixon somehow had a lot to do with engineering this. I knew parts of it because of Squire Behrens--Earl Behrens. We were both at some meeting at the Fairmont Hotel--I don't remember what meeting it was--and he got a phone call. He came back and told me about it immediately. He said, "There was Nixon, just saying Goodie Knight was getting out as governor, and running for Senator, and Bill Knowland was running for governor."

Bill Knowland then went on this "right to work" thing, which was a right-wing thing. You'd have to look up the history of that time, but he said a couple of terrible things. He was really a decent guy, in his own way. He said terrible things. It developed that Helen had gotten him to say them.

Chall: I've come across material that indicates that. I can't remember the name of the person who wrote some material which she distributed. It was very far to the right and damaging. [Joseph Kamp]
Heller: Yes, but it was really Helen that got into that, and then Bill Knowland stood by it, because he was protecting his wife.

He ran one of the worst campaigns that was ever run. I'm switching to the Pat Brown thing now, in a way. Pat just had clear sailing in that election. I don’t know how clear it would have been if Goodie Knight had stayed in the race, but this is my version of the background.

Chall: The whole big switch really let the Democrats in.

Heller: And then when it came to Clair who I thought knew the issues terribly well—Goodie Knight didn't know them, and Goodie Knight did not have the advantage of incumbency—Clair really could run a very good campaign. I really do believe that Tom Kuchel was very friendly toward Engle's candidacy. I really do believe it. You know, quietly. Goodie just made one mistake after another.

I also remember about Clair in that campaign. He had no use for the Democratic clubs. He came from what was it, Red Bluff?

Chall: Yes, Red Bluff.

Heller: In the north counties. He had no use for that sort of nonsense at all. He operated in his own good and free style. I can remember Clair coming here to this house once and having dinner with Jack Abbott and me at the beginning of the campaign. I can't even remember what we talked about, but we saw eye to eye. But I do remember Jack telling him then or right after, "You have to make the motions of going to these clubs' meetings." And Clair saying, "They're nothing but your shooting gallery. [laughs] They shoot questions at you and you have to knock them down all the time!"

Clair would sort of anticipate their questions after a few times, and he had this whole shopping list of things. He would anticipate their questions and he'd get out of those meetings as soon as he could. They were terrible, hard. He said, "What a waste of time."

Chall: Really?

Heller: He said, "Everybody in those meetings is going to support me." But he had to go through the gestures, and he hated it.

Chall: Mainly they were interested in issues.
Heller: Goodie Knight was going to run for governor again. This is the sort of thing I don't want to have on the record for a few years, but there are certain facts I know and certain assumptions I'm making. Bill Knowland was having a wild affair with Mrs. Blair Moody. Blair Moody had been the Senator from Michigan. Very nice man, I think. They lived in the same apartment building, I believe. Blair Moody died. But I think that affair had been going on—it was well known around Washington. Ed and I had known the Knowlands quite well before they went to Washington, when we were all younger, and spent a lot of time with them. Helen was absolutely what made Bill.

Chall: Helen Knowland?

Heller: Yes. There's just no question in my mind, and I think in many people's minds. I've often discussed this with a couple of mutual acquaintances. Then he got to Washington and he got sort of big shotty, and didn't use Helen's advice at all. I think she was very hurt about this. And everybody knew about this affair he was having with whatever-her-name-Moody was.

Chall: Was she then a widow?

Heller: She was by the time it all blew up, but I don't think she was to start. Helen was the last person to hear about this affair. When she did hear it, she, if I remember correctly—it's close to the truth—eventually moved to California. Said she wouldn't stay in Washington in the same apartment house. I'm a little vague about the time sequence there. But in the meantime, she was miserably unhappy, and as I've observed over the years, when people are unhappy, they are good prey for the extreme left or the extreme right. This is my conjecture. And here was Bill Knowland, the Senate majority leader at that point. Was he majority?

Chall: 1958—? [Minority]

Heller: Well, either he was majority or minority, who might well become president someday, and at odds with his wife. I do know that the right wing took up Helen Knowland when she was very miserable. They persuaded her to persuade him to move out to California, and give up his Senate seat, and run for governor. Nixon somehow had a lot to do with engineering this. I knew parts of it because of Squire Behrens—Earl Behrens. We were both at some meeting at the Fairmont Hotel (I don't remember what meeting it was) and he got a phone call. He came back and told me about it immediately. He said, "There was Nixon, just saying Goodie Knight was getting out as governor, and running for Senator, and Bill Knowland was running for governor."

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Heller: his own way. He said terrible things. It developed that Helen had gotten him to say them.

Chall: I've come across material that indicates that. I can't remember the name of the person who wrote some material which she had distributed. It was very far to the right and damaging. [Joseph Kamp]

Heller: Yes, but it was really Helen that got into that, and then Bill Knowland said he stood by it, because he was protecting his wife. The Moody thing was all over by this time.

He ran one of the worst campaigns that was ever run. I'm switching to the Pat Brown thing now, in a way. Pat just had clear sailing in that election. I don't know how clear it would have been if Goodie Knight had stayed in the race, but this is my version of the background.
Heller: There, yes. Anyway it was a grand and glorious campaign after years of nobody in office. Election night that night was quite a night. I remember the double celebration.

Chall: Oh, yes. That's right. Where did you celebrate?

Heller: I remember Helen Milbank and I spent it together. Ed never liked to go around on election nights, so he stayed home to listen to the radio or whatever. People would phone and give him reports occasionally. Helen and I went together. We went to the Engle campaign. And that's where we saw—what was his name? The first one of the people in San Francisco who projected election results by slide rule. He was so well known in San Francisco. He died a couple of years ago—two or three years ago. He did a lot of consumer surveys, market surveys. I remember his sitting there with these various election figures, with that slide rule—I'll think of his name eventually—projecting that Engle was going to win.

Brown had much bigger headquarters, so we moved to his headquarters. So everybody—the Democrats really turned out that night. We were all at Brown headquarters, just having a gay old time.

Headquarters on election night is really not very satisfactory. Because you don't know what's happening. It's so hard to get the results.

Chall: In those days it was much harder than it is now.

Heller: And, hard to hear what was going on. Lots of drinking and boisterousness. But nothing lavish. We never had any lavish parties. We never had the inclination nor the money to do that.

That's about all I have to say about it. I was very interested in both Engle and Brown. Brown ran a good campaign, too. But they both had a big break with that Republican manipulation. They really did. That is just like Helen Douglas going in against Sheridan Downey. Not just like it—but you mess things up like mad.

Chall: You mess up the party when you divide the party.

After Engle's election, Libby Gatov told me that you, and Joe Houghteling, and Jack Abbott, and Al Gatov, and Jim Thacher, and Helen Milbank all worked together on a committee to help Engle promote a climate of public opinion toward ultimately recognizing mainland China, mainly by opening trade relations.* Do you recall that?

*Gatov oral history, p. 228.
Heller: I have the most vague recollection of that. It's so vague that I wouldn't try to talk about it. Because I think very little happened, though we did all work together.

Chall: He did make a sort of maiden speech in the Senate about trade.

Heller: He probably knew what he was doing all by himself. Al Gatov knew some about trade. Jack Abbott understood Clair so well—that was true in the campaign and afterwards—that he knew how much Clair would tolerate of suggestions. He could write speeches for him, if necessary. He understood him so well. This is where Jack Abbott started coming into his own, decidedly.

Brown headquarters, I guess, were run by Fred Dutton.

Chall: I think that may be right. He was always a helper there.

Heller: Yes. He was very difficult to work with. I never worked directly with him, but my daughter Liz I guess worked in that campaign, and found him extremely difficult. He had quite a temper. He was a very, very volatile person. I've heard Liz and others who were working with him—Jack Abbott, Mary Walsh, et cetera—saying he could be very nasty to people who worked for him. I believe that. I've seen Fred over the years, you know, with the Regents. He'd jump on his closest friends as well as his enemies.

It seems to me I went to the finance committee meetings for Brown too, as well as for Engle. But I don't remember that it was particularly a joint effort.

Chall: My understanding is that Brown ran his own campaign.

Heller: That's right, whom he admired very much. Clair turned out to be a very strong candidate, and pretty much in accord with Brown, as it turned out.

Chall: It was just a matter of style, I guess.


Chall: When Engle became ill, and was unable, of course, to run again, there was a break in the Democratic party with respect to the campaign between [Pierre] Salinger and [Alan] Cranston. Did you take any part in that?

Heller: I was for Cranston, because I felt we had committed ourselves. I knew how sick Clair was, and largely through Jack Abbott, who was really close. Clair then could hardly speak. His wife, Lu, protected him so. She was sort of like a mini-Mrs. Woodrow Wilson. She wouldn't let anybody talk to Clair. She insisted that he was going to run.
Heller: She wouldn't let him take himself out of the campaign. She wouldn't hear of it. It really got into quite a mess. Some people just couldn't bring themselves to even support Cranston, because they felt they owed it to Clair. But I just was sure he couldn't run again. It was ridiculous not to have a candidate. I was convinced he couldn't even physically file. He died—I've forgotten exactly when—

Chall: I think it was shortly after the primary. [July 30, 1964]

Heller: Yes, shortly after. Of course, he didn't file.

A lot of us told Cranston we would support him. He was certainly a good candidate. Not perfect at that time, but good. It's never been really quite clear to me why Pierre—I've always thought maybe Lyndon Johnson kicked him out of his office. You remember he was held over after Kennedy's assassination. He kept Pierre as press secretary. I knew Pierre fairly well. I thought it was a stupid move for Pierre, but maybe he had no place else to go. He was certainly out of Lyndon Johnson's office. He came out overnight and filed, if I remember correctly.

It wasn't a terribly bitter campaign. There were charges of carpetbagging, but that extended to the general election. Alan was not nearly as strong as he is today. Alan Cranston. I don't remember any great emotions about that campaign, except it was once again splitting, when it wasn't necessary to.

That was when George Murphy won. Which is ridiculous, when you think about it. Craziest thing that ever happened! Among other crazy things. [laughs]

Chall: Well, there again it was a split, a really seriously split Democratic party over that issue.

Heller: Not that bad. Because Alan Cranston didn't have that big a following at that point.

But they chose a weak candidate, Pierre Salinger, who was great fun, and lively and unserious. He was a weak candidate.

Chall: But he won the primary.

Heller: He was well known, and the Kennedy legend was there. Alan wasn't particularly part of the Kennedy legend. That was '64. That wasn't so much splitting, as the fact that Pierre was just really a weak candidate. He had been so used to being in the White House and doing things. He never conducted a really serious campaign.

Chall: Don Bradley went down to help Salinger with the campaign.
Heller: That's right. He can tell you about how the campaign went. I had very little to do with it. I guess I contributed some small amount to Salinger.

Chall: You mean to Cranston.

Heller: No, I mean when Salinger was--

Chall: Oh, in the general election.

Heller: I would guess I did. I was always friendly with Pierre Salinger. This wasn't one of the campaigns I got terribly involved with.

Proposition 14: Fair Housing

Chall: That same year there was a campaign on an issue, Proposition 14 at the time, on fair housing.

Heller: Was that the Proposition 14? You mean, repeal of the Rumford Act?

Chall: Yes. That was a hard-fought issue.

Heller: It was a very hard-fought issue. That's the issue I cared about—to defeat Proposition 14. Now that you remind me, that interested me much more than Lyndon Johnson for president, because I never felt close to Lyndon Johnson in any way. Really wasn't interested in him. But Prop. 14 seems to me to have been the—that was the Goldwater year?

Chall: That's right. Goldwater versus Johnson and Proposition 14 the big issue. Did you do anything about it? Would that have been something you would have taken some active role in in any way?

Heller: Not particularly. I read the Rumford Act. No, I probably gave some minor contribution, but the money was all stacked up for Proposition 14.

I remember one of the people I always played tennis with on Sunday, who was quite conservative; a lovely person. I think what annoyed me more than anything else, he showed up with a Goldwater—what was the name of Goldwater's vice-president? I've forgotten it already. He was from New York, upper New York. Well, a Goldwater—whatever—it was sticker, you know, over here. He's not the sort who usually carried stickers. I'm sure he did it just to be funny. Then he was talking about being for Proposition 14. I can remember this on the tennis court. And I said, "Roy Cohn, you can be for Goldwater and Bill Miller (that was his name) as long as you want. I'm not going
Heller: to argue with you. But by God, you're not going to play tennis on this tennis court if you're for Proposition 14!"

"What's Proposition 14 say?" He was a brilliant surgeon. He said, "I haven't read it."

And I said, "You know, it's repealing the Rumford Act."

"What's in that?" He said, "I've never read it."

And I remember he was leaving the next day or two for Seattle, for a conference, and I got a note from him from Seattle. Typical Roy, because he was a scholar and a researcher. He wrote me from Seattle. He said, "I have read the Rumford Housing Act; I've read Proposition 14--(this was just a few days later)--and I will vote against Proposition 14." That was my personal contribution to Prop. 14. If you've read the things that others haven't sometimes you can get some people, and then they spread the word, and it helps you do something. I didn't do much in that election, really. Is that enough of that?

Chall: That's enough of that, I think.

Heller: Because it really wasn't very personal.

Chall: I just wanted to know what you had done, because I did notice that Clarence Heller went off as a delegate to the 1964 convention.

Heller: That is correct. That was the one in Atlantic City. That is correct. He was there as a delegate.

Chall: He went by himself, I take it. No other Hellers along.

Heller: Alf and Ruth Heller were there, my other son and my daughter-in-law.

Chall: You didn't go.

Heller: No, I didn't care about Lyndon Johnson. I'd had enough of conventions by this time. I don't like Atlantic City anyway. So I had no reason to go.

But this is where Clary--He had been to a lot of conventions, but this is where he took over as a delegate.
Sidelights on the Campaigns of 1968 and 1972

Chall: He was a delegate to the next two, but he lost out in '68, because I think he was pledged to [Tom] Lynch, and the Lynch delegation lost to Robert Kennedy.

Heller: Oh, no, Clary was for Robert Kennedy, who unfortunately was assassinated.

Chall: He was pledged to Robert Kennedy in the beginning?

Heller: Oh, absolutely. That I'm positive of. The delegation was nominally unpledged to anybody. I can't remember, exactly. But Clary was for Robert Kennedy way before I was. Probably it was just called the Lynch delegation because Lynch was chairman.

Chall: I'll look that over again. I could check that pledge to Lynch.*

Heller: Because I remember his telling me about it. He went to that dreadful convention, and he didn't know about the riots. An unattached man at a convention is all over the lot and up all night. He was staying in the apartment of parents of friends of his out here, that he had been given, instead of staying with the delegation. The night of those riots he just got terribly tired, which you can do at a convention; I've had a lot of it. He left the convention hall, and went to the apartment, and eventually turned on the T.V., I guess, and found out what had been going on that he had missed. He hates to miss excitement like that. Those delegates were at a loss about whom they were going to support. They wanted, if I remember correctly, didn't they want McGovern at that point?

Chall: No, that was Hubert Humphrey. McGovern did come in, but I don't think he was very strongly supported, although he did make a bid. It was McCarthy, really. Hubert Humphrey and Eugene McCarthy.

Heller: I'll have to straighten that out with Clary.

Chall: Well, anyway, it's his story.

Heller: It's his story, because he was there.

Chall: But you were watching it from here?

Heller: Yes, I was watching it from here and wondering where my son Clary was during this whole thing, because you never can tell with him where he's going to be! [laughs] And he actually missed it, which is

*Mrs. Heller is correct. The Lynch delegation was not pledged to any candidate.
Heller: just as good. That was a horrible episode. I hate to think about it.

Chall: Yes, it was a sad time. It didn't help the Humphrey candidacy at all.

Heller: No, it surely did not. I never was a hot Humphrey supporter, personally. He was okay, but he never was quite to my taste. I think there were a lot of good things about him. He was one of these "legends" who wasn't so much a legend at that time.

Chall: And Eugene McCarthy?

Heller: No, I never was for Eugene McCarthy, ever.

Chall: Did you say you came in late in support of Robert Kennedy, that is, you weren't on his side initially?

Heller: I supported him in the primary, but I wasn't one of the original people. I had to be convinced about Robert, whom I had never met. I think I told you before, all the people in the Kennedy family I'd met, but I'd never met Robert. Clary knew Robert and thought very highly of him. But I finally was persuaded by quite a few of my friends—I've forgotten who they were—to give a small lunch for support of Robert Kennedy. I don't think it was a finance thing. And I did, and I was glad I had it. I think Marietta Tree came out and convinced me to do that.

Then I was very much for him, in the last two or three months of that primary. I really was at dead center in New Hampshire, because I didn't like McCarthy. Lyndon Johnson, God knows what he was doing. I was never enthusiastic about him. I guess it took me until April to decide if Kennedy was the one I wanted to support. Have I given you enough of my personal history? You forget the details.

Chall: Yes, well the details are all available. I think it's how you react to some of these people that's important in this history.

Heller: I think so too. You can see, though, that I was getting less and less active in politics.

Chall: Yes, that's what I wanted to be able to see. Actually, after 1960 you didn't attend another convention, is that correct?

Heller: Yes, that's correct. Alfred Heller did. I don't know if Liz did after that. I can't remember. I don't think so. Of course, she moved to New York, also, and naturally wasn't part of the New York political scene. But Alf and Clary did.
Heller: Alf was very much for [George] McGovern when he ran, and Clary and I were for [Edmund] Muskie, just to finish up these last tales. We went to the Muskie caucus down here. Made no attempt to be a delegate, just wanted to see what was going on. And all the best people showed up for the Muskie caucus. That was before his New Hampshire mess. But Alfred Heller had been very much for McGovern and was working on us the whole time. We couldn't see McGovern for dust. We still voted for Muskie. Though he was through by that time, he was on the California ballot. Then came that awful period right after the convention with his vice-presidential candidate from Missouri—what was his name?

Chall: Well, we'll think of it.

Heller: He was a Senator then. That's the most I really saw of the McGovern campaign. What was the name of the vice-presidential candidate? He came from Hawaii to San Francisco just at the height of this emotion thing, and I went to the lunch given by McGovern people. Tom Eagleton! I went to a lunch with Eagleton, not a huge lunch. A lot of the original McGovern people in the state were present, plus people like me who were really Muskie people. And it was the most painful thing I have ever gone through. That man was wringing wet, perspiring; he looked like he was going to pass out the whole time. It was just ghastly!

Chall: Was that the period in which one never knew—

Heller: He was making up his mind what to do, for which he was being pulled from every end.

I remember that a newcomer to politics at that time was Stuart Moldau. Has his name come up? He, as far as I know, first became active in politics in the McGovern campaign. He's a Northern Californian now, but he came from Boston, I think. He's still very active in politics, and a big political contributor, if there is such a thing anymore. But he did contribute a lot to the McGovern campaign. He had persuaded me—he lives right here on Faxon Road—that I should go to this Eagleton lunch. I remember driving up with him. And after lunch, I remember saying, "Stuart, you're not going to tell McGovern to keep Eagleton! He's out of his mind! He's a psychiatric case." I remember Stuart stopping at a garage, and putting in a credit card call to whomever he spoke to in McGovern headquarters in the East, to say that Eagleton was in no state to be kept on the ticket. It's just a little sidelight, but I happen to remember that.

Chall: That was a very trying period. Very trying month or so.

Heller: Just terrible. And then another thing I remember about McGovern was again through Stuart Moldau, who was a good friend of McGovern's. It must have been early in the campaign, but it must have been after the primary. Because I didn't see McGovern during the primary.
Heller: He was at Stuart Moldau's with a group of people from around here. And I went over there, where he was trying to explain to a rather knowledgeable group, economically, his plan. What was his plan? A thousand dollars a month for everybody? And he just got more and more mixed up. I was just disgusted with him. I did vote for him, because Nixon was the opposition.

And I want to tell you that my son Alfred Heller turned against McGovern, and did not vote for him. Of course, he would not vote for Nixon.

Chall: Is that right? He turned against him during the latter part of the campaign?

Heller: Yes. He was just disgusted with the whole way he campaigned, and the way he handled Eagleton.

Heller: Alf, I knew, had been getting more and more disgusted with McGovern. He phoned me election night, before the results were in, and he said, "Guess whom I voted for." And I said, "Well, McGovern." He would never vote for Nixon, I knew.

He said, "No, I voted for--" whoever it was who was the equivalent of what used to be Norman Thomas. I've forgotten who it was. He said, "I just couldn't make myself vote for McGovern." That's how he disillusioned people. That's how Nixon won so handily that time, among other reasons. That's about the end of that, I guess.

Chall: I know you have good friends who have run for governor and other offices from time to time, so I suppose you've always had a hand in somewhere over the years, just because you have friends who run for public office. Like William Roth, and others. But that's just a friendship thing.

Heller: It really doesn't belong here.

Chall: So, active politics you were through with?

Heller: I really was. I did go up to the legislature occasionally when I was a Regent, because I knew x number of legislators from the past, and could talk to some of them. They knew me and they knew I was not up to anything myself. I could talk to some of them. But that's about all.

Chall: Did your whole, active political life have any bearing on anything you did later, or was it just something that was an episode in your life and had no connection with anything else?
Heller: It had some bearing on friendships that I made and kept, and had some bearing, I think, on my work as a Regent when it came to dealing with the legislature, when Pat Brown was governor, who appointed me incidentally. I felt I could talk to him or Hale Champion, who was his financial director, in relation to the budget of the Regents. In a way, it gave me an intuition about political moves as they would be conducted about our budget in Sacramento, even when there wasn't somebody I knew particularly well. And that goes on endlessly, with Albert Rodda, who had been one of the chief people in education and a state senator, with whom I had to work several times on specific pieces of legislation. It held over to a degree that way. But you don't want me to do a summary of politics, do you?
EXPERIENCES ON TWO COLLEGE BOARDS

VII MILLS COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES, 1932—*
[Interview 15: November 2, 1979]##

Aurelia Henry Reinhardt, President, 1916-1943

Chall: All right, we are going on to Mills College.

Heller: You're going to have to ask me questions about that, because I've been a trustee for so many years a lot of it fades away.

Chall: I'm sure it does. Well, we won't go into it too deeply, but we'll cover it. As I understand it, you went on the Mills College Board of Trustees in 1932.

Heller: That's right.

Chall: And then your first term was up in 1942. Does that mean there's a ten-year term?

Heller: They're two five-year terms. And then you have to be off for at least a year. 1942 was just when we went East. In World War II, Ed was in the army. I went back in '46.

We have talked about Albert Bender. He always told me that he told the trustees that I should be a trustee as soon as I had been out of college seven years, because—I've never looked it up to see if it's true—he always claimed that if you were an alumna of Mills, to be a regular member of the trustees, (not an alumnae trustee) you had to be out seven years before you were put on. That may have been true. I don't think it's true now. So, promptly in 1932, I was asked to be a trustee. I'm not sure I knew what a trustee was when I was first asked.

Chall: Who asked you?

Heller: I don't remember. It might have been Albert Bender, who was then a trustee. It could have been he.

*Portions of this chapter have been placed under seal.
Chall: He must have been very fond of you, or certainly had a fine impression of your abilities.

Heller: I don't know. He knew my parents, he knew Ed's parents. It's hard to say.

Chall: When you went on the board, did you--

Heller: I didn't know anything about what the role of a trustee was, I assure you.

Chall: And you were young; you were just seven years out of college.

Heller: Exactly seven years out of college.

Chall: Were you the youngest person on the board at that time?

Heller: Yes, at that time.

Chall: There weren't very many ever put on who were as young as that for a long time, were there?

Heller: I don't really remember. I really and truly don't. I'd have to just look at the list.

Chall: Being quite young, and not knowing what a trustee was, how did you find yourself accepted by that board?

Heller: Very well. It was always a very happy board, as far as I was concerned, to be on. People couldn't have been nicer. It was a sort of disorganized board, because Aurelia Henry Reinhardt was president of Mills at that time. That was just the beginning of the Depression, and the money situation was not very good. Aurelia really had no sense of money at all. In fact, she was a very unorganized person.

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Heller: She very much dominated the board. However, there were some marvelous trustees; I wish I'd looked them all up. I think Bishop [Edward] Parsons, who was the bishop at Grace Cathedral, was a very beloved person. A very fine person. I believe he was chairman of the board.

Chall: Let me give you something that I have here. It may not be correct; I've taken it from somebody else's notes. From 1929 to 1934 Joseph Knowland was the president of the board.

Heller: Well, maybe he was. That could be true. I knew Mr. Knowland, but I don't remember him as chairman of the board, though he could have been. Maybe he didn't attend after I was a trustee.
Heller: Actually, Parmer Fuller was also chairman of the board. You've got that?

Chall: I have that from '34 to '43.

Heller: Then it wasn't Bishop Parsons. Maybe he was chairman of educational policies or something. He was a very dominant figure on the board. Parmer Fuller was a marvelous person on the board. Other people that I particularly remember who were on the board were Oscar Sutro and Herman Phleger. I knew that Knowland had been a member of the board of trustees, but I don't personally remember him in relation to the board.

Chall: We can check that out. Do you remember any women?

Heller: Yes. Persis Coleman. She was an alumna of the seminary at Mills, from the Coleman family of San Francisco, and she is still alive. She's about 101, living in her home on California Street, the old house she was raised in; never married. On California Street between Franklin and Gough. It's on the hill there. In perfect condition. She gave a great deal of money to Mills over the years, until her family finally stopped her, because she was giving away everything she had. I'm sure Mills is in her will. I don't know what's left of her money by now. It was a very wealthy family.

Mrs. I.W. Hellman, Jr., who was married to Ed's uncle--I think of her as Aunt Frances Hellman--she was on.

There were some alumnae trustees, but I can't remember who they were. I could look them up.

Chall: The ones that stand out in your mind are the important ones from our point of view.

Heller: Those are the ones who made a particular impression on me.

It was a very tough time, financially, everywhere. Oh, Frank Wentworth was also a very steady trustee of Mills.

Chall: Was Mr. [Gerald] Hagar on the board then?

Heller: Later. He came on later.

Aurelia, before I went on, had borrowed money from the bank to build some of the dormitories that are still in use over at Mills. And she borrowed against endowment. She had no respect for endowment at all, which is absolutely illegal! You know, restricted endowment. By the time I got on, she still wanted to keep borrowing.
Heller: Frank Wentworth had taken the job as treasurer at Mills. It was a paid job, but he did it free. He was there every day, all day, trying to get Aurelia under control and these finances under control. [chuckles] I can remember every quarter there'd be a list of gifts to the college. My figures may be off, but they're very close to it, there was always $666 for Frank Wentworth. That was the salary he'd been paid, and he would turn it right back to Mills. So, you can see what the salary of the treasurer was. Not very high. He kept trying to curb Aurelia. This was one of the big tussles that was always going on. She would just sweep everything aside.

Chall: Wasn't there a finance committee that was in charge?

Heller: Yes, but Aurelia just ran everything. Frank Wentworth—he had just gone in as treasurer about when I came in—he spent all the thirties trying to get hold of the financial picture of Mills, and get the money for the endowment, which wasn't a huge endowment, paid back. Did accomplish it eventually. If you did that nowadays—it was illegal then—you'd be in jail! It's misuse for the purposes, of Mills. But that was Aurelia. She did bring that college into maturity by doing what she felt had to be done.

Of course, during the thirties it was so hard to get students. They didn't have the money to come to a private college. I've forgotten what it cost. It wasn't much, by today's prices. Around 1937 or so, she just unilaterally pulled away all the established entrance requirements to get students. It took us years to get that back; to improve the standards of admission.

Chall: What would the board do in the face of these unilateral decisions by the president?

Heller: As I say, I didn't know what the rights of the board were. I'm not sure that they all knew. I think they knew their responsibilities, but I don't think they knew their rights about who makes admission policies. Actually, the faculty make admission policies. But I don't think that was clearly established. Aurelia just set them.

Chall: What were her relationships with the faculty? Do you know that?

Heller: I don't think I can judge that. I was a student under her. She was a very dominant, colorful person. When I was at Mills, my senior year I was associated student president. She made me furious all the time, because she wanted to come to our associated student meetings, our executive committee, or whatever it was. Mills was always way ahead of all the other colleges in the West, or universities, with their associated student independent setup. We were famous for that. We were so far ahead. That had been done back in about 1916, I think. We had our independence, our own dues, and our own budgets, and ran our own affairs. She just wanted to run them.
In all the years then, that you were on the educational policies committee, you really were able to see how Mills evolved, changed in terms of its education.

Yes. It went down, though, really, in the thirties, because of the financial stringency, in a way. But Mills has always been very lucky to have very devoted faculty, and of course never had trouble with HEW or anyone else about women, because it has always been just about half-women and half-men.

From 1937 to '39, I have read that there was a study of curriculum by the faculty and also a study by the American Council of Education with respect to Mills curriculum. There were apparently three summers of meetings. Do you recall any of that?

No, I really don't. I really and truly don't remember it.

It probably came out of one of the books on Mills that has been written.

It's just something I don't remember. It's getting to be too long ago, I'm afraid.

Aside from Aurelia's methods of dealing with the board, and your learning experiences from that decade, what else can you recall of that decade particularly?

Well, I was rather close to the students in that period, because I was much younger. I knew quite a few of the students in the thirties, or the student leaders, anyway, and got to be quite good friends with some of them. I used to play tennis with them when I'd go over there, make them realize life didn't stop once you finished college. I didn't do it for that reason.

I did a study with a couple of the student leaders on the same question that's there right now—as it is in many smaller colleges—why did people leave Mills—drop out after two years. It's a continuous problem with most of the smaller colleges. It's on file somewhere. I did a long study and questionnaire, and from the recently graduated ones, to find out what they felt they didn't get at Mills that they needed. Of course everybody went from a B.A. either to matrimony or jobs. Very few took graduate degrees. The common complaint was they couldn't type and take shorthand. I think it's probably true today in finding jobs. I would say, "Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose." We did a survey of five-year graduates and current ones. It was a pretty well set up one, I think.

Do you think that was one of the first ones that had ever been done? A follow-up of Mills students?
Heller: I got into a terrible fight with her because I wouldn't let her come to these meetings. I said that wasn't in the charter of the associated students. Sometimes I'd invite her for one subject or something, if she wanted to present something. She was very hard to control. My feelings about Aurelia have always been mixed. I recognize all of her abilities. And she got a lot accomplished, I will say that. There have been a lot of books written about her, so I don't have to really go into her except to tell you about my own experiences. I got on pretty well with her when I was a trustee.

But nobody sat down and told me what a trustee's obligations were. I fumbled my way through.

Chall: Were you put on a committee right away? I understand board committees are important to be put on.

Heller: I was put on the educational policies committee from the beginning, which I continued always when I was on the board. And I think on grounds and buildings, I'm not sure if I was, at first, but I was on that—whatever it's called. Until I came back on the board this last time, I'd always been on educational policies at Mills. And lo and behold, this time I found myself on finance committee. I probably wouldn't have gone on it without my experience with the Regents. Not that I knew that much, but I can certainly handle budget, and audit now, and finance. I have nothing to do with investment committee; I never have. I feel I'm not competent in those areas. But otherwise I did educational policies always.

Chall: That was a vital committee anytime.

Heller: I always thought it was. I think when I came back afterwards, when I had been off the educational policies committee at Mills, it was called Educational Policies and Student Life. Had it not been changed I might have asked to go back on that.

Chall: You're talking about 1975?

Heller: Yes. But it's incidental, because I didn't feel those two functions worked well together. Student life has to do with how many social affairs there are, and I just don't think it has to do with educational policies.

Chall: Just within the period you weren't on the trustees, they changed that committee structure?

Heller: It's changed back now, as of this year. The committee I chaired for reorganization of the board got them separated again. Which I think is working fine. The two don't go together. You just sat there listening to reports, I think.
Heller: At Mills, I think. So that was one of the things I remember doing. I never had much to do with the Alumnae Association as such.

Chall: Any reason why you didn't?

Heller: I got launched as a trustee before I knew it, and it was much more interesting than the alternative. I belong, of course, and I contribute to them, but I really was never involved with them.

Chall: Was there an alumna representative at all times on the board?

Heller: Always. Always three, chosen by the Alumnae Association. And to this day there are three.

Chall: Are they full members of the board?

Heller: Yes. They have five-year terms and are eligible for another five years. We've had some very good ones. They're not always so good, but we've had some excellent trustees from that too.

But I don't remember the nominating process from those first years at all, how people were chosen. I think I had nothing much to do with it.

Chall: It may have been much more informal than it is now.

Heller: I think it was. I think it was very informal.

Chall: Was it a self-perpetuating board, do you think?

Heller: No. That was where Mills was ahead of Stanford, say. Because when I went in, there was this five-year rule of two terms, then you had to get off.

Chall: But only for a year.

Heller: Yes, but a lot of people were never asked back again. Whereas Stanford went on on a self-perpetuating basis. I always thought that's why Mills was such a strong board, because sometimes you dropped them after five years. When I say you, the nominating committee did.

Chall: There was a formal method.

Heller: There was a distinct effort to not have it self-perpetuating. That's why it embarrasses me to talk about how many years I've been on, because I seem to have self-perpetuated! [laughs] There have been a few who have been on a great many years.
Heller: A lot of Mills trustees became trustees of Stanford, or Regents of the University of California eventually. It's a very good training ground. You begin to know what it's all about.

Toward the end of my ten years, Aurelia didn't want to retire. But she was getting less and less effective. She was getting older and more careless, and all that, and she really just had to be forced to set a retirement date. I don't think she knew she was being forced, but she was, really, forced to. I think she set 1942 as a retirement date. But unfortunately, World War II came along just at that point. We had thought we had her successor, who was dean of the faculty, and that was Dean Rusk. And he up and went into the army in '41 as we went into the war. Just before, he had been a reserve something in the army; I've forgotten what it was. He would have been the president of Mills College beyond a doubt, to succeed Aurelia, and he went off to the wars.

Lynn White, President, 1943-1958

Chall: I see. So then what--

Heller: I was on that search committee--

Chall: Oh, were you? That picked Lynn White?

Heller: Yes. But he wasn't chosen until '43 because we had this setback. I didn't actually interview Lynn White because we went East just in '42. But they continued me on the search committee, somehow. Crawford Green was a very influential trustee at that time who knew more about higher education than a lot of the people on the board. I went down from Boston to New York to meet him, to interview Vera Dean.

Chall: For president?

Heller: Yes. [pause] I'm just trying to get the connection. Lynn came in in '42, didn't he? '43?

Chall: I have '43.

Heller: Forty-three, with the delay there. I did not interview-- It was very hard to find-- Vera Dean was obviously not the right person at that point. She was quite controversial. [pause] I think I've got my timing wrong. It may have been at another interview session. But I know I went from Boston to interview her.
Chall: That's interesting. I talked to Lynn White several years ago when we were just beginning our interviews, and he told me that he had wanted Vera Dean to be dean of the faculty. She was controversial, and Herbert Hoover had vetoed it.

Heller: That is correct. And that's why I think I've got this mixed up. I think I'm wrong. I certainly went to interview Vera Dean, and I know I was present on the board when this Hoover episode came. So I guess it wasn't for president. I wasn't there when they interviewed Lynn White. I know they had a tough time finding anybody because of the war. Everybody was so busy. They took this very young man Lynn White, who was a professor at Stanford. I don't believe he was a full professor then at all. I'm sure you're right. It must have been right after the war.

Chall: I don't know what date it was. He probably didn't date it either.

Heller: I remember about Mr. Hoover's influence on this. He's perfectly right about that. Because Mr. Hoover didn't want it, I was all for it. This is the way that I felt.

I remember that Gerald Hagar was at that point a trustee, because I came to have great respect for him then. I remember Gerald Hagar summing up all the information about Vera Dean--Crawford Green wanted her too--and he [Hagar] came down on Mr. Hoover's side, but not because of Mr. Hoover. I was very impressed with his ability to gather the pluses and minuses in a very unemotional and good way. Though I really was on the other side, my great respect and friendship with Gerry Hagar started right then and there on that board, because of that Vera Dean episode. So it must have been after '46. Yes, Mr. Hoover--I'd forgotten about that!

Chall: Mr. White told me that Herbert Hoover was an honorary trustee.

Heller: That is correct.

Chall: He rarely attended a meeting, but he had a transcontinental veto.

Heller: Lynn is right. You see, I'd forgotten all that. It was Aurelia who got him to be--She was a very ardent Republican and good friend of his. After he had been defeated in '32--and that was when I first went on the board--she proposed he be made--was it an honorary trustee? It could have been. But he had voting privileges of some sort. It was all very irregular. He never came to a meeting. I can't remember his ever having come to a meeting.

That seemed quite appropriate to have him. He was a person who had been very much in the education field, and very prominent. He always left his name on there. He never had anything to do with Mills
Heller: except to have his name there, until this Vera Dean episode, where he really got himself exercised. If I remember correctly, it was the time his anti-Communist stirrings were really starting up, though I really think there was nothing wrong with Vera Dean at all.

Chall: Didn't she write for New Republic or Nation or one of those publications?

Heller: I think maybe the Nation. She's mentioned in that memo that I just gave you that Lynn White wrote. But she seems to have been on our side of this argument of the IPR.

Chall: She was well known.

Heller: I'm not sure of the year that this was, but it must have been when Hoover, in his tower in the Waldorf, was very much under the influence of George Sokolsky and real right wingers. I think they must have stirred him up. So it may have been around the McCarthy period.

Chall: You were national committeewoman; you might have been going to New York on business when you had that interview with Vera Dean.

Heller: I was committeewoman from '44 to '52. Yes, I could have been there. I just remembered meeting Crawford Green in New York to interview Vera Dean, whom I liked. Though I didn't think she was the best organized person.

Chall: For an administrative position?

Heller: Yes, for an administrative position. But we both liked her. I'm glad you did that with Lynn, because that's an interesting part. Oh, Hoover really brought the pressure on a lot of that board! Of course, not on me, but on an awful lot of active Republicans on that board.

Chall: I gathered he had quite a strong role.

Heller: But that's what I liked about Gerry Hagar. It didn't influence his decision at all.

Chall: He just considered it on its merits.

Heller: Yes. You see, Gerry Hagar was an Earl Warren Republican. He was a different sort of Republican. This was before he became a Regent of the University [of California], appointed by Earl Warren. So it must have been '46, '47 someplace in there. Lynn is so right.

Chall: Yes, he remembered quite a bit. I have the Vera Dean information here in a little note that I wrote down.
Heller: You see, I merge my first period as a trustee of Mills into my second. It's very hard to distinguish them, I think. But that's the only time I remember political—well, it was more personal than political pressure, I guess. Outside pressure on the board. Well, I guess it wasn't outside, it was Herbert Hoover. But I believe it was in '33 or thereabouts that he was made an honorary trustee. Aurelia was a good friend of his and felt he had been turned down, that he should be recognized by somebody as a great citizen.

Chall: Lynn White told me that one of the concerns of his and the educational policies committee's was the fact that the salaries were very low for the faculty—

Heller: Terrible!

Chall: --that there were no fringes at all; no retirement policy--

Heller: This is all correct.

Chall: --and that the educational policies committee was concerned with that, plus appointments and firings of faculty. Do you recall that?

Heller: I don't remember that we did anything except okay appointments. I don't remember anything about firing.

Chall: That's the president's prerogative.

Heller: Yes. Appointments, to this day, just pro forma, come to the trustees. It really is pro forma. Any trustee could object to one, but I haven't seen it happen.

The salary thing was after the Depression, because the salaries were just awful! The only salary I can remember was that one of Frank Wentworth, which gives you an idea. But they kept carrying it on the books, which is correct if you're having a volunteer for a paid job. I think that was indicative of how the salaries went.

There were no fringes. Lynn began a long, long struggle, carried on by his successors, and going on to this day. We're almost in good shape now. Of course the fringes have all come in.

Retirement was put in during Lynn's term. TIAA retirement system. It was put in very mildly at first. In that period there were retirements of two or three of our faculty members that had been there for years. I remember the trustees just voted sort of a pittance for them, maybe $600 a year—I'm guessing this. Something like that. But there was absolutely nothing.
Heller: Lynn did introduce that—something that Aurelia would never have thought of. There wasn't really much done in the thirties. It was after the war that those things came in. But Mills salaries were awfully low. Lynn started to move them up, and Easton Rothwell worked very hard on those.

Chall: What was the attitude of the board as these went up?

Heller: It was always good. Always recognized once it was really brought to its attention. You had to start that retirement thing rather slowly. It started as a voluntary thing, I think. Those who were willing to pay into the TIAA, and Mills paid a little of it. Of course, now it's just all—retirement, health, everything is automatic; it's part of the whole package. It's hard to believe how bad it was.

Chall: So the faculty was just teaching there because they loved it? Or there weren't any choices—that's the way it was all over?

Heller: Actually, I don't think the University of California had much of a retirement system until the forties. Very, very little. Now, they have this enormous—One of the great things about the University, I think, is its retirement system, which is very generous. But now that's part of salaries. It's interesting, isn't it, how the whole world has changed? And quite properly, it should.

What else did Lynn tell you? That jogs my memory very much.

Chall: I didn't put it all down in my notes here. He said that liberal-conservative issues were on the board. I had the feeling that it divided the board, liberal-conservative points of view, and he felt that you were always on the liberal wing, and that you often fought and lost on issues. It was about five years ago that I think I talked to him, and I have to reconstruct what I think he was feeling at the time.

Heller: Vera Dean might have been an example.

Chall: That would have been one.

Heller: But the Mills College trustees you would not call a great liberal group, I wouldn't think.

Chall: When I talked to Dr. [Robert] Wert today, he gave me the feeling that regardless of points of view, the board works together very harmoniously.

Heller: Very well. The only split I can remember is from that Vera Dean thing. I don't remember a great liberal-conservative—never felt that. We've always worked quite well together.
Chall: I may be reading into it. He said that he built upon what Aurelia Reinhardt had set up in the way of educational policies there; that her interest in arts and artists, in teaching women in these fields was really far ahead of what many other colleges were doing at the time.

Heller: It was.

Chall: There was a certain vocational training in her curriculum that later got dropped, I guess. He built upon that, but changed directions.

Heller: Art and music and drama were always a big part of the Mills curriculum. Science was very minor until I guess after Lynn got there. Toward the end, they began building more of a science department. It's developed more because it's much more of a field for women now than it used to be.

If I remember our discussions, and it may be all in my mind, but I think of it as an educational policies discussion, we knew we couldn't be all things to everybody and we had to pick certain fields and not do other fields. Journalism was one of the subjects that was missing, because that wasn't particularly a field for women at that time. But when you have a small college, you just do have to stay within certain limits.

Chall: When this latest women's movement emerged, Dr. White's attitudes toward the education of women were scoffed at.

Heller: Well, they were sort of tongue in cheek. He wrote that book Educating Our Daughters.* It was half tongue in cheek. But it was to publicize Mills in a way.

Chall: And a philosophy?

Heller: Yes. I wouldn't rave about that book. I haven't looked at it for ages.

Chall: You went through Mills in the twenties, and your daughter went through Mills in the fifties. Was it a different educational experience, do you think?

Heller: They'd gotten some awfully good faculty in when she was there. They'd put in this education in American Studies, and that was what she majored in. That was largely from the money from the Morrison estate. May Treat Morrison—you know, the reading room in the Doe Library?

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Chall: Yes. Right.

Heller: Her attorney and executor, Edward Hohfield, was a trustee at Mills, and he also was executor of her estate after she died. He set up these three chairs in American Studies: one in literature, one in history, and one in political science. That was a great step forward for Mills. They got Franklin Walker in literature, who just died recently; Laurence Sears in political science, and who was it in history? Anyway, they got really eminent people to head up those three. I think that's the way a small college has to go. Built a beautiful program. Of course, there was a basis for it in the courses that were there. Liz majored in I think it was called American Studies; if not that, something like that.

Chall: That was a broadening of the program?

Heller: Much, much broadening. It was a broadening. You'd be a history major, or an English major—I don't remember about political science when I was there. But this broadened it out so you could take all three in the American field.

That started while Lynn was president of course. I think maybe this was Lynn's conception, or it may have been Mr. Hohfield's, or may have been a combination of factors.

Chall: I think he told me that one of the stipulations in setting up the three chairs—he didn't tell whose chairs they were, but he just said "three chairs"—that the person who established them had the right to name the first persons in the chair. After that, I guess, it was up to the president, whoever it would be. Apparently there was some discussion on the board about whether that was proper or not, but it was decided—

Heller: It was not proper.

Chall: --to let it go, because this was one way to get the endowment.

Heller: I think it was Edward Hohfield that set them up, because he had the Morrison estate. I think May Treat Morrison had just died. It is wrong.

Chall: But the choices were all right?

Heller: The choices turned out to be okay. Hohfield was not too much of a trustee aside from that. Of course, that's a big thing. But he didn't concern himself too much with anything else, if I remember it. He was rather difficult to talk to. Of course, now, every place is looking for these specialized studies.
Heller: Larry Sears was a tremendous addition to that faculty. He was a—what's the word I want? He just made things boil and simmer and people think. He'd say things that would outrage his students, get them arguing. He was terribly good.

Chall: How could you find out how the students reacted toward the faculty? How does a board know what's going on?

Heller: We never really know. You hear complaints. You usually hear them second or third hand, or you know some students over the years who complain. You never really have first-hand information. You usually hear when they're very weak faculty. Hope you hear it before they get tenure.

Chall: Gradually during Lynn White's period did the board sort of shape up in terms of its responsibilities as separate?

Heller: I think much more. We were in a much more steady period. It was a much more prosperous period at that time. Liz entered in 1948, and I think it was the biggest enrollment that had ever been. It was an enormous class. That was just the peak of enrollment period. I think you'll find that almost any place—'46 to '48. Huge enrollments.

Chall: She must have been a good student. She was the class valedictorian.

Heller: Well, valedictorian is actually chosen. It's not according to your grades at Mills. It's a title that's given, but the class at Mills chooses its class speaker. She was chosen to do that by her class. She had been—what was it? There's an academic board at Mills of students—Chairman of Academic Board.

[Interview 16: November 9, 1979]##

Heller: Where are we? I've forgotten now.

Chall: Today we are going to finish the Lynn White years at Mills College. I wanted today to talk just a little bit more about that term, and then go into Easton Rothwell's term. We didn't discuss the fact, when we talked about Liz being valedictorian of her graduating class, that in that same graduation ceremonies, you were awarded an honorary doctor of law?

Heller: That is correct.

Chall: How did that come about? Not that I think you didn't deserve it—[Heller chuckles]

Heller: Nineteen fifty-two, when she graduated, was the centennial of Mills College. It had been determined by the board that they would give more honorary degrees than usual, but only to women that year, because
Heller: of the centennial. I think they settled on eight honorary degrees. I'm not convinced of how it went, but I remember that I was pressing very hard that they must include a Mills alumna in this, but obviously I wasn't thinking of myself. [laughs] I can't remember whether I talked to Lynn White about it or someone else, but I felt very strongly that with Mills centennial, they certainly had plenty of people they could choose from.

In the end, they came up--I don't think it was a secret from me in the end, but I was certainly kept out of the meeting--a list of eight, of whom two were Mills alumnae. One was Esther Dayman Strong from Portland, Oregon. She had been associated student president right after Aurelia Henry Reinhardt came to Mills. She'd been a marvelous person, and then had run the Portland Girls' School in Portland, Oregon after her commencement. And me. I never was quite sure exactly on what terms I got that honorary degree--whether it was for my Bibliography of the Grabhorn Press--It seems to me there was quite a bit in that about my involvement in the community as national committeewoman. It was a little bit vague to me.

I was trying to think who the others were. Jessamyn West was one, and Georgia O'Keeffe. It was decided to take people from the West, that was it.

Chall: This list I have is broken down into two kinds of degrees. One is a doctor of letters and one is a doctor of laws. Georgia O'Keeffe received the doctor of letters, and Agnes de Mille did too.

Heller: And Jessamyn West, I think.

Chall: That could very well be. I don't have the name on this list. Lillian Gilbreth? Dr. Lillian Gilbreth?

Heller: Yes.

Chall: Ruth Leach, who was--

Heller: I don't remember her, really.

Chall: --vice-president of IBM, I have here in a note.

Heller: I think they were looking for somebody in business in the West, and I guess that was she.

Chall: And then Katherine Towle, who was a dean of women, I think--

Heller: No, she was dean of students at Berkeley, which was most unusual. She had been very much connected with Mills, in and out all her life though she was a Berkeley graduate.
And then Mrs. Henry Potter Russell.

Yes. Helen Crocker Russell, who had really been an outstanding person in the San Francisco community. She was a trustee of Mills College at the time, and one of the best trustees we'd ever had. She had never gone to college; she was from the very prominent Crocker family. She had been very generous to Mills. She was really one of the most important women in the Bay Area community. Into everything, and quite broad in her interests. Whether it was--what was the cultural part of the U.N. that was so frowned on? Not UNICEF, the other one.

UNESCO [United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural organization].

UNESCO. She ran the whole UNESCO conference, for example, put it on; put her weight behind it. Because it wasn't considered respectable by a lot of people. They thought it was sort of Communist tinged.

She was very much in the symphony. It was really she who was most responsible for the starting of the Museum of Modern Art in San Francisco. She was unusual.

That was a great list to be among.

Oh, I thought it was great. I was always pleased to have that. I must say, when I became a Regent of the University, I was very pleased to have that hood to wear over the Regents' gowns. Because with only a B.A., you don't have a hood. Very pleased to always have that. [laughter] I used to take it around from one campus to another in my suitcase if I had to wear my Regents' robes.

I didn't know Regents had robes. They do have robes, but not hoods, is that it?

The hoods are your own academic hoods, if you have any. Yes, there are regular Regents' robes, which is sort of a joke to some people. To others, it's very important. If you remind me when I do the University, I'll tell you about Regents' robes. It was one of the first things that hit me when I came over to the--it's silly!

This is the first time I've heard of it!

Anyway, it was very nice to get the honorary degree at commencement.

Was your whole family there?

I guess so, yes. It happened to coincide.

There is just one more personal thing I wanted to put in someplace. When I was at Mills, they did not have a chapter of Phi Beta Kappa. But under Phi Beta Kappa rules, which I discovered later, if
Heller: you had been out for fifteen years, and had kept on with any scholarly pursuits and had the equivalent of Phi Beta Kappa grades when you were in college, you could be chosen retroactively to be a member of Phi Beta Kappa. It was, I believe in 1940, that I was made a member of Phi Beta Kappa retroactively. I just wanted to tell you I have never worn my key. [laughter]

Chall: Do you read the magazine, the journal that's put out?

Heller: I take it. I find it quite dull, as a matter of fact.

Chall: You also told me last week that you wanted to say something about the Mills summer sessions. I don't know where you want to put that, but we might as well talk about that.

Heller: Oh, you were asking me about what happened particularly when Aurelia Henry Reinhardt was president. She built up very strong summer sessions at Mills in music particularly, and that was largely with the help of Miss [Persis] Coleman and Mrs. [Frances] Hellman. The Pro Arte Quartet was there summer after summer. Mrs. Coolidge from Cambridge, Massachusetts, who was a great supporter of music all over, used to come out and contributed to those, too. She was deaf as a doorpost, and used a trumpet. [chuckles] She was quite a factor. There was a big enrollment at those summer sessions.

They also ran for quite a few years an excellent Maison Francais there. I suppose there were other things, but those were the two main parts of the summer session. They were hugely attended. It was a fair source of additional income to the college in those lean years.

Chall: What's the summer session like now? Is it a regular summer session?

Heller: There aren't any Mills summer sessions. There are other programs that use the campus now. The Upward Bound program in Oakland has used that campus for quite a few years. There are various conferences that take place. It's more a conference center.

It's a wonderful place to have a summer session, with San Francisco available, and the swimming pool, and the tennis courts, and good accommodations.

Summer sessions have had their vogues and their problems. That's another subject that should be pursued when we talk about the Regents and the University's year-round operations. That's another subject.

Chall: Would you like to sum up those particular years when Lynn White was the president? He was in for fifteen years; that's a fairly long time as we look ahead.
Heller: Lynn, I don't think was ever terribly interested. He was really a scholar. He was a medievalist. He didn't have much outlet on the Mills campus that was really oriented to his specialized field. To his general field of history, yes. He had four or five very young children living on the campus. And his wife Maud was very, very young when they came—early twenties, and she was extremely bashful. She just dreaded every social thing she had to do as the wife of the president. She was very busy with young children and wasn't feeling well a good deal of the time. That was a great contrast to Aurelia, whose house had always been open house for students and faculty. Whereas while the Whites were there, it was sort of off bounds, except for the most formal occasions. I think this was very difficult for Lynn. He obviously never discussed it, but I felt he just didn't fit.

Chall: And yet he remained in fifteen years.

Heller: Yes, he did.

Chall: That's a long time.

Heller: Which was a long time, and certainly he was never asked to leave in any way; he left of his own accord.

Chall: Relationships with the faculty then, and the board, were okay?

Heller: Well, he was a scholar. There was just no question of that. He did start to bring the standards up again. That's the thing—besides the faculty and the salaries and the retirement. In the thirties, Aurelia, and I guess the trustees, though I don't particularly remember it, just let down the standards. When Aurelia decided to let down the standards, it was done, that's all. Lynn spent a great deal of that time rebuilding the standards of admission for students. He understood that very, very well, and he did a very good job.

Chall: That's important, because those were growing years.

Heller: It was very important that he did that.

Chall: Also, I realize, as of course you do too, that he was active with the IPR, which was an outside interest.

Heller: Yes. The IPR and then the World Affairs Council. But that sort of goes separately here. But he was, as a result of being president of Mills, I guess, involved in those activities.

I think he was always involved in historical associations. And he did keep his contacts in the academic world, so that when he did leave, he got an appointment as a full professor at UCLA. I remember his telling me that he really wanted to go to Berkeley, but there was no opening there for his field.
Heller: Lynn, by the way, thrived at UCLA. He was quite marvelous. He was chairman of the Academic Senate at UCLA, and very much not only in the academic, but the whole political structure.

Chall: He probably learned something from being the president of Mills.

Heller: I think he did. I think he learned a lot. The UCLA arena is rather different, but-- Last time I did anything with Lynn was when he was the chairman of the faculty committee for the selection of the new president after Clark Kerr's leaving. We selected Charlie Hitch, eventually. I was on that selection committee for the Regents. He was very good, very realistic.

He didn't seem to get on with the business community at all in terms of attracting support for Mills. Though some very good trustees came on the board about the time he was there. I haven't got the list of when they all arrived.

Chall: People can find that.

Heller: Yes. I knew certainly that there was a definite weakness there about his ability to get on with the community.

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Easton Rothwell, President, 1958-1967

Heller: Which leads me to Easton Rothwell. I thought he was a marvelous person and I was delighted when he was chosen. I was not on the search committee when he was chosen, but I had put in his name because I had heard he was unhappy at the Hoover Institution at Stanford. He and Mr. Hoover never did see eye to eye. I had put in his name and was delighted when he was chosen. But something I had not expected of Easton Rothwell was his tremendous ability to get on with businessmen and corporate people as well as knowing the-- He wasn't quite the academician that Lynn was. But Easton has always had a lovely way with people, and he enjoyed the students. Do you know Easton?

Chall: Years ago I knew him.

Heller: He loves people! I was always sorry that my daughter Liz just missed him. Not that she had anything against Lynn White, but he had such a warm, wonderful way.
Heller: Lynn had one unfortunate habit. These are the things I hate to put in because they're so personal. He had a terribly--and still has--an affected way of speaking. Do you know him?

Chall: I've talked to him on the telephone.

Heller: Very affected way of speaking.

Chall: I didn't feel it on the phone.

Heller: And Ed Heller used to say, "Where did he get that accent? He was raised in San Anselmo!" [laughs] Ed Heller was impossible about Lynn. I won't say he disliked him, but he sort of recoiled from him because of this accent. He always referred to him as the "headmahster."

Lynn was not good at working with the business community. I told you the story about Ed Heller to give you an example of how he didn't seem to get on with the business community at all in terms of attracting support for Mills.
Heller: So the whole orientation of the campus changed again. Welcome to the president's house, and the president knowing the students and working with them.

Chall: Wasn't he also on the board at the time he had been selected?

Heller: That is correct. Mills, at some point, and I don't remember when, I think it was in the thirties, had decided that--maybe in the early forties--that there should be two academic people, not from Mills College, but from Bay Area institutions, as trustees. Which was a very good decision. We've had just excellent ones. Easton was on the board at that time, from Stanford. Oh, yes, we've had superb people that have made great contributions to the college.

Chall: As a result of that?

Heller: Yes. Jim Hart, by the way, of The Bancroft Library, was one of those. And just this year, having served ten years in a regular academic position, he was chosen as a regular trustee of Mills. If you jump ahead from Easton to Rob [Robert] Wert, who was his successor as president, Rob Wert was also one of those academic trustees.

Chall: He told me that.

Heller: Most of the academic people had been from Stanford or Berkeley. There had been one or two, it seems to me, from San Francisco State before it became part of the state university system. There were originally some from there. One or two, but mostly Cal or Stanford.

Chall: So you had worked with him?

Heller: I had known Easton down here. I had first met him in, I guess World Affairs Council, possibly IPR. I don't remember. Some people you meet you become good friends with and Easton was one of those with whom I did become good friends. He and I always looked at things in a fairly similar way.

Chall: You were on the board during all the time he was president, I note.

Heller: Yes. I was on the board the whole time he was president. Of course, Easton not only kept up the standards, but while he was there we had our biggest fundraiser. We'd had small ones all along, but we had a Ford matching grant.

Chall: That was that challenge fund?

Heller: The challenge fund. We set out to raise $10 million, including the Ford matching. It came out to over $15 million. Easton was good at this thing. As a result of that and other things, there was quite a
Heller: bit of building on the campus when he was president. There was a new science building. There'd never been much of that. That [science] developed under him. A new health center, a new physical education complex, and I believe the new dormitories were being talked about when he was still there. They were actually built, I think, when Rob Wert was president. They got caught in the bind just as there was less demand for student on-campus living.

Chall: I understand that there were some objections from the alumnae about the buildings on the campus. It was finally decided that a new building should conform to the extent possible with the architecture of the old buildings. Was that a problem that you recall among the alumnae?

Heller: Not enormous, as I remember. Actually, I think there was rather good agreement that the new buildings—oh, another new building that was built while Easton was there was the new chapel. Your asking me about that reminded me of it, because the buildings I've mentioned tied in with the old buildings. They had the red tile roofs—if you've ever been there, you'll see how they tie in. They're not the same architecture, but they do tie in. But I do remember the definite decision—and that was the one there might have been the argument about—when we had the money for the chapel, to do an off-beat building. There was a great deal of argument about that, and probably there was some alumnae fuss about that. But it is an off-beat building. It's a lovely building, actually. I've always liked it extremely much. Oh, well, you know—alumnae never want to change anything. But I just can't remember it—whether it was formal, or whether the alumnae board of governors, or the alumnae trustees—I can't remember anymore. I remember there was a lot of discussion, but eventually most of the board of trustees came around to accepting this building.

Chall: That's the unusual chapel?

Heller: Yes.

Chall: What were the other funds from the $15 million used for besides building?

Heller: They were mostly used for endowments. Of course, when you're raising a sum like that, some of it comes in restricted so that you really don't have much choice. It might be for faculty salaries, or for just endowment in general, or sometimes for scholarships, or sometimes for special departments. It comes in in many ways. You really can't control exactly how that money comes in. But we did add quite a bit to our endowment.

Chall: So you were continuing to grow during those years?
Heller: Well, yes, I guess so. During the late fifties we were continuing
to grow. I'm guessing now--it was about 1960 or a little later that
the growth stopped--maybe--you'd know those from the University
figures. They're the same all over. Maybe the mid-sixties. Easton
was still president, though. I've forgotten his exact years.

Chall: He left in '67.

Heller: Sixty-seven, yes. Easton had just made up his mind that he was going
to take his earliest possible retirement. He had worked very hard,
and I think he felt quite satisfied with what he had accomplished.
I've forgotten how long he was in. About ten years?

Chall: From '58 to '67. Yes, ten years.

Heller: Nobody wanted him to leave, but he was very firm about it. He had
made up his mind about that. He's still very close to the campus.
He's called on to do consulting jobs quite often.

Chall: During that period of time, there was the beginning of the unrest
due to the Vietnam War on campuses. I don't know to what extent
it was at Mills.

Heller: It didn't come onto the Mills campus at that point, except in the most
minor ways. It was only after Rob Wert went in that it began to
manifest some of the unrest. The Vietnam War unrest really didn't
hit Mills because it was a women's college. The manifestation at
Mills, and I know it was after Rob Wert was president, was the black
students, who occupied his office.

Mills has never had terrible unrest. It's had some. I can
remember when the new physical education building was dedicated.
It largely came about through Walter Haas and the Lucy Stern trust.
There were other contributions. I can remember the Haas's--the whole
family were over at that dedication. It was known around the campus
that they had quite a bit to do with the money. In fact, it's named
the Walter A. Haas Pavillion, I think. There were a handful of
placard-bearing students. "Down with Levi Strauss!" Somehow they
had gotten the idea that Levi Strauss was not an equal opportunity
employer. They had some--I guess they still have--plants in the
South, and that word was around. I think Walter Haas was quite upset
about it. It always struck me as so ridiculous because of all en-
lightened employers, they were the most in this area. They were far
ahead of everybody else. It was really very minor, but I do remember
that demonstration.

The first big demonstration was the black students. I was not
a trustee at that time.

Chall: When they wanted Stokely Carmichael to speak?
Heller: Oh, yes, I don't know what they wanted.

Chall: But you were not on the board then?

Heller: No, I was not on it.

Chall: Were you on the board at the time when the students wanted to be more active on the board of trustees?

Heller: No. That was all part of that whole manifestation.

Chall: The reason that I ask you is that, in a conversation that Suzanne Riess had with Easton Rothwell several years ago, he did say something about your working with the students to increase their role on the board. There had been an advisory committee. Was it of students?

Heller: Yes.

Chall: This committee was changed into something with a little more strength. I assumed that this was after you had worked with the students to develop some plan.

Heller: I did believe in student participation. I don't think the vote makes that much difference. If you have one or two students out of thirty-five trustees, I don't think the actual vote makes a difference. I accomplished it at the University of California, but I never did at Mills. There are students on educational policies committee--members. Two students on that and two on student life. But there's not been any agitation recently about that. I have always found that I liked to have a student or two on committees and on the board. Easton is right. I always was interested in having the students learn more about governance, and vice versa--to learn more about what the students have on their minds. It varies in degree about how successful it is. It really depends on the individual students that are chosen.

Chall: As I understand it, now there's a graduate student on the board, and they rotate every three years.

Heller: That's not quite true. This was done in my absence. A recent graduate of Mills, there are two of them. It's supposed to be having graduated and received a degree within five years of the time they're chosen. I think they serve for two years, maybe for three. I understand the reason was to get more input from trustees who are closer to what the students are thinking. You get some good ones, and some not so good.

Chall: Who appoints them?

Heller: The nominating committee of the board of trustees. But they only have a two-year term, and they're revolving on and off. It's a little hard to even get used to them, because they go off. One of those has now
Heller: become a regular trustee, and is excellent, from New York, excellent trustee. You do find some. They all make their contribution. But by the time they get used to the ways of sitting on a governing board, their time is just about up. I approve of the principle of it completely. There are those two, and there continue to be the three alumnae trustees.

I think—still while Easton was there, that got changed after I went off—there were regional trustees. Always from Los Angeles, or Seattle, depending on where we had a strong alumnae organization. New York. They had two-year terms. Those have been abolished. The so-called regional are now regular trustees. That's where the board got enlarged, was to include people from other areas. There was one from Denver. It was to broaden the scope. Getting trustees to devote enough time to Mills is very difficult, and to serve on special committees, if they're not in the area. It is really very difficult.

Chall: How do these board members serve, then, from outside this region?

Heller: Theoretically, they were sort of a liaison almost between the college and their regions as to what was going on at Mills, and to provide information for possible new students, and for Mills alumnae in the regions. It didn't always work that way. It depended on the individual.

Chall: It would anyway.

Heller: It always does. In this area, it's fine.

Chall: Whether he lives in Denver or Oakland, it's the same.

Heller: Absolutely true. Things look so nice on paper. [chuckles]

Actually, Mills has had an awfully good board of trustees ever since I can remember. But it was during Easton's time that that superb group just got in and dug into this drive, like Bill Hewlett, and Walter Haas, and Fuller Brawner, and Alan Christianson. Joe Moore who's now a Regent, was one of them I think a little earlier. I think he was on during that period too.

Chall: I understand Edgar Kaiser was the chairman of the challenge fund.

Heller: That was because Gene [Eugene] Trefethen was chairman of the board of trustees at that time, who was Edgar Kaiser's right hand man. Edgar Kaiser's role as chairman of that challenge fund was a name role. There was one big dinner at which he made one of his resounding speeches. I think that was his complete role. Trefethen did all the work. Trefethen is still a trustee.

Chall: He's a life trustee, is he not, with you?
Heller: He and Walter Haas and I are life trustees, which I think is sort of a silly category, but--

Chall: At least it puts on some of the people they want to retain!

Heller: That happened while Rob Wert was president, establishing of life trustees. Jim Hart was chairman of the board when that was done. It really got tailored, I always figured, to take in Gene Trefethen, Walter Haas and me. [laughs]

Chall: The name Sloss, and Jane Taylor have come up.

Heller: Both excellent trustees. Ellie Sloss, who was my classmate, by the way, class of 1925 was a Fleishhacker, the daughter of Mortimer Fleishhacker. She was in my class at Mills. She's always been not only a devoted trustee, but a very, very intelligent, excellent person. She died just a year ago. She was still a trustee. She resigned about three or four months before she died of cancer, because she just couldn't get to meetings. But she was always among the best, in my opinion. Very thoughtful. She was rather quiet, but she did a tremendous amount for Mills. She really worked at it.

Jane Taylor had been in the class of about 1934 or '35 of Mills. She was president of the associated students. She never married; she's been a professional person. She's very good at administration techniques. It's been her lifework. She's also been an excellent trustee. She's off the board now, but she keeps very much up with Mills.

Whoever gave you those names was right. They were outstanding.

Chall: They were mentioned by Easton Rothwell as being on the search committee, he thought.

Heller: They were. Ellie Sloss has gone through many names. Her first husband died, and she was married twice again. Not very satisfactorily, but she went back to her Sloss name eventually. Ellie was chairman of the search committee that chose Easton Rothwell. And strangely enough [laughs] Rob Wert was chairman of the search committee in which he came up as the president. Well, they had to do it behind his back, of course.

Chall: In addition to Rothwell's changing the social aspects of the presidency and carrying on this great building program, were there any changes in the curriculum or in the way of handling students in those days or in changing the education at Mills, or had that been pretty well started by White?

Heller: I think it had been fairly well started by White. I'd have to go back and look at that. Easton had an excellent dean of the faculty, Mary Woods Bennett. They worked together extremely well, and she was
Heller: really a magnificent leader of the faculty. So all changes that were made were very carefully worked out with the faculty. There were changes in direction, but after certain points you forget all the details of them.

Chall: I just thought if anything stood out, it would be relatively major.

Heller: I do remember that they changed--but they've gone back--to a two-term and a four-one-four. It's a fall term, and then one month of vacation, in which you do studies, and then the spring term. They've abandoned that recently. I do remember Mary Woods Bennett recommending that change.

Heller: I hate to single out individual trustees, because I leave out too many good ones, I'm afraid.

Chall: If you want to add them as you review the manuscript, you can do that.

Heller: They contributed different things at different periods.

**Robert Wert, President, 1967-1975**

Chall: There were certain changes that came about at Mills, certain problems that had to be solved. I'm not sure whether you were on the board at the time as a life trustee or a regular trustee. Let me ask you about them. In terms of Robert Wert, were you on any committee that helped select him?

Heller: I was on that selection committee. Yes, I was. Rob came from Stanford, and I had known him and his wife Ann quite well, too. I had happened to work with Rob on the Coordinating Committee for Higher Education. He had worked before that was formed on the committee that eventually evolved the master plan for higher education in the state. He and Arthur Coons from Occidental, as I remember, were the two private college people. Coons was the president of Occidental. Of course, Clark Kerr says he evolved it. Arthur Coons always felt that he, and when he was sick, Rob Wert evolved it. Well, they all had a hand in putting together this master plan for higher education in the state. It depends on whom you talk to, but the thing came about, anyway.

Rob, whose Ph.D. was in education, had been very interested in all of education. He had been, I believe a provost. He had been in the Department of Education at Stanford, and he was provost at Stanford under Wally [Wallace] Sterling. When all the difficulties at Stanford emerged, when the students were really behaving terribly---
Heller: This was an awful strain on Rob, as it was on Wally Sterling. I'm not sure that I know the details, whether Rob was asked to leave as provost or whether he had had enough of it, but he went back to the Department of Education, where he had been for many years quite happily.

Once he got back there, he'd had a taste of administration, and found that he preferred it to the classroom. That became known to me in one of two ways, including his wife Ann, because he had been asked to consider his name, and he said no. But Ann did tell me eventually please not take his name off the list completely. She thought he might really be interested in it. And when it came to the point, he was. I think he was chairman of that committee, I may be wrong.

I have memories of Bob Connick who was from Berkeley. Bob Connick will come into my tales of the University as vice-chancellor of the Berkeley campus. Magnificent person. He's been chairman of the Academic Senate at Berkeley; very important person there and a marvelous person. Bob was certainly on that committee, he was one of our very fine academic trustees. He may have been chairman of that committee for all I know, or handled it by calling a meeting and presiding without Rob there, eventually.

We did quite thorough searches. You know, it's easier said than done to find a president of anything. The salary was not too high. Rob had independent means—the Werts had independent means. It was no great sacrifice one way or the other financially. He was ready to change; that's the short answer to it. He did accept the job.

Chall: He stayed on for nearly ten years, too. I guess it's hard to define what you consider a top administrator. Can you do that?

Heller: It's very hard.

Chall: How do you sense it?

Heller: One who knows what's going on, who works closely with his board of governors, consults with them, brings information to them, makes recommendations to them, takes recommendations from the faculty, sorts them out about whether they're good or not, and still doesn't try to direct the faculty. Knows the role of faculty, and curriculum, and courses; knows how to allocate the finances, and anticipate the financial problems. It's a tough job.
Heller: Yes, he did. Rob's a good personal friend of mine, but he's not a good administrator. There's another reason for not doing all these. I realized that, even though I wasn't a trustee at that time. He is a weak administrator. And he's a little lazy. He's very sweet and very charming. On the other hand, his wife Ann was a marvelous president's wife, and made that house delightful because she could spend more money on making it attractive than say the Rothwells or the Whites could. And it meant a lot to her to do it. It became quite a center; it remained a center. She was particularly good as a college president's wife. Rob is very nice in a social situation. But he's sort of lazy, and he really didn't, in my opinion, run that college well. He'd rather not make decisions, he'd rather let it go, though he did handle that invasion of his office perfectly well. He'd had some training at Stanford, I guess. He just sat there in that office filled with these students who wouldn't leave. He just sat there calmly for hours--days, I guess.

Chall: I think he said it took two board meetings to solve some of this.

Heller: Yes. I wasn't there. But I know that as far as he personally was concerned, he was not upset by students. But he just, I don't think, really put his mind onto Mills and its problems.

Chall: What was his mind on?


Rob didn't like to look at figures at all. He just hoped everything was going to be okay.

I shouldn't talk that much about Rob, because I wasn't there while he was president. But I know a fair amount of it, and I went on just as he was leaving, and I could see the mess there that was left of things undone by him. He had a tendency to let the people in his administration sort of run their departments, which is fine if you're watching them. But if you don't watch them, it's terrible. There were some sort of runaway administrators who were taking things into their own hands.
Chall: It certainly is.

Heller: With inflation, it's even tougher. It's a very tough job.

Barbara White, President, 1976-1980

Chall: Then in choosing Barbara White, you went back a reason for that, or did she just show up on top?

Heller: Let me say the pressure had been enormous, ever since Aurelia left, from the alumnae for a woman as president of the college. Let me just say in general that I have been on many search committees for different campuses of the University, where the idea of a woman is very attractive. They are few and far between to find. They are very hard to find, and I know that. But I was on that search committee for Barbara White. Bobbie Villard, who was a Mills alumna, was chairman of that search committee. She was not an alumna trustee, she was a regular trustee. Excellent one, too. I was on that search. Of course, on that search, I'd had a lot more experience than I've ever had on the others. So determination was made by the committee that, other things being equal, we would, if we could find a woman, take a woman. It wasn't an absolute decision, but it was pretty much of a decision. A woman had been looked for when Rob was chosen, and I can't remember if we had when Easton was chosen. But there was great pressure that a women's college should have a woman as president. As I say again, it's easier said than done. I don't want to go into any names, but we interviewed a lot of women on that last choice, including some alumnae.

Barbara turned up as a very good person. She had not been in education; she had been in the State Department. That was her whole life. But she'd had a lot of administrative experience in the State Department and the UN. She was as high as she could go in the State Department, unless she took an ambassadorship, which she was not interested in doing. I had come across her before in one of the searches for the University. Very high marks about her, but in the University it's impossible to take a chance without a Ph.D. It just couldn't be done. Whereas at Mills, that is not an essential requirement. Maybe you'd prefer it, but it's not essential by any means. So that's why she could be considered for Mills.

Chall: Generally working out all right?

Heller: Yes. She had a rough time for a while, it's a whole new world to her, but she's a very, very hard worker. She had to learn all the finance. But she wants to learn it all. You know, budgets, and investments, and computers. Of course when she came, she knew her first job—because she did not have a Ph.D.—was to make the faculty comfortable.
Heller: I think she's achieved that extremely well. She was very careful to establish her job as the president. The dean of the faculty is really the chief faculty person. She has an excellent dean in Ed LeFevour. That position was open, and Rob had left it open after Mary Woods Bennett resigned. She retired because of her age.

She's had a rough go, because there's always a big administrative turnover when a new president comes in, but it's more noticeable when it's a woman, because people tend to gossip, gossip. They think it's because it's the woman. Sometimes she's blunt, it may have been that. But she expects perfection. She has very high expectations from her administrators. You make some mistakes in choosing people, too. By and large, I think she's doing an excellent job.*

But we still have a problem at Mills. It's not big. If we had thirty more full-time students, you know, resident students, the budget would balance. As a matter of fact, we do perfectly well because of unrestricted gifts to the college. But of course she wants to balance income from endowment or chairs plus—it would be thirty more. So it's not a big gap. It's funny how hard it is to fill that absolute gap.

Maybe I should tell you here about the current struggle at Mills which hasn't been resolved.

Chall: Yes, and there are a couple of old ones that I left out, but tell me about the current and we'll go back.

Heller: You well know the housing situation at Berkeley. There's no place for the students to live. Mills and Berkeley have long had a good reciprocal arrangement on library use and a complete understanding—that happened quite a while ago—that Berkeley students may take courses at Mills that are not given at Berkeley, or vice versa. I think there's a limit on the number, but that arrangement's always been there. There's been a bus that goes to Berkeley from Mills twice a day, taking students or books or what have you.

Because of this shortage of resident students, which is one of the new phenomena at Mills—there are so many resumers, older students that live at home—we have one dormitory that has not been in use for several years. It is Mary Morse Hall which accommodates 110 students. For the past few years, it's been rented, contracted, whatever you call it, to different conference groups during the year that have maybe six-week sessions or something like that. It's provided a fairly decent income, but not as good as if there were students in there because there are always gaps. You can't quite fill it. The chancellor's office at Berkeley came to Mills, asking if we would take 110 Berkeley students to live there. That's the current raging question.

*Barbara White announced her resignation from the Mills presidency in January, 1980, effective June 30, 1980. Mrs. Heller was appointed to the committee to select the next president.
Chall: Female students, I assume.

Heller: No, Berkeley's very firm. It would be men and women, but it can be upper division, who are a little bit more responsible possibly than freshmen. It would be upper division students, and then there would be more buses that Berkeley would run back and forth. It would help Mills, too. Berkeley would contract for the dormitory, and would bring in—which at Berkeley may not sound like much but it's a lot for Mills—at least forty thousand dollars more regularly a year on a three-year contract, which could be dropped at the end of one year. Some of the students have just gone wild against this. It's the same old thing. A few of the alumnae are just in a state that it would no longer be a women's college. You might gather from what I'm saying that I think it should be done. [laughs] They would have access to dining room privileges—they'd be paying for breakfast and dinners seven days a week; and they could use the swimming pool, the tennis courts, the athletic fields.

Chall: So the whole college is open to them, in a sense.

Heller: In a sense, the facilities, yes.

Chall: The facilities, if they use the dormitory.

Heller: Yes, if they live in the dormitory. And I'm convinced it would work extremely well, and I think we would be helping Berkeley out enormously. Berkeley's very anxious for it. The finance committee, which I'm on, of Mills, is all for it. I'm all for it. How it's going to come out, I can't tell you. It has to be resolved, theoretically, by the fifteenth of November.

Chall: That's pretty soon.

Heller: It would start next year. I think it would be just fine.

Chall: It's a most unusual kind of idea.

Heller: You're not responding so well to it! [laughter]

Chall: I don't have to. [laughs] I can think about it. It is an unusual idea. I wonder how many colleges have used another college's facilities like this.

Heller: I don't know. It makes sense to me with the good liaison we have with Berkeley, to do this. I don't think it would make for any trouble. But there's an uproar on the campus. It's very hard to tell how many students are involved in the uproar, because the vociferous ones always show up.*

*The decision was finally affirmative and it has worked out very well, and a year later all the flack was gone. [E.H.]
Some Difficult Decisions

Moving the Mills Campus

Chall: I don't know if this involved the students on the campus so much—the idea of moving Mills to another location.

Heller: Yes, I was on that committee. That was when Easton was president. Definitely. Bill Hewlett was chairman of that committee. It was an excellent committee. I can't remember for sure who was on it, but I remember that Bob Brown, one of the senior partners of McCutcheon, was on it. I certainly was on it. Bill Hewlett and a couple more. Probably Gene Trefethen, and undoubtedly some other woman. I'm not sure if it was Jane Taylor, or who—it doesn't make any difference. We really did a huge survey of the whole Bay Area region, looking at properties, and personally went to all available properties.

Chall: Did you think the present site was not going to be a good area?

Heller: The trouble was there were those who thought that the area around Mills was getting very difficult. Which it is, you know, it's East Oakland. You know it better than I do. But by the time we looked at it, and looked at the costs of buying new property, which was not as expensive then—we looked particularly in Marin County, we looked down here (south of here on the peninsula), and the cost—it was just impossible. We decided—and this was a firm, written decision someplace—that what we should do was not only learn to live where we were, but to make use of the neighborhood we're in, for programs. You know, like this outreach program, which is one of them. And to use our position as being part of the community. That was a firm and absolute decision. I think it was the only possible decision, even forgetting the dollars and cents.

There are great values, as I know from other places, in not being too isolated, and having ready access to San Francisco and to the Berkeley campus. All these other sites were much more in the country. It would have been the terrible prospect of complete isolation, which was the last thing Mills really wanted when we began to think about it.

Trucks on Highway #580

Chall: There was a problem about Mills when highway #580 was being built.
Heller: Yes, that was earlier. I guess that was when Lynn White was president. That was a big political problem as far as Oakland went and the state of California because the trucking industry has always had a very important influence on legislators and the highway commission. I guess the highway commission was the main thing. That fight (for Mills) was led by Jerry Hagar, who was then a trustee at Mills, and another excellent one. He knew the Oakland community. His law firm was in Oakland, though he lived in Berkeley himself. He took the lead in that. Jerry in his mild way was very sophisticated about that sort of politics. I was only peripherally part of that fight. Very interested in it, but it was a matter of working with the Oakland community, and getting every element in Oakland to join with us to try to block that. It wasn't to block the MacArthur freeway; it was to block trucks from it.

Chall: Did it also have to do with how much property, if any, the highway would take from Mills?

Heller: No. Just peripherally, maybe a speck. But no. It was a matter of trucks, because the highway was to go very close to Mills. I remember long studies about decibel noises and how it affects. And let me tell you, decibels is not a scientific study. No matter what expert you got, they gave you different figures. But it was an upgrade, slight upgrade, and the noise caused by the shifting of trucks.

Chall: It could have been very noisy.

Heller: it could have been terrible. Jerry Hagar, and others, but I remember Jerry particularly, and Lynn I guess was very active in this. [pauses] It's possible Easton was there, but I don't think so.

Chall: I don't remember the dates, I just remember the controversy. And the controversy about trucks took a long, long time.

Heller: Oh, it took forever! But we kept getting stays, or whatever the term is. Finally, every possible group in Oakland from the school board, to the board of supervisors, to the neighborhood groups, the chamber of commerce—all sorts of different groups of a wide range—finally lined up with us. I think Gene Trefethen probably helped on that too, because Kaiser was in Oakland. We didn't have anybody except the trucking people opposed to this. It was a great and glorious day when it was decided that trucks had to be cut off just before they came to Mills. It's still that way now if you go out that way.

Chall: I'm not sure, but I think it's even further out into San Leandro.

Heller: It goes further out than San Leandro, but it starts before, closer to Oakland. Before Mills, they have to go off. Maybe High Street—no, before High. Whatever the turnoff is before that.
Chall: It's almost the entire stretch of highway.

Heller: I think at High Street maybe they have to go off. It's not called MacArthur there, is it. What is that?

Chall: I don't know that it has anybody's name attached to it; I think it's just a number--580. MacArthur Boulevard is a street parallel to the freeway.

Heller: It comes very close to Mills. I don't know if you realize it--

Chall: I do!

Heller: Very, very close. There's enough noise as is, without any trucks there. My best guess is after a terrific fight put up by the trucking companies—they had to go further by using East 14th Street, and how much more it was going to cost them—I would guess that it's a dead issue. I just don't feel those trucks are ever going to come on to that 580. I haven't heard a peep about it for years. It's just one of those things—it's now taken for granted.

Chall: I think it would be very difficult to bring them back.

Heller: I wish I could remember if it was—what years was Easton at Mills?


Heller: I think it should have been Lynn White that was involved in that, because Jerry Hagar by that time was a Regent of the University. I think he was not on the Mills trustees, though he may have come back and fought it for us—his firm.

Chall: It was a long, long battle, as I recall. Very long.

Heller: It may have started when Lynn was there and ended when Easton was there. It was sort of interesting that a small college did manage.

Chall: So the impetus for that ruling, then, was started with Mills, is that it? To keep the trucks off.

Heller: Absolutely. When I think about it—I haven't thought about it for a while—sometimes David can handle Goliath. [laughs] That's what happened in that case, which is very unusual.

I remember when it was going on, Ed Heller, of course, had a lot to do with PIE [Pacific Intermountain Express] trucking. He owned a lot of stock in it, and he was a director. I remember—I don't know what he ever did—begging him to please keep PIE, which was a big trucking factor in Northern California, out of this thing. I didn't
Heller: dare ask PIE to be on Mills College's side, but please keep it out. Now, I don't remember if he did. Ed never liked to mix his business in other things. He was very careful not to mix things up. But I can't remember that PIE ever fought us on it.

You really never know how powerful the truckers are until you start tangling with them. Of course, I've heard the other side of trucking from Ed's PIE people and their interstate problems. The different rules there are from state to state, and the labor problems, and so on. But anyway, I'm glad there are no trucks on #580.

Coeducation at Mills

Chall: Yes. So am I.

There was the time when students were not coming to school, and particularly to women's schools.

Heller: That is correct. Easton Rothwell was president when the movement had first started to make either the men's or women's colleges co-educational. It was while Easton was there. The chairman of the board appointed a committee, or Easton appointed a committee, or both of them (Easton worked so well with this board it's hard to remember) to look into the possibility of having not necessarily a coed college but a coordinate men's college. That was being done a little bit at that time. I was on that committee. We went into it quite thoroughly. The alumnae were involved in that. We had an alumnae committee going. But you know how the alumnae would be. They'd be against it! I always said I was very open minded about it, and I was. And I think Easton was, too. We were considering all the factors and all the costs that would be involved, and also the fear of the type of men students that might be attracted to a women's college. Not as good students as the women are; that they'd be of lesser quality.

Chall: You might lower your standards?

Heller: Might lower our standards. We firmly decided that for the present — that was during Easton's term — it should remain a women's college.

Rob Wert came in as president, saying he would never be president of a coeducational college, it had to be a women's college. I don't know if he meant it or not, but that was his announced position.

Chall: I think he did mean that.

Heller: I think he did, too. He felt very firm about it. And the alumnae continued to feel very firm about it, and some of the students too.
Heller: To keep on this subject one step further: When Barbara White was chosen president of Mills, she of course is a graduate of a women's college, Mt. Holyoke, and she really does believe in the concept of a women's college. But I don't think she's as firm on this as Rob was. Barbara has some practicality about her. Not that anything's been moving in that direction, but she doesn't say never as far as she's concerned.

Chall: Does it seem necessary from the financial point of view as it did in those other years?

Heller: The pool of students is smaller all the time, for more than one reason. First of all, the demography shows that there is a lesser available percentage of college student population, leaving aside the costs of a private college versus a public, which is more exaggerated in California because of the excellent public system.

There are a great many new colleges in this state, which I've come to know through the accreditation commission. There is an enormous number of them. Nobody knows how many, because we really only know the ones that apply for accreditation, but it's said that there are about two thousand. But nobody really knows. There are a tremendous number of them, and that detracts from the pool. And coed is probably one factor. There are very few--There's Scripps and Mills. Even the Catholic college for women in Northern California, Lone Mountain, went under. There are some Catholic colleges in Southern California, women's colleges. But this has never been much of an area of women's colleges, or as a matter of fact, for men's colleges.

Chall: No. I was wondering why you would have arranged to work something out with a men's college, the way they have in the eastern women's schools, because there isn't one around with which you could have coordinated.

Heller: At the time we were looking at St. John's College, near Annapolis.

Chall: All that far away?

Heller: Yes. It was looking for a western coordinate. It landed in Riverside, I think, in the end. But there were some of the smaller men's colleges that were thinking about that. Of course, the closest private college to Mills is St. Mary's. You see, that could never work, it being a Catholic college. There was some looking around at that point.

Chall: Did you drop the whole idea because Dr. Wert was coming in at that time?

Heller: No, we dropped it before. Absolutely dropped it while Easton was president. It was unworkable. That was the time before men and women occupied the same dormitories, the same facilities. It would
Heller: have been a matter of converting bathrooms to the proper things for men, and it would have been a quite expensive thing to do. Sort of a separate administration for women and men, and adding more courses, and more playfields for men, because Mills has most adequate playfields for women's sports, but not for football or something like that. There are all sorts of costs. I don't really want to go into that.

The Board and Committees

Chall: As far as I can tell, we've covered Mills, unless you want to say anything more.

Heller: I think maybe we've done enough. I would like to say in general about Mills that, and I've said this often, I've always felt that I had as good an education as anybody had coming from maybe much more so-called important educational institutions. I've always felt that I had a very strong college education. I think a great many people who went to Mills felt the same way. Mills has a lot of influence, in a way, on my life. There's a great Mills community of friendships, not necessarily of when you were there, but Mills people sort of find each other all around no matter from what generation. And though Mills changes, it's always basically the same. It's steeped in traditions by now. It's older than any Northern California institution of higher education except USF [University of San Francisco] I think. I think that's the only one that precedes it. It's far older than Berkeley. It was established in 1852. I just feel it continues to have its place.

But the finances of both small and large institutions are very difficult with inflation now, and they're going to get worse.

Chall: I guess you have a board that's going to fight to keep things on an even keel.

Heller: Oh, yes. We watch the budget very carefully.

Chall: How much time does the board take, particularly if you're on a budget committee?

Heller: It depends. Certainly not as much as being a Regent, God knows. The board now meets, as of this year, three times a year for two days.

Chall: Oh, that's all?
Heller: Yes. But then there are committee meetings in between. That's one of the difficulties of committees where people don't live in this area and haven't ready access to it. I just chaired a committee to change the committee structure of the board a little bit, bring it more up to date. The finance committee is really a budget and audit committee now. There is no separate finance committee, per se, and then there's the investment committee.

Chall: Has the board accepted this?

Heller: Yes, they accepted. I heard all sorts of things against it when it got sent out, but I presented it and I said nobody had any pride of authorship, they could do anything they wanted with it. They eventually passed everything.

It's good to change the inner structure of a board every once in a while. There had been—somewhere when I was off the board, the education and the student life committees were combined into an education and student life committee. I just could not see the connection between the two. I got those separated again.

Chall: And you separated the investment from the finance committee.

Heller: Well, budget and audit used to be a subcommittee of finance and so did investment. Well, it didn't make much sense; we were just hearing the same things over and over. I think this is working very well.

But we do watch that budgeting very carefully.

Chall: How do separate committees work with either the president of the board or the president of the college when the board meets so rarely? Do you go through the board president with ideas?

Heller: Our board president communicates quite well with a lot of his trustees and there's quite a bit of material sent out between meetings about what's going on. And anybody can bring up problems. One of the troubles with four times a year, which is what we'd had before, is that the president's staff is really kept very tight right now. Getting all that material out before board meetings is terribly difficult if you want it to be well done. Of course, budget committee, or finance or whatever you want to call it, meets more often. Investment committee meets quite often. But those are really people who live in this area. Education committee meets when necessary.

Chall: Are you given wide latitude to make decisions? Decisions between board meetings?
Heller: They have to be approved by the board. There can be action by an executive committee, but only in an emergency. The Berkeley option will be handled by the executive committee, but all members are asked to the executive committee meeting.

    I think you get better work out of people if they don't meet too often. They get into things they shouldn't. I used to spend a great deal of time at Mills, but I do not any more.

##

**Heller Family Gift to the Library**

Chall: Tell me what your children did for your seventy-fifth birthday.

Heller: I did want to put that in because it's quite nice. Last month, October, I had a seventy-fifth birthday. They gave $75,000 for my seventy-fifth birthday to the library at Mills. Wasn't that a wonderful present?

Chall: I should say!

Heller: And they surprised me on top of it!

Chall: You didn't know they were doing this, was that the surprise?

Heller: I had no idea of it. I don't know how they worked this. I know that my birthday is on the third of October; I was phoned and asked if I could have lunch with President White, and Ham [Burnham] Emerson, who's the chairman of the board, at President White's. There were some things she wanted to discuss with me on October third. Lo and behold, Barbara not only had all my children there--because apparently they got this idea and then Liz had negotiated it--but Barbara had suggested not only having them, but having all my closest friends on the board there for lunch.

    Of course, as soon as I drove up and saw those cars there I began to smell some sort of a rat--but I had no idea--and realized there was something. There were about sixteen people or something like that there. Which was really very nice. And Barbara made a very nice toast, and very brief. They all know I don't like big speeches. And then my daughter Liz got up and said she was going to speak for the family because she was the Mills alumna. She just said they had given this gift to Mills in my name.

Chall: What a great gift to a library!
Heller: Isn't that marvelous? My great interest has always been the libraries all over. As it happens, Mills has a national education fund—it's not exactly a matching grant: one dollar for every three dollars—every three dollars that Mills collects. I think the NEH [National Endowment for the Humanities] grant is close to $600,000.

Chall: For the library?

Heller: For the library. Well, it's for other things, too. But part of it is for the library. So, there's an additional $25,000 that goes to that, which I think is really a wonderful present. I was really stunned by it. I just thought I should end my tale of Mills with that.
VIII SAN FRANCISCO STATE COLLEGE ADVISORY BOARD, 1950-1961

Chall: Let's briefly go into your activity on the advisory board of San Francisco State College. I'll see if I have the date—1950 to 1961. Eleven years; that's not so brief.

Heller: No, it wasn't. When Paul Leonard became president of San Francisco State College, he was somebody I had known a long time. He had been at Stanford. I think it was allowed to have advisory boards, but there had never been one there. I've forgotten who was president before him. He really upgraded San Francisco State by quite a bit. He decided to have an advisory board, and asked me to be one of the members. It was a quite interesting mixture of people that he put together.

Chall: Was it the same almost all those ten years?

Heller: Almost. Have you a list of that?

Chall: Yes.

Heller: It went from Judge [Albert C.] Wollenberg. It was very carefully bipartisan. And Jack Goldberger the labor union leader.

Chall: I have the names of the members of the board who were on at the time of the Dumke controversy.

Heller: Well, it would be almost the same.

Chall: Judge Wollenberg, Superior Court Judge Raymond [C.] Arata--

Heller: He came on later.

Chall: Reginald H. Biggs.

Heller: Briefly. He had some connection with the Emporium.

Chall: Sam Eubanks.
Heller: Those must have come on after Dumke came.

Chall: Paul Eliel.

Heller: No, Mrs. Paul Eliel [Harriet]. Harriet Eliel.

Chall: Okay. There's another error in here too. Adrien Falk.

Heller: Yes, very active member.

Chall: And then there's Edward H. Heller, and that must be Mrs. Edward H. Heller.

Heller: I'm Mrs. Edward H. Heller.

Chall: I wondered if there were no women on the board at all except you--

Heller: No.

Chall: I took all this information from the newspapers.

Heller: No, it was Harriet Eliel who had been very active in the League of Women Voters and education.

Chall: George W. Johns. Now, that would have been the labor person at that time.

Heller: That's another labor person. Jack Goldberger was one, and George Johns was another. George Johns was very vocal.

Chall: Cecil Poole.

Heller: Cecil Poole, who's black—he's now the circuit court of appeals judge.


Heller: I think Cecil Poole at that point was U.S. Attorney—I can't remember. But he was very good too. Who? Oh, Charles Wheeler was from down here. A very nice man who's died long since.

Chall: And Thomas J. Mellon.

Heller: Tom Mellon was the chief administrative officer of San Francisco for many, many years. It was carefully bipartisan. It was just about half Republicans and half Democrats. Paul was pretty good about that. He picked mostly people who had been fairly active in the community one way or the other. We had no powers; it was purely advisory but could be used as a buffer, as it were. Paul Leonard used it to get some interest in San Francisco State as an institution, really, and to sort of spread the word about what San Francisco State was doing. Nobody had been paying much attention to San Francisco State at that time.
Heller: They had moved to their new campus. They had formerly been where University of California Extension is now, and they were building that new campus. There were just a few buildings there then. I must say that serving on that was very helpful to me in a way—the way things went with me. I always heard so much from Ed Heller about the University, but I didn't know anything about the state colleges, which were not part of a system then. They were each individual colleges. It was only after the master plan went into effect that they became part of the system. They were under the state Board of Education mildly. They got some money from the state and some local. Of course, San Francisco State was one of the older ones. But I did learn.

While I was on that board with Paul Leonard, the state system began to evolve there. I can't even remember who was first head of the state system. Oh, I know. He was terrible. I can't think of his name.

Well, they didn't know where they were going, of course. They had no tradition to go on at all. But I did begin to learn what the state college was all about. And it was very helpful after I became a Regent. The Regents—I used to argue with Ed Heller—had a tendency to just look down on the state colleges and on the system when it became a system. It was just an upstart system and up to no good ends. The University up to that point, or just about that point, had really free rein in the legislature. They got almost anything they wanted. The state colleges were all struggling individually. From that, I began to realize the powerful political base of the state college system—after all, they represented so many more communities—and, to understand that the University was going to have to make its accommodations.

Chall: You could see that coming?
Heller: I could see that coming. I used to argue about that with Ed Heller when he was a Regent. I thought the University was silly to downgrade the importance of the state college system which was evolving. That I could see coming. I could see what was happening legislatively. That was probably what I learned most out of that.

While Paul Leonard was there, it was just used as a friendly board.

Chall: Did he seek advice?
Heller: He sought advice. He was very good at that sort of thing. I don't remember what it was, even. He was very good about getting some community support. And there was a small foundation there that could be used by the president of the state college. Several of the colleges had them. San Francisco State had a fair one that they
Heller: could use. Not big, but they could use it. It was not state money. It came from contributions. Which leads into Dumke.

Chall: When Dumke came in, how was he appointed? Who appointed him?

Heller: When he came in, it was very annoying to state college people. There was a committee of the board of education, I guess-- Well, it was certainly not a committee from San Francisco State. I guess we were not part of the system yet. Whatever the committee was and whoever appointed it--must have been the superintendent of schools or the board of education--had promised that this committee would consult with the faculty committee at San Francisco State. You know, take their advice. They never came near them for advice. All of a sudden, Glenn Dumke, who had always lived in Southern California, was the new president of San Francisco State. There was great resentment from the faculty about his being thrust on them.

Chall: That's hardly the way to start.

Heller: That's not one of the better ways to start. All of this advisory board, I remember, all of us put in our resignations to him. He didn't know anybody up here. Why wouldn't you? It was a personal thing that Paul Leonard had chosen. I remember his [Dumke's] begging everybody to please stay, that he didn't know anybody in San Francisco or the Bay Area. I remember that completely. Absolute newcomer! So, we agreed to stay for a limited amount of time. I don't remember the date that Dumke came in. Do you?

Chall: I don't have it, but I think it must have been 1958 or so, because this whole controversy arose in 1959 and I think it was over the money that had been used for his inauguration. So it may have been '57 or '58.

Heller: That's right.

Chall: I can always get that date.*

Heller: Well, that controversy was ridiculous and unfair. That foundation was always properly administered. There was a committee of the legislature chaired by George Miller, Jr. which put out some sort of report written by Earl Waters charging misappropriation of funds by Dumke, and there were a couple of other colleges that were charged. Humboldt or--

Chall: Yes. Humboldt, Chico, Fresno, Sacramento. I think those were the ones.

*It was 1957. [M.C.]
Heller: Yes. It was absolutely scurrilous, and it was absolutely untrue! But the headlines in the San Francisco papers, if you've looked them up--

Chall: Yes, I did.

Heller: --were just horrible. Dumke just--this is why I can't believe he's still president of the state college system--he just fell apart. I never saw anybody fall apart like that. He was just so upset. He didn't know which way to turn; he couldn't face anybody. We finally got him to come to a meeting with some of us, someplace downtown. He wouldn't go on the state college campus, I remember that.

Chall: Really? You mean during that time he wouldn't even go to his office?

Heller: Well, he wouldn't have the meeting up there, which we usually had. I think Al Wollenberg called it; maybe Adrien Falk. One or the other. I can remember that meeting. He was sitting there weeping. Oh, he absolutely fell apart.

Chall: Over $484?

Heller: And as a result of that meeting, Al Wollenberg (a Republican), who had been a state assemblyman before he became a judge, and very, very well liked, and knew a lot of the people in the legislature, and I, because I had been very active at that point in the political process, as a bipartisan committee, agreed to go to Sacramento. We figured we could get George Miller, Jr. to at least listen to us. We both knew him fairly well. He was a tough guy. So we went up there and we must have spent four hours with him going from A to Z through this whole thing.

Of course, George Miller, Jr., Senator Miller, by the time he heard this whole story, knew that Earl Waters, who was sitting in on that meeting, had made a dreadful mistake about Dumke. I mean, there was proof beyond any doubt about the whole thing. We knew everything about all the money that had been there and how it was used. But George Miller was a very canny politician, I assure you. And he wasn't going to say to Earl Waters in our presence, "This is outrageous! You goofed it! You've got to put in a retraction!" He didn't do anything like that. As I say, he was very cagey. By the time we finished these four hours it was obvious that Earl Waters really didn't know what he was writing. He's done that since, too, by the way. George Miller said, "Well, what do you two want? What do you suggest?"

And we said, "We want this squashed in some way. It's an outrage to do this to anybody."
Heller: He said, "Well, would you let me take care of it in my way?" George Miller, Jr. was an honest guy in his own way. Tough as the devil. We both knew him well enough to say, "Yes, you handle it any way you want." He quietly put something through the senate, never saying about Waters, who had written it.

Chall: Waters was a staff man?

Heller: Yes.

Chall: The state Board of Education also had a couple of days of hearings on all this material out of all the various colleges, and they exonered Dumke and, in the press release I saw, all of the others except the Humboldt man.

Heller: We had done this first on our own, just San Francisco State. George Miller got some sort of quiet resolution through the senate just saying that Dumke was completely exonered, but never referring to the report at all. He was not one to publicly go after his staff.

I never understood why George Miller, Jr. had Earl Waters around. That was one of the peculiarities of George Miller. He sometimes had strange people around.

That's the whole story, except that it leads to the larger question that when Dumke was chosen as chancellor of the state college system, his board of trustees, which was comparatively newly formed --I knew a great many of the members of that--just couldn't stand him, and they were determined to get rid of him. They were just on the verge of voting him out, to the best of my knowledge, and I'm pretty sure it's true, when the blowup came on Clark Kerr and he was thrown out as Reagan came in. So they thought they had better mark time.

Dumke knew how to handle Reagan. He got stronger and stronger in his job. And he's still there! I've never--I haven't anything against Glen Dumke, but I felt this weakness--his falling apart--was very bad. I saw him fall apart once or twice on the coordinating council he sat on, as did Clark Kerr. I sat on that as a Regent, though. He sat on it as a state college representative, which had its ups and downs. But when things didn't go the way he wanted, or seemed to him to be misrepresented, he'd start to fall apart. I never, never would have dreamed that that man would be chancellor of the state college system to this day. That's all I wanted to tell you about it.

Chall: You left in 1961?

Heller: I resigned when I was appointed a Regent, because I did realize there would be a conflict of interest, which there was bound to be. But I think it did help me in my work on the coordinating council and
subsequently, the California Post Secondary Education Commission, to understand more about the stage colleges and the state college system. As a Regent, I remember, oh my God, some of the Regents just wanted to fight tooth and nail against the change of name. I kept saying, "You're crazy! If they want it that way, they've got the votes, they're going to get it. It's not going to make them any better than the University or even equal, because they're an entirely different sort of system. Make your fights where they count. Don't make it over a title." The Regents fought that for years, you know, officially. I thought it was one of the more ridiculous fights, because they were bound to get the name they wanted.

Chall: Yes. And there's always been a great reservoir of interest in the state colleges. There was hostility toward the University, which had to be fought.

Heller: There's no question of it. I knew it; I knew it before I became a Regent. I knew it was going to grow, and it did. It's not so bad now, but the two systems are pretty well established. Reagan tended to favor the state college system in his budget, because of his anti-Berkeley attitude. It was really more anti-Berkeley than anti-University. At least originally it was. We bucked him all the time. I certainly was fighting Reagan on what he wanted to do to the University. The state college trustees were really his captives, because the turnover is much quicker on the state college boards [shorter terms], and he had control of that board in no time. It never bugged him. He tended to favor the state colleges. But I think it's just about evened out now. I don't think it's one of the number one issues anymore, one way or the other. I don't know if you feel it is.

Chall: I don't know. But it's interesting that your knowledge of the system has spanned the changes in both systems.

Heller: I just happened to fall in the right places at the right time.

Chall: As well as the background of the private college.

Heller: Yes. It was really interesting. You never plan anything like that, it just sort of happens. That was all, really. As I say, being on the advisory committee of a state college just meant nothing in itself.

Chall: Just a great learning experience.

Heller: Yes. it was a good learning experience. I learned about how they worked.

Chall: Next week, then, we'll start with the University.

Heller: Okay.
I brought the book on the loyalty oath by David Gardner.* I am sure you know this.

He was pulling his punches. He just can't quite get around to criticizing anybody. I like Gardner very much. He's now president of the University of Utah. I like him extremely much, but I felt he necessarily pulled his punches. I read it ages ago.

He phoned me one day after it had come out and he said, "I'm thinking of doing the FSM." And I said, "Good Lord, Dave, it's much too soon to write any definitive books on the FSM. Are you still pulling your punches?" I know him very well. "You're still pulling your punches on the loyalty oath thing, and it's much too soon to try to sort that [FSM] out."

Then he had to wait even on the loyalty oath until the material became available. A lot of it had been sealed.

It was the [John Francis] Neylan papers.

It is difficult to pull it all together.

He's [Gardner] a very good person. Very good.

We will get to that in a little while. I just wondered to what extent you might have recalled that controversy. There is material in this book.

Heller: I've read an awful lot of material. Of course, Dave Gardner's book I do remember.

Chall: George Stewart wrote one.

Heller: George Stewart's was terrible, because he was so prejudiced against the oath. And it was written--

Chall: It was written at the time when the controversy was still quite hot.

Heller: Yes, and he was very caught up in it. This is my opinion, but I think it's true.

Chall: Let's get back to the beginning. I can't quite figure out when your husband was appointed a Regent because some of the records say 1942, but you were in Boston.

Heller: He was appointed in '42.

Chall: He was?

Heller: Yes. In March of '42. That is correct. However, when the war was on, nobody expected him to be there, that was all. He didn't go into the army until June of '42. Things moved so quickly at that point.

He really never got into the Regents thing until '46, or the end of '45, I guess, when we got back. He was appointed March first of '42 to a sixteen-year term.

Chall: He was appointed by Culbert Olson.

Heller: That is correct.

Chall: He had been considered for an appointment once before, you told me, but he preferred [J.K.] Moffitt.

Heller: That's correct. The thing was, Ed really wanted to be a Regent. But if you take it from my point of view, I didn't really know what being a Regent meant, because it was nothing like the governing board of Mills College. Actually, to me, the University was basically Berkeley. Certainly at that period, Davis was around; UCLA was a little place, but it was very predominantly Berkeley and Northern California. But he had always talked about, he talked in general, as being a Regent. His grandfather, I.W. Hellman, had been a Regent for thirty-nine years, which, in itself, didn't mean that much to me. I never knew what the composition of the Regents was or anything else.
Heller: If I remember correctly, Olson, whom Ed certainly didn't support in the primary but did support him eventually for one term, had offered him some position, I've forgotten, on some board. I may be wrong about this, but I know that Ed had said to Governor Olson that the only thing he would really ever be interested in was being a Regent. I know he had gone that far. I'm not quite sure how it came up. Olson's first appointments—I guess there had been a vacancy or two—his first regular appointments would have been in 1940. They came every two years. J.K. Moffitt's term expired, I guess in 1940. I'm not sure.

Chall: I don't have that down here, but okay.

Heller: Well, I'm sure his term had expired, because there was no way that he would have resigned. He was one of the all time great Regents after whom the undergraduate library at Berkeley has since been named. Ed adored J.K. Moffitt, quite properly in my opinion. When his term expired, Governor Olson offered that position to Ed Heller. Ed Heller, much though he'd have liked to be a Regent, under no circumstances would consider taking the place of J.K. Moffitt.

In fact, he led a group of Berkeley alumni and others up to Sacramento—it was a very powerful group that got together—to urge Olson, who knew nothing about Northern California, to reappoint Moffitt. It was quite a big thing. I think there must be something in the press someplace about this big move to have J.K. Moffitt reappointed. Finally, Olson did reappoint him, though I'm not sure if it was for a full sixteen-year term or whether there was a partial vacancy that came along. I have a feeling that it was for a lesser time.

I was always pleased with Ed about that. Much though he wanted to be a Regent, he would not take the place of his father's great friend. Moffitt was a marvelous person, that's all you can say about him. Ed not only turned it down, he led the move to get Moffitt reinstated.

Olson knew very little about the state at all, and nothing about Northern California. After all, he was really from Utah, wasn't he?

Chall: I'm not sure I remember, but someplace out there.*

Heller: He was not a Californian as we think of it. He was full of ideas. But he was rather traditional about the Regents’ appointments. I guess he made some funny ones down south; I no longer remember their names; they weren't very good. And the one that lasted out of the

*Mrs. Heller was correct. [M.C.]
Heller: Olson appointments was Ed Pauley, who was one of his first appoint-
ments, who was a Berkeley graduate too, of course. And eventually, Ed Heller. Oh, I've met them all. But I've forgotten them now. There were some not too good appointments in there which made some of the trouble when the loyalty oath controversy came up.

So for four years after he was appointed, almost four years, he really did nothing as a Regent.

Chall: After he had been appointed and came back here, then he began to go regularly to the meetings?

Heller: Yes, that's right.

Chall: Was he put on the—what was then finance—it had a bigger title.

Heller: It was called the finance committee. At that point, the finance committee was really the only committee that was important. At that point, it ran the whole University. Educational policies hardly ever met. This always surprised me that it had no importance. I don't remember about grounds and buildings. I do remember asking why educational policies didn't have some more importance in the University and being told, well, the finance committee was the important committee. It really made all the decisions.

Chall: Yes. And as I understand it, it met once a week. Is that your recollection?

Heller: I don't remember.

Chall: That's what I read in Mr. Neylan's oral history.*

Heller: Well, he'd probably know. Of course, there was an investment committee, that was, I guess, a subcommittee of finance, that was very active. During the war, I only knew it later, there was a special committee of the Regents that was the secret committee. When Los Alamos was started, it was a secret project. Mr. Neylan was on that committee. Ed really didn't know of the existence of it. It was all secret until after the war. Then he began to know that Los Alamos was run under the aegis of the University. No Regents, except those that had been cleared—I think there were five or six of them on that committee. I wouldn't try to name who was on it; I know it would be in the records. I know Mr. Neylan was for sure, and I know that only the members of that committee ever went to Los Alamos.

Los Alamos and the Loyalty Oath

Heller: I went to Los Alamos, the spouses went, the first time the Regents ever met at Los Alamos. I don't know if I can pinpoint the date, but I can tell you for sure that it was during the loyalty oath controversy. Because I can remember certain Regents weren't speaking to certain others, and certain wives weren't speaking to certain others. It was a nightmare.

But in the meantime, let me say that all the other Regents were given—what I know of as the "Q" clearance. I guess it was the same thing. There was always sort of a joke about that, because they were all examined. Two Regents didn't get their clearance right away, and one was Ed Heller, and one was Admiral Nimitz! [laughs]

Chall: So much for loyalty!

Heller: I don't know what would have happened if Ed had been alone without at least the admiral! It was an awful feeling; he was furious when he didn't get the clearance. He used to come home and just be furious about it, it made him so angry. I said to him once, which he didn't like, "Maybe the clearance doesn't depend only on your loyalty to this country, it may depend on your talking too much." I said, "After you've had drinks, maybe they think you talk too much about what's going on!" He didn't appreciate that at all! [laughs] Eventually, he and Admiral Nimitz did get their clearances.

That leads into my being a Regent in a way, because Ed was just insistent, through the office of the Regents, and through the president, and the office of the secretary, that he was going to be told why he didn't get his clearance as quickly as the others did. I always thought how terrible people must feel that don't have any way of getting this information. He was so insistent that finally one of the agents that was doing the clearance—I'm not sure if he was on the campus, probably assigned by the FBI, or whoever—came to his office and had a little piece of paper, and read him off some of the reasons that he didn't have clearance. But he never would give him the paper.

They all turned out to be things that either his mother or I had joined during the late thirties or during the forties. Nothing that he had done, because Ed wasn't a joiner. My mother-in-law, in the thirties, when she was very, very anti-Hitler before we were in the war, joined the League Against War and Fascism, that eventually turned out to be a Communist front. One of the counts was that I'd made a contribution to the San Francisco Labor School, which did turn out to be Communist dominated. Of course, we knew nothing about it then, but all the best people in San Francisco—well, I'm exaggerating, but an awful lot of the pillars had contributed to that. It seemed like a very good thing at the time.
Heller: But when the FBI looks at these files, it just looks at the things you joined, it doesn't look at who else has joined it. We never had anything to do with it. Actually, I had happened to send the check in, but it was at Ed's suggestion, really, that we sent something in. Jack Shelley was very involved with that. I think it was Jack Shelley that got us interested. He was never accused of anything. It's just crazy.

Another count against me, to give you an example, was when I was Democratic National Committeewoman, I chaired or attended a meeting at the Palace Hotel for Henry Wallace, who was vice-president of the United States, and that was one of the counts, that Ed's wife had done this. I did it in my official position. By that time, I was fighting some of these elements. That's the sort of thing.

I mention all of this to say that by the time I became a Regent, in the end of '61, my file was all cleared up because of the fact that I had written out for Ed's clearance, just the details of what all these few things were about. So my part was perfectly clear. My clearance went through in one minute. It's hard to believe, though.

Chall: Did this affect the thinking that he had, or the two of you might have had, during the period of the loyalty oath?

Heller: No.

Chall: It didn't. The fact that one could be accused of being a Communist without any--

Heller: No, he wasn't accused of being a Communist.

Chall: But he was almost accused of being disloyal.

Heller: That was Mr. Neylan who was accusing him of being--

Chall: Well, Mr. Neylan certainly felt, and I quote, "Heller of course had been flirting with the Communists for God knows how long. He's one of those broad-minded people."

Heller: Mr. Neylan at that point was absolutely impossible. I always sort of felt at that time that he must have had some access to FBI raw files, otherwise, how would he ever have thought of all this? Remember, he was the attorney for the Hearst's Examiner. He used that paper a great deal for saying the things he did.

*Neylan, oral history, p. 239.
Heller: I'm a little bit ahead of myself. I was talking about Los Alamos at that point.

Chall: That's all right, because it does fit. Your husband, then, was on the finance committee, and so he was close to Neylan and a few of the others who met, as Neylan says, almost weekly.

Heller: Neylan just infuriated many people, as you know.

Chall: Even before? Prior to the loyalty oath controversy was he considered a problem?

Heller: I can't tell. He was a very powerful Regent, and he wanted things his own way very badly.

Chall: He was on a long time—from 1928 until 1955. It was a very long time.

Heller: Earl Warren always said one of the greatest mistakes he ever made was when he reappointed John Francis Neylan. This was before all of this had started to develop. Oh, they hated each other! Earl Warren hated him and vice versa. I don't know if it shows up in that correspondence, but they certainly did, which I will get into on the loyalty oath.

Chall: I guess he was never chairman of the board.

Heller: He was very powerful as a Regent. There's no question of it. And having been part of this secret committee.

Anyway, we did all go to Los Alamos, and I know it was during the loyalty oath controversy. Of course, there was still all the security up there when we went. Our names had to be at the gate. Nobody would go into the town of Los Alamos, nobody could get in without passes. The spouses or anybody else along who didn't have security clearance were confined to certain areas of Los Alamos. We couldn't wander around just to see what it was like. I don't mean go inside buildings, we just were not allowed to. We were in the old lodge up there, which was the only facility for overnight staying. It had been a boys' school, but the University took over Los Alamos.

I didn't see Los Alamos at the very beginning, but I saw it before it grew with all its secrecy. Of course, I've been there quite often since then. That was the first time that any of the Regents except the five or six had ever seen it. It's hard to believe, isn't it?

Chall: What new activities in your lives came about because of his belonging to the Regents?
Heller: Very few. The Los Alamos trip and the loyalty oath. Oh, I met a few of the people, of course, but I don't particularly remember going to any—I know I never went to any meetings.

Chall: Some spouses, as I understand, did.

Heller: No, they didn't at that time.

Chall: Oh, they didn't at that time? It was later that they did?

Heller: No. I was always very interested in the educational process, and this was, oh, quite a bit later in the fifties, that—I remember saying to Don McLaughlin or somebody like that—Jesse Steinhart—"I don't see why I can't go to one of these meetings." We were at Riverside. I remember this so clearly. These were my friends, and they said, "Ellie, don't do it. You'd be considered very presuming if you do. People don't go to those meetings." Isn't that hard to believe?

Chall: They didn't even accompany their husbands? There was no social life attached?

Heller: In the fifties there started to be a social life which turned me off very much. I didn't like that. I don't like this wives' business.

Chall: I understand the wives were toured around the various campuses during the Kerr period.

Heller: That was when Kay Kerr started it. Well, that was later. They played bridge, sometimes they'd be taken to hear one lecture. I so seldom went, you have no idea how seldom I went.

Chall: So you weren't involved in whatever social activities there might have been. What about activities at the president's house or for Regents. Were there any major social activities for the Regents and their wives on special occasions?

Heller: I don't think you remember them. Bob Sproul, Bob and Ida, were very friendly, and I'm sure I was there for meals, not at the time of the Regents' meetings. But I certainly had been in and out of that house when Ida Sproul was the hostess. I don't think it had to do with Regents per se. I think the fact that Ed was a Regent was why we were invited, probably, to occasional dinner parties, or certainly lunches, or something like that, sometimes to meet somebody. I just really had almost nothing to do with any of the activities of the Regents.

On the other hand, Ed, once he got in the full swing of Regents, like me to know what was going on. He did talk about it; I didn't always know what it was all about. He did over the years, give me what he called the basic documents that were being issued. I had
Heller: read all of those for many years. What was basic then isn't basic now, like the growth plans and all that sort of thing, but I had read quite a number of them.

Chall: Was he interested in your opinions, to find out what you thought about some of these matters?

Heller: I can't say.

Chall: Why did he give them to you?

Heller: Well, we were used to talking over things. He knew I was interested in the whole general subject, though I don't think I ever really grasped what the Regents did until I became one myself. I had some inkling of it.

Chall: What about those heavy packets of material that would arrive prior to each meeting. Did he go through all of that?

Some Issues Prior to the Loyalty Oath Controversy

Heller: I don't think so. I'm not sure if they came here or went to his office. I can't remember his spending much time. I'm not sure how heavy the packets were, even. That's become more and more organized over the years, with more and more material. As the new and expanding campuses came in, it was a much bigger load of reading material. When Ed was first a Regent, the big argument was north-south. It wasn't the loyalty oath, it wasn't anything like that; it was the domination of the Regents by the northern Regents. The leader of the south faction was chairman of the Board of Regents for many years, and that was Ed [Edward] Dickson. This was before there was any limitation of terms of the chairmanship. He just kept on being chairman forever. I think if any one single person could be credited with putting UCLA on the map, it would probably be Ed Dickson, because he just fought that fight. I remember hearing about that a tremendous amount. It's hard to believe that the Northern California Regents dominated everything and if they weren't Northern California, they had gone to Berkeley.

Chall: Yes. Well, it was the only school for many years.

Heller: He fought the fight for UCLA. He was determined that UCLA was going to be just as important as Berkeley. That was the fight that was going on. There were two fights going on before loyalty oaths came in. That was one--north-south. The other was whether there should be dormitories on the campus. Ed was very much of the faction that
Heller: wanted dormitories. Oh, as late as when Clary Heller went to Cal—he was the class of '50, he had been in the war—there were only two places to live on the Berkeley campus. There was Bowles Hall, and there was, it had just been added, Stern Hall, that small dormitory for women that Rosalie Stern and her family had funded. It's hard to believe. I've always wished I'd saved the letters. I found them after Ed died, when I was going through things, but I did not save them. Ed was accused of being a socialist by Mario Giannini and others, who were Regents, for wanting to put dormitories on the campuses. Isn't that hard to believe? That was one of the big fights.

Chall: Here were all these returning students needing housing.

Heller: Not a thing. It's hard to believe. Ed was accused of advocating socialism.

Chall: That must have ruffled him!

Heller: I think he was right about dormitories. Eventually, the idea of dormitories sometime during the fifties took over and, in a way, quotas for the campuses were established. First, hoping to have enough dormitories for 25 percent of the students at Berkeley and UCLA, and hoping to get as high as 50 percent for the other campuses. Of course, this was all helped at that time by federal funds that were available for building, so Cal and UCLA got their first dormitories almost free with federal funding. But that was a long, tough struggle. Some Regents didn't want to accept that money, the federal money. But, it eventually turned itself around. I always say all ideas get accepted eventually. Those were the two things I remember the most, being uppermost in the minds. I can't swear that Mr. Neylan was against dormitories, but I guess he was.

The First Expansion and Reorganization Plans and Problems

Chall: That was something that I've never heard of before. There was an attempt to expand existing campuses during that period. That's probably what it was all about.

Heller: I don't know what period you're talking about.

Chall: Forty-eight to '57, basically.

Heller: You're taking that whole period?

Chall: Yes.
Yes. Santa Barbara had been acquired in that period. The Regents did not seek it, you know, the Santa Barbara campus. There was an assemblyman from Santa Barbara whose name was [Alfred W.] Robertson, and I think he was majority leader, or minority leader, of the assembly. His dearest dream was to make the normal school, the teaching college, I guess it was, at Santa Barbara—up on the hill—a part of the University of California. That was the first move to expansion, and it did pass the legislature. Here the Regents got presented with a place up on the hill, and what to do with it. It was made part of the University system.

I don't even know if it was called a state college then. I don't know if it was a teaching college, Santa Barbara teaching college. But the standards were nothing like the University's standards, and that was another problem that was facing the Regents at that time. I can remember going with Ed and a couple of others at some point to look at the Goleta property, which was surplus property. It had been some sort of a military base during the war, and it was available to the University.

I think the University paid nothing for it, maybe a dollar. The question was, should the Regents accept that and try to build a campus for this teaching college which had suddenly become part of the system. Of course, they did. The timing was pretty good, because that was the time of the big expansion, and the money did come in. That's how the campus came to be at Goleta. I remember seeing that when it was pristine.

Let me say that San Diego existed to the degree that there was the Scripps Institute of Oceanography, which was a graduate school. Davis, of course, was in existence. The San Francisco campus was not called UC San Francisco, it was known as the San Francisco Medical School. It was always part of the University, but it was not a general campus. UCLA was in existence, so that the new campuses—Riverside had existed as a citrus research station. The expanding colleges became Riverside, San Diego, and Santa Barbara, and to a degree Davis, which was well established. It had more than just plain agriculture there for many years. The brand new campuses were of course Irvine, and Santa Cruz.

Really, all of this expansion took place after I became a Regent. It had been planned before, but it began taking over in that period.

The change from provosts to chancellors of the campuses came about in 1952. Do you recall any concern about that on the part of the Regents or President Sproul?

No. It didn't all come about at once.
Chall: Probably first just to UCLA and Berkeley, two chancellors appointed, Kerr and I think--

Heller: Monroe Deutsch was known as provost, but he was provost of the whole University, but basically that was Berkeley. Now the title of provost stayed at SF Med School for years after the others were changed. But it was Clark Kerr that didn't like—if I'm not wrong in this. With his appointment—he was appointed as chancellor of Berkeley. Whether Clark wasn't interested unless he had this title of chancellor and not of provost—I'm not sure. It was rather a cleaning up of the language. People in the state are very confused with the University system, with the president of all the campuses, and the chancellors, and some provosts even yet, like at Santa Cruz there are provosts of the individual colleges. Then you have what I keep calling the state college system, but it's a state university and colleges system. It's just the reverse: the head of the whole system is the chancellor, and the head of the individual campuses are the presidents. It is very confusing to people. They cannot get it straight, and why should they?

Chall: As long as the people inside the systems understand it, I guess that's all that matters.

Heller: I'm not sure that they do. [chuckles] Well, the terminology is very confusing. Just as in Britain, it's confusing to Americans who don't know that the chancellor is not the important person at the university. He's a name; he's usually a public figure.

Chall: In Britain?

Heller: In Great Britain. It might be the Prince of Wales, or some well-known figure. It's the vice-chancellor who is the important person and who runs the various universities in Great Britain.

Chall: A title doesn't mean everything.

Heller: It means a great deal within the academic world which you come from.

I'm not sure whether Clark was the one who invented the title of chancellor; I haven't thought about it. I really don't know.

Chall: It just came about at that time.

Heller: Yes.

Chall: But there had been some kind of outside study made about the reorganization of the University at that time. Some decentralization was beginning to take place, and this may have been a part of it.
Heller: Very little, but a little bit, at the beginning. I do remember it was a very difficult changeover, because Bob Sproul, the president of the University, thought of himself as Berkeley. It was inevitable. He'd gone straight through Berkeley; he became president of the University when Berkeley was dominant; he lived on the Berkeley campus for many years, in what is now known as University House, so that when Clark came in, on a shift there, to run the Berkeley campus, there was no thought of his ever moving into the campus house, that was Sproul's for as long as he was around. But Clark was chancellor. When he became chancellor he enlarged his own house. It was pointed out to him he was going to have to do some entertaining, I believe. It is a lovely house, it's rather far from campus, but it's a very nice house. They still live there. You've probably been there, haven't you?

Chall: No.

Heller: What I remember most about when Clark was chancellor--he used to write notes to Ed (and possibly to others) all the time. He just used to be bugged by Bob Sproul, and Bob Sproul was bugged by him. I was very fond of Bob Sproul. He was a very warm person. But he was not what I'd call an organized person. He sort of flew by the seat of his pants and got things done. It was the time when the University was riding very high. Clark, very interestingly, kept notes of the time of every day of what Bob Sproul had said and what he had done. He had these pages upon pages of the way Sproul spent his time and the inconsistencies of Bob Sproul.

Chall: And he would send those to some of the Regents?

Heller: He sent them to Ed, I can assure you, because I saw them. Just railing about--I don't know if he used the word, but it was implicit--the duplicity of Sproul, that you couldn't believe a word he said.

To jump ahead many years, that was really in a way the count against Clark Kerr if you look at it in a very generalized term, not by those who hated him for whatever he stood for, but those who really had liked him who thought he didn't always tell a straight story. In a way, I think nobody can stand up to absolute analysis. Oh, but Clark just went at this, and this, and at this.

What he wanted basically--I don't think I explained that very well--Clark wanted to be able to run the Berkeley campus. He figured he was proving how Sproul always stepped into the Berkeley campus. Strangely enough, Clark, when he became president, was always stepping into the Berkeley campus himself. I don't know whether Clark has ever thought of this, of the same situation repeating itself so many years later, but it did. Nothing was more evident than that during the FSM, even though Clark was thinking in terms of all the campuses. This all goes back to before I was a Regent. But I did see those memos. This was his desire, to run Berkeley himself. Which is fair enough.
Chall: That was what he was appointed for.

Heller: And Sproul's quite natural interference. He'd been running Berkeley all these years, and it had become a great campus. Sproul really did attract marvelous people to that campus. There's just no question of it. He did it, I think, through sheer personality.

Chall: I understand he had a great personality; he was a marvelous speaker.

Heller: Oh, yes, he had humor; booming voice. I wouldn't say he was a deep thinker at all, but he was really quite a remarkable person. I don't think he ever had more than a B.A.

The Loyalty Oath Controversy

Chall: No. Was he hurt by the loyalty oath as a leader?

Heller: Oh, yes. Yes he was, but I think a lot of people who were close to him, and I know that would include Ed Heller, because I'd heard him, always said that Bob Sproul's weakness was that he tried to carry water on both shoulders. It was very hard for him to come to tough decisions. That was where it became very apparent, during the loyalty oath controversy. You can tell that, in a way, in Mr. Neylan's memoirs, because his fury was not about the loyalty oath, it was about Bob Sproul.

Chall: There's some of it in here [Gardner], you can read between the lines.

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Chall: George Pettitt, who had been, I think, Sproul's assistant, wrote a book called Twenty-Eight Years in the Life of a University President.* Regarding President Sproul and some of his ideas, he says that Sproul allowed himself to be persuaded that he should support the adoption of the Special Loyalty Oath by the Regents of the University, but that "during the entire controversy the faculty went to great lengths to protect the President of the University from being saddled with the responsibility for an action that had been dictated by the temper of the times." Does that seem about right to you? That isn't quite the way one reads about it in Stadtman's book.**

*George A. Pettitt, Twenty-Eight Years in the Life of a University President, (Berkeley: University of California, 1966) pp. 85-86.

Heller: That isn't quite the way I see it, but I could see how George Pettitt, who was very loyal to Sproul would look at it that way. I'm not sure who ever initiated that loyalty oath. I think it probably came out of the state action, which—there was that Levering [Act].

Chall: Tenney came before it. The general history of it seems to be that the Tenney committee had proposed a constitutional amendment—

Heller: The Levering [Act].

Chall: No, that came before Levering. It would have required University employees, among others, to take this special oath. The Regents wanted to retain their prerogatives in controlling the University and its staff, so they decided to pre-empt that by the [University's own] oath. That's the reason that's given here, and the reason that Stadtman gives.

Heller: It may have been historically—

Chall: Levering came up later.

Heller: It may have been historically true that that's the way it started.

Chall: But it was the temper of the times; it was the anti-Communist—

Heller: Tenney was part of the temper of the times which was the general McCarthy era. I'm sure that's what started it. I don't think I ever knew exactly why it started at the University, but I do know for sure, and I think Neylan corroborates it in his writings, that he was against a special loyalty oath.

Chall: Neylan was? Yes, that's correct.

Heller: Yes, Neylan, to start, for the faculty. You're going to have to take this on my recollection, which—after all, I wasn't a Regent, I was getting it all second and third hand.

Chall: That's just as well, to have what you can remember second and third hand, because you were caught up in that controversy, I'm sure.

Heller: Bob Sproul had said he would handle it with the faculty, and as far as I know, he just didn't tell them exactly what the situation was, which infuriated Neylan. That's the beginning that I know of it. He turned against Sproul, who then tried to be on both sides, and said he had said one thing to the faculty, and reported back from the faculty to the Regents, but not accurately. The thing just got itself more and more tangled.

Neylan could spring from one side to another. This is something that's hard for me to believe, that the personality to him was more important than the issue. This is one of the things—because I watched
Heller: Neylan for years afterwards. He lived down this way, and after he retired he lived up in Woodside and tried to take over the school board, and how it was run, and just infuriated everybody. He always wanted things his own way.

Maybe I should tell you that despite this terrible fight, ongoing fight with Ed Heller and all the awful things he said, after it was all over, the loyalty thing was passed, Neylan, who was still a Regent, wanted to give a dinner in honor of Bob [Robert] Underhill, who was the treasurer of the Regents for many years, who was a very close friend of Ed Heller's too. Now Bob could stay friendly with everybody without doing any double talking. He wasn't trying to prove anything. Bob Underhill—I've talked to him since about it, he laughs about it but I know it's true. I've always thought that he saw an opportunity to bring a halt to this big breach. Jesse Steinhart was one of Mr. Neylan's big opponents, and Jerry Hagar—there were many by then—and of course Ed was the one who infuriated Neylan the most because he was very outspoken.

Well Neylan wanted to give this huge dinner for Bob Underhill in appreciation for all he had done. Bob Underhill said he would not have a dinner given in his honor by Neylan unless Ed Heller was invited. That's a true story. And Neylan said to him, "You find out if he'll accept before I invite him." [laughs] Ed always let bygones be bygones. He could fight hard, but this was over by now. Actually, his side had won eventually! Bob Underhill came to Ed and told him this story. Ed said, "Sure, if I'm invited I'll accept."

So I went to that dinner; the spouses were invited too. It was an enormous dinner at the Mark Hopkins. I remember it well, a very lavish dinner. Neylan got up and made a long speech, eventually about Bob Underhill, but he began talking about all of his years as a Regent and saying in all the years he had served, there were only five great Regents. He named Garrett McEnerney and J.K. Moffitt; I'm not sure that I can remember who the other two were, and Ed Heller. Would you believe that? After all that bitterness he got up and made this public speech in which he named Ed as one of the five great Regents with whom he had served. I thought I might leave that out if I waited until the end.

Chall: Isn't that interesting. That brought almost a split among half of the Regents. The last votes were twelve to ten, and ten to ten. It wasn't just voting, it was test of strength.

Heller: It went on for months. It was just horrible, from my point of view. When I became most conscious of it, which is what I think you want, the first vote that I remember on it, was when Earl Warren was first governor. There were only six votes against the loyalty oath, and those were—why can't I think of his name—the attorney over in Berkeley, Francis Farquhar?
Chall: [looking through papers] I think they're mentioned in here. Sometimes Gardner mentions them and sometimes he doesn't.

Heller: I know exactly who they were, I just can't think of his name. Ed Heller was one, and that very fine attorney. Was that--not Francis Farquhar, one of that group though. Francis Farquhar was never a Regent.

Chall: We're now in the period of 1949.

Heller: Here. I can pick out the names.

Chall: Here are the names of the Regents and their terms that I thought would overlap his and yours.

Heller: I can pick it out right away. [pause] I don't see his name there, but he may have been just a little before that. I'll think of his name. He's very well known.

Chall: Do you remember the others?

Heller: He also had been a Mills trustee; I knew him quite well. Yes, the others were Ed Heller, and Bob Sproul, who finally came down against the loyalty oath, and--

Chall: Earl Warren.

Heller: Earl Warren was one of them. Roy Simpson, who was ex officio as superintendent of education. I think I've got all six of them, if I could think of the name of the one who eventually resigned because this just got to him so he couldn't stand the strain anymore.

Chall: I have the [unnamed] attorney, Ed Heller, Bob Sproul, Earl Warren, Roy Simpson. That's one, two, three, four, five.

Heller: There was one more. I can eliminate an awful lot of these who were not on that side.

Chall: Maybe it's someplace.

Heller: Maurice Harrison I don't think was still a Regent when this vote came up. He died in '51. He would have voted against it--I think maybe, Vic [Victor] Hansen.

Chall: Let's see. Here, I have the names, I think. Regents Warren, [Earl J.] Fenston--

Heller: He came on later.

Chall: I see. This is what Gardner has here.
Heller: They were later.

Chall: Regents Warren, Fenston, Heller, and Hansen agreed with the president. That may not be the vote.

Heller: I believe Fenston, who was a very nice man, but I think he came on a little later.* I don't see his name here. You haven't got a complete list by any means.

Chall: If I don't have it there, it means it didn't overlap Ed Heller's term.

Heller: You don't have Fenston's name, for example, but you have Hansen's name.

I know perfectly well this attorney, he was a marvelous person. He finally resigned because he had a heart attack; he couldn't stand the strain. Anyway, I'll think of it.

Chall: There had been two earlier votes taken: that one that you're talking about came about--

Heller: I know Fenston and Hansen. Hansen was never a very strong reed; Fenston was. I'm not saying that that was the--

Chall: That was the first vote that you recall, then? There had been others, and they had been unanimous. The first vote for the loyalty oath itself was a unanimous vote of the Regents who had attended that first meeting when it was proposed. By the time it got into the faculty committees and some of the problems began to emerge, then these other votes were taken, and I think that's when Ed Heller and a few others began to see what was coming, what the problems were, and so then they changed sides.

Heller: Well, I know it came to a head as far as I knew-- Farnham Griffiths is the person I'm trying to think of. That's who definitely voted. Thank heavens I found that name. He was definitely against the Regents.

Chall: Why do you remember that particular vote?

Heller: Because probably their meeting was on Friday. I remember on Sunday morning, the Examiner, which was then a morning paper, came out with the statement that the Regents had voted unanimously for the loyalty oath. Ed was absolutely furious when he spotted this, and he felt that that was Neylan's doing, that it was reported that way--remember these were closed sessions at that point--because there were six votes that weren't. This is what I can remember so well.

*Fenston served on the Board of Regents from 1948 to 1958; Hansen from 1946 to 1962.
Heller: We were over at his mother's, down here for lunch, and Ed put in a call to Earl Warren asking Earl Warren if he would join him in a statement, or if he could use his name in a letter, or however it was, or phoning the Examiner to say that they were inaccurate, that it had not been unanimous, and would Earl Warren mind his name being used. Earl Warren got caught up in this thing happily, and started fighting Neylan.

Neylan was always the dominant person on this thing. Of course, there were others that were supporting him very strongly. It was all because of this inaccurate press release. You could look that one up. I don't think it quoted Neylan, it just said it was unanimous. In that day and age, when things about the Regents got in the paper, somebody usually phoned the paper. Ed believed, because Neylan used the Examiner so extensively, that he had done it. That's where the fat was in the fire, and they decided to fight this to the bitter end.

That's really where I remember so much Earl Warren's never hesitating to enter into this fray from beginning to end. Coming to all the meetings—he was not used to doing that—to fight it. As he got appointees to the Regents, I'm sure he didn't ask anyone that he appointed how he was going to vote, but they all turned out to vote against the loyalty oath. Nimitz was on before. It was Jesse Steinhart, Don McLaughlin, Neil Haggerty, Gus Olson was a bitter fighter against it, Gerald Hagar. And until Dr. Nofziger and Ed Carter came along, they—I see that Nofziger came on in '52 and Ed Carter in '52.

Chall: That was when it was all over, basically.

Heller: It was just about over, but they were for the loyalty oath in the tail end part. There were still some odd bugs. They were still there. All the others, you see, had joined with the ones who had formerly been there, and—you don't have the ex officio members.

Chall: No, I don't.

Heller: Which had a lot to do with the vote you see there. I think maybe Bill Merchant, who was from the Mechanics Institute, eventually joined against the oath. I don't think he did the first round, but I think he did eventually. They eventually built up a bare majority against it.

Chall: The last vote was taken before it all went into the courts—at which point those thirty-some non-signers had to leave the campus—that was in 1950.

Heller: Was it 1950?
Chall: Yes. I have a date for that. It went to the courts between October and December 1950.

Heller: Let me say that I know there were votes when Gus Olson and Gerald Hagar, who according to your notes were both appointed in '51, were very strong opponents of the loyalty oath.

Chall: I think some decisions had to be made after a court decision had been reached. They had to act on a court decision.

Heller: I believe so.

Chall: But the original problems were fought between '49 and '50, and the votes finally ended up twelve to ten, that was the last one. Your husband was among them.

Heller: Was for it?

Chall: Against the oath. The last several votes he voted against it at all times.

Gardner keeps quoting Ed Heller as somebody who occasionally makes a statement. He indicates that Heller had close friends in the faculty, and that Professor [Laurence] Sears at Mills would have social events at his house.

Heller: You know why he quotes it? Because he interviewed me. [laughter] Nobody knows about this; I gave it to Dave Gardner.

Chall: Gardner also says, and this is probably then what you told him, that even at the social events at Sears' home, when he was meeting members of the faculty at the University, he [Heller] would tell them that he thought it was better for them to sign the oath and stay on the campus than not to sign it.

Heller: That is correct.

Chall: Still, he voted against it when he felt that these people were going to leave.

Heller: He didn't try to get anybody who absolutely objected to signing it to sign it. There were some who wouldn't do it. But there were some who couldn't make up their minds who were friends of Ed's, and who'd ask him. Ed would always say, "If you don't have absolute convictions against signing, sign it. You can keep on fighting it. There's no use leaving the University and going--" Ed always said, "We're going to win this." I can remember, and I can name you a couple of the people that he talked to about it. One was Peter Odegard, political scientist. And one was somebody that I don't think you'd know, but he's one of the great scientists who's still alive. Sam Lepkovsky.
Chall: In nutrition or something.

Heller: A nutritionist. I happened to remember those two being down here and talking about it. Lepkovsky had no strong feelings, he said to Ed, "Tell me what to do!" Ed said, "Well, if you don't have any strong feelings, sign it." And Peter Odegard, who emotionally of course was very much against it, but didn't personally mind signing an oath. I remember those two.

But the story basically is true. I haven't read this for a while, but I gave it to Dave Gardner. There was a rule at that time, I don't know the origins, but under Sproul, that no faculty could have direct communications with Regents. Did you know that?

Chall: No.

Heller: Ridiculous rule. Well, Ed never paid any attention to it; he always had a lot of faculty friends. But this really was the rule under Sproul. Crazy rule when you think about it. Then when this controversy came up, it was even more rigidly enforced. Ed said, "I'm going to work this out." Larry Sears—he was a member of the Mills faculty, not a member of the Cal faculty. He was a good friend of ours, and he lived right in the heart of Berkeley. Larry Sears was very much against the oath. So, Ed would always say, "I'm going over to a social evening at the Sears'." I went over there quite often; I'd hear some of the discussion or I'd be in the other room. This is where I started getting quite involved. Larry Sears would have a few of the faculty that were very much against the oath, particularly those who had signed it, in to—I don't know whether it was to map strategy—I think it was eventually about taking it to court and what the best ways were of doing anything. But Ed literally kept to the fact that he was socializing at Larry Sears'. Ridiculous when you think about it now, but that is really true.

To skip way ahead, when I was given the Clark Kerr award by the Academic Senate of Berkeley in '76, it was presented to me by Bob Connick, who was, I guess, chairman of the Academic Senate then, at a meeting of the Emeriti at the faculty club, a dinner meeting. So there were quite a few people I knew there. I didn't know them all, but I knew quite a few of them. They said they wanted me to speak, and I'm not a speaker at all, so I just remember getting up and saying I just wanted to go over some of the traumas the Berkeley faculty and I had gone through together. They all come out in the end.

Of course, the first one I mentioned, though I wasn't a Regent, was the loyalty oath. At that time, I said, "I think it can be told now, about how my husband, Ed Heller, used to meet with some of the faculty at Larry Sears' house, because he was not a member of the
Heller: faculty." They met quite a number of times. And somebody put his hand up in the audience and he said, "I was one of those." It was Malcolm Davisson. I hadn't seen him in years. He corroborated it.

Chall: Oh, yes, he was one of the strong faculty fighters.

Heller: Yes. Very strong, very strong. I hadn't seen him in ages. I think a great many of the Berkeley faculty—you can never say anything in general about the Berkeley faculty—felt Ed was, in a way, their strongest supporter. I've heard that since, quite a bit.

Chall: How did he become so outspoken? Was that just the nature of the man?

Heller: Just the nature of the man. He wasn't afraid of anything. And when he believed something, he really believed it. And he really believed that this was outrageous, to have loyalty oaths for the faculty separate from anybody else. He always said, "I'll sign any loyalty oath they want me to, I don't mind, but I don't think anybody has to sign one."

Chall: I don't know whether this surfaced at the time you recall it, but it's presumed to be one of the underlying reasons for the continuing dissension among the Regents. At the time Sproul was ready to make a revision, after all the alumni meetings and faculty committees and whatnot, that it would be allowed up to the president and perhaps the faculty to determine whether or not a non-signer would be allowed to remain on the campus. The Regents felt that this was taking away the prerogative of the Regents for making decisions of this kind. It was on the basis that they were going to lose some of their power to the faculty that made them vote as they did toward the very end. It was a power move rather than whether or not you signed the oath.

Heller: I really can't speak to that, because I really don't feel I knew enough of that.

Chall: I just wondered how much of that you were aware of, because that's where I think some of the opposition came from at the very end, and I just wasn't sure to what extent your husband was concerned about faculty prerogatives, of which there were very few at that time, or the oath itself, or a combination of both.

Heller: No, he just, as far as I can remember, felt that a special loyalty oath for one class of citizens was completely wrong.

Chall: And he kept saying from time to time, according to Gardner, "This is going to ruin the University."
Heller: He did. He felt it very firmly. He just lived with this, month after month after month. You have no idea what it was like among the Regents. I did go to some of the meetings then, because Ed would get so upset. He'd want me to go so he'd have someone to talk to after the meetings were over. I can remember one endless thing at Santa Barbara, where wives of Regents who were opposed wouldn't speak to other wives. It was just like a nightmare. The press was covering all this, though they weren't allowed in the meetings. The press was floating around trying to talk to anybody. It had become a big issue by this time. It was horrible. As I mentioned before, that trip to Los Alamos was awful! People wouldn't speak to each other. There were a few exceptions, but basically, I remember old -- he wasn't old -- Gus Olson, who kept saying, "I won't sit in a room with that John Francis Neylan!" He was a good old farmer who just couldn't stand being pushed around.

Of course, Neylan got more and more determined. Naturally, that does not show up in Dave Gardner's book or in Neylan's notes. After this was all over, Neylan had lost all his power on the Regents, because he'd behaved so outrageously. To get his way, he broke all decent rules of how you behave, and what he said to the newspapers about these terrible things, like about the Hellers. He didn't care. This was the nature of Neylan. Neylan was used to taking over those meetings, and doing a lot of talking. It got so nobody would listen to him. They just let him talk on and on, and people would read newspapers or magazines or leave the room. They'd just let him have the floor for hours on end. He was used to such dominance. He became completely isolated from everybody as a result of that. That does not show up anywhere. He finally resigned.

Chall: Oh, is that what happened?

Heller: Yes, he finally resigned as a Regent, never giving any reason but that he had served long enough or something like that, but he did resign. He was absolutely isolated. It's interesting.

Chall: So he was hurt by it and Sproul was hurt by it.

Heller: I think that doesn't show up in any of his papers. And Sproul was badly hurt by it with his seeming playing both sides. It was awfully hard from what Sproul said to know how much -- because that was part of the thing of not talking to faculty. He wanted to be the go-between. Very hard to know what he had said to faculty, or what instructions the faculty senate had given Sproul. He was the holder of this information.

Chall: He tried to hold whatever power he had had.

Heller: I'm giving you more a spotty impression of this, as I knew it to a degree. But as a result of this, there was a whole group that became enormously friendly because of this fight, and these were the ones I
Heller: mentioned just a while ago. They began really to work together awfully well. You know, Jerry Hagar, and Don McLaughlin, and Farnham Griffiths, and Vic Hansen, and that whole group really began to work as a group for the University. I think there was a very healthy outcome of that.

Now Ed Pauley was always on the other side, though Ed at that point was not the dominant figure on the Regents, that he became. Ed Dickson was always on the other side. I always vaguely felt sorry for Ed's [Heller] uncle who was a Regent, Sidney Ehrman. Because Sidney Ehrman had been very much admired by the faculty. He understood the reasons, the purposes of scholarship very well. Somehow he got caught up on the other side of that. It sort of ended his position on the Regents, at least as far as the faculty was concerned. They were very upset about his not seeing it. I've never been quite clear—it was something we never discussed. You know, he lived to be a hundred, past a hundred, and I never discussed it, ever with him. Everybody had died, and he was living on. I was a Regent, of course, and I used to go see him. He always wanted me to tell him what was happening at the University. He always retained his interest, and had no bitterness from it. I always felt he sort of got caught up.

Chall: Gardner mentions him a time or two. He was, because of his position as a Regent, and the fact that the faculty had admired him for many years, placed on a few rather important committees. He had a very difficult time making up his mind. He was vacillating.

Heller: It was too bad, really. Maybe that's enough about the oath. I still think that nothing definitive has been really written about the oath yet.

Chall: Where do you feel that Gardner has made--

Heller: I haven't read it recently. I'd have to reread it. I just don't think he made judgments on Bob Sproul, and Neylan, and Ed Heller, and all of them. He tried to let the facts, which he didn't have complete control of, speak for themselves. He tried not to make judgments, and still it was a very judgmental process. On the other hand, Simpson, the superintendent of schools, voted against the loyalty oath; his inclination was to vote for it. He was very much of a non-entity.

Chall: Why do you think he did?

Heller: I think Earl Warren just told him he'd better as a public official vote this way. I don't think his heart was ever in it. He never got into the controversies. In fact, it was well known that he stayed away from the votes if he possibly could. He always had to leave as the vote was coming up. He tried to duck them as much as possible.
Chall: How many Regents are there if everyone comes?

Heller: Twenty-four. Not true right now, but while I was a Regent it was.

Chall: It would have been in those days, too, I suspect.

Heller: Yes. It would have been the same, exactly.

Chall: Well, they had twenty and twenty-two votes toward the end, so that most people were there.

Heller: Oh, yes. When the crises come, they usually show up. [laughs] Unless they were in a crisis situation while Ed was a Regent, there was not terribly good attendance a lot of the times.

Chall: I think it's Gardner who pointed out that at the very first vote that was taken on March 25, 1949, that there were eleven members out of twenty-four in attendance, and that was about usual.

Heller: As I remember--of course, there were very full meetings when I was a Regent--I think never below sixteen at them, and rarely that low.

Chall: It was a crisis most of the time.

Heller: Oh, yes. Things began getting more and more hectic.

Chall: During 1958, that was just about the time your husband was ready to go off the board, the whole matter of the master plan for higher education was in the process of being formed. Do you recall your husband being interested in that issue?

Heller: Did that start in 1950?

Chall: It started in the fifties. Sometime about '58, or a little before.

Heller: No. Ed had no part of that. I was more involved in a way, not directly as he was, but I was very interested in the whole thing. I think I indicated to you last time my feeling about the fact that the state colleges had to be part of the process. I just was very interested in it, and because I knew Arthur Coons, and I knew Rob Wert, I followed it quite carefully to see what was evolving on it. No, Ed had really nothing to do with that, except in a most indirect way.

You see, Ed was off the Regents for two years. His first term was up in '58. Goodie Knight was then governor.

Chall: That's right. And he didn't want to reappoint him?
Heller Denies Quitting as UC Regent

Edward H. Heller, noted San Francisco financier, was not offered re-appointment to the Board of Regents of the University of California by Governor Goodwin J. Knight.

In Los Angeles last night Heller denied emphatically reports published in San Francisco newspapers that he had declined reappointment "because of ill health."

Heller said he wants it understood his health is excellent. He said his first intimation that he had been succeeded on the Board by John E. Canaday, Los Angeles aircraft executive, came Monday when he received a telegram to this effect from the Governor.

The Governor's office said Knight "wanted to appoint someone else" in Heller's place. Spokesmen for the Republican Governor said reappointment was not offered Heller nor is any application on file for his reappointment in the future.

Heller was appointed to the board 16 years ago by Governor Culbert L. Olson, a Democrat. Heller and his wife are prominent in Democratic circles.
Heller: Ed Pauley always tried to arrange everything, but really didn't, though he always liked to think he did. That's mean of me, but I know it's true; that's the nature of Ed. He came to Ed Heller and said, "If you'll just stay out of Brown's campaign, Knight will re-appoint you a Regent." That forced Ed into Brown's campaign! He wasn't going to take a very active role; he would have contributed and been for him, and he was so mad that Ed Pauley or anybody would think that he could be bought off that way, that he accepted the finance chairmanship for the first [Pat] Brown campaign for governor! [laughs] He was just furious that Ed Pauley would think he'd do anything like that. I'm not sure that Goodie Knight had indicated that to Ed Pauley. Ed Pauley liked to try to fix things up. He might have just as well have turned around and said, "Look, I kept Ed Heller out of the Brown campaign," if he could. I'm not sure which way it went. But Ed wasn't going to take a chance. He probably had been asked, and he'd refused it, then said he'd take the finance chairmanship. Isn't that ridiculous? [laughs]

So he was off for two years. Though I must say, that a few of his best friends on the Regents, and Clark Kerr, did keep him up with what was going on pretty well. When Brown was elected, his first appointments available to him were in 1960. He immediately phoned Ed—Norton Simon was his other appointee—and asked them to be Regents. Ed hadn't even mentioned it to Pat Brown. I think Pat had always decided he was going to put Ed back on the Regents. Ed was a good Regent, there's no question of it.

Chall: It's interesting, you've mentioned it before, too, and now again, that Clark Kerr had a close relationship with your husband.

Heller: Yes.

Choosing the Santa Cruz Campus Site

Chall: That's because he respected him as a good Regent, I take it.

Heller: I think so. Clark always admired people who paid attention to being a Regent. It was in that period that the nature of the University was changing so. Ed wasn't present when the big expansion took place, he was part of the planning. And the part I remember most, is the argument over the expansion either to Almaden, outside of San Jose, in Santa Clara County, or to Santa Cruz. The reason I remember is, the phone calls that came in here.

Because Ed was the only Regent who lived near Santa Clara, he was phoned by business people, by politicians, pressure, pressure, pressure, to put this to the Regents. That's the most pressure I ever saw Ed have from outside, as a Regent, to choose the Almaden
Heller: site, in Santa Clara County. But Ed had gone over the Almaden site and gone over the Santa Cruz site and he thought the Santa Cruz site was far superior. He was always a staunch supporter of the Santa Cruz site. If you go to Santa Cruz now, you see certain names of Regents, who I guess Dean McHenry (the chancellor) felt had been the most influential in choosing Santa Cruz as the site, on the roads. There's Hagar Road, and Steinhart Way, and McLaughlin, and Heller.

Chall: I didn't realize Heller was there.

Heller: The Heller is not for me. Everybody thinks it's for me, because I was very involved with Santa Cruz as it was being planned. But it was named for Ed Heller. Dean always felt that those were the four who were the most influential and most anxious for the Santa Cruz site. I don't mean it wasn't voted unanimously. It probably was; I don't remember. Eventually. I think the Southern California Regents stayed out of that site decision or didn't pay much attention to it one way or the other. But it was really a big political, business pressure.

Chall: I'm sure that would be true any time you build a campus, or an institution.

Heller: I'm sure of that. I just knew more about that one. I've forgotten when we acquired that site, whether that was when Ed went back the second time as a Regent. I'm not sure. No, it may have been before he went off.

Chall: I think that Stadtman has a great deal of that information in his book.

Heller: Oh, I'm sure he has. I can't find that book. I've got it somewhere.

Chall: I have it in the office, so I'll bring it along next time.

Heller: I have it someplace. There are some inaccuracies, including--I've forgotten whether it was the spelling of my name, or something like that. [laughs]

Chall: When your husband died, did you anticipate being appointed in his place?

Heller: I never thought about it. I never anticipate anything. It just isn't my nature to. Clark used to keep phoning Ed to ask his advice when he couldn't get to meetings anymore. I did go to meetings with Ed quite a bit after he was reappointed.
X APPOINTMENT TO THE BOARD OF REGENTS: IMPRESSIONS AND EXPERIENCES*
[Interview 18: November 30, 1979]##

Chall: Let's see. We were talking about the fact that in the last year or so of your husband's life, you attended Regents' meetings with him.

Heller: I didn't attend the meetings. That was never done.

Chall: Oh, even then? I thought perhaps you were then breaking protocol at that time.

Heller: Absolutely never done. It's hard to believe.

Chall: After what's occurred since. You just accompanied him?

Heller: I remember specifically saying, you know, "I'd like to do something." I remember at Riverside. In Los Angeles, okay, I could see friends or leave, but in a place like Riverside, you couldn't. Finally, it was agreed--I forgot who did it--that I could go and get a tour of the library. So everything I knew about the Regents was second hand in that period, though I heard an awful lot, because Ed would come home full of it always.

Chall: But in those days, did you say you went with him to some of the meetings?

Heller: No.

Chall: Or went along in the last year or so?

Heller: I just went to the places. You see, they were meeting at different campuses; I would go with him. Of course, the last few months of his life he didn't go to any. He always kept up pretty well. Clark

*Portions of this chapter have been placed under seal.*
Heller: Kerr would phone with information, and Jesse Steinhart, and Jerry Hagar, and Bill Roth, who was by then a Regent, would keep him up with what was going on pretty well, even though for two years he [Heller] wasn't a Regent. He gave plenty of advice.

No. I never, ever was at a Regents' meeting until I became a Regent myself. Isn't that hard to believe? With my interests in those things.

Chall: That's not a policy that's frowned on anymore, is it?

Heller: Oh, no!

Chall: Not after the students began to come.

Heller: No more. They're open meetings. Which they should be.

Chall: Weren't they, by law, open meetings then?

Heller: The Brown Act had exempted the University. Now whether it exempted it specifically by name—you know, that was the law on open meetings—or whether there had been an interpretation to the effect that because of Article IX Section 9 of the constitution the Regents were exempted from the Brown Act, I don't particularly call to mind. It was perfectly legal. And then the pressure came on, and we finally opened them up though there was not any specific legislation. It was ridiculous. But it was very hard on the Regents to open them up, because they were so used to expressing opinions about individuals, or anything. They had to learn that any personality problems are explicitly reserved for executive session. Oh, it was tough on them! It really was.

Chall: When did they open it? Mid-sixties?

Heller: I don't remember. They were closed when I was first a Regent for two or three years still. I can't remember exactly, but you'd have to go to Marge Woolman, who could tell you that right away. If I remember correctly, I may be wrong, but I think first they opened the Regents' meetings before they opened up the committee meetings. It took them longer to open up the committee meetings to public sessions. Now, the only thing that is not—well it is open, but it's not open a lot—is the investment committee. I deliberately never served on the investment committee.

I have attended a few investment committee meetings just to see how it was going on; they're very dull, really. But there were certain reports on long-term holdings of the Regents, or large holdings, that would come into the investment committee. Those are perfectly proper for open sessions. However, when immediate decisions
Heller: are being made about stock or other transactions which could affect the market at the time, then it's perfectly proper in any board to have that in executive session. Of course, all such transactions are reported at the end of each year.

Chall: Were you used to open meetings at Mills?

Heller: No, it's not come up at Mills. As far as I'm concerned, anyone can come in. Occasionally some students will wander in, but not very often.

I first grappled with open meetings on the Palo Alto- Stanford Hospital Board, because they were all closed meetings down there. See, that was a semi-public institution. Half the directors of the hospital board were appointed by the city of Palo Alto (by the city council), and half by Stanford University. I was a Stanford appointee. If you ever want to go into the files of the Palo Alto Times, you'll see the big fight that was going on about open meetings. That's really the first place. I don't know, something in me tells me that open meetings are good. I was very much in the faction on this hospital board, that believed in opening up our meetings. And we did. Let me say, on a board like that, people come to the first meeting and they never come afterwards.

Chall: That's generally so. It's just the fact that they're open if you need to come.

Heller: They were really bored, you know. But that's where I first came to it.

I think the open meetings of the Regents have gone reasonably well. Every once in a while, somebody gets out of order, and if you have a good person presiding, the person presiding will say, "That is for executive session." I've done it often in educational policies. Or, let me say, the reverse happens sometimes. You're in executive session, and somebody will say, "Why is this an executive session? Should be in open session." The Regents are very good now about putting things in open session which they wouldn't have dreamed of putting at the beginning. Much better. So that particular hump is over.

The Brown Act was really difficult when it first came in, not for the Regents, because to this day, you can't have a majority of any, say, city council gathered together. You have to have less than a majority. If you want to meet with anybody at a city council or the county board of supervisors, if there are seven members you can't meet with more than three of them.

Chall: That's right. I noticed in the bylaws of the Regents that I was checking out the other day, that it would have been very easy for committees to have had meetings just over the telephone or at somebody's house.
Heller: That was done more than I knew when I first came on. I discovered certain decisions had been made, or certain knowledge seemed to be in the hands of certain Regents. There is such a thing as a phone check-out vote that's allowed.

Chall: Yes. Four people, or some such, had to sign afterwards. But that was when the policy was being set. But it seemed to me that a great deal of conferring and decision making could have been done behind the scenes in a very casual way without anybody knowing about it at all except that you had to vote on it afterwards.

Heller: I think that happens in any public body. There's no big plotting, on the whole. Let me say that when Reagan first got most of his new appointees on, I could spot a lot of behind the scenes plotting that went on, because they'd come in more or less as a bloc. I felt it wouldn't last; I felt there were a couple of his appointees that once they woke up to what they were doing would not be part of it. It turned out to be true. They were not going to have any of that.

The Appointment and Early Impressions

Chall: How did you first find out you were going to be a Regent? How did this news first come to you?

Heller: Well, the news came to me in a phone call the day after Ed Heller's funeral from Pat Brown, the governor, asking if I would be a Regent --he'd like to appoint me. It's just that simple. Ed died on the eighteenth of December, 1961, so that would have been just before Christmas, really. If you'd look up the days of the week, I can't remember, but I do remember that he said, "I need your biography up here no later than Friday." So I don't remember what day of the week it was. I did say to him—it must have been before Christmas that he wanted it—I did say to him, "Pat, I wish you'd do me one favor." (We just had had Ed's funeral.) "Let's wait until the first of the year to announce this." He said, "No, this is the only thing I'm ever going to ask of you, Ellie. I'm going to ask to announce it immediately. There's a lot of pressure for me to fill this appointment from various sources." He never told me who were the people wanting it. He said, "I've made up my mind, and I'm going to ask you to let me release this right away." So what could I say?

Chall: You didn't need any time to think about it, I'm sure.

Heller: Well, I just felt it was terrible to announce it just as Ed had died, almost. But of course, I'd known Pat, and in the less than two years Ed had been a Regent appointed by Pat Brown, (he had been sixteen years a Regent before this, appointed by Governor Olson),
Heller: from March of 1960 until December of '61, Pat knew I was very interested in the whole procedure, and that I often listened to all this. I've forgotten what things were coming up then, but Pat used to sometimes phone and Ed would always say, "I have Ellie on the other line." So he knew that I was very much clued in to what was going on, so I have a feeling it was one of the least difficult appointments he ever had to make. [chuckles]

When he appointed Ed for that sixteen years, Ed's second term, he appointed Norton Simon at the same time and for the same term, 1960-1976. Norton was a fascinating person—an individualist—not at all inclined to be a team player. I don't say he didn't do lots of good for the University, but he is not—he lets nothing go unchallenged. There was a big fight before I became a Regent. I remember hearing it from I think Bill Roth the first time, that Norton wanted to send his right-hand man as his proxy to attend all the meetings. There was a terrible fight about that. Of course, it was refused, quite properly. There are no proxies allowed, which is a very good rule, don't you think?

Chall: Oh yes.

Heller: But Norton, who argues and argues, put up a terrible fuss. I was not there when it was done, but it was certainly a proper rule, don't you think?

Chall: Yes. Very interesting.

Heller: The first meeting I attended was in January of 1962. At that time, all the meetings were two-day meetings, except the January meeting. The January meeting, by custom, was a one-day meeting. It was held at what was called the SF Medical School, that's now UC San Francisco. So my first meeting was a one-day meeting only, which I think maybe was easier on me.

Chall: How did you feel about it? How were you greeted?

Heller: Well, how would I—? I would say that being a Regent is nothing like being a Regent's wife. When you first became a Regent, the material is very hard to learn how to handle. It's all numbered, and you must get on to the system. But it's very confusing. That's why I say, it was a little easier, I think, that I only had a one-day meeting. I just have a few impressions out of that. You see, I knew most of the Regents, so that I was not a stranger coming in at all. I didn't feel strange as far as who the people were. I didn't know a lot of the vice-presidents, or some of the chancellors, but I did know the Regents, anyway, which helped. I have always seen how difficult it is for new Regents, with rare exceptions, to get hold of what's going on right away.
Heller: What do I remember? First thing I remember was going in and Buff Chandler, whom I had met, among others, said, "Here, sit next to me." I said to her right away, "Buff, I'm not going to do a woman's thing with you. I know all the people. I think it's silly." And believe it or not, that's how she and I became friends, because I refused to--

Chall: What did you mean by that?

Heller: I don't think, when there are only three women on the board, that they should group together. I knew nothing about Catherine Hearst then. I'd met her. I knew plenty before it was all over, but at that point I didn't. But Buff and I became very good friends on the Regents. And I've always thought it partly stemmed from that, that I--it wasn't that I didn't want to be taken under her wing, I just think it's silly to sit next to each other.

Chall: Buff Chandler was a very strong organizational--

Heller: Marvelous. Marvelous to me. Difficult in some ways, excellent Regent, though. Thought very straight. She was very tough, very tough, but excellent, and worked at it. I think this is the nature of Buff. When she's doing something, she does it very, very hard. I remember that particular episode.

I remember Jesse Steinhart coming around the table to me, he was way on the other side, and saying to me, "If you want to leave the room, Ellie, do, because a few of us are going to say something about Ed. And I said, "No, I'd like to hear it." Ed's death wasn't a shock to me, remember. I'd known for twenty months that it was coming. So you're not in any emotional state whatsoever. I said, "No, I'd like to hear it." And, as is the custom, as I've discovered since, several of the Regents spoke up about Ed. I guess it was a formal thing read, and several spoke about him. Not very long, but I do remember that.

As for the contents of the meeting, the thing I remember most was that we were getting a huge federal grant for Davis for their--what should I call it?--millions of dollars for their studies of--it's not gorillas, what is it?

Chall: Primates?

Heller: Primates. Exactly. The words just escaped me. For their primate study, and that was the day that we were accepting this grant. It was one of the most important grants the University ever received. It's still going on. I remember more about that than anything else. Emil Mrak, who was chancellor at Davis, going on and on about this. It was very interesting. Emil was always interesting. That was the
Heller: big thing of that session. I have also since discovered that it was the first Regents' meeting that Dan Aldrich attended as chancellor of Irvine. I might have known it then, I don't remember. It was very close to Dean McHenry's first meeting. We all sort of came in, as it were, at the same time. The Santa Cruz and Irvine campuses had not been developed in any way. It was the very beginning of them. So I arrived on the Regents just—all that had been done about those two campuses was that we had the land. I was there for all that planning.

Chall: Irvine and Santa Cruz. Those were the two campuses?

Heller: Yes. That's really almost all I remember about it. Jesse Steinhart went off the Regents very shortly after I came on. I've forgotten the date. Have you got that date?

Chall: Well, it just says 1962.

Heller: Then he went off the first of March. I guess I was just at that meeting, and the next meeting was at Riverside. When we used to go to the campuses, we had certain months, and Riverside was always in February. But Jesse always positioned himself in a certain place in relation to Clark Kerr. Well, Jesse had this fine legal mind. Clark sort of depended on Jesse to pick up anything that he hadn't picked up on. Those things aren't done now; we use our general counsel much more. But at that time Jesse sort of acted in that capacity. It was never acknowledged, but I picked it up very quickly.

Chall: Did the Regents generally have places where they eventually would sit at the table?

Heller: Not really. It's gotten a little more so in more recent years, though Ed used to tell me about John Francis Neylan and his exact position. He never sat anyplace else.

Chall: Where was that? At the foot of the table?

Heller: Yes. Glaring directly at Clark Kerr, I gather, or Bob Sproul. [laughter] Otherwise, no. It shifts a little. In the last couple of years, I found I was sitting facing the audience, because I was vice-chairman of the board, and I'd sit there then. I was chairman of educational policies, and I'd have to sit there to preside, of course, over educational policies, and then I was chairman of the board. During committee meetings I'd shift, I'd move away from there. But for the board meeting, I'd sit there a lot of the time, and it gets to be sort of the older Regents, not always. Ed Carter is always there, for example. When I went off the board, Bill Smith used to sit there quite a bit, and actually it's sometimes better to sit just opposite with your back to the audience, because it's
Heller: the long end of the table, you see, and most of the talking is coming from that end. It's easier to hear across the table. "Dutch" Higgs sat there quite a bit.

Chall: Who was that?

Heller: Dutch (real name De Witt) Higgs from San Diego. No, it varies. I'd sit wherever I felt like sitting. It's sort of interesting the patterns that were evolved. Ed Pauley's back was bad, and he had to have a special chair. So he'd always sit on the side, right next to Marge Woolman, the secretary, who was at the end. And his chair the first one at the side. He always sat there.

Chall: You all served on at least one committee, you would have had to.

Heller: If not two.

Chall: What committees then did you serve on?

Heller: Well, when I went on, Ed Pauley was chairman of the board and I had known him for a long time. He phoned me very shortly after it was announced, and the first thing he said was, "Of course, I got your appointment for you, Ellie." I knew perfectly well he didn't get it. He always claimed he got everybody an appointment. I paid no attention to that. I said, "Quite a few people have told me that they were instrumental in getting me appointed." That's all I said. He ignores things like that. But then he said, "What committee do you want to be on?"

Chall: That's his prerogative isn't it? Or was.

Heller: Yes. Except that there are a limited number of each committee. I right away said, "I'd like to be on educational policies." It was what I had done at Mills. He said, "Well, Ed's place on the finance committee is open. I thought I'd appoint you there." Of course, I knew finance committee was still considered very important. I said, "Well, if you can, I'd much rather be on educational policies," which I think confounded him completely. Well, there was no space on educational policies, I discovered. So apparently, Bill Roth gave up his educational policies seat and took Ed's finance committee seat so I could go on educational policies. This is all friendly. There's no plotting on that at all.

I was on three committees. I was put on grounds and buildings, or buildings and grounds, whatever you call it. Buff Chandler was really the dominant figure in that. Of course that was the period when we started to do a tremendous amount of building. It hasn't nearly the same importance now that it had then. Then there was a committee that has since been abandoned, called university relations.
Heller: And Catherine Hearst always planted herself next to Ed Pauley because she would chat and chat and chat at him. This was during all the tough times. One of the ends of the table. You know, in my mind, she was trying to make sure that Ed Pauley voted the way she wanted. I really do believe that.

Chall: She had that much influence? Or was it the Hearst paper that had the influence? Why? Or was it more subtle than that?

Heller: Ed Pauley didn't like Clark Kerr even before all this trouble started. Catherine had been friendly with Clark; she turned on him too. She could work over Ed Pauley on quite a few things. She'd certainly try to get his vote; she didn't always. Catherine plotted and plotted. When I was first a Regent, she paid no attention at Regents' meetings. She didn't come very often. When she came, she wouldn't sit at the table; she'd sit on the side and talk, talk, talk, talk, to a chancellor, or a vice-president, driving everybody crazy. You know, paid no attention. She had varying roles until the FSM started and she got so agitated against Clark. She'd only speak up on certain things. She wouldn't pay much attention. I'm giving you my impressions, obviously. I want that understood all the way through.

Chall: Yes. Was this herself, or was this somebody motivating her behind the scenes?

Heller: When I was first on, I think it was herself. I really do. She's a very strange person in a lot of ways.

Chall: Is she bright?

Heller: In certain things. It's very hard to know how bright she is, because she has this typical southern belle's way of doing things—very flirtatious and very feminine. I've seen a lot of other southern women this way. I don't think she's dumb. It's hard to know. But when she was fighting for a cause, boy, even though it was wrong headed, she just never let up. She'd come with big briefcases full of material that she'd get out in front of her. Whether she did the work that she produced or somebody did it for her, I would be speculating and I don't know.

Chall: But she came well prepared, then.

Heller: Once the big fights went on, yes.

Chall: That was in the FSM period.

Heller: But she wasn't interested in anything else, you see.
Heller: I think it was supposed to be public—I don't know what it was supposed to be. I remember Phil [Philip] Boyd was chairman of it, and it was looked down on by the Regents, by some of the old-time Regents. They thought this was a lot of nonsense.

Chall: Was that a standing committee or a special committee?

Heller: It was a standing committee at that time. I was appointed to that. But it never had exactly a particularly good role, and was eventually dropped as a standing committee. So I was on three committees now that I think of it right away. Besides which, I always attended and listened at finance committee meetings.

Chall: You would learn quite rapidly, then.

Heller: Then before that January meeting, Clark Kerr said he would send Jack Oswald, who was vice-president, the vice-president of the University, a very good man—he's now president of Penn State; he was a fine person, and I had met him in passing, I didn't know him very well—down to Atherton to go over anything I wanted with me. So he spent a day down here, and it was very helpful. Of course, I knew more than the average new Regent, so it was a very useful briefing for me. I think they still try to do that, but some times I think it gets better done than other times. I think it should always be done. But he spent a day down here and tried to tell me the problems and what was before the Regents, and that was all the preparation I had.

Of course, Marge Woolman, the secretary, sends you the bylaws and things like that. I had read all of what they call the basic documents at that time because I was interested. Those were the growth plans of the University—remember I went in on this expanding period—and the preliminary physical plans for all the campuses, including the old ones. Those were followed by educational plans. That's reversed now. The educational plan comes before the physical. But at that point, the physical was coming first. So I knew some about that. That's about all the briefing I got. Funny, you get thrown into this tempest and you sink or swim.

Chall: What was expected? That you would just cast a vote?

Heller: That's all that's expected, that you cast a vote on your committees, and in the board. It's surprising how quickly you're able to. You know, most of the votes are pretty unanimous, until you get into problem areas. It seems more complicated than it is once you get used to the system—although really it takes years to get onto the whole background of what's going on.

Chall: Most of the heavy work, then, was done in the committees?
Heller: Always has been.

Chall: One would expect that it might in a situation like this.

Heller: Well, certain things may be referred from the committee to the board for discussion. Certain Regents maybe can't make the committee meeting on a subject of great interest to them. They can ask to have it deferred for the next meeting, or sometimes the full discussion takes place in the full board meeting. We try to avoid that as much as possible. It's awfully hard to time meetings, you know, terribly hard sometimes to get through all the work. I think all of that has become better organized than it used to be. We had endless meetings when I was first a Regent. Good Lord! They'd go on for hours.

Chall: Yes, but when you see what you were trying to cover, it's not surprising.

Heller: Unbelievable. You have to let some interests go in order to cover the whole thing. I got to know the campuses, I got to know the chancellors, and the chief officers, usually the heads of the Academic Senates, some of the students, but I never had time to go to any lectures or any courses. You know, you just can't do it all.

Chall: How much time did it take you in the early years, before the FSM? What I'm trying to do today is concentrate, if I can, before '65.

Heller: I remember that Ed Carter told me once, and this is before FSM—he was chairman of the board at the time of the FSM, it was before that—that he had his secretary check the amount of time that he had spent—that would include phoning time and this was before he was chairman—he spent the equivalent of thirty days a year on the Regents, which is quite a bit of time.

Chall: How much time did you spend on—?

Heller: I never figured it out.

Chall: Before you were chairman. There certainly would be more time then.

Heller: I made a great effort to get to all the campuses aside from the meetings, because I felt I didn't know the University that well. It's hard to say. Maybe up to a third of my time.

Chall: A third of what time? Spare time?

Heller: Daytime. It might be nighttime, but I'm saying eight a.m. to five p.m. About a third of that, I would guess.

Chall: How often did these committees meet? Particularly grounds and building and educational policies in those days must have required quite a bit of time.
Heller: Oh, they met every month.

Chall: Just once a month each committee met?

Heller: Yes.

Chall: On different days?

Heller: Before the Regents' meeting. You see, we'd have two-day meetings, and we'd have committee meetings, except finance, say on Thursday, and the Regents always met on Friday. Friday used to be finance—these are the major committees—and then the Regents' meeting. It went on all day sometimes. That's changed now. The committees don't spend quite as much time, and they all meet on Thursdays, except the special committees. You see, that's what you don't realize. It takes so much time.

Chall: If you were on three committees, how did you handle all that on Thursdays?

Heller: Well, they had one follow another. We'd have university relations at lunch, and grounds and buildings in the morning, and educational policies in the afternoon.

Chall: So you would attempt to cover whatever needed to be covered in the committee and then just hold it over if it were something that were going to take several years like the year-around program or anything like that. It would go on—

Heller: It would go on for several months, but we'd have long discussions on them. It's very hard to give yourself a timetable, because there are shifts in the way the Regents operate over several years, and different chairmen make different arrangements. But when I first went on, except for the January meeting, the Regents met every month of the year, except August, for two days. Now, it's been changed, I've forgotten when it was changed, I think maybe after Charlie Hitch came in as president. This all requires a change of bylaws, this stuff is endless, to get sixteen votes. I'm pretty sure it's the same. We do not meet in December, April, and August. But there are often special committees that meet then. But that gives the administration time to plan and to get caught up. It works quite well. It's amazing how much business is covered. But then, they have to work in investment committee, and there are so many special committees on all sorts of subjects.
The Santa Cruz Campus Planning Committee

Heller: My first special assignment was when Clark Kerr asked me if I would informally be a member of the Santa Cruz Campus Planning Committee. Now, campus planning committees do not usually have Regents. But he felt that it was such a unique place that he should have a couple of Regents sitting with the campus planning committee. I can see why he asked me. I was the Regent who lived closest to Santa Cruz. He asked Bill Roth, too. Bill did quite a bit of it, but I did a lot more, stayed with it much more than Bill did.

Chall: What was your role? What was expected and what did you do?

Heller: I was supposed to go to all the meetings of the campus planning committee, and I just tramped that campus from beginning to end. This was the physical planning. Of course, I had to learn quite a bit of educational plans. I used to go down there at least once a month at Clark Kerr's request.

Chall: Work with the architects and landscape people?

Heller: Yes, all the architects, and Tommy Church, the landscape architect, engineers, the planning commissions of the city of Santa Cruz and the county of Santa Cruz. We had to get utilities and roads up there. It was a fascinating experience, let me say that, with many arguments.

Chall: Arguments like what?

Heller: About where buildings would be placed. I was there for the first arguments, which were where the first building should go. Have you ever been to the Santa Cruz campus?

Chall: Yes.

Heller: Well, the campus as it touches the city of Santa Cruz, has this glorious large meadow. Just beautiful. There were those on the campus planning, and also on the Regents, who wanted to build on the meadow first, keep the rest of the campus in reserve. I was among the group—fortunately Tommy Church was also part of my group, but Don McLaughlin was not—that believed we should start our first building just where the trees started, and keep the meadow unbuilt upon. Well, we won, thank heavens. This plan was accepted by the Regents. There was a good reason for those who were opposed. It cost more in the first place. We had to get all the utilities up to the middle of the campus. That meant the county of Santa Cruz had to put in a road for us. You see, that was part of the arrangement we had come to with Santa Cruz. They had to bring all the water up there, all the electricity up there, so it was a more expensive first-time plan.
Chall: Wasn't the grounds and buildings committee also a part of the Santa Cruz campus?

Heller: Well, they're not a part of the campus planning. Where grounds and buildings comes in is, once a campus planning committee makes decisions, it brings it to grounds and buildings. But they're not on the spot, you see. They're not on the territory. Of course, they approve the plans for the buildings, they have to approve the architects. Yes, they're part of it, but the physical planning on each individual campus starts with its own campus planning committee. It consists of people on the campus or related to it, and the architects. And then, it moves from there to the Regents. You see, we used to have a vice-president, a big office of vice-president for--I think it was called--planning. That is no longer necessary. It doesn't exist anymore. But it was a very important part of the University at that time.

Chall: I was just wondering why Donald McLaughlin was on that committee--

Heller: He was not on the campus planning. It was just Bill Roth and me. We didn't have votes, but we were consulted quite a bit. We were always anxious to know if the Regents would accept this, that, or the other.

Chall: So you did consult with other Regents who might have a different opinion?

Heller: To a degree, yes. And what was possible, and what wasn't possible. You know, you made your own rules as you went along because as far as I know, no Regents had ever been assigned to a campus planning committee before. Now, there may have been some assigned to Irvine, I'll have to ask Danny Aldrich that sometime.

Chall: It would make sense.

Heller: It would make sense. If there were any, Buff Chandler was one of them--some of the Southern California Regents. But I go into details because it is interesting to see how these things evolve.

Just before I was a Regent, there had been a big fight at Santa Cruz, and I'm not sure that I know the background of that, about who would be the--you forget terminology very quickly--the campus--something architect, and who would be the outside firm. The executive architect was one who was doing any particular building. For practical purposes let's call it the campus architect, who was the overall architect. There was a big fight that I was not a part of, because by the time I went on, there had been a meeting where it was agreed that four architectural firms would jointly direct this.
Heller: And among them, they would pick one person to sort of head up the others. I have a vague feeling, though I wasn't there when it happened, that Skidmore Owings wanted to be part of that, and they were ruled out. I'm not sure that I know why. I think I know, but I'm not sure, so I'd better let it go. They (Skidmore) never built a thing on the Santa Cruz campus—you know, one of the big firms up here.

Those that made up this group of four were Carl Warnecke, whatever his company was called; Anshen and Allen; the Wurster-Bernardi firm; and Ernest Kump. Those were the four firms. Of those, they picked John Carl Warnecke to be the—I guess they were called supervising architects, that was the name—to be the head of it.

So the first few months I was going down there, Jack Warnecke was very much around. But Jack gets all sorts of exciting commissions all over, and he was not paying enough attention to the campus, that's all. It was quite clear. We had to replace him with Ernie Kump.

Chall: How do you spell Kump?

Heller: K-u-m-p. Ernest J. Kump or something and Associates. That was a Palo Alto firm. All four are most eminent firms.

Our committee quickly established the practice that if you were supervising architect, your firm could not build individual buildings. But before that, Jack Warnecke was given the main library, and Ernie Kump, before he was chosen supervising architect, had been given a very minor first job, which was the temporary administration building, and he was subsequently given College Three. But that's all he ever built. The Wurster-Bernardi firm—it was really Bernardi much more than Wurster in this case, because Wurster was the supervising architect at the Berkeley campus, so it was his partner Bernardi—they were given College Number One, Cowell.

So they had to pioneer how we were going to build these small colleges. We had many a long argument with—what's his first name?—Ted Bernardi, I guess. His name is Theodore, but I forget what his nickname was—about College Number One. Clark Kerr would put in his car a lot, too. He had some very strong convictions about it. College Number Two, which was linked to College Number One, which was eventually named Stevenson—but they had a common kitchen and some common facilities—was given to Joe Esherick, who, in a way, was a Wurster protege.

Chall: What firm was he with?
Heller: He had his own firm by then. He had been with Wurster years ago. Joe Esherick and a group were the ones who built quite a bit of Berkeley. They built the Student Union, they were the architects of that, and the Environmental Sciences Building—you know, the huge massive thing at Berkeley.*

Chall: Yes. I know which one it is.

Heller: But then, Kump never had any other assignment, nor did Warnecke. I think they had sort of had their assignments before this whole thing was decided. On the surface they got on.

Anshen and Allen, who was the fourth firm, were given the first important building that was built, and that was the Science Building. Bob Anshen, who later committed suicide, but had a genius all his own, was very much a part of that campus planning committee. But I always said that Tommy Church, the landscape architect, was the real architect of Santa Cruz. If you've ever looked at Santa Cruz, the trees are more important than the buildings.

The Santa Cruz physical plan is really very interesting, because the buildings didn't have to relate to each other essentially—the trees were the binding factor. It can't be compared, say, to Berkeley, which just grew up like Topsy—as did UCLA to a degree, although it wasn't as long-established as Berkeley. Santa Barbara is the epitome of campus planning, where all the buildings are almost the same—they all relate to each other. At Riverside, though it already had some buildings, they tried very hard to relate the new structures. Irvine, which is just out in the open and with no trees, nothing—had to have, in contrast to Santa Cruz, a definite relationship in the types of architecture. But at Santa Cruz, each thing that was built didn't have to relate to any other building, because they're never seen except close up, because of the trees. An entirely different thing was done there.

Chall: This was done consciously? This was a conscious choice of Clark Kerr and others?

Heller: Yes. The campus planning and Tommy Church, and certainly Bill Roth and I, and other Regents eventually came along on the idea. I always felt that the Southern California Regents never understood the geography of the Santa Cruz Mountains. [chuckles] It wasn't elaborate enough for them. I can't explain it. Irvine and UCLA, where you see the buildings, meant much more to them. I don't mean this in any nasty way, but they never did quite, most of them, come to grips with the Santa Cruz physical situation.

Chall: Would that mean that there were problems on the board itself when the plans were brought in?

*Vernon DeMars was architect of the Student Union Building.
Heller: No, they usually—as a matter of fact, eventually, later on, I had to take myself off that campus planning committee—it had been going on for quite a while—because all of a sudden I found any time there was any item on Santa Cruz on any committee, they turned to me and asked, "Regent Heller, what do you think?" I didn't want to be the expert on Santa Cruz. I felt that to be very awkward, and I took myself off, and I said plainly that I did not choose to be an expert on Santa Cruz and T had just helped with some of the physical planning.

Chall: Can you remember what kind of questions would come up?

Heller: No. They may come to me, but I haven't thought of them for a while.

Chall: Eventually, that committee would have gone out of business anyway.

Heller: I think they still go on. I don't know, it went on for a long time. You have to remember from '62 to '65, '66 was that enormous expansion. It was really unique in certainly the history of the University of California, and fairly unique around the country, to have whole campuses being built. Now I did visit campuses in the Midwest that were doing huge building at that time, but it was largely in expanded dormitories, huge expansion of dormitory space and all that. But to build campuses from scratch was really something. Of course, San Diego was there too, and that was a—each one's a different problem, which makes it interesting. You get very interested, strangely enough, in all the campuses.

Chall: But the only one you had anything specially to do with was Santa Cruz.

Heller: Yes, the only one I specially did. I was a little involved in San Diego, and I don't remember why, but I was.

The San Diego Campus

Chall: There was something I read in terms of San Diego about the Regents purchasing the Black property—

Heller: Oh, that's a whole other subject. I don't think we've got time to go into that. [chuckles]

Chall: Was that while you were on the Regents, or before that?

Heller: Oh, yes. It certainly was when I was on the Regents.
Chall:  You don't want to go into that today?

Heller:  No, I don't mind going into it.

Chall:  Is it on the record anywhere? I don't know where I picked it up. It was in my notes somewhere.

Heller:  It's certainly in the San Diego papers on the record, and it's certainly--partly on the record--what was the name of the legislator down there that was just dingding the University right and left about this. It's a whole real estate thing that was going on there. We acquired the property we did--I'm not sure that I know exactly where all that property came from. You see, San Diego, which is La Jolla, really, had the lower campus, it had it for years--the Scripps Institute of Oceanography. I know part of the upper campus was acquired from the United States government. It had been some sort of military training camp. Most of that property was acquired from the government, not all. I guess the Regents bought some.

But then came the Black property. I've forgotten how many acres it is, but it's on the cliffs overlooking the ocean. It goes right down to the ocean. It's magnificent property. Mr. Black had a home there, and there were a few other homes. Ed Pauley and Ed Carter were the ones who brought this matter to the Regents, that we should acquire the Black home. It could be the chancellor's residence, serve as what came to be called University House. They had been sort of make-do. I remember when Herb [Herbert] York was chancellor down there, he had a little house down in La Jolla someplace, very small. I can remember the Regents going there for cocktails. And then when John Galbraith was chancellor, we leased a house right close to the upper campus; I can remember that one. It was when Bill McGill came in as chancellor that this Black property was available. He had nothing per se to do with it.

That legislator--would it have been [John] Schmitz?--extremely conservative--was always after the University for one reason or another. Just hated it. It had something to do with real estate interests. Ed Pauley and Ed Carter were just firm that we were going to take Regents' money and buy this Black property. And by God, it turned out to be a very good investment. We sold a lot of that property and made a profit on it, the Regents. But oh, it was just fury! I think it was probably the choicest property. And why they were so interested in it? I think they were accused of making money off of this.

Chall:  Pauley and Carter?

Heller:  I honestly don't think it's true. I think they saw it as a good deal for the University. They were both very good on this sort of thing. I've never believed that they ever made a cent on that Black property
Heller: in the first place. But you have to go into the files of the—I think the San Diego newspapers would have that. But there were horrible fights down there about that.

Chall: Meanwhile, the campus, of course, had been built, or had been finished.

Heller: Well, it's never been finished, because it didn't get far enough along to ever really be finished. But it's very different from Santa Cruz. We got the basic things in, including the library, of course.

The Problems Incurred with Medical Schools

Heller: San Diego acquired a school of medicine right away, which was a very difficult problem, making for enormous complications, because it was the county hospital and really not an adequate facility. It's not contingent to the campus; they are still working over that. Never worked that out. We made a poor deal with the county. We're still working on it.

You have to remember this was the point when these huge buildings were being built. Huge science buildings for biological sciences (don't hold me to the terms I'm saying), anatomy, you know, things that you must train people in for medicine. It brought some huge expenses and very bad problems. One of the problems is still that, at least in California, the county hospital is what's called the "Hospital of Last Resort." If you don't have insurance, or Medicare—for transients and all that—people who can't pay in any way get sent to the county hospital. So the University of California's San Diego medical school's hospital, is the hospital of last resort.

We never have been able to solve this problem with the county, which theoretically should pay for all these people. We had the same problem in Sacramento County with the UC Davis Hospital, but that has now been resolved. But San Diego, I believe, is still not resolved. And it runs your expenses up. It's just a nightmare! In fact, I hate that whole hospital thing at the University. Five medical schools.

To summarize all this, we had two excellent established medical schools in the University system, one in San Francisco and one at UCLA—and suddenly within a year we were one way or another adding three more from scratch. There were reasons for each one. San Diego wanted the prestige of having a medical school, because there were great scientists on the campus. At Davis, Emil Mrak, who was chancellor, had also been most anxious to have a Davis medical school and also had great scientists there, although not a medical school.
Heller: faculty—and because Davis is so close to Sacramento, the county liked the idea too. Irvine was another matter. There was a hospital in Los Angeles called the California College of Medicine, which was an osteopathic college, and one of its most eminent graduates was Steve Teale who at that point was one of the most powerful senators in Sacramento. He came from one of the small northern counties. Teale was determined that his California College of Medicine should become part of the University system and legislation was passed in Sacramento giving it to the University, with the University to decide where it should go.

The natural place would have seemed to be at UCLA, but UCLA simply refused to take it. It did not have an eminent faculty at all—so here we were, stuck. We considered Riverside at some point but that didn't work out, so finally the Irvine chancellor, Dan Aldrich, said okay, it would become part of the Irvine campus. Remember, this was one of our newest and smallest campuses, so you can imagine the problems involved in building up a medical faculty and getting rid, bit by bit, of the not-too-eminent faculty that was there plus working out the financial arrangements with the board of directors of the California College of Medicine who felt they had a vested interest in the fate of that college wherever it was.

Chall: Marvelous, glowing plans were made in the sixties.

Heller: Yes, these glowing plans, and the expenses, the inflation, the lack of funds; it's just unbelievable. And I understand the problem with the county still remains for San Diego. But at Irvine we did solve it with the county. I remember this because I was chairman at that time and signed the documents. It is a smaller county hospital and we straightened it out with Orange County.

Chall: In what way is it different?

Heller: What we would exchange in land with them for facilities; that they would take care of these, for a better word I say indigents, that the county's responsible for, that they would pay for them. Our red ink was just horrible with all these hospitals.

Chall: The red ink for the county hospitals generally is just terrible.

Heller: Yes, but it should be a county responsibility.

Chall: Of course, but I can see why they'd love to move it off.

Heller: At Sacramento, we had a devil of a time, and I was on the special committee trying to work out—this was a lot later—the medical school thing in Sacramento. There was where we worked with the county board of supervisors. I was in on that one. That's a board
Heller: supervisors of five people, so we could only ever meet with two of them. I can't even begin to tell you the problems. They'd tell you they'd do something, and then they'd go back and the board wouldn't do it. It was endless! Because they really had said they would do all these things, and they refused to. We finally got that settled. I was still a Regent when that finally got settled. UCLA and SF are really in comparatively quite good shape. They're older medical schools. In accounts receivables, they're in very good shape, but the cost of all medical care and research is horrifying and getting worse.

And the buildings! You say, why put up such elaborate buildings? but the state has very strict requirements on hospital buildings. Very strict. Terribly strict. So they're terribly expensive. SF is just in the midst of rebuilding Moffitt Hospital. They've never had a decent hospital there. They've had a marvelous medical school. The campus there is raising I've forgotten how many millions of dollars to take care of two floors that the state could not pay for, that they needed. Unfortunately, the two floors were not the two top floors. They had to be low down so they could connect with the old hospital property. That money's about the last big building loan that the state has given us. The state finally agreed to push the frame up two more stories, if UC would fund. So the Regents have lent the money to SF Med. SF Med has raised quite a bit of money.

Chall: How have they raised it?

Heller: They've got a whole promotions committee. They've got a pretty good constituency when you think of the patients and the doctors that they've had over the years. A lot of money has been given to SF for other things. The present chancellor, Frank Sooy, really has to spend a tremendous amount of time on this—raising funds. I don't know the exact stage of it now, but they have a fair amount. The Regents agreed that it was important to get it done while this whole building was being done, or it could never be done. It had to connect up with the adjacent hospital at a certain floor level—the parts that the state refused to fund.

The Regents' Funds

Chall: How do the Regents come to have their own funds, I mean, funds enough to buy property, and lend money, and give scholarships?

Heller: Two ways. Gifts, which used to be given maybe to the University, but they usually are given for specific campuses. But the Regents have charge of all those. Then we have all the federal contracts, like the AEC, which pay overhead to the Regents in their contracts and grants.
Heller: Grants, both federal and private, have this overhead. Now contract money, this is largely federal, has to go half, I think it is—it may have changed now, but I haven't heard it has—half of that money has to go to the state. We used to have it all. When I was first a Regent, we negotiated that with Pat Brown and Hale Champion, who was his finance chairman. They wanted to take half of contracts and grants, but they settled on contracts. So the state gets half that money, which is supposed to apply to the UC budget when they get that much less. So it's built up to pretty good sums.

We have two main funds that that money is in. One is for outright spending, and one is for lending. Like, we can advance money for say, when the faculty wants to build a faculty club. Its dues, theoretically, will pay back that money, or for dormitories, though we usually do housing bonds for dormitories. Anything that's income bearing you can fund out of that. The other fund—I guess it's called the Opportunity Fund, I've forgotten the names, I'd have to look it up—we do our over-and-above things on. We give a great deal of our scholarship money out of the Opportunity Fund.

University Abroad is done with that. All sorts of exchange privileges between the campuses is taken care of by that. There are many uses for it, I assure you. It's committed years ahead. The state often tries to get its hands on it, but the Regents have it heavily committed way ahead. The other fund, the Contract Fund (I believe it's called University Fund), is for money that can be returned eventually, as against scholarships. Student grants, which are supposed to be paid back, come out of the contract money. And, over and above faculty funding, lots of things that come out of that. Then there's the private money, some of which is restricted. Any gifts which are made to the University at large—not designated for individual campuses—go into the Regents' fund also. Let me assure you those funds are extremely carefully allocated by the Regents. Some of the items will of course be repaid. Have you ever seen the list of all these gifts to the University and how they keep it?

Chall: I may have seen it.

Heller: It's about that thick. It's all computered. You get the hang of it after a while. I went through it once, because I wanted to see certain things. I learned an awful lot about funds I didn't know anything about. You know, it's so massive, it's almost impossible to keep track. With computerization, they've got a much better hold and count on the University's assets than they used to have.

Chall: So investing the money is a very important aspect of a Regent's duty.
Heller: Oh, is it! When any individual campus raises funds for a campus, they have to get the okay of the Regents. They can't just go off on their own and decide to raise funds for a student union, or this or that, they have to get approval. An art gallery, or—depends on what they're doing. You know, a gym up at Davis. The state does not give us money for athletic facilities. They give it to state colleges, but not the University.

Chall: That's rather a large bite out of the budget.

Heller: I don't know where you stop and finish on all this University business.

Chall: I don't either, but we'll decide.

Heller: I shouldn't be talking in general this way, I should be talking about things I've done. That hospital thing I did do some of, you see.

Chall: I think that you give us a general impression of how the Regents operate which only an insider can see.

Heller: Of course, some Regents do a lot more work than others. Some by inclination, and some because they have more time. But most of them spend a great deal of time, a tremendous amount.

Regents and Their Personal Interests as Board Members, and Changes in Terms and Composition

Heller: That varies with the individual Regent. Most of them do, though. They're pretty good about it.

Chall: What if you had a Regent appointed who really didn't function well? There's nothing you can do for sixteen years?

Heller: There's not a thing you can do. Norton Simon, for example, refused to serve on any committees. Didn't believe in it. You can assign him forever; he wouldn't come. So it was no use assigning him. He wouldn't come. Everything he was interested in, he was interested in certain subjects, had to come before the Regents, because of his personal interests. Regents are very good, in my experience, at considering any one Regent's special interest. I don't mean money-making interest, but anything that any Regent is especially interested in, making sure that that Regent is there for discussion and decision making. Norton made it very difficult, I assure you, by refusing to go through the committee process.
Heller: It's a sixteen-year term, it's a long term, it's a lot of time. There's not a cent of money paid; much less than state agencies, for example. All you get paid is per diem and transportation. That's it. And the per diem never covers a Regent's per diem costs, because it's never up to the cost.

Chall: That's per diem on the two days when you're meeting as Regents?

Heller: Yes.

Chall: And transportation?

Heller: Yes. You can get the transportation for any special committees. But the per diem goes with the state per diem. It's just hotels--[tape interruption]

[listening to tape playback] You'd better label that that's a female voice. It sounds so male as it comes out.

Chall: Well, you have a deep voice. That's all right; I'm sure it's much easier for the transcriber to hear than another type. I think our discussion, before your phone call, was anent the fact that if the governor were to make a bad appointment, you had difficulty for sixteen years.

Heller: You can. You can, because, except that I knew about John Francis Neylan's resignation, I can't think of any resignations short of death.

Chall: I understand that Buff Chandler resigned before her term had ended.


Chall: Mrs. Hearst did too, I think.

Heller: On her second term.

Now Phil Boyd was another thing. He was seventy, and he hadn't been that well, his doctors told him not to, but he could have gone on. But you know, this new law was passed, that didn't apply to the Regents until the very last--the disclosure. It was discovered the Regents were not part of that unless you were an officer of the Regents, which did not apply to Phil Boyd. Phil has a passion for privacy. I think he's a very wealthy man, but he's very quiet about it. For example, he gave the campanile to Riverside. It was done anonymously. He just has a passion for anonymity. He just up and resigned on the excuse of not being too well, and being seventy. But he had said he was just not going to be in a position where he would have to disclose.
Heller: I didn't feel that way; we didn't have to. I would have been perfectly willing. All you had to do was name anything which it was thought might be in conflict with the University. You didn't have to name the amount, you'd have to say over ten thousand dollars of this stock or that, but Phil was appalled at the idea that he might have to write out all of his assets. I think we were all glad that we didn't have to do it. You know, it can be done perfectly well. Nobody else thought of resigning because of that. That's why in my opinion, he resigned, but it's true that he hadn't been feeling too well, besides.

Chall: And who was the third one you mentioned resigned before his term was up? Was there another one who resigned before the term was up?

Heller: John Francis Neylan, before I was a Regent.

Chall: Neylan, of course. So it isn't done very often.

Heller: Oh, it's rarely done.

Chall: It's a prestigious position, isn't it? It's really felt to be a prestigious position.

Heller: Well, it has been. I'm never sure, since Jerry Brown's in, exactly what is thought of it. I think it's still very prestigious. After all, it has enormous control over-- but by and large, it's been a very good control, in my opinion. Very good. The trouble is, I'm more than happy to have every sort of person on the Regents, but there's no money for them! They've got to be able to afford to take all this time off, and to spend a certain amount of money just for living expenses. There are very few people that will fill that bill. You talk about minorities, and underprivileged, and all that, but it's awfully hard to find people.

Chall: And the state hasn't been willing to provide any better help to the Regents?

Heller: I think it's specifically a constitutional thing. I'm not--I'll have to look that up. It's easier said than done to get a wide variety of people. And it's much harder work than people realize. And the other thing--I'm giving you some of my philosophy, maybe I should sum it up later--

Chall: Any time is right.

Heller: I don't believe any Regent should represent a constituency. If you go in representing the Chicanos, the blacks, women, I can speak to women particularly, the young, the old, whatever it is, I don't think you're being a proper Regent. I always refused to align myself with anything.
Heller: I don't think she should have accepted that second term, because it was right after Patty was kidnapped. There was all this excitement about the Regents. Governor Reagan offered her the second term, and I have heard on very good authority that Randy Hearst was absolutely furious that he offered it, that Catherine accepted it, and he announced it in the midst of this thing. Which was all very difficult. Remember, the attack was on about the Regents, and her mother, and all that. I think Randy was not consulted on any of this, from what I hear. And certainly not about the fact that it was going to be public. That's the part I heard most of.

Buff Chandler--this is why I cannot handle this thing, it has to be sealed--Buff Chandler hated Ronald Reagan. She just hated him. Buff has her loves and her hates, and she hated him from the beginning, and I always knew it. She found him extremely distasteful.

Chall: And that was her reason for resigning?

Heller: Well, it took a while to develop. She had a dinner party at the L.A. Times shortly after they had built this great Norman Chandler Pavilion on top there. Beautiful; it's a beautiful room. Elegantly--that's the only word to use--furnished. The food is catered by Petrini's, which is the best restaurant in Los Angeles, always. And she invited all Regents, no spouses, shortly after--a few months after Reagan was elected to office. And he refused. Bob [Robert] Finch was there; he had just come into office, and [Max] Rafferty was there, whom she didn't like either, of course. And Reagan refused. I think he said he was too busy, had a cold, I don't know what.

But you don't refuse Buff Chandler, I want to tell you. And she was frankly furious. She made such a fuss, that somehow he changed his mind and came. In that room there are large tables, round tables, of about ten people per table, maybe twelve. There were only three women out of this whole operation. There was Catherine Hearst, there was myself, and there was Buff Chandler. Buff is an extremely good hostess; she keeps her eye on everything that's happening. She just knows.

So we had cocktails for a moderate amount of time, and then I remember she came over to me, and she said, "Ellie, I'd like you to take the governor into dinner." You know, me with Ronald Reagan. Didn't make much sense. Of course, he didn't like that at all, I'm sure. He didn't say anything. She came over to the table as we went over, and said, "Here, you should sit here." It was facing the room, and then she called to Norton Simon, and said, "I want you to sit on this side of the governor."

The governor and I--Reagan and I have never had a fight, but our interests were so different. Whereas Norton was always fighting with him. The whole thing was just so distasteful for her that she
Heller: naturally—I suppose she should have taken him in—she wouldn't do it. Instead of which, she took Bob Finch, the lieutenant governor, and she assigned Max Rafferty to Catherine Hearst. [laughs] This is typical Buff, that's all I can tell you. There were about—Well, there are twenty-four Regents, and almost all of them were there, I guess, plus—I guess that was all. It was not a big party, by any means. Well, I'm just telling you how her dislike evidenced itself.

I knew from things that Buff had said to me, that this dislike of Reagan was dominant over everything she did. She had been a splendid Regent. She resigned a little over a year before her term was up.

Chall: That's what surprised me, that it was so close.

Heller: Well, Buff is pretty cagey. She was not going to allow Reagan not to reappoint her. She was going to get off those Regents before she was going to be rebuffed by Reagan. And she wouldn't have accepted an appointment from him if he had offered it, though I don't think he would have. He might have, and with dislike, she wouldn't have taken it. That's Buff.

Her husband, Norman, was retiring just about then. She used that as the easy excuse, that now that Norman was retiring, she had to spend more time with him and not be going all around the state. But that, in my pretty solid opinion about this one, is why she resigned.
Chall: I'd like to finish where we left off last time. You were telling me that you didn't approve, exactly, of the Regents coming from constituencies, that is, women, minorities, that sort of thing.

Heller: What I think I was trying to say was, once you become a Regent—naturally anybody carries his own point of view on to the Regents—but you cannot act for a constituency, in my belief, as a Regent.

The first constituency which was most apparent was individual campuses within the University system. I had always been oriented, for example, toward Berkeley. But I found very quickly I had to be equally interested in the other eight campuses. Some of the UCLA people came on, but the good—Let's take the alumni Regent, who's only on for one year of voting and one year of attendance. He may come from Berkeley or UCLA, which it was for a long time. Now they've got a pattern whereby Santa Barbara's been in, Riverside, and Irvine, and Davis. There's a whole pattern evolved by the Alumni Association. You can't go in, even though you come from one campus, and just represent that one campus. Those are the most obvious constituencies.

The labor people that I worked with, for example, to give you one constituency—Neil Haggerty was on, and then Einar Mohn was briefly—they were very good Regents. You would never have thought of them as representing labor. They were just interested in the issues of the whole University. You can have a person who's a labor leader, but he can't be thinking about his constituency, or you can't possible do the job.

The head of the state Board of Agriculture used to be a Regent. That was abolished, but I served with quite a few of them that way, and they were not representing agriculture, per se, they knew more about agriculture, usually, than the rest of the board, but that's just one tiny speck of one whole university's business.

Now you hear all the calls for the minorities and the impoverished and this and that, and I think it's fine for anybody to be on. But you're not very effective if you're always talking about the people you consider you represent. Let's see, I was just thinking—there were two blacks on when I was a Regent. One was Wilson Riles, ex officio, of course, who did an excellent job. He doesn't think of himself as a black, he thinks of himself as a person in education. He was an excellent Regent. He looks at the big issues. Then Mervyn Dymally was lieutenant governor. Once in a while, Dymally would make little speeches about minorities. He'd go off on Chicanos sometimes, which he really didn't care about at all, but that was his style. But when it came to the point on the Regents, he really left that
Heller: issue basically alone. I don't mean that the question of minorities isn't for everybody, it is. But you can't have that as your sole issue.

Now, since I've left, and I'm only speaking in theory, because I've only met her, Vilma Martinez, who was appointed by Jerry Brown, is very much Mexican-American whatever the organization is.

Chall: Yes. I think some legal defense organization.

Heller: And I understand very conscious, you know, really pushing that. However, I imagine she's going to get better--they almost all do in the end--about looking at the whole problem while mindful of one thing that they're interested in.

Chall: Do you have any objections to the fact that these people are generally picked to come out of certain of our constituencies in the general population, knowing that they'll probably take into account the good of the University as a whole within a short time? And that they have special interests that might need to be reflected in board decisions?

Heller: I don't have any objection to anybody, because I've seen them come out of all sorts of groups that don't represent any special constituency. I suppose if I had gone on looking at Berkeley, which was maybe one thing I knew more about, or women--I was certainly not representing the women of the state of California as far as I was concerned.

Chall: Do you think by appointing women, it is expected that they would be concerned solely with women?

Heller: I don't think so, really.

Chall: This is required now, I guess, that these diverse elements be represented on the Regents. Do they bring something?

Heller: I'm not sure that Article IX, Section 9 says that, does it?

Chall: I don't know. I though that in the recomposition--

Heller: The recomposition of the Regents?

Chall: I don't know whether it's required by the new amendment, or it's just a consideration.

Heller: I don't think it has anything like a formula at all. The only thing that really was changed by the amendment was that the president of Mechanics Institute and the chairman of the State Board of Agriculture were dropped as ex-officio members--and the term of the Regents was changed from 16 to 12 years.
Chall: What's your opinion about the twelve-year rather than the sixteen-year term, as long as we're on the Regents in general?

Heller: That one I can tell you exactly what I thought, because I went into this rather in depth, because I looked at every board of governors in the country to see what their terms were. Sixteen years, aside from the self-perpetuating boards, was the longest term of office that there was. I personally didn't feel it was too long. It's amazing how long it takes to get to know the business of the University, and be effective. But I could understand the legislative cries about "It's too long a term!" I really could understand that. There was a great move to cut it to eight years, which is what the state colleges have. I fortunately was on the committee that met with some of the legislators who were drawing up that new constitutional amendment. I think I had some influence in it, in that I thought it made sense to listen to those cries against sixteen years, because we clearly were the longest term, and still try to get more than eight years, which I don't think is enough. Because they're appointed by the governor, one governor gets control of the Board of Regents, which may be good or may be bad. I think I had some influence on getting it changed to the twelve year, rather than cut to the eight year, though I had some opposition from some of my Regent friends.

Chall: On cutting it?

Heller: Who didn't want to give at all, who wanted to keep the sixteen years. I don't want to say that I was the determining factor, but that was my own position. Given my first preference, I would have opted for the sixteen years.

Chall: Would have opted for the sixteen without the possibility of renewing a term?

Heller: I probably would have. It never really came up. There were quite a few things I suggested which were rejected too, not in a formal way, about looking at automatic retirement at the age of seventy.

Chall: On the Regents?

Heller: Of a Regent. I didn't care for seventy, but I mean just putting an age limit. That was rejected. Part of the trouble I had on the twelve year, which, as I say, wasn't my first choice, some of the more recent Regents wanted their sixteen years. They felt they were being discriminated against. So we finally compromised that out into a grandfather clause, so that everybody that was on there at the time served out the sixteen years. Which makes a rather big board up to--I've forgotten what year, but it will eventually settle down to twenty-four Regents again.
Chall: What about the student--There were two other--I don't know whether they're in the amendment, but I suspect they are--that the Regents may appoint a member of another institution to the Regents and also a student.

Heller: Is that in, that they may appoint a member? It's never been done.

Chall: I think I saw it in the University--it's just "may."

Heller: It's only been done in an indirect way. For instance, Glen Campbell, who is a Regent, is sort of a member of Stanford University. He isn't a member of the Academic Senate or whatever they call it there. The Hoover Institution hasn't been accepted for that, or the director of it, but he is part of another institution. I'm not sure why that was put in.

Chall: Did the Regents appoint him, or was he appointed by one of the governors?

Heller: He was appointed by Reagan.

Chall: What about the student?

Heller: That was another compromise, I guess you'd call it. I always thought it would be fine to have a student Regent, personally. There was a lot of opposition to it. A lot of students get very obstreperous sometimes when they come before the Regents. I always thought it would be okay to have it. That compromised to the Regents to "may."

After this amendment was passed, there was a special Regents' committee set up to look at if a student Regent were accepted by the board, how the person would be selected. There was much negotiation back and forth with the students. I can't remember all the rules that were established, and accepted. One was the student Regent could not be an officer of the associated students on any campus, or editor of the newspaper of a campus. The reason for that, it seems very clear to me, we didn't want one group always dominating. So they had a very elaborate system of choosing, which is not worth going into. I don't know if you know it or not.

Chall: No, I don't know all the rules.

Heller: Oh, they are nominated from all the campuses, from north and south; they nominate people, and then there's balloting, and the three top choices are submitted to the Regents and are interviewed by a special committee of the Regents each year. It was tried for one year, that was the first year, and that first student Regent was just marvelous.

Chall: It was a young woman, wasn't it, Mock?
Heller: Yes. Carol Mock. She couldn't have been better. If all Regents were like Carol Mock, it would be beautiful. She was marvelous. She understood very clearly that she was a Regent, and though she could express points of view about the students, she was not there to be a student. She was there to be a Regent. She was superb. She had a tough job; she was the first one, she had to feel her way, she was being besieged by students who wanted to control her in a way. She was really superb. At the end of that year, the Regents voted—I think there was another special committee—to continue this for another five years. It was to be reexamined after one year, or maybe two years, I can't remember, and then it was voted for five years, and I think that's where it is now. I haven't served with any of the others, but I hear varying reports on their abilities. I couldn't speak more highly than I could for Carol Mock. Some of them are very demanding, I guess. I shouldn't talk about it; I only hear it indirectly.

Chall: Well, I suppose it's like any other appointment.

Heller: Yes, certainly. But I think basically, in theory, anyway, it's a very good idea. And then, there's also in that law that a faculty member may be appointed a Regent. Well, the statewide Academic Senate, whatever the process is, through the campuses and up the statewide, decided it did not want a faculty member as a Regent, that it would be a conflict of interest. Instead, they asked that the chairman of the statewide Academic Senate be seated right at the Regents' table. They felt that that would be beneficial, that they don't have to be recognized from the floor all the time. Whenever the chairman of the Academic Senate wants to be recognized, the statewide, you always recognize him or her to speak. But now they do have a faculty member sitting at the table. This is all a matter of space.

It sounds silly, but a table just gets impossible after a certain amount of people. The chairman is seated at the table now, and the faculty like it that way. I think they were rather wise to come up with the fact that there would be a big conflict of interest voting on faculty salaries, all sorts of things. As far as I know, the Academic Senate is very satisfied with the decision it came to. I think they could change it if they ever wanted to.

Chall: Yes. I suppose another faculty might.

Heller: Yes. This has been going on for quite a while, and it seems to satisfy everybody. The actual vote is not very important most of the time. Well, most issues are pretty unanimous—most votes.

Chall: There's an elaborate system set up to nominate a Regent now to the board.
Heller: Doesn't work--and in my opinion it never will work. It does not function. It is for a list of suggested names sent to the governor, from which the governor would appoint Regents. I was on the original committee, by--not by name, but by--

Chall: By title.

Heller: Title.

Chall: Because you were chairman of the board.

Heller: On the first one I was chairman of the board. We met three or four times. If I remember correctly, one member was to be appointed by the speaker of the assembly. I don't think we ever had anybody from that position. One was to be appointed by the senate. I can't remember if we ever got anybody from that. But the president of the Alumni Association, the chairman of the Board of Regents--

Chall: A student of the University.

Heller: A student, yes. I've forgotten how a student was chosen now. It was very elaborate. There was a very nice young man from San Diego on the committee I served on.

Chall: A faculty member.

Heller: A faculty member, yes. We had the chairman of the Academic Senate, or a designated person. We met quite seriously and quite often. It's a funny thing, because there's no staff, you see, connected with it. It's very hard to get these people together. George Link was president of the Alumni Association that year. He was a Berkeley alumni president. So George offered us the use of space in the Alumni House to meet, and a secretary from the Alumni Association to keep what records there might be. The secretary of the Regents quite properly had nothing to do with this.

Oh, a representative of the governor was to come. I can't think of his name, but he really didn't have much to say. So we tried to find out what would be desirable, and if I remember correctly, we asked all these various constituencies to suggest names, or the Alumni Association and so on. We had a huge list of names. Some of whom were just plain nutty, some of whom were good, and we tried to put together a list of--I've forgotten how many names were on it eventually--that we knew more or less about for the governor to choose from.

The governor absolutely ignored the whole thing. And what he's done, I understand, because then I was through by the time the governor (Jerry Brown) got his first appointment--he delayed a long
Heller: time in making any appointments in the first place. By that time, Ed Morris was president of the Alumni Association. He was president of the Santa Barbara Alumni Association, though he lives in San Francisco. What the governor did then and has done since, I guess, is the most casual thing. He phoned Ed Morris the first time, and said, "Well, I'm going to appoint so-and-so and so-and-so, and I want your okay." That's all there was to it. He never looked at the list; he never looked at anything. He just made up his mind. And that's what I believe he's done ever since. As I remember, our group decided to make the president of the Alumni Association sort of informal chairman of the group, so that that's why he checks with that person.

That's all there is to it. It was an endless procedure which ended in nothing. I know the wish was, when it was originally drafted, the idea of that committee, was to keep out absolutely irrational appointments. It wasn't aimed at Jerry Brown.

Nobody knew whom he was going to appoint to anything. It had nothing to do with him. It may or may not have had something to do with Reagan. It was done to keep a governor from going out of control. But it doesn't work at all that way. And then what was added was confirmation by the senate. The confirmation by the senate, I hear, is absolutely just about automatic.

Chall: Just pro forma.

Heller: Just pro forma. I think they all have to go up there and-- After that was passed, Joe Moore, who had been an ex officio Regent as president of the Mechanics Institute, was appointed a full-term Regent by Reagan. Catherine Hearst was reappointed by Reagan.

Chall: Did this come in during the Reagan term, this proposal, this change?

Heller: Yes. It had to, because I know that they had to go before the senate, and they were both appointed to those sixteen-year terms while I was still a Regent. Now, I'm not sure how the two linked, I've forgotten. Joe told me about it, you see. He said it was really just a pro forma appearance. Catherine's was probably more pro forma. I guess there were two appointments there. There had to be. They both got these sixteen-year terms. As far as I know, every other appointee has been that way. So it's a device that's being ignored, and I imagine it will always be ignored.

Chall: It will be ignored unless a group of people become irate with an appointment, and then they'll call to order.

Heller: I vaguely remember somebody from the governor's office saying that Jerry Brown considered that was all he had to do under that law. He had legal interpretation. He considered that a consultant.
Chall: That's interesting.

Heller: Yes. I don't think that's ever been very much explored.

Chall: I had a feeling that that wasn't working from the nature of his appointments. Not that they're bad, but they just are so much like Jerry Brown.

Heller: He's ignored it. Except for that very pro forma thing. I don't know what he's said recently, but he hasn't made any appointments; he's had vacancies.

Chall: Still? Again?

Heller: Oh yes. There's still two vacancies floating around there.

Chall: He's not quick at appointments.

Heller: I don't know what he thinks about. There will be two more coming up in March.

The Year-Round Schedule

Chall: We'll probably get into other matters as they come up in terms of special problems that we've explored, but now we can go into some of the issues. They year-round schedule is one that took much time.

Heller: I was thinking about it, and I can recall bits and pieces. You may have had some of that from Harry Wellman.* Did you?

Chall: Oh, yes.

Heller: I'm afraid I don't remember the details, I remember bits and pieces. One was that Pat Brown, when he was governor, and Clark Kerr was president, was pushing very hard for full use of facilities on a year-round basis. This was at the time when the demography projections were expanding, and there was a question of should there be another campus or two of the University. Pat Brown was very eager, as was, I think, Hale Champion, to use the full facilities. Now, that makes good sense in theory. Well then the question was how do you use year-round facilities. Can you do it with the semester system that was then in existence? Do you do it on a tri-semester thing and what

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Heller: complications do you get into then, or do you do it—do you switch the whole university system to a quarter system? I think the objective was that the summer quarter, when it was eventually adopted, would have about maybe forty percent of the other three quarters' enrollment. But there was a—

This is the part I can't remember in detail, but I remember some of it. Clark Kerr by this time had made up his mind that we had to go on the quarter system. But he had to get it through the faculty first. If I remember correctly, at that time the Academic Senate statewide worked differently than it does now in that there was the northern division, and the southern division. And I believe, and you can correct me, or I can correct myself by finding out, that the northern division, which would be Berkeley, Davis, San Francisco, and Santa Cruz, which was very small, voted against the quarter system. And the southern campuses had many more votes for the quarter system. So Clark got the Regents to just turn those rules around. There was an awful fight on that. Do you remember it? Did you hear any of that?

Chall: No. There were a couple of votes taken in the Regents' meetings, and it took them a long time.

Heller: Well, it was trying to straighten it out with the faculty. Though there had always been a northern division and a southern division vote, and this is what I can't remember—how it worked. Clark decided to combine them all into one vote because northern division was used to voting for what it wanted, and the southern division for what it wanted. He was determined that he was going to get the quarter system through. So he changed the way the total vote was weighed by throwing all the Academic Senates, both southern and northern, into one vote, and then he got a vote in favor of the quarter system.

Chall: He changed the weight of a vote?

Heller: No. It used to be the northern could have stayed on whatever it wanted—the semester system plus the summer system, and the southern division went for a quarter system. So he took the total number of faculty votes for each system, and by combining them, he got the quarter system voted through the faculties. The faculty were furious at him. They were just furious at him for changing the system. There was nothing in writing that said you had to do it that way.

Let me say that I think Clark had thought this through to the degree that—Well, I know he had thought a lot about it, what was the best, and he came up with the fact that the only practical thing was the quarter system. But there was terrific faculty objection from the northern—the Berkeley faculty in particular—about it. And they were just livid with this change in rules at that time. They did not want the quarter system.
Chall: What did the Regents do about all this?

Heller: They finally accepted the quarter system, voted to accept the quarter system. Now Clark very carefully pointed out, and he was quite right, that we could go into a year-round operation without too much greater expense: more faculty offices, more secretarial help because we'd have more full-time faculty, we'd have to stagger faculty differently. He had plenty of facts and figures, and I'm not sure whether Pat Brown, who was governor, or Hale Champion, ever fully accepted those figures, because what happened was it went into year-round operation with the summer schools more or less performing as usual with a very light enrollment. I believe the new campuses were allowed to delay instituting the summer quarter.

Chall: They were until each reached a certain size.

Heller: I thought so. Well, the thing eventually fell of its own weight. That's the sum total of it. But it was Pat Brown who started this to economize on not building new campuses. Which would have been more expensive. But then the anticipated growth did not come, and the thing just sort of-- I guess in theory it was still possible to have a year-round operation on the quarter system. I think there are some people who still hate the quarter system. There are arguments on either side. I heard somebody say, "Whatever system you're on, you like the other one better." That was somebody at Stanford that said that. It was a very hot fight.

Chall: Did it divide the Regents at all?

Heller: No. No, it really didn't. Norton Simon was one of the leading advocates of the year-round system. He never would listen to the facts and figures on it. He just was determined to-- It did upset the faculty a lot to change on to the quarter system, but I think that's hard on any faculty. If you change your system you have to change your courses, their content, their vacations, some of them said they couldn't do it. But it's been worked out. I don't know. Do you hear much complaint about the quarter system any more?

Chall: No, I don't hear it, but then I'm not in a place where I could. I did notice in yesterday's paper though that as the University contemplates the eighties, somebody suggested that they go back to the semester system.

Heller: Well, I think it's always alive. It would be a live subject. Maybe facts and figures will prove out the-- It's a big upset to faculty members to change their courses and the content.

Chall: One of the reasons I think it was done was to integrate it with what was going on in high schools and junior colleges and some other institutions.
Heller: It could be. I wouldn't be surprised.

Chall: In those days, I mean at that time, one of the reasons for going to the quarter system was that it was seen to be moving everywhere in that direction.

Heller: That was part of it. But the main thing was, a lot of people, I think a lot of the Regents, did not think the semester system plus a double summer session would be practical at all. This was to accommodate a lot more students. You have to remember what the purpose was originally. I think that purpose has sort of disappeared, and we certainly proved while we had the year-round operation at Berkeley and UCLA, that you cannot attract many regular students in the summer. That's when the jobs are available to students outside of the University. You get the special students, not the regular students, who are working toward a degree. I'm sure the facts and figures are somewhere on that. I'd never be surprised to see figures that would prove we could run a better, more economical system than on the semester system.

But the basis of it was really the use of facilities. I think Norton Simon never gave up about the fact that it should be used full time. It wasn't a big fight within the Regents, except all these hazards were being reported. First this hadn't been settled and that hadn't been settled.

Chall: It was difficult. That's why it took so long.

Heller: I'd never be surprised if it changed.

**ROTC: Compulsory or Voluntary?**

Chall: What about ROTC—changing it from a compulsory to a voluntary—

Heller: That was one of the first big votes after I came on the Regents. It had been in the works for a long time, but there never were the votes, I understand, on the Regents to pass it. That was a lot of furor on that subject.

I knew that Edward Heller had always been for the abolishment of compulsory ROTC. I think that that was one subject on which I had made up my mind. If it ever came up before the Regents, I felt I knew enough about it that I would vote to abolish it.

But somehow it got turned into a patriotic issue. You weren't patriotic if you voted to abolish compulsory ROTC. Some of the Regents over the years sort of equated ROTC with patriotism. This
Heller: is unbelievable, but it's true. Last time I heard it mentioned was the last year I was on the Regents. Berkeley was always the nub of the attacks.

Chall: That was to get rid of it entirely from the campus, wasn't it?

Heller: No. To make it voluntary, that's all.

Chall: In 1962, they chose to make it voluntary. Then I recall sometime later that certain Berkeley people—by and large both associated students and the Academic Senate—were trying to get it off the campus entirely.

Heller: They were trying to get it off. That is correct.

Chall: Your vote had to do with making it voluntary.

Heller: It's never been abolished, because a land grand college has it in its charter. We are a land grant college. We do not have to have it on all of our campuses, but we have to offer it. Berkeley has it, UCLA has it; I'm not sure if Davis does or not. I think that's all. But it did get equated in this silly way with patriotism. Of course, I voted for abolishment. I always wanted to see the compulsory ROTC abolished.

It was abolished. There wasn't too much excitement, I don't think, after that. It kept coming up as an issue. It was really more a Berkeley issue than any place else. The Berkeley faculty just cannot stand the way the army ROTC works. You know about that, probably.

Chall: No, I don't.

Heller: They want members of their own senate to give the courses, or they want army personnel who can get appointments to the Academic Senate to give it. The Berkeley faculty have always felt that it's too low quality teaching. There has been this constant fight about it. They don't want to accept the units. This has gone on for years. And during the FSM and later, as I say, it got sort of equated more and more with patriotism, and there was a clique then on the Board of Regents that were always attacking the Berkeley faculty for being unpatriotic. This fight would come up, and I remember Roger Heyns would have to come in with whether the credit was going to be accepted or not each time. Always was accepted. It's one of these crazy fights, that's all I can say.

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Heller: What year did you tell me we abolished it?

Chall: In June 1962.
Heller: Well, to go back to my vote: I remember we were meeting on the UCLA campus in what used to be called the Regents' room in the administration building. Much too small for any audience in it. This is an interesting sidelight. This is before Catherine Hearst got mad at Clark Kerr and the University. She got all emotional about this. The Hearst papers were violently against abolishment of compulsory ROTC but Catherine got carried away by this when it finally came up. I guess I was pretty new to the Regents, but I guess Clark knew the votes were there by this time. It was a split vote, but the votes were there.

Chall: It came in twice: once to be considered--

Heller: Yes. That's right.

Chall: --and then the next month for voting.

Heller: We actually voted, I think, at UCLA. I remember this because all of a sudden Catherine Hearst rushed around the room, or rushed to Clark, and said, "I want to introduce the motion to abolish it." And she did. I've forgotten who voted on which side. It was a split vote.

I happened to go home on the plane with her. All the way home she kept saying, "I'm scared to face Randy. I'm scared to face Randy! What's he going to say to me? He's going to punish me for this!" This is Catherine.

Chall: What made her, do you think, vote for abolishment?

Heller: I don't know. I've never figured out why. As I say, she wasn't mad at Clark Kerr then; she wasn't mad at anybody. She wasn't too busy a Regent most of the time, but suddenly she decided that she wanted to introduce the motion.
Heller: Well, I can remember, in my last year as a Regent, '75-'76, there was a routine report that came in from the Berkeley campus about ROTC which had along the way been insisted on by certain Regents every year. Al [Albert] Bowker was then chancellor. I could see a few Regents just spoiling for a fight on this again, this great, so-called quote "patriotic issue." Somebody very challengingly said to Bowker, "Does this mean students are getting credit for ROTC?" And Al Bowker just said, "Yes." That's the way Al Bowker does things. He never says more than one word if he needs only one. And there was nothing further that could be said. It was the neatest disposal of it. But that was 1975 to '76. It was still sort of an issue. Isn't that hard to believe?

Now, the navy, incidentally, was always more cooperative about the quality of instructors. There was never much trouble about the naval ROTC. The army--I remember Roger Heyns, when he was chancellor, and then I think Al Bowker too, were working with the army, trying to get this smoothed out. I didn't know any of these ROTC instructors, but apparently a lot of them did not have university quality in their courses. Most of them could have been taught by various professors, faculty on the Berkeley campus. The other campuses' Academic Senates never kicked up that much fuss. So I don't know if it's a dead issue now or not.

Chall: I don't think anything is a dead issue, do you? [laughs]

Heller: No, it never is. [laughs] Well, that went on, and had gone on for quite a few years before I came on. But that was one of the first big votes at that time. I don't really remember who voted on which side anymore.

Chall: Anybody can find that, I guess.

Heller: That's all in the records. It would be no problem. I have a vague recollection that Sam Mosher, who was a Regent appointed by Earl Warren--no, I guess Goodie Knight--never came to meetings. He was very indifferent to most of what went on at the University. And he was rather conservative. A strange man; I never got to know him that well. He showed up at that meeting and voted for, if I remember correctly, for abolishment of ROTC, to my personal surprise. I really don't remember how the votes--it goes so far back now.

Chall: Yes, that's a long way.

Heller: I know that Buff Chandler was for that. I don't remember. It's no use my trying to figure that. You can go to the records.

Chall: In the Daily Cal issues of that period--I just glanced at a few of them--and my reading in Stadtman,* he indicates that it was an issue that an organization rather new on the campus called SLATE had taken

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*The University of California, 1868-1968, p.434.
Chall: Although the Regents had been considering this for some time, Slate took some credit for this because they had been pushing for it.

Heller: Well, they took credit for a lot of things that they had nothing to do with. As a matter of fact, I would say from my own opinion, that Slate had exactly no effect on any Regent's vote. And judging from myself, if I could have voted against them at any point, I would have because they irritated me so. It was one of those ego organizations that thought they were changing the world. They were a sort of precursor to the FSM [Free Speech Movement]. I think they had exactly zero effect on the vote.

Chall: It was coming to a head.

Heller: I think people were starting to change in general on the ROTC issue. It was being perceived a little differently, in that it would be there for anybody who wanted it. Actually, I used to inquire about it quite often. Once it was made non-compulsory, they got, as I remember, good enrollment in ROTC courses and much better general quality.

Chall: Well, they restricted it to juniors and seniors. That made some difference too.

Off-Campus Speakers: The Communist Issue

Chall: About the same time, the matter of Communist speakers on campus was coming up. This again was '62. In May, the Academic Senate asked the president and the Regents to rescind the ban on Communist speakers. That's because there were some problems going on in the other campuses.

Heller: What year was that?

Chall: That was 1963. In June of that year, the Regents did establish a policy that any off-campus speaker may speak on the campus, but it was also required, for balance, that a tenured professor be in attendance. All that sort of thing.

Heller: It was a nonsensical decision. I don't mean that they shouldn't have spoken; I think anybody should be allowed to speak. I can't remember my particular role in it, but I know that I insisted there was no such thing as balance. But I preferred to allow speakers on any subject on the campus and take what I thought was this silly notion of "balance"--because I don't know what is a balance to anything--than not to allow speakers of any sort. I just believe that that's what a university is all about, whether it's a fascist or whatever.
Heller: I really do believe in free speech. I thought it was a silly decision, but if that was the way it would pass the Regents, it's okay with me.

It wasn't that you wanted Communists per se, that's where the thing went crazy. They always looked at Communists instead of looking at the broad spectrum of speakers. I believe it was accomplished, if I'm not wrong, when the Smith Act which declared the Communist party illegal in the United States was declared unconstitutional. I believe that's what changed it. It was no longer illegal to be a Communist. I think it was called the Smith Act.

Chall: Yes, it was.

Heller: Once that was declared unconstitutional, you could be a member of the Communist party; it was legal. There was really nothing to stand on to ban Communists. That had been, I guess, the rationale up to then. Of course, some who were pushing for it were up to no good ends, but that's always true of almost anything, and the best you can do is look at the big issue, or try to look at the big issue. I think when it came to a vote, I don't think there was much—I think it was almost a unanimous vote.

Chall: Stadtman says it was fifteen to two, with [Max] Rafferty and [John] Canaday voting against.

Heller: That is correct. I'm glad you looked that up. That is exactly right. I'm not going to try to explain Rafferty in this thing. Really very bad guy. And Canaday—really a very strange man. In some ways I liked him, but he had some very foolish ideas. He just wasn't going to have Communists, that was all. He never would move from that position. That is the correct vote.

Chall: Was this a difficult problem in the Regents? Who brought in the idea of the balance? Was that Clark Kerr in order to get it through, or was that a result of the Regents' committee.

Heller: I don't remember. I really don't. It probably would have been a combination of some committee of the Regents and Clark. It just made sense. But while the Communist party was illegal, I don't think you ever would have gotten it through the Regents. You could find out when that Smith Act was declared unconstitutional. I don't know how long it took after that. It actually went through pretty easily then. Balance, of course, never did work in practice.

Chall: I think that was abolished after the FSM. Somewhere in those final committees—

Heller: I've always said, "How do you balance anything?"

Chall: And have a tenured professor on hand at the meeting and all that.
Heller: It was abandoned in practice. Actually, there weren't that many Communist speakers. Once a thing is allowed—or if they were Communists, you just didn't know. I never heard much about Communist speakers, except during the FSM, I heard about Bettina Aptheker, who was an announced member of the Communist party. But that's another subject completely.

Rafferty was you know, always "the great American." I say that cynically, because that was his ploy always.

Chall: When he came on the board, that was because he had been elected the--

Heller: State Superintendent of Schools.

Chall: Yes. Did he create some kind of a negative feeling among most of the Regents?

Heller: Always. Always. In my opinion. Always from the very beginning. After Reagan was elected—he came on before Reagan—Reagan used to turn to him for advice on higher education matters. Rafferty had a pretty strong influence on Reagan for a while. There was something I thought should be voted that I knew Rafferty would go against unless somebody could really get a commitment from him ahead of time. It was perfectly innocuous; it was just the way he goes. I was afraid a whole string of people would automatically go with him.

Bob [Robert] Finch was then lieutenant governor, who was an excellent Regent, by the way, for the length of time he served, excellent, and always understood issues very well. Bob Finch would vote with Reagan quite often, but I think not necessarily with his heart, really. Bob Finch was very easy to talk to, to explain what you hoped to accomplish. I wish I could remember the issue. I must have been chairman of educational policies then, and I felt very strongly on some minor issue that should be adopted. I said to Bob Finch, "Will you do me a favor and explain what this is about and get a commitment to vote for it from Rafferty or Reagan." I've forgotten whom. But Bob understood it so well. And because of that, we got it passed. I do believe so. There would have been an uproar. There were these automatic votes against things. I wish I could remember what it was. I'm only telling you that incident to say that Bob Finch was a very good influence within the limits that he could use. He couldn't always go against Reagan.

Chall: Did he attend committee meetings? I mean, committees of the Regents.

Heller: Yes. See, he didn't stay on terribly long, because he resigned, after Nixon was elected, to go to Washington. He resigned as lieutenant governor.

Chall: Yes. I think he became head of the HEW [Health, Education, and Welfare].
Heller: Bob Finch was elected by more votes than Reagan was, you know. And Reagan always looked down on Bob Finch, whereas Bob Finch was much more popular. So Bob, in order to get certain things he wanted done (not connected with Regents) would have to go along with Reagan and some of his people on some Regent votes. But basically, he made excellent votes.
To THE REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA:

There is attached for your information a copy of a letter addressed to the Chairman of the Board by Regent Rafferty, and received by the Chairman on July 5.

As a result of information received from local newspapers as to the contents of the letter, Chairman Meyer on Friday, July 1, sent the following telegram to Regent Rafferty.

Dr. Max Rafferty:

According to the Press you have sent me a letter regarding Mario Savio. I am advised that Mr. Savio has not applied for readmission to the Berkeley campus.

Theodore R. Meyer
Chairman of the Board of Regents

Marjorie J. Woolman
Mr. Theodore R. Meyer, Chairman
Regents, The University of California
111 Sutter Street
San Francisco, California 94104

Dear Mr. Meyer:

Rumor and the daily press have it that the ineffable Mario Savio is about to be readmitted as a student to the Berkeley campus.

In view of the farcical manner in which he changed the respected image of the University a few months ago to that of a baggy-pants slapstick comedian, I suggest that we Regents submit ourselves forthwith to group psychotherapy.

If we let this character back in, we've got to be nuts.

Cordially,

[Signature]

MR: sf
Heller: I was really very sorry. I think he's an excellent person; I do to this day. Bob Finch's fate does not belong in my tale of the Regents.

Chall: Well, I'm glad to hear what you have to say about him.

Heller: It's hard for me to go back to that day of how you had to sort of work to get votes on the most simple things. There would be this automatic voting against.

Chall: Was that after Reagan came in?

Heller: Yes. But it was started by Rafferty. That's what Rafferty was trying to do. He was trying to single-handedly determine who—-he couldn't get rid of any Regents, but he could get rid of anybody within the University system, he thought. He was riding very high then. I don't know if you can remember how overwhelmingly he'd been elected.

Chall: That's right, yes. I was trying to recall the date, I'll have to check that, but I think it was about '64 or '66. Probably '66—no, '64.

Heller: He was a Regent during the FSM—before, he was there before. I've forgotten—-let's see: Reagan was elected in 1966.

Chall: Yes.

Heller: Well, then he would have been elected four years before.

Chall: He must have been elected in '62, when Superintendent Simpson resigned, or didn't run again—chose not to run, retired. So that was it.

Heller: Rafferty came on very shortly after I was a Regent, you know, within a year. He just thought that his brand of patriotism and Americanism just—-I want to finish this stuff about Rafferty, because I'm not going to remember any details. I began noticing after a couple or two or three years that close Reagan people were not talking to Max Rafferty at the Regents' meetings. I just saw that nothing was ever said. You see, he was going to run again, and I could just see a distance being put between them. I said to Bill Smith, who was a Reagan appointee, his personal attorney, a very smart man, conservative but a good one, very nice person, I remember saying to him, "I notice the governor and others are not having anything to do with Rafferty any more." And he said to me, "You're pretty perceptive, aren't you."

They were sort of trying to avoid an open breach with Rafferty, who had been reelected when Reagan was elected. But they were paying no attention to him by this time. It was interesting to see how he was so far out that none of the conservative Republicans wanted anything to do with him. He was sort of, almost an outcast on the Regents. Well, that's all I'm going to say about Rafferty. There's plenty that's been documented about him. I don't know where that started from.
Chall: We were talking about the vote on the Communist speakers. He was one of two that voted against making—

Heller: Canaday had his own—It's hard to explain John Canaday, I don't think I ever will very well.

Chall: If there were these kinds of feeling toward people on the Regents, feelings about them like Rafferty, Canaday, and others, did the Regents still meet together for dinners and luncheons during their meetings?

Heller: Oh, yes. They got on pretty well. Basically we had a very good time at social things.

Chall: Most of the time you were the only woman there. I mean, for many years you were one of three, but you were often just one of a few, or maybe the only woman at these affairs.

Heller: Yes. Of course sometimes spouses were invited, but not always.

Chall: Did that in any sense make you feel uncomfortable?

Heller: No. I was perfectly comfortable. I think I told you that some meeting I went to UCLA—I think it was a group of some faculty women, I don't remember how I got involved with it, I didn't usually. I said I'd answer questions, but I wasn't going to make any speech. They asked some easy enough questions, and then one of them said, "How does it feel to be a woman Regent?" And I said, "I don't know." [laughs] I never found any distinction. And that's about the way I felt about it.

Chall: And the men treated you like one of the Regents—one of them without making you feel out of place?

Heller: Oh, yes. There was never any problem about that. Of course, Buff Chandler was there quite a bit, and Catherine was there sometimes. Catherine was always a Regent while I was, but she didn't come so often. And then when Buff went off, then I was the only woman until Carol Mock came on. They all loved her, quite properly. The chancellors liked her; everybody liked her. She was the epitome of a good young person. No, no, I really found absolutely no differentiation.

Events Leading Up to the Free Speech Movement

Chall: Well, we're going to go into the FSM next week, but I thought maybe if we had time today, and we apparently do, we would start with some of the activities that were going on off the campus that were creating disturbances among the population in the early sixties. One of them,
Heller: Rafferty was just perfectly dreadful. He'd just call-- Well, Danny Aldrich, the chancellor at Irvine. Rafferty would call him every name under the sun. And remember, that was the heart of Rafferty constituency in a way--Orange County. He would just go down on Aldrich for what he was allowing on that campus, which has always been quite a prim campus.

Chall: That's Irvine, isn't it?

Heller: Yes, Irvine. He'd take him on, because of the nature of the people that he, Rafferty, appealed to, by residents--of the things that were appealed to him by some residents of Orange County. Dan Aldrich would never take anything from Rafferty. He spoke right up to him. Because I remember Rafferty saying [grandly], "I know Orange County and what it wants!" And Dan Aldrich said, "I know Orange County too. I live and work with the people."

Chall: These were arguments in Regents' meetings?

Heller: Well, maybe in executive committee. I can't remember. That's why I have to seal some of it. Dan would never be cowed. Dan was the target of Max Rafferty, and I always said if you punched a button looking for the typical, all-American upright, bright, attractive, Republican it would be Dan Aldrich. He'd come out of the slot. He's handsome, he has a lovely wife, lovely children, he's bright, he's Republican, he goes to church, he doesn't drink, he doesn't smoke, he's a superb person. And still, Max Rafferty tried to get rid of him because he wasn't a right-wing Republican. A right right wing. Isn't that hard to believe? But that's true. But Dan was never afraid of him. Never. He never cowered in front of these terrible onslaughts. I think of those executive committees! When you type this up, I'll have to take this part out, I guess.

Chall: We'll pull it out for sealing, if you wish.
Chall: before you were a Regent, but your husband was on, was the House
Un-American Activities hearings in San Francisco, when quite a
number of students and other people too wanted to get into the hear-
ings but were not allowed to. Ultimately, there was quite a ruckus
created, and the police used hoses to try to get people down the
stairs.

Heller: I don't really know anything about the students in relation to that.
I can remember about the hearings, but I don't remember anything
about Cal students per se on that. I wasn't reading the Daily Cal
at that time. Is there a lot in the--?

Chall: I haven't looked in the Daily Cal. You weren't aware of it and your
husband didn't--

Heller: No.

Chall: I can't say that it came up before the Regents, because I didn't see it
in the University Bulletin.

Heller: Was that when there was that disturbance at the Palace Hotel?

Chall: That's later. Okay, we'll talk about that.

Heller: I don't know too much about that either.

Chall: I just wondered how these things spilled over. In 1964, by this time
the students were asking for quite a bit of freedom on the campuses.
But in 1964, in the spring, there were two sit-ins: one at the
Sheraton Hotel, the Sheraton Palace I guess it's called, and the other
at the Cadillac agency in San Francisco.

Heller: The Sheraton Palace was then the Palace Hotel. It was not the
Sheraton Palace. And one at the Cadillac agency. I don't remember
too much about that in relation to the University, but it must have
had to do with the mood. The students were very badly treated,
weren't they? At the sit-ins.

Chall: I can't remember--yes, I think that may be true. I've forgotten now.
I just know that it created a tremendous amount of furor and I think
began to create some concern among the public with respect to what
are the students doing.

Heller: Yes, very upset about that, I do remember that. Was it the House
Un-American Activities hearings where the fire hose was used to
wash the students down the steps? Some of this was starting to build,
though we didn't recognize at that time really what was going on. I
didn't relate it to the University, per se. I'd look on it more as
demonstrations at the Iranian embassy might be looked at now. I
didn't relate them to the campus in my own mind.
Chall: But other people were relating them.

Heller: I think they were.

Chall: That sort of relationships among the people you were seeing didn't come to you? What are your students doing there? Can't you Regents control your students? Can you recall any of that?

Heller: I guess so. I think there were more than Cal students there.

Chall: Oh, I imagine so.

Heller: I don't think it was basically a Berkeley campus group.

Chall: No, it wasn't. But I think there were some Berkeley students in it, and there was some concern, apparently in the public's mind.

Heller: I don't doubt it. The first time I really remember was the recruiting when the Goldwater Republican convention--I think that's the first I remember--was in San Francisco, and they wanted to recruit--I think it was Bill Knowland who wanted to recruit--sign up Republican students. I really think that was sort of the beginning of it. [1964]

Chall: Yes. That's how it's kind of dated, because that's when it began to occur on the campus, and the rules were not being followed about recruitment and that sort of thing. So you can date that as the beginning of the whole FSM conflict?

Heller: I always thought it was amusing that it really started with Bill Knowland--who was a loyal Cal graduate--wanting to recruit students. They were on the sidewalk there, on Bancroft, and I think there was uncertainty about the territory--what belonged to the University, and what belonged to the city.

Chall: It had been decided, but apparently nobody knew it.

Heller: And the recruitment was going on there, I guess.

Who was to blame for that, you don't know. Ed Strong was chancellor, and he ordered them off. When I say "he," I just say he was the ultimate commander who ordered them off. I know a couple of facts in through there, but not all of them. I know that Katherine Towle, who was dean of students, begged them--I don't think Ed Strong himself because she reported to Alex Sherriffs--not to do anything abruptly--that wasn't the way to handle students--but to give her time to work the facts out with the students.* I know that from her.

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Heller: But she was told no, it was against University rules. She was the one voice of reason that I heard at that point, that tried to slow up this thing that just impacted so terribly. She had a great understanding of how to handle students, that when there are problems you sit down and try to work them out.

Ed Strong always said his was the responsibility. I've never been sure whether he actually gave the directions. But the chain of command was from Katherine Towle to Alex Sherriffs to Ed Strong. Ed Strong was--well, they were all liberals. Alex Sherriffs at that point was a liberal Democrat, believe it or not. They all got caught up in this thing, and things just went from bad to worse. It was just starting then. That must have been in July of '64.

Chall: Yes, it was earlier when the Young Americans for Freedom, or the Republicans, were recruiting for the convention, which was in July. So it was over the summer that I think Strong, Sherriffs, Towle, and maybe Arleigh Williams, who was the dean of men, had some meetings and were trying to decide on campus rules. Then they came up with the notion that some of the recruiting that was going to go on because of all of the conventions and the coming elections was illegal on the campus, and they had to straighten this out.

Heller: Well, it's very hard to know who came up with all this. Tom Cunningham, who was general counsel for the Regents, though nobody paid much attention to him on this point, unfortunately, kept saying this was illegal, that they should be allowed to recruit. But he never was very articulate about it, and Tom didn't like to get into fights very much.

Chall: The Regents had in 1959 given that rather large strip of sidewalk, had deeded it to the city of Berkeley, but nobody seemed to have carried it out.

Heller: He knew it. He did know it, but nobody paid much attention. It was just—if you want to take a long view, if it hadn't been that, it would have been something else.

Chall: That's what Harry Wellman thinks.

Heller: Yes. I believe that. But it really did go from bad to worse.

I was in Tokyo on Regents' business with Clark Kerr and Bill Forbes. We were opening up the Overseas Education Abroad campus in Tokyo. ICU—I've forgotten—International Christian University, I think. We were there for the formal opening when the FSM erupted. That part—Clark did a lot of this handling later, but he was not directing this at the time, because I know where he was. He was in Tokyo when word came about this.
Chall: What was the reaction?

Heller: Actually, he was just taking off. So he took off. He was just about to go back, but I stayed in Japan for a while, and knew very little about it for a couple more weeks. You know, it's awfully hard to put yourself back into that time. It was so awful.

Chall: I can bring next week some of the chronologies that have been written to help keep track of the activities.

Heller: Will you? Because it's very hard to keep track of it all. It will come back to me, because it's such a--

Chall: It was hourly, daily and hourly.

Heller: Hourly bulletins, command posts, spying, if you want to use that strong word, but it really was; deterioration of administrative relationships. The Regents were not as a bloc one way or another. The Regents were really trying to find out what was happening at that point. Now, that is a fact that I can tell you for sure. They had not taken any sides; they were just trying to find out what was going on. I don't know if we ever really found out. Just trying to keep the University from closing down. We were not factionalized at that point at all.

Tom Cunningham kept trying to explain the law to us. I can remember some executive meetings at night. But he was so fuzzy, that we didn't really grasp what he was saying to us.

Chall: But I understand that Clark Kerr remembered that he had asked the Regents and the Regents had in fact deeded that piece of property to the city of Berkeley.

Heller: That's true. That is true, but the fat was in the fire.

Chall: But nobody knew why he didn't say so either.

Heller: That's why you cannot--I knew, I knew almost immediately that that property had been deeded to the city of Berkeley for a sidewalk, although it seemed to be part of the campus. But the trouble by that time was automatic. There was stubbornness, there was some hatred, there was pointing of fingers, but I would say that the Regents were not fighting among themselves then. I think that's a fair statement. Eventually they came to infighting, but in the meantime they were just trying to find out what was going on.

And nobody could find out. Clark--oh, we used to meet endlessly! See, we didn't have open meetings then. I can remember a meeting at Davis where we just sat while Clark was on the phone to Berkeley all the time getting the latest facts. Sometimes Harry Wellman, as vice-
TO MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF REGENTS:

As you know, one of the points in the Regents' statement of October 16 requested that the administration keep the Board informed of recommendations by the committee considering the cases of the eight suspended Berkeley students.

Enclosed is a copy of that report and the covering letter which accompanied it.

Clark Kerr

Enclosure
Chancellor Edward W. Strong  
3335 Dwinelle Hall  
Campus  

Dear Chancellor Strong:

Herewith are a number of copies of the Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Student Conduct. The Report is addressed to the Academic Senate. It will be released to the press at 10 a.m. on Friday, November 13th. Copies of it have been mailed to the students involved in the controversy; these students will receive the Report the morning of the 13th. I would appreciate it if you would make no public release of the Report or comments on it until after the 10 a.m. time.

Sincerely,

Ira Michael Heyman  
Professor of Law
REPDRT
OF THE AD HOÇ COMMITTEE ON STUDENT CONDUCT

To the Berkeley Division:

This committee was formed pursuant to the following motion adopted by the Berkeley Division of the Academic Senate on October 15, 1964:

"The Berkeley Division instructs the Committee on Committees to appoint a five-man ad hoc committee to hear and make recommendations on the cases of the eight suspended students. The committee will be appointed immediately and will promptly take up the cases. The students may be represented by counsel and may take a recording--which would include a tape recording--of the proceedings."

The committee members were appointed on October 19, 1964. On October 21, the committee addressed a letter to the Chancellor requesting that the students be temporarily reinstated pending action on our recommendations. This request was denied. The committee then met with counsel for the University and for the suspended students on October 22nd at a pre-hearing conference, during which general procedures were stipulated to govern the hearings. Hearings commenced on October 28th and continued on October 29th and November 3rd. They consumed approximately twenty hours. The proceedings were in large part adversary, but the committee members also extensively questioned witnesses who appeared before them. The chief witnesses for the University were Dean Arleigh Williams, Associate Dean Peter Van Houten, Assistant Dean George Murphy, and Mrs. Leone Weaver who is Dean Towle's administrative assistant. Six of the eight students appeared as witnesses; two students, Mr. Sandor Fuchs and Mr. Arthur Goldberg, failed to make themselves available when their cases were being considered.

This committee has interpreted its terms of reference to mean that it should render its report to the Berkeley Division of the Academic Senate, with copies of the report to the University Administration and the students involved. It assumes that its recommendations in these cases will form a basis for Administration action concerning these students, but it realizes that its recommendations are advisory. The committee, with assent of the parties, has considered only those events occurring up to the night of September 30, 1964 when the students here involved were indefinitely suspended by the Chancellor. It has not been asked to, nor has it, considered any events occurring after that time.

This report is organized in six sections. The first section concerns applicable University and campus regulations. The second describes the background of relevant events occurring between September 14th and 30th. This narrative of events is based solely on evidence received at the hearings. The third section evaluates the cases of six of the eight students whose activities were substantially similar. The fourth section concerns the remaining two cases. The fifth section is concerned with administrative procedures and penalties assessed in these cases. The sixth section comprises our recommendations in all eight cases.

(First and final pages of report regarding the events of September 14-September 30, 1964)
The committee emphasizes again that it has been concerned only with events occurring through September 30, 1964 and has not been asked to, nor has, considered any events after that date. Further it has considered only the specific charge made against these students by the University Administration. On the basis of the foregoing, we recommend that Messrs. Bravo, Goines, Fuchs, Hatch and Turner and Mrs. Stapleton be reinstated as of the date of their suspensions. The penalty of indefinite suspension should be expunged from the record of each student. Instead, the penalty for each of these six students should be recorded as that of "censure" for a period of no more than six weeks.

We recommend that the suspensions of Messrs. Goldberg and Savio should be for the specific period of six weeks beginning September 30, 1964.

The imposition of academic penalties on these eight students would amount to additional punishment, and of a severity disproportionate to the offenses. We recommend that, so far as is feasible for each student, he be permitted to complete his course work for the present semester, without academic penalty. We further recommend that each, at his option, be permitted to drop one or more courses, or to withdraw for the balance of the semester, without loss of academic credit or the imposition of other academic penalties.

Respectfully submitted,

R.A. Gordon
M. Haire
R.E. Powell
L. Ulman
I.M. Heyman, Chairman

November 12, 1964
Heller: president, would take up routine matters, but usually we'd just sit and mill around. No real business would take place. We'd sit and wait for the latest reports. We didn't know if people were going to be killed, shot. We really didn't know. I think any Regent who claims he knew what was going on at that point is thinking after the fact. I'm quite clear about that. It was a groping.

Chall: Everybody was groping.

Heller: Everybody was groping. I'm talking about the Regents now. Really we were groping.

Clark, having been chancellor at Berkeley, would not let Ed Strong run that campus when this occurred. He wanted a minute-by-minute command of it. Which didn't help things. But he thought he was doing the right thing. I don't want to defend Clark's actions in this, but this is the way his mind went, that only he could solve it. He always thought he could talk to the students. He set up a command post with Earl Bolton, who was vice-president for university relations, as his right-hand man for minute-by-minute reports. They'd be up all night half the time.

Chall: Harry Wellman feels that while it appears, and in fact it was, that Clark Kerr did get into this as if he were the chancellor, he's not sure that the Regents would have allowed any other kind of action. He thinks that they might have really wanted Clark Kerr to be on top of it.

Heller: I think Harry's rather straight on that. I think after the fact, all of them were furious at Clark for getting into it. But I think at the time, we all felt--never thought anything of Clark's taking over. Whether Ed Strong was a weak or strong chancellor was not the point, the point at issue. He was a comparatively new chancellor, very nice man. We just automatically assumed Clark was doing the job that he had to do. He was right in the middle of it. Nowadays, nothing like that would ever take place. The chancellor would be in command of a campus.

Chall: At that time, the command of campuses, while it was theoretically the chief campus officer, in fact it wasn't all that clear for problems like this. I mean, who was to know?

Heller: It was an unheard-of problem. You might use the word unique there. Nothing like this had ever happened before. In anything you read about it, this was the movement that started at Berkeley.

Chall: So, in fact, were the Regents more or less looking to Clark Kerr for action, solutions and bypassing others consciously?

Heller: I think they felt their own responsibility in trying to get this solved. But the vehicle was necessarily Clark. All these terrible animosities that were developing toward him had not shown up yet.
XI THE FREE SPEECH MOVEMENT AND ITS RAMIFICATIONS, 1964-1967 *

[Interview 20: December 12, 1979]##

Heller: It's hard for me to read this. [chronology prepared by Chall]

Chall: Yes. Well, you can use that for a reference. I just didn't get around to typing it neatly.

Heller: I'm usually a good scanner, but I can't.

Chall: Let me put it to you this way: Everything started to come apart in September, as you well know. We talked about that last week. There was a lot of tension between that time and October first. On October first the students confined a policeman and a non-student, who was arrested, in an automobile for thirty-two hours.

Heller: I remember that well. When was that?

Chall: That was in 1964, between October first and third.

Heller: Yes, he was a non-student.

Chall: [Jack] Weinberg, I think his name was.

Heller: Yes, but the students were all with him. He was an agitator type, as I remember, probably.

Chall: He was arrested for--I can't remember exactly--he either set up a CORE or a Slate table, I think it was a CORE [Congress of Racial Equality] table against the-then regulations. He was not permitted to because he was not a student and he hadn't asked for permission. So it was a testing of the rules, and he was arrested. So instead of carrying him off the campus, it was decided that it would be safer if they brought in a police car, put him in it, and drove him off.

Heller: Oh, yes. And then the car got surrounded.

*Portions of this chapter have been placed under seal.
Chall: That's right.

Heller: There was a policeman in that car all the time?

Chall: Yes.

Heller: And how long did that go on?

Chall: Thirty-two hours. Now, at that time, the Regents didn't come into it at all. It was Clark Kerr negotiating with Mario Savio, and with Strong, and I guess some of the other members of the administration. Then Clark Kerr and the others made--there was a concession made of some kind, at least a settlement, and Mario Savio went back to the car and told everybody to go home. Things seemed to be settled rather peaceably, according to the arrangements that had been made by Kerr and Savio and the others. That was in October. Everything then began to fall apart during November, until December sixth, when the students, several hundred of them or more, went into Sproul Hall and sat.

Heller: That was when they went into Sproul Hall?

Chall: That's right.

Heller: In December?

Chall: Yes, although they had done it for a few hours in September. But this was the overnight vigil. Now at that point, the Regents began to come into the picture—but informally. During the time the students surrounded the car, up until the time of the night Sproul Hall sit-in, when the Regents weren't taking any official action, can you recall what was going on among the Regents informally?

Heller: I can remember some of it.

Chall: Just whatever you can remember, because there's nothing official anywhere. You must have been alerted and alert.

Heller: I'm going to have to give you this in bits and pieces, without time. The things I remember particularly that may not have struck anybody else, or maybe nobody else thought the same thing, or did the same thing.

Chall: That's why I'd like it from you. So wherever it falls together, we'll just work at it.

Heller: Well, there was some point during that—before the occupation of Sproul Hall, but when these masses kept gathering in Sproul Hall Plaza, and more and more kept coming every day, at first I thought—I'll speak it from my point of view, I think that's the best way—
this was just another one of these student rebellions that comes and goes. It seemed to be basically left-wing fomented. We'd had them before about Communist speakers on campus or what-have-you--it seemed to be that--and then they'd fall away. There was some point in through there, as the crowds got bigger every day and they kept coming back, the students, and more and more students came, it certainly struck me that there had to be something more than just a left-wing rebellion going on. Now, I didn't know what it was, but I just knew that students didn't stick that long unless they thought there was a real cause, because whatever anybody may say, it got up to about twelve thousand students, I think, didn't it?

Chall: I don't know, but I know that it was huge masses.

Heller: Well, a huge number, and they kept coming and more and more. It struck me that there had to be something there, and I began personally looking to find-- Remember, I didn't have any retrospective view on this then--I began looking to see what it was.

Chall: How did you look? In what ways were you beginning to look?

Heller: Just in my own mind, trying to cast about what the events as I had heard them, what was it that was appealing to students. I did talk to a few students, not those that were so active, they were students that would go, they weren't big activists but they went. They just felt very strongly about this free speech issue. I began to get an inkling that it wasn't a political thing, per se, you know, the usual agitated thing, and began to get slight comprehension of the fact that there was something more than the usual agitators. I did know that there was so-called left-wing planning among the students. That became apparent fairly soon with the--I don't remember what they call that student group that met every night; I don't know that they were all students. I think it was called a steering committee.

Savio was not really the leader, that was one of the things that emerged. But Clark Kerr, I think, did not know. He thought that if he could negotiate with Savio, whom he thought was the leader of all this, that he could start dispelling all this. But at some point it became quite apparent that Savio was an instrument of this more hard-core group, that he was a natural charismatic leader, that he did things instinctively. Somewhere a little later than that, I read an article about Sicilians and he was supposed to have been of Sicilian descent, that they instinctively know how to manipulate crowds. This was using his instinctive ways as a, for lack of a better word, as a Sicilian, of how to manipulate crowds. He just had it, that was all. But he wasn't thinking these things out. That began to be apparent.
Heller: I can't put the time or place of that, but Clark kept negotiating with him and a few students, and I do remember one thing, that the students that he would negotiate with were never the same ones. They changed their personnel all the time so he could never get his hands on— He had never come up against anything like this, obviously. Nobody had. But I got this first inkling that there was something more than this agitation that was going on, which I think is true. It couldn't have had the following it did.

Chall: It was some kind of principle that all the students were concerned with in terms of free speech?

Heller: Some sort of principle that attracted them, because frankly some of the students that I knew already otherwise were very caught up in this. Though they were never going to occupy Sproul Hall or anything like that, they felt there was a real cause there.

It was during that period—and I once again can't put my finger on it, but it was I believe before Sproul Hall was occupied, but I'm not sure—several Regents got together. I don't say others didn't, but I'll tell about the ones that I know about. Don McLaughlin and Phil Boyd were instrumental in getting certain Regents informally meeting. We'd meet at Don's home, which was right in North Berkeley, trying to find out what was going on. My point of time may be wrong.

Chall: That's all right, just keep at it.

Heller: Bill Forbes was part of that, Ed Carter was once or twice. Strangely enough, Larry Kennedy was, who turned out to be such a poor Regent, but he was a new Regent and he was there. He didn't make much sense. And I was there. There must have been two or three others that came in and out.

Chall: This was not the Education Policy Committee, just an informal--?

Heller: No, it was just a group. We were trying to find out what was going on. At that point, or at whatever point we were having those get-togethers, I'll put it that way, Clark Kerr shut himself off from everybody. Wouldn't talk to anybody, and he was not in his office, though he didn't admit it. He was at home, we did know that. Don McLaughlin was very close to Clark, and he could not get a phone call through. Kay Kerr screened all the phone calls. Clark would not talk to anybody.

Chall: Of course, you were Regents, so you wanted to talk to Clark Kerr. But where was Dr. Strong in all this? Did anybody try to reach him?

Heller: Only indirectly, but basically we did talk with Katherine Towle at some point in there. The point was, we were meeting. We kept meeting day after day. Phil Boyd and Bill Forbes, I remember, moved
Heller: up here. Bill stayed at the Durant Hotel. Clark, you have to remember, is a very proud and a very sensitive person, and we were all at that point friends of Clark's. We felt very strongly--Phil Boyd had a suite in a hotel in the City--what's the one on Mason? Is that the Hilton?

Chall: I think so, yes.

Heller: He had a suite there, and we met there, too. This wasn't what you'd call a secret meeting, we were just anxious to try to find out. And because we knew of Clark's sensitivities, we felt very strongly that we wanted Clark to know we were meeting. We would have liked him to join us. He wouldn't take any calls. And this made for a very, very awkward situation. He didn't seem to want to know what we were doing, or trying to do. Now, I've never made up my mind whether Clark felt defeated, mad, annoyed that he wasn't just handling the situation. He'd always been able to handle everything before that.

And then we met at Don's house, too. This was all in the same period of time. We had various people come in and give us their versions. That's why I don't remember Ed Strong, but I certainly do remember Katherine Towle.

There was a meeting of the Regents at the airport. When was that?

Chall: There actually were a couple, but let me get to the first. [checks notes] The very first one came the night of the Sproul Hall sit-in [December 2, 1964], when a small group of Regents met at that San Francisco airport, and among other things, all I know is they did not want the police to evict the students. Were you at that meeting?

Heller: I don't know that I was part of that, but I certainly did not want any police moved in. I think we were all pretty clear on that at that time.

Chall: Of course, they did move in that very night.

Heller: Yes, but we didn't want them moved in. But I'm not sure that I was part of that. What's the other meeting at the airport? There was a full Regents' meeting there. Was that the same day?

Chall: No.

Heller: It was an official Regents' meeting. I don't mean a regular one, it was a special one.

Chall: I do not have it as part of the-- Wait a minute, maybe I have it. Well, there may have been one--
Heller: I can place it pretty well.

Chall: Was that in December soon after—just about the time that—Let me back up a bit and see if I can find you another one. I have a couple of special meetings on my list, but I don't note that they were in the airport, so tell me about it.

Heller: In that meeting, Ed Strong—

Chall: That's the one, okay. That was a special meeting in the middle of December.* You may know of one that hasn't been placed in the record.

Heller: Well, it was sometime in through that period.

Chall: And Governor Brown met with you there?

Heller: Yes. Don't you know, we didn't know what we were facing at all. Ed Strong had pretty much come apart, not like John Sparrow at all, but he had no control of anything on the campus by this time. Whether that's his fault, Clark Kerr's fault, whose fault I don't know. But he just obviously had no control left or authority left on the campus. It was at that point that—remember there was no Academic Senate executive committee, there was no way to marshal the faculty.

Chall: But they were meeting as a so-called committee of two hundred, and there was a meeting of the chairmen of departments, so they were meeting.

Heller: That's what I was going to talk about. Finally, the faculty decided, because they had no organization, they had no vehicle for this sort of thing, it was unheard of—to take the twenty-six or twenty-eight chairmen of departments and to form a committee to try to get this straightened out. If I remember, there were three or four that were very pro-FSM. I don't even want to try to name them because I've forgotten, which ones. So they always knew that even while they were meeting and planning strategy to try to get that campus in order again, there were three or four that were sitting with them that were rushing to whoever the powers were of the FSM to tell about it. As a result of that committee, they had this meeting, a huge meeting with students in the Greek Theatre. What was that date?

Chall: The Greek Theatre date was December seventh.

*On December 16-17 the Regents met in Los Angeles. Chancellor Strong was present. (Stadtman) On December 18, Governor Brown and twelve Regents met with a newly elected Emergency Executive Committee of the Academic Senate for two hours. (Daily Cal, May 19, 1965).
Heller: Tom Cunningham, who was general counsel, came and brought John Sparrow. I guess we met in Don's office in San Francisco. You know how you have a visual picture of where you are. John Sparrow was associate counsel for the Regents. (He's now on the bench, he was appointed either municipal or a superior court judge by Reagan.) John Sparrow was a strange guy who saw Communists under every bed. I don't know if you ever knew him at all.

Chall: Just recently, I knew of him.

Heller: John was--I don't like to use words that I'm not sure the meaning of--I would say more than paranoid about this. He gave us a tale that day, and wept--cried in front of us about what was happening and what he had seen. Of course, none of it turned out to be true. And that he was scared for his life, that he was being followed and he knew he'd be killed, and how Clark Kerr was the leader of this Communist group. It's really hard to believe. They were spying on him and others. I remember a few of us met with him that one day at Don McLaughlin's office. Tom Cunningham had asked to bring him. I don't want to involve Tom in this, I don't know how he felt about it. Tom was the sort that would keep his mouth shut, but would come and ask for John Sparrow to come. Then, after all, John Sparrow worked for Tom. So it was a perfectly logical progression.

Chall: How did you react to that kind of news?

Heller: I was never so appalled by anything in my life. Don McLaughlin--I think Ed Carter heard that one. I may be wrong, but I think he was at that meeting. There weren't more than three or four of us. I think that meeting preceded Bill Forbes, Phil Boyd, Larry Kennedy, but I know that we felt that we had to have other people hear this account, not use just our judgment. There were a handful of us. Within a day or two, we had asked John Sparrow to meet with a larger group of Regents at Don McLaughlin's house.

That I remember. He came in shaking--It's hard to picture somebody like this--and apologizing for being late. But he said, "I had to go to the FBI this morning. I know I'm going to be killed, and I wanted to give this whole story to the FBI before I was killed."

Does that sound true at all? But it is! It's literally true. And then he went through more of the same. He didn't break down and cry quite as much as the first time, but he gave us the whole long tale about how poor old Frank Kidner was one of Clark's spies, and that Frank had treated him very strangely. And it had--you can see why I'm going to seal all this.

Chall: This is fascinating!
Heller: And when we said, "Frank Kidner?" He said, "I'm sure I know why. They're after me." "They," whoever "they" were. I think "they" included the Communists, "they" included Clark Kerr. I don't know who "they" included. He said, "I know why Frank acted this way," he said, "because he caught me in an indiscretion with a woman other than my wife in some restaurant in Los Angeles." We couldn't have cared less about this, and Frank Kidner couldn't have cared--you know. But Sparrow felt it was part of a plot to get him. The more I think of it, the more appalling it is.

Chall: Do you think that--just to move ahead because it's on my mind--that Sparrow could have given this kind of information to the Burns committee who would use it?

Heller: I think he could have given--yes, I think he could have given any information. I do believe that I thought he was giving that information. And of course, as I read things now and know what J. Edgar Hoover was doing--infiltrating--I'm convinced that not only John Sparrow, maybe others were rushing with minute information, day-to-day things that weren't apparent to me at all. This strings out for months, in a way. It isn't just then. That was part of that.
FROM TEHRAN, IRAN, MR. PAULEY ASKED THAT THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE BE TRANSMITTED TO ALL REGENTS QUOTE PLEASE REMIND REGENTS THEY HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY TO RUN UNIVERSITY, TO HIRE AND FIRE THE PRESIDENT AND THE CHANCELLORS WHO SHOULD BE ABLE TO RUN ACADEMIC SENATE. I WILL DEFINITELY BE THERE FOR NEXT REGENTS MEETINGS. END QUOTE

GAYE BJORNSEN SEC E W PAULEY.
Heller: Well, they had that. Bob [Robert] Scalapino from political science chaired that meeting. I believe he was the choice of the department heads. I think that's how he was selected, as far as I remember. I'd known Bob quite well. Some of the Regents were very skeptical about him, they didn't know him, and they thought he was playing an FSM game. But I knew Bob much too well to know he was not a natural great liberal by any means. It was planned that he would chair it, and then Clark would speak to try to bring some order back. That was where Mario Savio grabbed the microphone and just started the whole thing all over again. There certainly were Regents that believed that that had been planned from the beginning, that Savio would take the mike, whereas I'm absolutely convinced it was completely unknown. It was one of these instinctive moves of Savio.

Chall: According to Stadtman, it had been planned that at that meeting, there would be no police present.

Heller: That's correct.

Chall: But that when Savio did come up to the microphone, the police grabbed him, and that absolutely tore the meeting to pieces.

Heller: Yes, pulled him off. There were police, I believe. I did not attend that Greek Theatre meeting. I guess there were police behind the Greek Theatre—plain-clothes or what I don't know—who grabbed him. Which was, in retrospect, a terrible mistake, and nobody has ever agreed, as far as I know, who gave the order to them. I don't know what Stadtman says.

Chall: Stadtman says they don't understand it, because Kerr had promised the students, and he promised everybody, that there would be no police there.

Heller: There were many accusing fingers about who gave the order, but I really have no idea where it came from. Some accused Ed Strong of it, and others accused—there were just accusations all over. I think some accused Clark Kerr maybe of plotting something that went the wrong way. It was such chaos.

Chall: Yes, it was terrible, because it just broke the whole meeting up and there was a possibility of peace there.

Heller: One part of the Sproul Hall occupation that I wanted to speak about was that the only Regent who went into Sproul Hall was good old Don McLaughlin. You know, the white hair, beautiful man. Don is really very conservative, but he loves students. And they were so anxious to talk to him. I wouldn't have gone near it. Not for physical fear, but I thought they'd howl me out and it would be no good. Not at all! Don was in there talking to these students, not trying to get them to do anything, just trying to find out what was on their minds.
Heller: He found that a lot of them were there through pure emotionalism. They didn't know exactly why. Some of the parents of those children were just frantic that their children were there. A Nobel prize winner whom I knew pretty well, although I didn't know his wife, phoned me, they had to come see me. Their daughter was one of the FSM occupiers. They were just beside themselves about it. You know, asking my advice. There was no advice in the world that I could give them. But they didn't understand it; they were just pouring out. The mother was half weeping.

Of course, any student was free to leave there, you know. They weren't hostages, that's the word I'm trying to say. They were free to leave. Most of them didn't. A few did, I guess.

Chall: Didn't Chancellor Strong go in there at midnight and tell them they were under arrest?

Heller: I don't remember that, but I'm sure it happened. Too many things happened. They were under arrest?

Chall: Yes.

Heller: But they were free to leave, weren't they?

Chall: Oh, yes. It took them a long time, from three a.m. until noon for the police to get them all out of there.

Heller: They were really dragging them out then. That was when?

Chall: The same day. The same December second--into December third. On December fifth, Strong went to the hospital with gall bladder problems, or whatever it might have been, that's what's claimed. And then the sixth and the seventh and the eighth is when you tried to arrive at some decision with the Scalapino proposals.

Heller: Ed Strong was an honorable and fine person. Whether he was really that sick, or whether he was just so emotionally drained that he just couldn't carry on-- I've no reason to think he wasn't sick, but I think you can just reach the end of your tether at some point.

Chall: It's interesting; when I ask you what you were doing and with whom you were trying to work, you don't think about working with Chancellor Strong, he doesn't come into your mind, and yet in retrospect people say Clark Kerr should have left the scene to Dr. Strong.

Heller: Well, this is in retrospect.

Chall: And yet, apparently people weren't even considering him.

Heller: The hatred of Clark Kerr had not arrived then.
Chall: But those of you who had provided for decentralization to some extent, the Regents, still weren't looking to the chancellor--

Heller: There wasn't much decentralization then.

Chall: You weren't looking to the chancellor, you were looking to the president.

Heller: We were looking to the president especially because Clark Kerr had been chancellor at Berkeley, and he was always into Berkeley affairs, and you can look at it and realize it was all around. But at the time, you never thought of it. You assumed he knew what he was doing with Berkeley. He and Ed Strong had been very close, and we were very pleased with Ed Strong when he was appointed chancellor.

There had been some weak, brief terms of chancellors: Glenn Seaborg, for example, who had not been much of a chancellor, was delighted to leave. He left sometime in 1961 just before all this occurred. Everybody was delighted with Ed Strong. There was the inauguration of Ed Strong just before this started, when President Kennedy came to the campus and there was this tremendous event in the stadium. In fact, the most exciting event I've ever seen on the campus. Ed Strong gave his inaugural address as chancellor, which was very brief. He took about five or six minutes; it was just excellent.

The president was marvelous, and oh! the excitement around there. Every Regent showed up, which was very rare. Every single Regent I think, was there for that occasion. It was when Kennedy was first in office. Kennedy, by the way, was completely at ease in an academic atmosphere. And that all occurred before. Ed Strong came in with the greatest of good will from every side.

I think I mentioned before, that in the long run, Ed Strong did not show any real bitterness. I think he was very unhappy for a long time, but he never resigned from the faculty at Berkeley. He went back to his philosophy, I guess isn't it? And was a strong faculty member. And he had a very strong wife, Gertrude Strong, who I think was very helpful to him through all this.

I am honestly--I've said it before--I honestly did not know who started this crazy order about the tables and no political speeches. In my own mind, because of future events, I would place it on Alex Sherriffs' head, who was vice-chancellor. But I don't think I'm--because of his bitterness, you know. Berkeley and the Berkeley campus, and Clark Kerr and joining Reagan.

Chall: Yes, but he wasn't bitter then. It was just following--
Heller: No, but I've never known if he gave the order or if his immediate superior Ed Strong gave the order. Katherine Towle literally had to carry out the order. That much I know. She got her order from Alex Sherriffs, and that's as far as I have ever been able to get.

Well, we just felt--the Regents just felt that Ed Strong couldn't handle it any more. We weren't aware, for a while, that Clark Kerr couldn't handle it. He'd always been able to handle everything. He was an arbitrator, and he thought you could arbitrate anything. I'm sure I felt he could do it, get this worked out. But of course it didn't work that way.

Chall: Do you think anybody could have handled it?

Heller: Personally?

Chall: Yes.

Heller: No.

Chall: It just had to run its course?

Heller: I think this was a thing like the Vietnam War, eventually, that was beyond anybody's handling. As a matter of fact, one of the worst things was the police dragging Mario Savio because we had been very careful about no police and that we wanted nobody hurt, and that it should be sat out. We were very careful about that. The campus should not be closed down. We were following what we thought were quite proper procedures. I can't remember whether Ed Strong gave the order for the police--

Chall: That's during the sit-in?

Heller: Yes.

Chall: I don't know. I think it might have been Governor Pat Brown, but I'm not sure, finally.

Heller: I'm not sure who it was. Well, it was state property. Does this chronology show it?

Chall: No, it doesn't tell who gave the order. It gives you some day-to-day activity but it doesn't help in totally understanding.

Heller: Here it says seventy-three university department chairmen. I only remember about twenty-eight of them. Maybe we met with twenty-eight.

Chall: That's on December the sixth or thereabouts.
Heller: [pause] Well, I think probably their occupying the building of Sproul Hall was an illegal act. It was state property; it was not an outdoor assembly. I think that would have been a perfectly legal move. Of course, they had all those demonstrators at court. I think nothing ever came of that.

Chall: I think they had to pay fines and some of them were put on probation. This is December that we're talking about, early December. But on November the twentieth, the Regents had a regular meeting [on the Berkeley campus], and the students wanted to have a voice. The Regents allowed five FSM persons to attend that meeting. I don't know whether they spoke or not, but do you recall--

Heller: When was that?

Chall: November twentieth.

Heller: Let me see if I can take a look at this--

Chall: At which time you formulated a policy for campus political action, and you seem to have taken the--

Heller: I don't remember students coming.

Chall: The Regents then formulated a policy that political action on the campus was all right and that they could take any action they wanted but it had to be for lawful off-campus activity.

Heller: What could be done on campus had to be lawful off-campus. That was one of the first steps we took toward liberalizing.

Chall: Do you recall whether behind-the-scenes somebody had been working that out, or was it done in the meeting?

Heller: It was done in the meeting. We had endless sessions. Where was that meeting. Was that at UCLA?

Chall: No, Berkeley.

Heller: We met in University Hall, according to this. [pause] Oh, it's awfully hard for me to sort this out.

Chall: Well, you've done pretty well so far. Let me move on to the middle of December. The faculty--

Heller: It says [chronology] Governor Brown ordered arrest of the Sproul Hall demonstrators. That's probably possible. It was state property. I don't remember that the FSM leaders ever appeared--

Chall: On November the twentieth?
Heller: On November the twentieth. I really and truly don't. You see, it doesn't say.

Chall: Well then I may have picked that up in some other—maybe the University Bulletin chronology.

Heller: I don't remember any of those people in meetings, to tell you the truth. Later on, some faculty members came down (to UCLA) and wanted to meet with the Regents—this is just a little aside, really—and the Regents refused to meet them. They said they didn't belong there. I've never forgotten that. I, and several other Regents, said we would meet with the faculty group that was down from Berkeley and hear what they had to say. I've forgotten what they had to say. They were fine. They were quite agitated about all this, but they were fine. I know that was at UCLA. I've forgotten which ones of us said we would meet with them. But some of us said we were going to do it; it wouldn't be an official Regents' act, but we wanted to hear what they had to say. Then there were more and more Regents coming into the room, until it was terribly crowded. I guess some of them had a change of heart and came to listen. It was not acrimonious, it wasn't exactly pleasant hearing all the things people thought were wrong. But there were some good spokesmen for the faculty there.

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Heller: It went from one thing to another. When the FSM group eventually broke up, because of fighting among the factions that began to want control, the group calling themselves the FSU came in. You remember about that?

Chall: Yes.

Heller: This is later. Called the—

Chall: Free Student Union.

Heller: Then there was that Filthy Speech Movement. It was sort of inspired by this young man who got up and said all these swear words in public. He came from a very proper background; he got all worked up. It had never been done before! Commonly done now, you hear it on TV, all the time. That was appalling. [laughs] It was an entirely different group. Maybe I just better put it in now while I'm thinking of it. I might not think of it again.

Chall: That came later after there had been a few months of rest. [March 3, 1965]

Heller: Yes. Well, they never really did get any place. But I do remember that Marty [Martin] Meyerson was acting chancellor by this time. There was still great tension on the campus, even though it wasn't the great
Heller: mass movement. Well, Marty Meyerson phoned Don McLaughlin and me, and asked us—I think Clark Kerr had agreed to this—if, as a favor to him, we as Regents would meet with a group from the FSU.

Don and I both like students, you know, but this was a sort of crazy bunch, I must say. So we said yes, we'd be perfectly willing to meet them, but we didn't want to meet them on University property because you never knew when a thing would mushroom around there. Don invited them to his office and Don and I were there, just to talk with them. They came marching in, a strange assortment of young people, as I remember, carrying a huge tape recorder. They set it down right in front of them, and turned it on. Don said, "What's that thing you have there?" And this young man said, "It's a tape recorder." And Don said, "What do you have to tape record this session for? We're just meeting to get ideas from you." They said, "We've got to. Our leaders won't believe us; that we've presented our points properly, [laughs] unless we can give them a recording of it." You know, it was just hilarious. And Don and I sort of looked at each other, and we really wanted to laugh. And we sort of said simultaneously, "Go ahead and record. It's okay with us. There's nothing we say that we're ashamed of."

We didn't have a bad conversation with them. It didn't make much sense. And by God, in five minutes the tape recorder broke down [laughs] and they were very upset. And Don said, "Do we have to stop the meeting now? Because you can't tape record, you have to leave?" [laughs heartily] And they said, "No, we guess they'll believe us when we say it broke down." I don't remember really the contents of the meeting, but they were just determined to carry on. I don't think these were far-left people, they were just emotional—charged. They were going to save the University from the Regents and the faculty and the administration. But that was one of the funnier sessions, I must say, that took place. And it's unimportant, and I wouldn't have except for the suspicions that were going on among the students. Once they started to split up after the big FSM--

Chall: Yes. In September, they were beginning to come apart. But--

Heller: I'm trying to think when Ed Strong resigned. It was right in that period--

Chall: Strong was put on leave of absence in January, about January second, and Meyerson was appointed acting chancellor. Strong didn't resign until mid-March. [March 13]

Now the Filthy Speech Movement—What can you say about it? Apparently by this time, it would seem, the legislators and other people on the outside were very much aroused. By this time they'd had it with the students, and they decided that something had to be done right away. Clark Kerr felt that Ed Carter and maybe Governor Brown
Chall: and others were, in fact, telling him what to do about these students. Discipline them, put them in jail, whatever it was, and he said, "That is not my responsibility. That's the responsibility of the chief campus officer," and he refused to do it. He felt that he was being pressured to do something he shouldn't be doing on the campus.

Heller: I think this may have been one of Clark's post-rationalizations.

Chall: Clark Kerr and Martin Meyerson handed in their resignations. Do you recall that?

Heller: Of course I remember it.

Chall: They resigned mid-March.

Heller: Ed Carter was chairman of the board at this time, during the Filthy Speech Movement. I remember this extremely well. Ed Carter was in constant touch with them by phone. Of course, he lived in Southern California, but he was up here quite a bit. Out of a clear sky, Clark and Marty Meyerson called a press conference, saying they were resigning. That was the beginning of the end of Clark Kerr. He withdrew the resignation, and this is where people who had been supporting Clark began to fall away from him. They were furious at him. If he were going to resign, he had to resign to the Regents and not the press. All the Regents thought that this was a very bad tactic, if it was a tactic. They both pulled it right back! When was that?

Chall: That was March nine, and March thirteenth (or fifteenth) there was an emergency meeting of the Regents, I think. I get a little hazy on all these dates, but this is what I have set down in my chronology--it depends on the source.

Heller: Yes, well, that's the trouble.

Chall: The Regents urged them to stay, and the faculty showed strong support. Were there a few Regents who went to Clark Kerr or called him and told him that--

Heller: I think Ed Carter, basically, did it. I think he checked around. There was a lot of checking back and forth at that time. You have to remember that Ed Pauley had been wanting to get rid of Clark Kerr for a long time, for very different reasons. He had no use for him, and that was because--you have to go back a ways--Ed Pauley was chairman of the Regents, head of the search committee that appointed Clark, and was delighted with Clark's appointment.

But then, Ed Pauley used to like to boss everybody. And when Clark wouldn't take orders from Ed Pauley, Ed Pauley was through with Clark. And he had been against Clark since well before I was a Regent.
Heller: He had just been dead set against him. I'm sure, in my own mind, that that was the reason. He had a million different reasons why. But most people were still supporting Clark until this radio resignation, and I noticed people starting to pull away then. Very upset. And actually, when you look back on it, it was right. You can't threaten to resign. And that's one of the principles I've always gone by since then. I saw what that did. You resign or you don't resign. There's no in-between thing. You can't make gestures. I don't think that Clark wanted to resign.

Chall: I think it was just anger--

Heller: It was anger.

Chall: --being told what to do on the campus, when he'd already been through that.

Heller: Marty Meyerson was chosen acting chancellor mostly because he was sort of above the battle in that he was comparatively new at the University. He wasn't part of any one faction. Marty had a lot of good things going for him, I think, but he was an indecisive administrator. I give him this much break, to say that he was only acting; he had no real authority.

Chall: What was your feeling about the Filthy Speech Movement?

Heller: It was the--what do you want to call it?--the last gasp of the FSM. You know, the emotional end of it. I suppose using all those words had something to do with free speech, but very little. It didn't attract a big steadfast crowd of students by any means.

Chall: So it was an annoyance, then. By this time it was annoying to the Regents?

Heller: Most annoying. Kept everything in an uproar. Things kept continuing to be in an uproar all the time.

Chall: One of the effects of it, of course, was what we just talked about—that was the Kerr resignation. It certainly had a long-term effect.


I've never been satisfied in my own mind whether Clark knew where to go from there or not. Clark's a very sure person in lots of ways and he'd always been able to handle everything up until then. You know, he always had his Regents with him, too. With one or two exceptions. I don't know whether he just was-- You know, Clark's a hard person to talk to, even though I knew him well. He won't talk personally about himself ever. He'll talk about events and what's
Heller: going on. So I've never been sure what brought that immediate thing on, and I think Marty probably would just as lief have gotten out, or was ready to follow Clark. Marty had very little authority as acting chancellor. He really couldn't even make appointments. It was a tough position, and of course eventually we chose another chancellor.

Chall: Roger Heyns.

Heller: Yes. Well, the sidelight on the way was that I guess Don McLaughlin was chairman of the search committee for the new chancellor, if I remember correctly. I may have this a little mixed up, but I know one thing that happened: Don had to go to South America--it was some preliminary meeting of the search committee--and I remember he said to me, "You're in charge, Ellie." We didn't have anything very formal, you know. I had to be the one to establish whether Marty Meyerson should be a candidate for chancellor or not. I don't think people disliked him, but you just couldn't zero in; you couldn't find out if Marty wanted to be a candidate at all. I remember having come to the conclusion that he should not be a candidate. This was before the search really started, but I was on that search committee. But that comes later. I've forgotten what year--

Chall: Yes, that comes in September 1965.

Heller: Just a year later, just a year after FSM started.

Chall: Now, to go back to the FSM.

Heller: Yes.

Chall: Right after the Greek Theatre episode, which was supposed to solve the problem and Mario Savio was dragged off by the police, the Academic Senate met at Wheeler Auditorium and the students surrounded Wheeler Hall to listen. The proposals of the Committee of Two Hundred had not been acceptable to the Regents and to Clark Kerr--

Heller: Whatever those proposals were. I don't remember anymore.

Chall: Well, it's all on the record. They were accepted in that faculty meeting, by the Academic Senate, which meant that the faculty was repudiating not only Clark Kerr, but the Regents. They set up their own proposals which had to do with faculty decisions about student conduct, things of this kind, which the Regents said was not the province of the faculty, but was the province of the Regents. So the Regents had their December meeting [December 16-17], and at this meeting, the Meyer committee and the Forbes committee were set up--

Heller: Is that when it was set up?
Heller: But as I watched him over the years and have heard about him, first at the University of Buffalo, where he eventually went as chancellor, and then president of the University of Pennsylvania, he has not been one of the nation's top educational administrators. But Marty—here are some sidelights. I can remember he used to drive Ed Pauley crazy. This had nothing to do with Clark Kerr. Ed Pauley was ready to like Meyerson; to support him as far as I remember. I'm using Ed Pauley as an example—I remember his just bursting out one time in a Regents meeting—remember these Regents meetings were closed, they were not open meetings—"By God, why can't I get a yes or no out of that guy! He'll never say it. He goes around and around and around and around, and 'maybe,' and you can never get that guy to say yes or no." Not that Ed Pauley was always so acute about people, but he was surely right about Marty Meyerson.
Chall: Yes. Then several Regents met with Clark Kerr to prepare a four-point resolution having to do with student conduct, and that among much else in that resolution, that speech would be governed by the first and the fourteenth amendments.

Heller: I do remember something like that.

Chall: Okay. Do you remember how that was put together? A few Regents? Were you among them?

Heller: I don't recall. I do recall—this is only indirectly what you're talking about—that Clark couldn't get on with the Berkeley Academic Senate, as a result of this. He turned to the statewide Academic Senate, which had had very, very little to do. It had never been a powerful group. It was always the southern division, as we discussed, and the northern division, and dominated by Berkeley and UCLA. Because he just felt that he had no place to go, he brought in the chairman and vice-chairman of the statewide Academic Senate. If I remember correctly, Bob Brode, in physics, was one of those two, and the other was Angus Taylor. I know it was Angus Taylor.

I've always thought that that meeting—it was a horrible meeting, it was a private dining room someplace in Los Angeles, it was just a horrible meeting. But that was the beginning of getting some semblance of faculty working with the Regents, because of those two. Angus Taylor could tell you quite a bit about that. I always felt that this was a terribly important move at that point, where everything was split every which way. You see, Clark never went to Berkeley Academic Senate meetings.

Chall: Was that proper as president?

Heller: He was a full member of the—

Chall: But he was also the president.

Heller: No reason not to, but he wouldn't. Then there was this dichotomy that was coming, and he turned to the statewide Academic Senate, which in turn could go back to the campuses, and began to get a little sense out of procedures. That was one of the things that kept the faculty from just falling away from the whole University, I've always felt.

Chall: So that was a good move on his part, then.

Heller: Very good. Very good. They were very sensible, good people. Angus eventually became a vice-president of the University. He was at UCLA at that time. And I think it was Bob Brode from Berkeley who was the other statewide officer.
Chall: What was that name? Bob what?

Heller: Brode. In physics. I'm not absolutely positive. I see him around once in a while. He's retired since then. But they did an enormous service there. Highly charged emotional situation. That was probably earlier, because I remember talk of Ed Strong there, and he hadn't resigned-- Well, it was not nice, anyway.

Chall: What was? The meeting with these two--

Heller: Such acrimony.

Chall: --statewide persons?

Heller: No, they were all right. There was no acrimony with them. The Regents were just biting at Clark, and starting to bite at each other. Very, very unpleasant.

Chall: Somewhere along the line by this time, by the time of this mid-December meeting, I picked up someplace that Regents Hearst, Canaday, Forbes were pro-Strong at this point.

Heller: That is correct. No, no, Forbes was not pro-Strong. Forbes just became anti-Kerr, and he had been a strong supporter of Kerr's. I'm not sure that John Canaday ever was. Catherine had been a supporter of Clark's.

       Pauley was chairman of the Regents when I went on. He was not chairman at the time of the FSM. I guess Ed Carter was, I'm not sure. I haven't thought about that.

Chall: I had a list here.

Heller: Don McLaughlin was someplace in there, too.

Chall: Here are the chairmen of the board, dates--

Heller: Ed Pauley was when I came on.

Chall: Ed Pauley was from 1956 to 1958 and again from 1960 to 1962.

Heller: That's correct.

Chall: Gerald Hagar was from 1962 to 1964, just probably had a bit of the FSM.

Heller: He went off in March of '64, his term was up.

Chall: Okay, and everything started in September.
Heller: I know why Bill Forbes changed. Bill Forbes in that period felt that Clark had lied to the Regents, hadn't carried a straight story. Never forgave him. He was implacable. Now Forbes was a good friend of mine, but he was not what you'd call a leader among the Regents. In my opinion, Forbes was never comfortable in being lumped in the company of Canaday and Hearst. They didn't think the way he did. Forbes really was a very fine person, but not a leader. And he wasn't pro-Strong.

What got Catherine Hearst and John Canaday so pro-Strong I'm not sure. Sometimes I thought that Alex Sherriffs had something to do with that. At another point, I felt that Hardin Jones and John Lawrence, both of whom were faculty members, had something to do with that. There was hysteria about Kerr being the leader of a Communist group, and Canaday and Hearst would automatically just fly in the air.

Chall: Were they ready to believe that?

Heller: Oh, yes, they were ready to believe anything like that. That's really true. But Forbes was not ready to believe that. I never have figured this: No matter what Ed Strong did, they adored him. And Ed Strong, you know, was a very liberal person. And Pauley also was part of the pro-Strong group. The thing never made any sense to me, because they were using Strong, in my opinion, as some sort of a symbol, which Ed really wasn't. They just flattered Ed Strong to death. Maybe it helped some wounded ego on his part, but I always felt they were not really allies, and Ed Strong could do no wrong. There'd be fights on the Regents all the time centering around that.

As I say, at some point right in there—I'm trying to give you personal things—Gerald Hagar, who was no longer a Regent, he had finished his term the March before the FSM, he was a good friend of mine, marvelous person—phoned me one day. I always felt maybe if he'd still been a Regent we would have had some more sense, I don't know.

He said, "Ellie, John Lawrence and Hardin Jones, who are both professors, John in nuclear medicine and Jones in chemistry, want to come and see you. But they're of the old school. They don't believe in faculty members talking to Regents." He said, "So I'm phoning." I said, "That's ridiculous, Jerry. You know I don't believe in that whole thing. Sure, send them down."

I'd never met Hardin Jones, but I had met John Lawrence. He was the brother of Ernest Lawrence, whom I admired enormously. I'd met John. I knew he was very conservative. I'd been at a dinner party at the Hagars' and the Lawrences were there. I remember Ella Hagar was just appalled at some of the stuff he was saying in front of me, assuming I was very Republican, which of course I'm not.
Heller: Just saying dreadful things, in a social way, against the Democrats. You know, the sort of thing you really don't do at a dinner party. Oh, she had a fit! She phoned to apologize to me the next day. But that's the way John was. Of course, I got to know him much better later when he eventually became a Regent, and one of the worst Regents that I think that the University's ever had. But that was later, after Reagan was governor. They came down to see me, and they were here for about five hours. John didn't say much. Hardin Jones, I don't know if you've ever heard of Hardin Jones or not--

Chall: I have.

Heller: One of the extreme right-wingers, really right-wingers on the faculty. Another Communist-under-every-bush guy. Sat there with a briefcase full of documents. And he sat here for five hours pulling out handbills, leaflets, I don't know what, trying to prove to me that Clark Kerr was a Communist. It was right in this room. It was one of the damndest sessions I ever knew. I remember John Lawrence saying, "I was a supporter of Clark's." But he said, "Hardin has convinced me with this, that Clark is a Communist." He said, "I'm now convinced, and I'm going to fight him." He was not a Regent, he was a faculty member. Well, that's the sort of thing you were in all the time in that period. Of course, Hardin Jones remained a foe of Clark's.

Chall: Clark Kerr was getting it from all ends. The Communist thing is so far out.

Heller: To me the Communist thing is just so ludicrous, and I had had enough experience in Democratic politics to know how you can build things up that aren't true. I saw it during the McCarthy period so well, and how documents could be made to seem what they're not. There were handbills. I can't even remember what it was. But as I say, it took him five hours to go through this thing.

Chall: How did you respond to this kind of thing?

Heller: I just listened. I made it clear that I didn't believe that this was the case. I tried to be polite. Why not be polite? I said I didn't interpret those documents the way that he did, and I was convinced that Clark Kerr was as anti-Communist as all the rest of us. Which I was convinced of, and I'm still convinced of. But these people were maniacs. That's all I can say.

So that was going on through all that period, too. You have to remember that, because it has a lot to do—or some to do with the eventual ouster of Clark. It's ingrained belief. Somewhere along the line Catherine Hearst came to that conclusion, and John Canaday was always that way. Not a dumb guy, but a "maniacal patriot," and I say that in quotes. You've run across them. Just no sense. And
Heller: then he'd take drinks and he'd be worse. Oh, we had some of the most horrible sessions in the evening, at a dinner party, a cocktail party. John Canaday would take drinks and he'd just be impossible. Ed Pauley too.

There wasn't much drinking on the Regents, by the way. Those two. I don't say that John Canaday drank so much, he just didn't handle it very well. Ed Pauley was a heavy drinker and got worse as time went on.

But Ed Pauley did love the University of California. You always have to remember that. He thought he was doing the right thing, and he thought Clark was bad for the University.

Chall: Was Ed Pauley one of the Regents who had been on so long that he remembered fondly and didn't want to give up the days when the Regents had almost total control over the University? Was that part of the problem as decentralization and size became a problem?

Heller: No, because Ed Pauley wanted UCLA, for example, decentralized. It's hard to say if you didn't know Ed Pauley. He wanted his own way in everything. I knew him when he was in Democratic politics, when he was national committeeman and I was national committeewoman and before that, Ed Heller knew him in business. Ed Pauley was ruthless in wanting things to go the way he thought they should go. Sometimes he was right, and sometimes not, and he would get me so mad I can't even begin to tell you, and the next minute I'd be roaring with laughter with him. He could be so funny, even about himself. Strange mixture. I didn't always vote against him on the Regents.

Ed Pauley would vote as the whim struck him. He ignored the whole academic niceties. He didn't think that was important. You know, the role of the Regents. The Regents were boss, as far as he was concerned.
Heller: Yes. I know Jerry wasn't on when this occurred.

Chall: Ed Carter, then, was the chairman from '64 to '66. Right straight through it all.

Heller: Well, then Ed Carter was when the FSM started. Yes. Ed Carter was. Then when was Don McLaughlin?

Chall: Fifty-eight to '60. That was before. He wasn't chairman when you came on.

Heller: He was chairman when I was on at some point.

Chall: He was chairman of the Educational Policy Committee, but not of the--unless I have these dates wrong. It was Donald McLaughlin from '58 to '60, and then Ed Pauley from '60 to '62, and then Gerald Hagar from '62 to '64, Edward Carter from '64 to '66, and Theodore Meyer from '66 to--I don't have that date. Probably '68.

Heller: That's right. I guess Don wasn't. He was chairman of educational policies, but he was a very important Regent.

Chall: Yes. So it was Edward Carter who was chairman during all the period that we're talking about.

Heller: Would have been an awful time to be chairman.

Chall: Yes. Then Theodore Meyer was '66. Theodore Meyer was chairman when Clark Kerr was fired by the Regents.

Heller: You don't have to tell me that, I remember it.

Chall: Okay. Well, we'll get to that soon. I wanted to ask you again about that meeting in December, when apparently during a dinner meeting of the Regents during that weekend, Strong criticized, indirectly, Kerr. He either gave a speech--

Heller: That was the one at Los Angeles?

Chall: Yes. How did that affect you all? Because it was only within a few weeks afterwards that Strong was asked to resign, or rather given a leave of absence.

Heller: That's what I remember as such a distressing affair.

Chall: That was January. And between January and March, when the Filthy Speech Movement started, things were sort of at peace.
Heller: Well, comparatively speaking they were! But you know there was a different thing in the press every day, and as far as I was concerned during this period, I was besieged by phone calls. I have a listed number, you know. People would get me on the phone and harangue me and tell me all these dreadful things that were going on. Sometimes they'd be people I knew. I'd say, "How do you know this? How do you know?" I discovered they all—the ones I knew—belonged to some organization that was putting out propaganda of what it called "facts." Some newsletter, or something. It was sort of a right-wing thing. They'd phone me and harangue me. And I'd always be polite as I possibly could and listen. I just got boxloads of letters. I have them all tucked away someplace. They really didn't say much.

Chall: What were they wanting you to do? You, as a Regent, and all the Regents?

Heller: I guess fire, and get rid of the students, close down the University. Most of them were postmarked from Southern California. It was when we used to have the individual—there was a whole letter writing thing on, equating what was happening with communism all the time. The phone kept ringing. It was horrible.

Chall: I suppose that the legislators and Governor Pat Brown were getting the same pressures.

Heller: Oh, yes.

Chall: So it made it very difficult to work in peace.

Heller: Don [Donald] Mulford, who was the assemblyman from Berkeley, insisted that he represented the University, not that there weren't campuses all over the state, but the statewide headquarters were in Berkeley. He hated Clark Kerr. He hated all of this. He would produce things. I remember going up to see him trying to talk about budget or what-have-you—with certainly Ed Carter and I've forgotten who—and he'd pull all these documents out, just the way Hardin Jones had, and give a diatribe against Clark Kerr. It was really difficult to work with him.

But fortunately, Pat Brown, who was governor then, never got into this antagonism to Clark Kerr, and never hated Berkeley, and so the budgets kept coming out all right. That was that expanding period, too. We didn't have too much problem with our budgets then. It was when Reagan came in that we began having the problems. But he couldn't do what he wanted to do, because he wanted to cut out Berkeley funds only. He wasn't mad at the rest of the University, and he found out the way the University budget goes in, you can't cut out one campus and leave another in. The budget must be divided among all the campuses. It's a statewide thing. That comes later, with teaching assistants. That was when Ted Meyer was chairman, when teaching assistants went on strike.
Heller: I think I'm getting two dinners mixed up when I talked about Angus Taylor coming in. I think they were there. I think that was the beginning of bringing in the--Clark felt he had to have some witnesses from the academic side. I believe they were at that dinner. It was in a Los Angeles hotel. It was a nightmare of emotion. We broke up, and came back together. It wasn't a meeting of the Regents, it was during an informal meeting of them in the evening. Ed Strong was weeping, and I can't remember, really, whether he was accusing Clark of trying to run his campus, or trying to get rid of him or what. I just remember it with revulsion. Not against Ed Strong, whom I liked; I never had any feeling personally against Ed Strong, I couldn't. But people were just on the verge of breaking. I don't know if there are such things as nervous breakdowns, but certainly on the verge of it, and Ed Strong was at that point. I really don't remember the details, except it was just a horrifying experience. To see men really sort of going apart. I can't remember whether Clark answered Ed Strong or not. Just can't remember it. He probably did, because Clark always has to--generally has to answer everything.

Chall: Set the record straight? Is that the feeling that you have?

Heller: Yes, as it were. I'm not sure that everything Ed Strong said was absolutely factual. This was the point at which Ed Pauley, and Catherine Hearst, and John Canaday became such ardent advocates--and I'm afraid, Rafferty too--of Ed Strong. It was a curious combination when you think about it.

Chall: And yet two weeks later he was given a leave of absence.

Heller: That's right. I think that was the only thing to do. I'm sure we didn't want to fire him outright, because that isn't my inclination ever. I just don't remember. Somebody's got to remember that. It was quite evident that he was falling apart and couldn't do the work. Whether it was the intention of never having him resume his chancellorship or not, I'm not sure. Morals get a little bit mixed up there, but he certainly was not in a physical position to do it.
By this time then, I guess the Regents are really split.

It's starting to split.

Starting to split. Was the feeling among the Regents as intense as it had been during the loyalty oath?

Well, I was only a bystander for the loyalty oath.

Yes, but you did see it.

Yes. No. No, I won't say that. We always spoke to each other. During the loyalty oath, some of the Regents weren't speaking to others. We always spoke to each other at Regents' meetings, or when we had dinner, or whatever. There was never any not speaking to anybody. So in that way, it was slightly more sophisticated. It really was.

Were they treating Clark Kerr civilly in meetings? Those who had left him?

They were, except sometimes at dinner or after cocktails, John Canaday and Ed Pauley would really take off after him. Of course, we have long since abandoned having any dinner meetings. But Clark used to have them. Not actual meetings, but for information meetings. They could be very unpleasant.

Were they formal, then. I mean they were formal in the sense that they were part of the Regents' activities?

Yes. You see, we didn't have open meetings, you have to remember that point. Clark had always insisted on these evening things. Well, after Hitch came in it changed.

The Meyer and Forbes Committees##

I was thinking about which Regents first started to even generally understand the concept of what free speech was all about. It was never that clear, because there was all this mess going on all the time. Buff Chandler was one of the first to get the concept, though it was very hard to sort out strategy with concept by this time. Bill Roth was very good at it. Ed Carter was. I think I began to get some idea of it too. Actually, I think Phil Boyd did in his quiet way. Bit by bit, different people began to understand the--

What was really wanted by the students?
Heller: Yes. I'd have to go over the list of who was Regent when, to remember. Some were no longer Regents. Einar Mohn was only on for a very short time, but he understood it very well.

Chall: Here is a list. I'm glad you brought that up, because when you look back now on that whole movement, it's sort of hard to wonder why it ever had to happen at all when the issue was presumably settled by deeding that trip of sidewalk.

Heller: Jesse Steinhart was off by that time, who would have understood it, but he went off in '62. Don McLaughlin did, Neil Haggerty when he got to meetings. He wasn't too well, he was living in Washington. He was a labor--AFL-CIO, secretary-treasurer. He understood very well. Let's see who was on there. Ed Carter, Buff Chandler. Oh! I'll tell you who was no longer, but who was sort of advising from the side, was Tom Storke, who had a very slight role, because he was off the Regents by 1960. He was somebody that was very much respected.

Jesse Tapp was. Sam Mosher had his role sometimes, but he rarely came. Catherine Hearst I don't think ever did. Phil Boyd did. John Canaday might or might not have. He had that emotional thing. Norton Simon really did. Bill Roth did. I guess Fred Dutton did, but he was such a maverick in his own way that he never helped anything. He just stirred things up. Bill Forbes did. Ted Meyer. Oh, another very good person in all this was Jesse Tapp, who was state chairman of the Board of Agriculture. Very strong. He unfortunately had a heart attack and died, but he had been replaced by Reagan in '66 when Allan Grant was put on. But Jesse Tapp did.

So you can see how we had a working majority if we had only known how to bring ourselves together. Funny enough, I know Bill Coblentz did, but I just don't remember—he came on in '64, you see, when this was just underway. I mean, Bill would have had to have been. But I can't remember him so much during the FSM.

Chall: These are Brown appointees, many of them?

Heller: Yes. Dutch Higgs came on later, in '66. He was helpful later on, very helpful later on.

Chall: So the issue then was freeing the rules to allow—changing the rules and standing orders?

Heller: Yes. It was much easier said than done.

Chall: Why is that?

Heller: Because it just never had been exercised in this way. We had all sorts of rules that really didn't allow for free speech, in the modern concept of free speech. You're missing at least one Regent here.
Chall: Maybe, because I don't have Mohn's name down here at all.

Heller: Larry Kenendy, whom I happened to mention back there, and you've missed—he was at Crocker Bank—Jerd Sullivan. Big tall guy. He was a longtime Regent. Not an awfully good one, in my opinion. You've missed some.

Chall: I'd better make a new list.

Heller: I guess you haven't got me on at all.

Chall: Yes. Well, up at the top I have, at the very top, I've got your date and your husband's date. I was trying to put together the names of some of the Regents who had been on when both of you were on.

Heller: You haven't got me. Edward Heller, that's all you have. Oh, I see Elinor, way over here.

Chall: Those are my notes. This brings me into wanting some real background into that Meyer committee, because that was a committee that was so balanced, and you had so much difficulty getting those proposals approved by the faculty, and then even by the Regents.*

Heller: Oh, did we!

Chall: I really would like to know how you operated. What really happened?

Heller: We met and we met, and I called that the year of lost Saturdays. We met all day every Saturday, except for maybe Easter, or something like that. This was Ted Meyer's committee, and Don McLaughlin--

Chall: Yes, I have the list of the persons on it.

Heller: Well, it started—I believe Ed Carter nominated those committees, and he wanted to put Ted Meyer, if I remember correctly, and Don McLaughlin and me as a committee. But then there was all this clamor that all the Regents had to have a role in these two committees. One got called the Byrne committee--

Chall: Yes, that's because--

Heller: It was largely Southern Californians. The Meyer committee was largely Northern Californians. Then, I don't think you'll find it this way, but I know it happened—Catherine Hearst and Larry Kennedy were put on.

*The Special Committee to Review University Policies.
Chall: Yes, here's the list of them.

Heller: Boy, you really dug this out. I wouldn't think I'd ever forget, we met so often. John Canaday. Well, Sam Mosher never came. I can't remember Ed Carter. I think he was on ex officio, probably. I can't remember his ever coming. John Canaday was part of that committee. Catherine Hearst, myself, Larry Kennedy. Clark Kerr, I think, did not meet with us. Don McLaughlin and Ted Meyer, chairman. That was it.

Well, Ted Meyer, who was chairman, was a very thoughtful, quiet person. He didn't like controversy. He was reputed to be an excellent attorney, and I know he was. But before I had met him as a Regent, I had always heard he was. That's why I say reputed to be --he was. He was an excellent attorney, but he was a low pressure guy, he didn't like big visibility, and here he found himself in this-- He came on as an ex officio member, because he was president of the Mechanics Institute. A very fine Regent, let me say. He accepted this chairmanship and it was a very good choice, because we were dealing with the law here.

We met and we met with Tom Cunningham, and I guess Don Reidhaar was the young attorney from the general counsel's office. He was with us, and Virginia Smith, who was sort of a special assistant to Clark Kerr, who had a law degree. She really did the recording and keeping these things straight. Just trying to find out what procedures would be within the law as far as use of University facilities went.

Chall: You met with faculty members--?

Heller: Yes.

Chall: And you met with some students?

Heller: We did. We met with some of the Boalt Hall faculty, and they were not too helpful. They were not realistic. What's his name, Adrian Kragen?

Chall: Was it Sherry?

Heller: We met with Art [Arthur] Sherry. He was not very good on this. Adrian Kragen was the one I think was the best and the clearest thinker on this. Everybody was thinking different things, that's all you can say. The law was so unclear.

Chall: But was this really a legal matter--university policies?

Heller: Yes, it was a legal matter. And here were all these non-legal people, except for Ted Meyer, trying to work this out. John Canaday's emotions were getting in the way of that, and that's where Catherine started
Heller: developing this great bitterness. She and Larry Kennedy, who had been sort of a nice guy up to then, got this--were always at odds with us, would keep us in session for hours longer than we wanted to be, pursuing useless points. I haven't reread that report for so long.

Chall: The first committee report was brought in in March, I guess, and then the Regents wouldn't accept it. Then it was reviewed by faculty people, and by the time it came back again in May, it had been considerably revised.

Heller: That's right. I remember one Regent who wouldn't accept it.

Chall: Kennedy wouldn't.

Heller: Yes, but I remember that Bill Roth thought it was too restrictive.

Chall: I see. I'm thinking of the Regents on the committee.

Heller: Oh, no, Kennedy and Hearst wouldn't sign it for reasons--something about student government.

Chall: Hearst's was student government. His had to do with the faculty, apparently, about how the faculty felt about it.

Why was it brought in in such a way that it wasn't acceptable? Was it too strict? Were the Regents trying to--

Heller: Some of them thought it was too strict, I guess, and some of them thought it wasn't strict enough. As I remember, Roth and Dutton didn't like it. They thought it hadn't liberalized the rules enough. I'd have to reread that. It finally got passed.

Chall: The one that got passed is the one you have in your hand. I haven't seen the first one.

Heller: Yes, but it's--

Chall: I've only read about it. But it was generally not liked. I wondered where you were on this issue.

Heller: Well, I would say that Don McLaughlin and Ted Meyer and I saw pretty well eye to eye in the committee.

Chall: And were you on the side that wanted greater freedoms rather than stricter controls?

Heller: Well, I was feeling my way. Yes, I felt that we had to allow some local autonomy, because you just can't administer anything like that statewide without some interpretation of what's been going on. It was a very difficult thing to draw up.
April 7, 1965

TO SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO REVIEW UNIVERSITY POLICIES:

Supplementing the agenda for the meeting of April 10, the following list shows the present status of the Minutes of each meeting of the Committee:

- December 23, 1964 - Approved by the Committee
- December 30, 1964 - Approved by the Committee
- December 31, 1964 - Approved by the Committee
- January 2, 1965 - Approved by the Committee
- January 9, 1965 - Approved by the Committee
- January 16, 1965 - Approved by the Committee
- January 22, 1965 - Approved by the Committee
- January 23, 1965 - Approved by the Committee
- February 6, 1965 - Rough draft attached
- February 13, 1965 - Final draft attached
- February 19, 1965 - Final draft attached
- February 20, 1965 - Rough draft attached
- February 27, 1965 - Approved by the Committee, as amended
- March 13, 1965 - Final draft heretofore mailed to Committee, but not yet approved
- March 20, 1965 - Not yet completed
- March 26, 1965 - Final draft attached
Heller: Let me say that the forming of these committees, in my opinion, was a device to try to defuse the tensions. Because it was obvious they were going to take a long time, so it had some success in that way—deferring a lot of action. I always thought that was the chief accomplishment of the Meyer committee. It helped defuse the tensions on the campuses waiting for it to come in. I think faculty and students became less and less impatient, got less and less interested in the subject.

Chall: That report you have there has the general minutes of a couple of faculty committees and indicates that they really had given it a great deal of thought. You must have worked very closely with the faculty in considering the problem.

Heller: Yes. I remember more working with the law school faculty, with some of them. They were as lost as we were about where you went. Not an easy thing.

Chall: You were really moving into new ground.

Heller: Completely. That was one of the things that kept bothering me, that there were no precedents that we could find to use. Stanford had avoided this thing, and I kept—I remember—a copy of the rules and regulations of Stanford. Stanford had somehow avoided this free speech thing, but I never did quite figure out why. Wally Sterling was the president of Stanford, and he'd always say about Clark Kerr, "There but for the grace of God go I." He said, "I was just lucky." He and Clark looked at things very much alike. But somehow Stanford's regulations were slightly different. We couldn't copy them; it didn't cover the case once this thing was out. I don't think we knew what we were looking for when we started.

You can see, some of the letters suggested the regulations unduly limit local campus autonomy. I guess we loosened some of that up now. [Reading the report, University Bulletin, June 1, 1965] That's covered very carefully, about individual campus needs.

Chall: When you finally came out with your report, it seemed to satisfy everyone. But the initial one was, I guess, unacceptable all around.

Heller: Yes. Well, I didn't expect it ever to go. As I said, I was perfectly willing to spend all my time on it, in the hopes that this would simmer down, which it did eventually. In the meantime, that other--

Chall: Forbes committee. Can you tell me a little bit about that report, the so-called Byrne report?*

*Committee to study the causes of campus disturbances and recommend to Regents what actions are indicated.
Heller: I only went to one meeting of the Forbes committee.

Chall: I have Forbes--

Heller: Forbes was chairman.


Heller: If you have Pauley, Chandler, Norton Simon together, you've got problems. That's all I can say. They just-- I know Roth was on that committee, because he was the one who suggested that they get this guy [Jerome C.] Byrne. He was also trying to defuse things.

Chall: What about the Byrne report, as they call it?

Heller: I don't remember what even happened to it! There was such controversy about it.

Chall: I think one of his ideas was that it all came about because there hadn't been enough decentralization, and then he had an idea for a commonwealth--

Heller: It had to do with decentralization, which did come about. But Byrne was a difficult person, apparently, and didn't have as good a reputation as people thought he did. So he became controversial in himself. If I remember, now I can be corrected on this, somehow Byrne wrote up this report and released it on his own. There was a horrible controversy about that, because it wasn't his to release, trying to boom himself. So it sort of muddied the effect of whatever it was that--Byrne was sort of a self-seeker, I guess. I only met him once. I think he was sort of thrown out, eventually. Somebody else better tell you about that Byrne committee.

But the decentralization did eventually come about. Buff Chandler was very strong for decentralization. I became more and more in favor of decentralization after I saw the troubles. I'd seen troubles before, but the troubles that were really developing when the head of a campus didn't have more authority. The budget has to be controlled at the statewide level. Certain things do. There are those who now say decentralization has gone too far, but I think that's a natural thing.

Policy on the Term of Board Chairman

Heller: I want to put one other little thing in here. You know, Ed Dickson had been chairman of the board. I've forgotten for how many years.
Heller: Now, Bill Forbes had been a very active Regent. And that's where Bill unfortunately met his downfall, and I mean this nicely. There was no real downfall; but from being a very strong Regent, he became known after that as a weak Regent. He had such a willful committee, he couldn't control them. Now Ted Meyer could always control his committee, but Forbes had Buff Chandler, and Norton Simon, and Bill Roth and Ed Pauley, among others.
Heller: Once they asked me to come to Los Angeles for a meeting of that committee, and Bill Forbes had just lost all control of it. He couldn't guide it at all. It was sort of sad, when you think of it. He had always been thought of as a strong person who would probably be chairman of finance committee and chairman of the board eventually, and never was any of those things after that.

I personally was very good friends with him; I liked him very much. But Ed Pauley looked down on him, and Ed Carter looked down on him. He never sort of reestablished himself after that period.

Heller: All this time there was a fight going on between Clark Kerr and Franklin Murphy. There were fights within fights. Clark was terribly jealous of Franklin Murphy.

Chall: Why?

Heller: Franklin had been a president of a university: the University of Kansas, if I'm not mistaken. Franklin was absolutely adored by the Southern California Regents, and he did build UCLA. No question about it. Very able person. But there was such jealousy. This is one of the petty things about Clark. This is one of the things that just couldn't help irritating me. Clark wanted to be in control of every ceremony. The chancellor was only incidental. We used to move Charter Days around to different campuses. He would not allow the chancellor on whose campus it was to conduct the ceremony. Kay Kerr would fight with Judy Murphy about her husband's role, and who stood first in line. It was unbelievable. I think Clark was absolutely wrong. I think it was most ungenerous of him, if you see what I mean. In a way, this eventually brought about decentralization. Incidentally, Ed Pauley always wanted to be the one to present, introduce anybody, any honors on any campus. That's long since been abandoned. He liked that. That was an ego there.
THE BYRNE REPORT

... to the special Forbes Committee of the Board of Regents of the University of California is a document of national significance.

The Los Angeles Times published the report in its entirety in the May 12 edition. I am sending you a reprint, accompanied by the news story published the same day and the lead editorial which appeared in The Times on May 16, in the belief that you will find this material of interest and value.

Sincerely,

Otis Chandler

NO ACKNOWLEDGMENT NECESSARY
Chall: It's in there somewhere. Maybe the second page or so I've got the list of chairmen.

Heller: From 1948 to 1956. It was right in that period—that was when Ed (Heller) was off—I guess his term was up. Ed Pauley became chairman of the board from '56 to '58. That was where Catherine Hearst and Buff Chandler first came on the board. They didn't like this centralized control. This was one of Catherine's better things, before I was a Regent. They got a reorganization committee of the board going. I think the two of them were largely responsible for this. The board set the rules which are still in effect now, that no Regent may be chairman of the board for more than two consecutive one-year terms. And though it's not explicit, it's really meant to rotate from north to south, which is no longer an issue, so it doesn't have to be observed. But at that time, it was an unspoken issue.

Ed Pauley was chairman of the board until '58, and this had just passed, this reorganization, so Don McLaughlin was chairman for two years there, '58 to '60. And then if you'll notice, Ed Pauley, who had been off for two years while Donald McLaughlin had been on for two years, was reelected chairman of the board. The nominating committee used to be a very important element in this, because the chairman of the board appoints the nominating committee.

So here was Ed Pauley chairman of the board when I came on in 1961.

By July first of '62, we were due to have a new chairman. I was not on the nominating committee. He was determined, he was going to, after he had been chairman for two years, in '62, he was going to break that rule. He was going to get these bylaws changed. It required sixteen votes to get them changed. I remember Pat Brown once told me—it's the only discussion about the Regents per se that I ever remember that Pat Brown phoned me—"Say Ellie, Ed Pauley tells me he's going to change the bylaws of the Regents. He's going to be chairman of the board again." I think Pat was inclined to go along with Ed Pauley. He didn't pay much attention to the Regents. Nobody did until Reagan came along.

I said, "No, he isn't." Remember I was a new Regent, comparatively speaking. He said, "Why not?" And I said, "Because I can name you more than eight people who will not vote for the change of bylaws." And I rattled off a whole bunch of them who would not change it. It had to do with Ed Pauley indirectly, but they didn't want—Buff Chandler wouldn't have changed it, Catherine Hearst wouldn't have changed it, I wouldn't have, Jerry Hagar, Don McLaughlin, I've forgotten. There were a whole bunch of us that wouldn't dream of it. We liked it the way it was.
Heller: It was a terrible fight. Jerry Hagar was on the nominating committee, as was Ed Pauley, and he did everything to keep Jerry Hagar from getting that job. Jerry Hagar was a splendid person, just splendid. This was all off the record, I guess, but I knew about it because they were very good friends of mine. I think Don McLaughlin was on that nominating committee.

Ed Pauley just didn't have the votes to change standing orders. So then he decided, well, he'd control the chairman, even if he wasn't chairman. I know this firsthand, from Jerry Hagar. He tried to get Jerry Hagar to make commitments to him about what he'd do as chairman of the board. One of the things was that he'd allow Ed Pauley to name the members of the nominating committee each year.

Chall: Sounds like a political convention!

Heller: Jerry Hagar is a lovely person. Just lovely. An attorney, good attorney. Of course, Jerry wouldn't. And Ed said, "I'll drag your name in the mud, you won't be chairman of the board." Jerry said, "Okay, let the nominating committee come in with my name, and if they don't want me, it's okay." Ed threatened, and said he would never support it. But of course, he did. The whole thing went through unanimously. But, oh! What an uproar. Ed Pauley trying to—and he would have liked to be chairman of the board again; he was never chosen again, once Jerry Hagar's two years were up.

Chall: Did he try to control Hagar during the years when Hagar was the chairman?

Heller: He knew he couldn't. But I was on the nominating committee following that, when we nominated Ed Carter. I can remember talking to Ed Carter at Jerry Hagar's house, and saying, "We'd like to present your name for chairman of the board." You have to remember there were wheels within wheels on this board. Ed Carter was very devoted to Ed Pauley, though a very different sort of person. But I think he was sort of business indebted to Ed Pauley, and he has loyalty to Ed Pauley. Ed Carter was a fine Regent. He understood the functioning of the University. I don't mean that he loved it any more than Ed Pauley did, but he understood it better.

Ed Carter was very reluctant to take it, because he was very worried about Ed Pauley. I remember we finally persuaded him, that the nominating committee would not name Ed Pauley. There were only five people on the nominating committee, I guess, and I remember Jerry hagar and Don McLaughlin and I were three of them, and we just told him, "We're not going to name—"

At that time, you usually had to be on the Regents for ages before you were on the nominating committee. But because Ed Heller had been a Regent for so long, I was put on earlier than one usually was. We
Heller: just said he's not going to be nominated. And we really would like you to be chairman. So he finally agreed.

Since then, all the nominations have been worked out--there have been occasional little flurries--but really worked out in the nominating committee. And they come to the board, people hardly know who they are. They just vote them okay. That's sort of an interesting side-light, in power. I don't remember any other problems about chairmen of the board after that, particularly. I served on nominating committees on and off.
Ted Meyer, by the way, who was chairman after that, was the first, as far as I know, ex officio member of the board who was ever named as chairman. But he was awfully good.

You had good chairmen during those difficult years.

Oh, we were lucky. We really did.

I'll bring it up-to-date, so when we discuss the ten years--

Yes, bring it up-to-date, because I often think of what happened when certain people were chairman.

All right, I will.

What else did you want to ask me about especially? I think I got you diverted there.

No, that's all right.

It's hard for me. This is all so technical, and I spent so much time on it.

I don't think we need to go into any of this day-by-day or article-by-article, because it's all there. It's your recollections that add to the record, and help make it as complete as possible.

It did help us to get--that's the best thing I can say--to get over a very difficult time, and I think both committees, particularly the Byrne committee, led to a greater decentralization. I don't want to say decentralization. More individual campus autonomy. Decentralization took longer than that. There are so many technical things on decentralization it's hardly worth going into.

But these led to something that had to be done.

Yes. If you can ever get Don McLaughlin to talk about it--

He did not. He had been interviewed, but I checked it and there was nothing on this subject.*

Heller: Don was very much a part of that, I assure you.

Chall: What he did say was that he was considerably more concerned about not dealing with the student leaders of the FSM. He didn't feel that Clark Kerr did the right thing by dealing with them at all.

Heller: I know now he didn't, but I'm not sure that I knew it at that time. You know, at the beginning of it.

Chall: Perhaps he's thought that through, too, later. I don't know. But I know that's what he said. I read it just the other day.

Heller: I think Don honestly believed that, though I don't think he expressed it at the time.

Chall: He may have had his mind on the same goal that you did--the matter of free speech.

Heller: Don was a very, very good friend of mine, so that I knew what he was thinking pretty well. I know he eventually felt that way. But it's very hard to put your finger on when you start to make decisions like that, when everything has been rolling along very easily.

Don was off, by the way, before Clark Kerr was fired. Yes. Just before.

The Effect of the Hugh Burns Report

Chall: There was one other matter that probably had something to do with the firing of Clark Kerr, I'm not really sure how much, and that was the attitude of the Regents toward the Hugh Burns reports on Un-American activity and Communists on the campus. From what you've told me, it looks like a steady progression. One can understand where it might have come from.

Heller: I'm beginning to think more and more that the FBI was in there somewhere. Hugh Burns was a funny guy. I had known him, not well, because he wouldn't be a guy I'd known well, he just wasn't my sort of person, very, very crude in a way, from Fresno. He was an undertaker, if I remember correctly. He had been on a Democratic delegation to a national convention that I had been on. I think it was in 1940. He was a drinker, and a clown, and a teller of dirty stories. He was just not to my taste at all. But I did know him.

He got involved with Jack Tenney, who was head of the state Un-American Activities Committee. Jack Tenney was reputed to have been very close to the Communist party in the mid-thirties, and then
STATEMENT BY EDWARD W. CARTER, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF REGENTS
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Within the past decade substantial progress has been made in strengthening the University of California to meet the continuing obligations confronting it. President Kerr has presided with skill and perception during this period of unprecedented expansion of the University of California into one of the most productive and creative systems of higher education in the world.

Chancellor Heyns, during his brief but effective tenure at Berkeley, has made remarkable progress in stabilizing the occasionally turbulent situation there and in planning imaginative programs to enrich this great center of learning.

I am sure that I reflect the view of my fellow Regents in stating their deep sense of commitment and responsibility toward making the University of California even greater in the years ahead and our confidence that it is well prepared to meet the challenges that lie ahead.

It is with these views in mind that I now propose that The Regents authorize the appointment of a special committee to review the report of Senator Burns' committee and to report promptly its conclusions to the full Board.
Heller: He changed around and became this Communist hunter. Hugh Burns was vice-chairman of that committee. Tenney resigned, got defeated--I've forgotten.

Chall: He was defeated in 1954 by Mildred Younger.

Heller: That's right. Hugh Burns came into the chairmanship of that thing, and it was outrageous, in my opinion, the whole report. But this is where one of Clark's weaknesses shows up. Now, I remember this very well. It was an outrageous report. But Clark cannot dismiss things in general. He had to try to refute every single point in that. Documents like that, in my opinion, are irrefutable, because you cannot, any more than you could ever refute some of these McCarthy House Un-American Activities committees. It was just so much inaccuracy. Clark spent days laboring over answers to these documents. It just got worse and worse.

A lot of Regents got sort of disgusted with his spending all his time—he wouldn't talk about anything at that point except this Burns committee report. Whereas it shouldn't have been shrugged off, there should have been a general statement about the inaccuracy. But that isn't Clark. He was just obsessed with answering that. He was spending much too much time on this almost unanswerable document.

Chall: And a year later, when another one came out, that year the Regents appointed Jesse Tapp to look into it.

Heller: Who was superb.

Chall: But I understand that at that point—if I can find it, so much crowded on this little piece of paper—

Heller: I know.

Chall: Well, there were a few Regents—Hearst, Canaday, Pauley, [Robert] Haldeman, Rafferty, and Forbes would not accept the Tapp report when it came in.

Heller: Who was the first one?

Chall: Hearst. Catherine Hearst. They wouldn't accept the Tapp report when it came in.

Heller: That's right. Because they were so against Clark by this time. You have Rafferty, and you have Haldeman starting to move in there. He (Haldeman) was an ex officio Regent at that time. He was not a regular Regent.

Chall: That's interesting. This was September sixteenth, 1966. How come Haldeman was on?
Heller: He was president of the Alumni Association, UCLA. Those are the people you've missed a lot on these lists you compiled.

Chall: Right. They're important.

Heller: But that's the list that wouldn't accept it. Bill Forbes was not on that list there, was he?

Chall: Forbes, yes.

Heller: Was he on that?

Chall: I think I took that out of the Stadtman.

Heller: That's probably true, then.

Chall: It was Hearst, Canaday, Pauley, Haldeman, Rafferty, and Forbes who would not accept the Tapp report.

Do we want to talk about how Clark Kerr came to be fired? How it worked?

Heller: Well, I don't know if we have time to do that or not.

Chall: That depends on how much time you want to take. I have forty-five minutes left on this tape.

Heller: Oh, I can't do it because I have to go out. Do you mind?

Chall: Not at all. We'll start next time.

Heller: Yes, because you can't really do that quickly, you've got to tell about how Phil Boyd fell off, and Buff Chandler.

Recapitulation on the FSM and its Effect on the Board of Regents and the Administration##

[Interview 21: February 8, 1980]

Chall: Up to now, we've just been talking mainly about the Stadtman book, and using that as a reference, so I think it might be a good idea to point out how you feel about Hal Draper and his account of the FSM.*

Heller: I can't remember why Bill Forbes--I guess Bill Forbes was still having this feeling about Clark.

Chall: Did you ever find out what it was that he felt Clark Kerr had lied to him about?

Heller: No. He always said to me--of course, he's still alive--"Someday I'll tell you."

A sidelight of Bill Forbes, whom I really am enormously fond of. He started wearing a black tie, and he said he would never wear a colored tie until Clark Kerr was no longer president of the University. I said, "Bill, you've got to stop this. This is just nonsense." He said, "No. I have sworn to myself I never will, and I will never change."

Chall: That's a black tie not only at Regents' meetings, but all the time? Is that it?

Heller: Yes.

Chall: That's quite a symbol.

Heller: It was a symbol to him. But he really was a--there was something very nice about Bill Forbes. I know in general what he meant. Clark had to explain everything. He didn't deliberately lie, but to make things come out all right, he wouldn't be quite accurate sometimes, in my opinion. He'd repeat what somebody had said, and it wasn't quite accurate. You've known people like that.
Heller: hit them. It was a period of trying to find out. Freedom of speech is such a simple issue nowadays, but it wasn't then. You know, the limit to freedom of speech. It's very hard to put yourself back there. It was always thought that University property—anything that happened on University property could be controlled by the administration or the Regents of the University. It's awfully easy to wonder how people thought that.

Chall: Looking back on it, if one read only the University Bulletin about what actions the Regents took, it would be difficult to know what was going on. The Bulletins are written almost as if everything were being decided in a vacuum. Draper and other sources at least give an account of the general chaos as a backdrop for administration and Regental decisions. Even so, the question is why did it take place at all? The rules were being made, revised, modified constantly, until by the time it was all over the students got just about what they had asked for on September fourteen.

Heller: It's very hard to know. You can just get back to the chaos of those days. The lack of ability to communicate. You know, these mobs of students. I think that Tom Cunningham, who was the general counsel, did have a vague idea of what the constitutional issue might be. But he never could express it clearly enough to have anybody listen to him. He'd always end up everything by saying, "Well, after all, it's your decision." He'd never say, "This is the law."

Chall: But weren't there attorneys on the Board of Regents?

Heller: I'll tell you, they had never thought about it very much. Even as liberal a person as Fred Dutton who was a Regent. Certainly not Ted Meyer. You know, they just hadn't thought in these terms. It was a whole new conception.

Chall: It's interesting in light of Clark Kerr's statements in Newsweek after he was fired in January 1967 (which was Reagan's first meeting as governor), and in 1974 on the tenth anniversary of the FSM. Of course he's looking at it now from a very long distance, but he makes other kinds of judgments.

Heller: He can rationalize anything when he wants to.

Chall: He says, "We didn't give the University away. We made virtually no concessions; we really gave back the students what they'd had before that unfortunate order in September 1964. We made virtually no change in the rules..."* The unfortunate order was the one that Strong made, apparently.

Heller: I didn't mark Draper's thing because, first of all, it's not full--

Chall: No, I only gave you excerpts.

Heller: --and just as I get interested in certain subjects, excerpts would come.

Chall: Sorry about that. [laughing]

Heller: I'm sure in his way, Draper tried to do what he saw of the FSM movement. I'm not quarreling with what he knew from the FSM side, but he makes assumptions about the Regents' side that are at best assumptions, and at most untrue. He had no real knowledge of the Regents.

The thing that struck me first and foremost as I read his account was about a meeting of the Board of Regents on the Berkeley campus, on the edge of the Berkeley campus, which was in University Hall, in which the Regents allowed I think five FSM students to come in. But the rest, a great student mass, had moved over from Sproul Hall to the West Gate, and I guess were perfectly orderly; they didn't try to storm the building. But then he said the Regents had retreated to a room without windows. Well, that's where we always met! It was the Regents' meeting room in University Hall. Just these great assumptions which he took for granted that weren't true. And there were several times. I can't go into it without going back over the text--about secret meetings of the Regents and what was done. Well, it was just a misconception completely. There weren't great secret meetings ever. There were harassed meetings.

And he keeps talking about the "split" in the Regents. The split in the Regents had not developed at the beginning of the FSM at all. When the FSM occurred--and that is accurate in both Stadtman's and I guess Draper's--Clark Kerr was in Japan. And that I know personally, because I was in Japan too with him. We'd gone over for University Education Abroad purposes. I don't want to swear that Clark knew nothing about what was going on, but there was no indication in any way that there was any communication with the Berkeley campus of what was going on in that period. I think it's perfectly true that Clark did not know about it.

But there was no big split in the Regents there, which, from Hal Draper's account, you get a feeling of a great, wide split. It came about much more gradually than that and not at that time.

What doesn't come out in either of these accounts is--let's see, how shall I put it?--the complete lack of understanding that there was on all sides of what was going on. The Regents certainly--I'll speak for the Regents--were always trying to find out what was going on. Never in any backhanded way; they just didn't know what had happened. I don't believe that Ed Strong and Clark Kerr really knew what had
And at that point, there was only one Regent--well, maybe two--that really disliked Clark. One was Ed Pauley. He had made no bones about it; it had nothing to do with FSM; had nothing to do with anything like that. Ed Pauley had been chairman of the Regents when Clark Kerr was appointed president of the University.

Now I'm giving you my strictly personal interpretation of what happened. Ed Pauley liked to boss everything. In later years he couldn't, but he did try and he always thought he could run everything. He tried to tell Clark how to run the University in his way and the things he was interested in, and Clark wouldn't do it. I think his hatred of Clark started when he found he couldn't boss him. But he thought as long as he had put Clark in, which he believed--. Now, I was not a Regent at that point, so I'm not sure if he had the only role in putting Clark in, nor how it was done, but he certainly was high on Clark who was Berkeley chancellor. He went on. He had been really feuding with Clark the whole time that I was on the Regents, and before that I guess. Just hated him. They had terrible fights. At dinners, all that. Ed Pauley could be very nasty after he'd had drinks. Very nasty.
Heller: I should have mentioned when I said there was nobody against Clark at that point, that Max Rafferty had become a Regent at that time, and he was automatically anti-everybody. I don't have to go into Max Rafferty; there are plenty of books written about him. But he had very little effect on the Regents, per se.

Chall: Were the Regents then getting a great deal of pressure from the outside? Did they feel the pressure from the legislature, from their own peer groups in business and industry?

Heller: I think all the Regents were getting pressure. I would guess that Max Rafferty got more letters written to him. He was highly visible at that point. I have a box full put away, of all the letters that came to me. They were largely inspired by these letter-writing groups, because they were so similar. You could--

Chall: Then the pressure came from the right, you think. I mean the right-wing--basically the conservative groups?

Heller: Basically, yes.

Chall: How about the other side?

Heller: However, everybody was saying, "What's happening at Berkeley?" No matter whom you ran into. We had many phone calls; we all had a tremendous number of communications. Most Regents, I believe, did not answer them. I answered every one with an address. But it was very brief; I told them I appreciated their concern, and was trying to find out what this was about, and how it could be solved. You know, something very vague. But I did acknowledge it. I don't think it made any difference to the letter writers at all. I rarely got letters from anybody I knew. I could always tell the right-wing letters before I opened them. Every one used an American flag stamp, which was not so common at that time as they are now. And they invariably were under instructions, almost, to use the American flag stamp. Some of them gave themselves away, because they said they were a member of the League of Patriotic Letter Writers, I think it was called. You've forgotten the days of Welch and what's his society?

Chall: Birch.

Heller: The Birch Society. It wasn't Birch per se, but they were great letter writers. They used to have chains of letter writers. If you ploughed through those letters, you'd find a letter where they had enclosed their newsletter, which told them to write. They gave them a list of the Regents. They had another subject they were writing on; I've forgotten what it was. They were to write separate letters. So one enclosed that list. And then one sent me the wrong letter; sent me the one about heavens knows what. Something in Asia maybe, or something like that. Had nothing to do with the case. They were really following instructions from some organization to which they were dedicated. I don't want to say people weren't upset. They were.
Heller: Did I go into that order with you before, the little that I know about it?

Chall: I think you did.

Heller: I can only trace it back as far as Sherriffs.

Chall: Yes, that's right. I think we talked about that.

Heller: Never been able to know whether that order—Sherriffs was Strong's right-hand man. I suppose Ed Strong gave it, but I can't prove it. I think he would always take responsibility under any circumstances, but it came so suddenly. What I know most is from Katherine Towle, whom I've spoken to at quite some length, who resisted the order, you know. She asked to be given time to talk with the various groups that were setting up these tables.

Chall: Yes, but from their point of view, they had a perfect right to be setting up the tables and—

Heller: I don't think they knew that strongly. This is one of the things I don't think emerged at first, at all. They wanted to do this; I don't think there was anything near a consensus at that point. But it got worse and worse and worse as you know.

You know, it's much easier to go back and to look at it than to remember where you were at that point. Let me just say this. I personally was inclined to brush it off as another fall term phenomenon, until I suddenly—and I can't remember at what point, but sometime during the fall—realized that these crowds weren't going away. They were getting bigger, and bigger, and bigger. I suddenly realized that there had to be something in what the FSM was urging, more than just trouble. I knew a few students that were all for what the FSM was standing for, but who were not what I would think of as the FSM types at all. They just began to feel this freedom of speech issue, I think before any of the Regents really realized what it was about. But I began to know there was something there, because there just wouldn't be more and more students coming to protest unless these students felt that they had a valid issue. That developed over the fall.

The Regents were not plotting and planning, per se. If there was any overall plan all that fall, it was that we shouldn't close the University down; that we would strive above anything else to keep the University open, and there should under no circumstances be any bloodshed. I think those were the two things at first that we were most anxious to avoid, hoping to untangle what this was about. I think as far as the Regents went, that was the guiding principle.
536 Eastmont Avenue  
Los Angeles 22, California  
January 7, 1965

Mrs. Edward H. Heller  
99 Faxon Road  
Atherton, California

Dear Madam:

The recent meeting of the Board of Regents of the University of California was a disappointment because it did not come out directly and condemn the student rebellion at the University. The University is not, as some far left people would have us believe, a principality in a state and a law unto itself. The students should be informed that they, nor the faculty, nor the president of a university own the university. They should be informed it is owned and maintained by the taxpayers and the faculty and president are employees of the state in which it is located. The members of the faculty who supported the rebellion are not fit professors for a tax supported school.

FBI director J. Edgar Hoover has said, "This academic year will undoubtedly see intensive Communist party efforts to erect its newest facade on the Nation's campuses to draw young blood for the vampire which is international communism." That is the warning to all. The anarchy at the University is the beginning and will spread unless it is quickly squelched. It was a tragic mistake to allow Communists to speak on the Campus in the first place. They are not entitled to freedom of speech because their purpose is to destroy our Constitutional Government.

Therefore I urge you to put down student rebellion against constituted authority in disregard of law and University regulations.

Yours truly,

P.S. Since typing the above letter the newspaper reports that the new Chancellor at UC is physically exhausted after 48 hours. It is no wonder after turning the Campus over to a bunch of communists or far left trouble makers to charge "California's migrant farm workers are subject to 'slavery' ..." The regents should have the guts to close Sproul Hall steps to all speakers. Those "students" are on the Campus to make trouble and not to get an education.
"All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing."

PS: We urge a full investigation into these lunatic notes for seriousness.

Dear Mr. H. H. Willcr, the University of Tennessee:

I was just informed that your university is under investigation for serious activities.

Sincerely,

[Signature]
Heller: That's the wrong question. It really is.

Chall: Straighten me out.

Heller: You're making it too simple. Now this is another matter of my opinion. That's why I say you're way too far ahead.

Chall: My thinking is moving in the direction of trying to find out how out of touch the Regents were, and whether or not as a result of some of you working on that Meyer committee, you had a conception of being out of touch and how communications could be established.

Heller: A lot of the Regents weren't as much out of touch as you think.

Chall: But the body of the Regents, the legal form--

Heller: The body of legal thinking, with which I had nothing to do, was not in touch.

Chall: The way you evolved your decisions indicated some of that.

Heller: The legal thinking, in the matter of freedom of speech, had just not evolved at that time. The little we knew were the SNCC [Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee] marches in Alabama, which really was not related to this. This was for minority rights, you might remember. That was the thing that we were more aware of. I just don't think legal thinking was really part of it. The Meyer committee, which I was on, did meet with a great many attorneys, including the Boalt Law School people. They didn't know what it was about. They hadn't formulated their free speech thinking at all. Their advice went in every different way. There was no clear body of law on this subject that had ever been applied to demonstrations. It just wasn't there. You were feeling your way.

I wish you'd ask me those questions before I go any further.

Chall: Well, I'm working on one of them. Would you like me to start from the beginning? I'm really working on the question here [outline]. There are two of them having to do with the Regents: Did the experience indicate a need to look more closely at students and the atmosphere in which learning took place, and the administration? That's where I am right now.

Heller: I don't remember that question in there. It's perfectly okay, you know.

Chall: That's where I am, just because we started there this afternoon.

Heller: Well, of course, you had to [look closely at students]. But only x number of Regents were on the Meyer committee. So the rest of the Regents weren't paying any attention to what the Meyer committee was
Chall: I know they were.

Heller: Including me.

Chall: Do you think, from what you say, and from some of the criticisms that the Regents operated in an atmosphere in which they really did not understand the University—the students—and that much of the opposition stemmed from the students who felt that they weren't getting an education?

Heller: Of course we understood the University. But I think that the University had grown so quickly that we didn't have any good lines of direct communication. It was that rapid expansion period. We had very bad mechanisms for being in touch. The Regents had long had a rule, though they had open meetings to a degree, that nobody could speak to the Regents without prior notice. They were very tough about that. And if it wasn't given exactly, people just didn't come before the board and talk, without prior arrangement.

Chall: So they were out of touch; that was one of the prime reasons given for dissatisfaction.

Heller: They were and they weren't. Probably all of the Regents knew about the overcrowding, about the impersonality. A lot of the objection of those who weren't in the heart of the FSM, was the impersonality of the University, particularly on the Berkeley campus. I think it probably still holds true, you know. But it isn't an issue any more.

You should look it up, if you could: In 1963, Bob Haas, of the Haas family, Walter Haas, Jr.'s son, graduated and gave the commencement speech. I was not present; I was in Europe. He forecast a year ahead of time, not the FSM, but the unrest that was developing on the Berkeley campus. It was a very, very wise speech when you think that that was from a twenty-one year old. And nobody paid much attention to him. I mean, people remembered what he had said, and nobody objected to what he had said, as I understand, but nobody realized that it was more than just a usual commencement speech. I don't know if that's in the archives somewhere.

Chall: Should be somewhere. It certainly ought to be. What about the Meyer committee?

Heller: You're too far ahead. You're way too far ahead.

Chall: We covered it last time to some extent. What I'm wondering is did those of you who were on the Meyer committee, and did have an opportunity, because you were charged with it, to talk to students and talk to faculty people, did you come to realize how much out of touch you were? Even the rules that came back from the original Meyer committee report didn't make much of a change in attitudes toward student activity.
Heller: The other thing I suppose I have to say is that it was the way the administration was set up—I may have said this earlier. Clark Kerr had been chancellor of the Berkeley campus, and he still felt as if he ran it. I don't mean he didn't have large perspectives about the growth of the University and all the campuses. But he still felt that he ran the Berkeley campus as well as the whole University. Ed Strong was a very close friend of his. Ed Strong was very liberal—not left wing, but a very liberal person. The metamorphosis of Strong is one of the fascinating aspects of this. Of course, Clark met endlessly with Strong, I guess Alex Sherriffs, and Earl Bolton.

Those were the ones who were meeting. And they kept putting out directives and changing directives and bringing them to the Regents, thinking they were solving it. But that's one of the things that's never been clear in my mind, whether Ed Strong wanted to run the thing and Clark wasn't having it, or whether Ed Strong just let Clark lead the way.

Of course, Clark thought he could manage anything. He really did. It wasn't exactly ego; he was a labor negotiator, he was used to negotiations, he thought; anything could be worked out. Which turned out not to be true. One of the—I told you I'd have to jump around all over the place with this—one of the things in Draper's statement was about how the steering committee that was to meet with the administration, whatever they called it, of students, kept changing all the time. You know, the members. Well, this was one of the really impossible situations in that the administration—the Regents did not meet with those students; it was Clark Kerr and Ed Strong—would think they had reached an understanding, and by the next day it was another group of students. They never knew with whom they were dealing.

At the time, I didn't know whether this was deliberate strategy, or whether it was the nature of—And I'm not sure that I know yet, though Draper does sort of explain how one group was in, one group was out. I've never been sure whether—I think they did things almost by the seat of their pants all the time.

Chall: Well, that's what it would indicate here. It looks as if the administration was doing it that way too, to some degree.

Heller: Yes. It got to be a nightmare. We had meetings by the hour—Regents were trying to find out what was happening. I remember one day at Davis—I can't put the date on it, but it was probably October, because we usually met there in October—where the Regents just sat around for hours while Clark was on the phone to Ed Strong or whoever in Berkeley trying to give directions, find out what was happening. I'll tell you, we were not kept in the dark deliberately. There was just no way of knowing what was going on.
Heller: looking at. Let me say that we met endlessly. Saturday after Saturday all spring. It just went on and on and on. Trying to work our way through to some form. And let me say, I don't think it ever --well, no, I have to go back.

Ed Carter, who was chairman of the board, appointed these two committees. I think he got, if I remember, the Regents to approve the formation of the two committees.

Chall: That's the Meyer and the Forbes.

Heller: The Meyer and the Forbes. It was unspoken, but I really do believe this. It was--you were looking for time, buying time to have this terrible chaos simmer down. It had nothing to do with Clark Kerr or Ed Strong or the Regents or anything else. You forget--I forget--the intensity where you didn't know if somebody was going to get killed the next day. And you were trying to buy time, in my opinion. I don't mean I didn't take the Meyer committee seriously; but that was the purpose of it. And because both those committees took a long time to report, it did buy a little time to be thinking. Neither of those reports were ever acted on. Do you realize that?

Chall: No. I do recall that the Meyer report had to be greatly amended, and came in in an amended form.

Heller: Yes, but it was never really put into force. It was accepted, and I think that's all.

For those who were on the Meyer committee: Ted Meyer, Don McLaughlin, myself, I think John Canaday--

Chall: Laurence Kennedy, too, I think.

Heller: Canaday, John Canaday was rather hard line, but John had some constructive points to make. He really was trying to find a way through that. And of course, Ted Meyer just worked like a fool. Don McLaughlin and I were most anxious to find a way out. Don and I saw a lot of the students at Berkeley. We were not removed from the students. We saw them more and more. Don was in the best position, because he lived there. He was the only Regent who ever went into Sproul Hall when it was occupied. The students were fine with him. He said he never could find out why they really were occupying it, but he said they were perfectly pleasant. He had students over for breakfast every day, trying to find out what was behind their thinking.

Chall: Doesn't seem to me it should have been so difficult.

Heller: There is no order to this thing; that's what I'm trying to say.
Heller: I know Laurence Kennedy, and Catherine Hearst. Catherine Hearst and Laurence Kennedy were just a pest. They kept going into minutia, apparently for no reason other than they wanted punitive measures. Oh! I don't even like to think of the obstructions they'd put in the way of every single point that ever came up. They were looking for punishment.

Chall: Laurence Kennedy? Or Canaday?

Heller: Kennedy. Larry Kennedy. They were such obstructionists! It's exhausting to even think of the time spent on it.
Heller: Let me go back further than that, though. You're asking where people fell off, you know. Bill Forbes was one of the first who had been very strong—well, no, I'll put it this way. Catherine Hearst, I guess, had been very much for Kerr, and I've forgotten why she fell off. She got mad when she didn't get enough attention.

Chall: I understand that some of the Regents, and maybe Hearst was one of them, fell off at the time that Clark Kerr and Meyerson tendered their resignations—

Heller: That was later. I'm before that. No, that wasn't Catherine's reason. I'm never sure what her personal reason was. I do know that she went to that— I didn't go—to that Greek Theatre meeting where Savio grabbed the mike. She was very titillated by it. So she was still friendly with Clark at that point. It was very hard to read Catherine and what influenced her.

I have to have the date of Clark and Meyerson to get this at all straight.

Chall: We have it on our respective—

Heller: It's very hard for me to—

Chall: It was in the spring of '65, I think. Over the Filthy Speech Movement.

Heller: Ed Carter was chairman then, right? Yes. Let's say that a great many of us were furious about Clark's allowing a press announcement that he and Marty Meyerson were going to resign, because we thought that was completely bad procedure. If you're going to resign, you resign to the Regents; you don't do a public thing. What brought that on, I'm not sure. I've never been sure if Clark thought he could make things go his own way by doing it—there's no proof, really. I've never been clear in my mind. I think he was fed up. He had a fight with Ed Carter over the phone about something. I've forgotten what that was.

I think the pressure was just getting enormous, he had a new acting chancellor. He had been pressing, of course, for Ed Strong to get out. And that was at last accomplished, and a miserable thing it was, too, let me say, when it came to the point. But that's all before that. Quite a few of us were pretty annoyed at this, but I think some of us realized that the pressures were just so enormous that that could have been the reason.

Chall: I believe somewhere I picked up that— I believe it's in our chronology here—that Ed Pauley might have been ready to fire him at that time—and other Regents—but Pat Brown—
Heller: One of the things that mystified me at the time was why this didn't spread to other campuses. It did a little bit, but not to any extent. I'm not sure that I know the answer. Each campus is different and has different interests. The dirty speech thing spread to some other campuses, but this one didn't. I don't think it was necessarily strong administration that kept it from spreading; I think some thought it was. Everything that came afterwards was the student movement. But before that it had never been. It did originate there in Berkeley.

Firing Clark Kerr

Chall: Let's get into the firing of Clark Kerr, then.

Heller: Where are your questions? You had a whole series.

Chall: They're right here.

Heller: Okay, start at the beginning.

Chall: That's the first question on the list for today. The vote was fourteen to eight, and apparently the vote was taken after several hours of very hard wrangling. I also wanted to know—that's sort of the end result—Between the September meeting and January, Kerr had been advised by Harry Wellman, by Regent Chandler and others that maybe he should start looking for some other position. Apparently this began to take place at the party Haldeman gave to introduce--

Heller: Well, the Haldeman party didn't have any really ulterior motives. Bob Haldeman knew Bob Finch terribly well. Actually, he was not very interested in Reagan, you know. He was a great Finch man.

Chall: Haldeman was?

Heller: Yes. In fact, I do remember in the primary when Reagan ran against George Christopher that Bob Haldeman did not take a position. His interest was Bob Finch. And he had met Finch through the Nixon connection. There was no great intimacy, but Haldeman thought he was almost the only Regent that really knew them both. So, as often happened, he decided to have a dinner party, to which he asked the Regents, to meet the new governor and lieutenant governor. It was simple, except for the fact that Reagan had been campaigning on "clear up the mess at Berkeley," by which he meant get rid of Clark Kerr. That's what it was, but Finch was delightful. I guess there was some side talk there, but you don't always know what's going on there.
Heller: Let me say that before that, Bill Forbes had become very disillusioned with Clark Kerr. And Bill Forbes is one of the nicest people that ever was. He just became disillusioned with Clark because he didn't think--and I was a good friend of Bill's and I know what I'm talking about here, I'm not guessing--he just believed that Clark wasn't telling the complete truth to anybody about what was going on. That's why he hated Clark Kerr.
Heller: Ed Pauley was always ready to fire Clark.

Chall: --Pat Brown interceded there to some degree.

Heller: Pauley was always telling things to Pat Brown that may or may not have been true. That was Pauley's method of operation. He was always ready to fire him. He wanted absolute control. I'm sure that was one more annoyance. I was annoyed about Clark's announcement, too. I certainly didn't hesitate to make it known that I thought it was a very stupid thing to do. But anyway, Clark did sort of apologize, I guess, and withdraw the resignation. Technically, he had never really resigned, because you resigned to a body. He made this great gesture. Carter was annoyed at that, but Carter was supporting Kerr all that time, supporting him very well.

Buff Chandler I think was beginning to have doubts, but not real doubts yet at all.

Chall: What were the doubts about?

Heller: Well, I think Buff's were administrative. Buff was always personally very fond of Clark Kerr. They stayed very, very good friends always. You might notice that in the Stadtman thing there's never any mention of Buff Chandler. Did you notice that?

Chall: Except--

Heller: Except that she was vice-chairman. That's the only time. There's no other mention of her. You know, there should have been. Buff was a strong Regent. Though I never want to say that she was under the influence of anybody, because she wasn't, she was her own person--she was very close to Franklin Murphy, who was chancellor at UCLA. Franklin--it was no secret--was always looking for greater autonomy on his campus, if not all the campuses. So that was beginning to push through.

But some of the Republican Regents--I don't want to imply that they acted in a partisan way, except that when Reagan was elected, some of them met with Reagan in Sacramento. I wasn't present (naturally), but I think it was Buff and I'm not sure that Ed Pauley was part of that group because he wasn't a Republican and he was supportive of Pat Brown. I'm not sure who met with Reagan in Sacramento. They met again with Clark--it was on the budget. Reagan refused to have Clark come into his office--he wouldn't speak to him. That was the point at which Buff realized there was no future for the University while Reagan was governor if Clark continued as president.
Heller: I can't say for sure at which spot different Regents fell away from supporting Clark. But I know that was Buff's point.

I think I can remember before that; before Reagan was elected, I believe. Phil Boyd had been very supportive of Clark. He had been a good, quiet Regent.

Incidentally, you talk about getting close to students: Phil, Bill Forbes, Don McLaughlin and I in particular—Bill Coblentz was brand new, and two of them were southern Regents—really did try to get close to the students. You know, it's awfully easy to say "get close to the students." There are so many thousands of them. It's fine to say "toss out students," but wait till you try to do it. It's almost impossible.

You know, you speak to one group—I went to associated student groups, met with them. I met with all sorts of people, as did all the rest, just trying to find out what it was all about. Each group was off in a different direction and wanted different things. You listened to their grievances, trying to find a common theme. And the most common theme was the size of the classes, incidentally, and the fact that teaching assistants graded their papers and had charge of their sections. I suppose if you had the biggest budget in the world, you never could have had enough physical space to have full-time professors handling all these things. It's one of the disadvantages of large places. But that was the one common theme of all of them, I guess. I was just going to say of the non-radical, but I think it was a common theme all along.

All of a sudden the impersonality of the University just hit them very, very, hard. You know, the lecture halls and the TV monitors, the classes were so large. I wouldn't put that blame on anyone, except that I suppose the Regents could have limited the sizes of the campuses and put on a great many more faculty. But it wouldn't have solved it, a good many more classes at the campuses. I don't know how you'd ever solve that. And it's not a hot issue any more. It's no better than it was. Teaching assistants were not trained, you know. I don't know if they are to this day. Somewheres down the line I've tried to get some standards in for teaching assistants, but I'm never sure that I accomplished that. These things are very elusive, you know. It wasn't my business. That was really academic standards business. I'm trying to tell you about people going off of Clark.

Chall: You've told me about Boyd.

Heller: Yes, he was one who was very supportive. Buff was one, Bill Forbes went off earlier, Ted Meyer in his quiet way saw that the University was just going to get no place; I think he may have been one of the
Heller: And there were some very foolish things that happened between Franklin and Clark Kerr, and Franklin's wife Judy and Kay Kerr. Ridiculous things that were going on about protocol. Clark always insisted that he preside at all Charter Days and commencements, and Franklin insisted it was his campus. It was just utter nonsense, that's all you can say when you look at it. That's the way it was. And so, although she had always been very fond of Clark Kerr, I think Buff was beginning to feel a little uneasy. Buff did not like Reagan. He was always distasteful to her. She liked Bob Finch enormously, very much, so that the fact that Reagan wanted to get rid of Clark, would at most have the opposite effect on her.
Heller: People like Ed Pauley were inclined to make fun of Phil Boyd. That's one of Ed Pauley's nasty points—making fun of people who weren't up to what he thought should be done; who weren't power people. I remember Clark said to me one day—we were at a coordinating council meeting. I was one of the Regents representing the University and so was Phil. I remember Clark said to me, "Phil Boyd is out to get me." I can't pinpoint it, but it was before this other part. And I said, "Phil Boyd is just as supportive as can be of trying to make things work out. You're all wrong, Clark." He said, "No, he's out to get me." Well, as an upshot of that, Phil and Clark and I had lunch at the Sir Francis Drake Hotel. I can remember this.

Chall: Did you arrange it, or was it part of the meeting?

Heller: I can't remember if I arranged it—part of the meeting. We didn't have any lunch arrangements. We had a long discussion and Phil was trying to explain how he thought Clark could do things a little better. He wanted to support him. Clark was just impossible. He wouldn't believe a word that Phil said; he kept saying, "You're out to get me, you're out to get me."

Chall: He told him that?

Heller: Yes. Phil would just never be out to get anybody. It just isn't Phil's nature. In through there, Phil began to have strong doubts about Clark's effectiveness. Phil was very tolerant about the FSM.
Heller: ones who had gone to Sacramento, and he by this time was chairman of the Regents. Are we on the firing of Clark or not?

Chall: We are.

Heller: I think you asked that question did I ever speak to Clark between December and January. To my knowledge, no. I don't believe I ever did.

Chall: Were you informed in any way about the undercurrent that was taking place?

Heller: You could feel it. I knew there was that meeting in Sacramento. And let me say that shortly after that, there was a group of Republicans who decided they needed one Democrat. I was added to it. It was largely a meeting with Gordon Smith, who was director of finance. And by strange coincidence, I was the only person on the Board of Regents who knew Gordon Smith. Gordy had come from Palo Alto before he moved to Los Angeles. I had served on the Palo Alto-Stanford Hospital board with him.

But the reason I was one of the eight who voted against the firing of Clark--

Chall: You were one of the eight?

Heller: Oh, yes, I was one of the eight. I disliked the manner of the thing. It was just horrible. Let's admit that Clark apparently would not offer his resignation. So, in a way, he asked to be fired. But I just believe you give somebody notice, really.

We asked Clark to leave the meeting. Ted Meyer was chairman; Buff Chandler was vice-chairman. They went back and forth. We were in University Hall, on the first floor, and they were back and forth to Clark's office up on the sixth floor. Back and forth and back and forth for two hours at least, if not more. But the whole thing started as soon as Clark left the room. I don't think there were more than two words said. Allan Grant (an ex-officio member, as Reagan's Board of Agriculture chairman)--it was his first meeting--he made a motion that Clark should be fired. I remember several people saying, "You can't do that, you don't know anything about the University. Withdraw it." Reagan seemed quite upset that Allan Grant had made the motion. Perhaps he had something else in mind.

Chall: This, by the way, is all told--this information--in a book by Lou Cannon, under the title Ronnie and Jesse: A Political Odyssey. It was published in 1969. Ronnie and Jesse, meaning Jesse Unruh. Cannon does say that some felt that Reagan and Kerr wouldn't be able to deal with each other on the budget, and probably the only man at
that time who wanted to fire Clark Kerr outright that day was Max Rafferty. Cannon quotes Kerr as saying that he wouldn't resign, because he thought it would be imprudent really for the president to resign when a new governor came in; it would set a precedent.

He did say that. But whether that was one of Clark's rationalizations or not is something I don't know. Whether he thought he could handle it, I don't know. But Allan Grant very much wanted that resignation, and made the motion at his first meeting. He was reproved. Larry Kennedy jumped in then and said, "I will make the motion." I just felt that his resignation should have been asked for as of whatever date, but not to leave his office that day. I thought it was just terrible.

There were two aspects, then, of this: One, to fire him, and the other, to do it immediately if he wouldn't resign. Was that it? To ask him first to resign, then when he didn't, I understand, then they came back and said they'd fire him outright.

I'll try to resurrect what I just remember; it's all a great blur. It was so emotional. As I say, I did not speak directly to Clark. I believe very strongly in structure, and I believed the chairman and the vice-chairman were the only people to be talking back and forth. I never spoke to him that day, but I made my feelings known to the Regents that I thought this was an outrageous way to do things. I didn't think that Clark could stay on. I knew that was impossible. But I just don't think you fire in that way. It's clear, and there were eight of us who didn't feel it should be done that way.

But the final vote, which was fourteen to eight, was to fire Clark Kerr?

Forthwith, or whatever the word was. Yes. And he was fired then and there, though he did come back so that he should conduct the rest of the meeting. He knew the business of the meeting. It was terrible. Clark could do that, you know. Of course, Ted Meyer was chairman, but Clark had all the information. He stayed at the meeting, and then he had a press conference afterwards. Some of us stayed for the press conference. It was really a very sad thing. Here you go to work one morning, and you think you're president of the University, and by the afternoon you're not. It was highly emotional, though Clark conducted himself pretty well at the time, under the circumstances.

How did you feel?

How did I feel? I thought it was a terrible thing to do with no notice.

Who were the eight people who voted—it was fourteen to eight, then that means that eight people voted not to fire him. You were one of the eight.
Heller: I knew he [Gordon Smith] was a terrific lightweight. I knew that. This is just one of these parenthetical things that I'll give you. One of Reagan's big boasts was that he was going to have an "important" financial person running the Department of Finance. Pat Brown had had--

Chall: Was it Hale Champion?

Heller: Hale Champion, who had had no financial background--that was one of the things I think you could find Reagan quoted on. He would have a "six-figure-man" as his director of the Department of Finance. That was a big sum then, before inflation would take its way. He couldn't get any six-figure man to be chairman.

Apparently Gordy Smith was in Los Angeles. He was one of the "hang around type"--not bad type, but ineffective. He was in Booz, Allen, and Hamilton--you know, an advertising firm. I guess he was somehow one of a group that was sort of like the headhunters of nowadays, looking for something in the way of director of finance. I can't remember the people who turned it down, but there were plenty. When they couldn't find anybody, apparently Gordy said, "Well, why don't you try me?" Now, I wasn't present, but Gordy told me that himself. And that was the so-called "six-figure-man." He was just impossible.

Chall: He didn't last very long, because Verne Orr seemed to have come in within a few years.

Heller: He didn't come in for a while. Gordy finally got kicked out. He was very ineffective. He was used to Booz, Allen, and Hamilton. He always presented things with charts whether they made sense or not. He never did grasp anything except--what was it?--"squeeze, cut and trim." That was his great expression. But that, incidentally, came just a week or two later, that I was asked to be a part of that group. So that I saw, in a way, the way it had been operating. Ed Carter was part of it. Reagan never really trusted Ed Carter, I think. Ed always wants to be friendly with everybody. But that's just incidental.

But I knew there was a realization that this just wasn't going to work out. I knew it, too.
Heller: Yes, I was one who voted not to fire him.

Chall: Who were the others, do you know?

Heller: Bill Coblentz, Bill Roth, Fred Dutton, Jesse Unruh, Norton Simon, Einar Mohn and Sam Mosher.

Chall: Cannon says that after there were two hours of wrangling, Unruh finally accused the Regents of vacillating and said he'd make the motion to dismiss, and then he would vote against it just so that there would be a motion on the floor, and that the motion was then made by Allan Grant, but he was persuaded to withdraw it, because coming from him it would look political. Therefore it was resubmitted by Laurence Kennedy. That's what you just said too.

Heller: Well, yes. I don't remember the Unruh thing. Unruh always did all sorts of dramatic things, you know, and he could well have done that. But I just only remember that Allan Grant made the motion.

Chall: How did you feel? You say it was a sad, very difficult day. Did you feel ill when you left?

Heller: No. That's not my style, but I just felt dreadful. I thought it was outrageous; that you don't treat any human being that's tried that way. I can tell you one thing. I know that Buff Chandler felt terrible about it--these are the ones among the fourteen I know--Phil Boyd felt terrible about it, Ted Meyer, Carter, I think, felt pretty bad about it. These were not the hate group. And Dutch Higgs felt very bad about it. But they knew it was hopeless, and they decided it had to get over with.

Chall: And was it hopeless because Clark Kerr would not tender his resignation for five or six months in advance?

Heller: Apparently. He said he would not. They had to fire him, and they did. But I still thought they should have fired him at a time certain.

Chall: That they could have done?

Heller: Yes. Clark used to have an expression that had nothing to do with this, before there was any trouble. He always used to say, "Remember, faculty have tenure, but administrators are expendable. They have no tenure." He used to say that long, long before any of this started.

But I still just don't think you do it that way. I just thought we should have had it to a certain time. I just don't think you go in the morning and fire in the afternoon. I knew there was no purpose of his staying, and I knew that he shouldn't stay; that he had lost his credibility and his ability. He would have plenty of ability and you can see how he picked himself up with that Carnegie thing. He became enmeshed in it.
Heller: What are some more questions you had there?

Chall: Okay. Cannon says that Kerr blames Ronald Reagan for maneuvering behind the scenes, but Reagan apparently was as surprised as anybody that Kerr was—that he maneuvered himself into being fired that very day, because he planned to dismiss him maybe five or six months down the road.

Heller: I don't know.

Chall: Was Kerr caught in the conservative backlash, do you think, against rapid social change, or do you think his firing was a result of other causes?

Heller: I think it was other causes, basically. Clark just couldn't let go of authority. He wanted to run everything. I mean, you could say rapid change caught up with him such as the desire of the campuses for more autonomy, which he himself proposed to them, did you know that?

Chall: Yes.

Heller: That was before he was fired. It was he who got the changes through for greater autonomy of the campuses. Clark saw that in the long run during that year before. He was the one who put it through very skillfully.

Chall: He claims that the Regents were unable to give up some of their authority. When the size of the University made this essential, he said it was many Regents who didn't want to give up their authority, which is more or less what you said. That was one of the reasons behind the difficulties between them. Let's see what he says in this Newsweek article.* He claims that prior to his term as president, the Regents just historically had been a managerial board to quite a degree. During the period when he was president, the Regents became a policy board rather than a managerial board. That meant more authority, particularly for the chancellors. There were some Regents who were very much opposed to this development. That was part of the problem. And then he feels that there were some Regents who wanted to manage the president, I think is what he means. If a president tries to "cater to the changing whims of individual Regents, he will just never get anywhere. He may survive quite a long while, but he will never get anything done."

*"Clark Kerr Tells His Story," Newsweek (February 6, 1977), pp. 64-65.
Heller: There's part truth in that.

Chall: He said that the Regents were going to try to assume control again now that they had fired him—or as he said it "to make more detailed decisions."

Heller: I don't think that's true. There is some truth in what he says, that you can't cater to individual Regents because they do change too often. I think there's great truth in that, and I think that's one of the great challenges of a good administrator. I do believe that it took Clark a long time to intellectually give up the concept of a strong central administration. The best example of this is the nonsensical thing I just gave you about protocol. He wanted the symbols there. Another thing he had always done, which you'd never do now, he always chose the chancellor of each campus. He'd just come in and choose them. He didn't consult with anybody. Now, that's all been changed. It was changed when Roger Heyns was brought in and Marty Meyerson was acting, because Clark's throne was a little bit wobbly. The rule wasn't changed, but we did have a committee that really functioned. He led it quite a bit, but he'd never heard of Roger Heyns.

Chall: Oh, he hadn't?

Heller: No, he got the faculty Academic Senate making lists. Roger Heyns was on that list; there were some excellent names on it. And we kept eliminating them for one reason or another. I remember one president of some university, who had very good marks in his favor. But he had an alcoholic wife. That would go out. Another wasn't interested. Clark would go talk to people.

We did have some very good Regents in the meantime as chairmen of the board. Don McLaughlin and Jerry Hagar had been really very good chairmen. And Ed Carter was really a very good chairman. He got trapped in the worst part of it. Ted Meyer had a pretty tough row to hoe too, because the teaching assistants' strike came under him, among other things.

Let's say there were many changes in the winds. It took a long time for anybody to catch up with them, including the students. Because the students change. That's the thing that Draper takes no recognition of, or I don't think he does as I read it. What students want one year, the next group of students isn't interested in. There's very little continuity in students' mass thinking. But the FSM, if you take the pure thing, free speech, I think was an epic-making event.

Chall: And that probably was the basic cause, if you want to take it so far, of Clark Kerr's problem. You think he would have lasted out—well, it's hard to say. Reagan might not have been elected if it hadn't been for the FSM.
Heller: You don't know. Clark Kerr's own temperament, while brilliant and very far-seeing in many ways, still held the whole University to himself. He was on the Berkeley campus all the time with his fingers in every pot. He just couldn't help it. Maybe the fact he'd been chancellor of the Berkeley campus was one of the problems and that University Hall was next to the Berkeley campus.

There was someplace along in there where we had a committee studying the question of moving University headquarters. Norton Simon was very active in that. One of the few things he was ever active in. Well, the upshot was it came to nothing, because it was too expensive to consider doing it. It just couldn't be done. They looked at San Francisco; they looked at the middle of the state; they looked other places in the East Bay; they looked all over. The expenses and the structure were just going to be impossible.

I don't say Clark resisted it or was for it. I don't know. He just left the room. It was the committee who pursued space and costs. I think it could have been accomplished had it been possible. It was not only cost, but it was the fact that so many people in University Hall had spouses with two jobs—I mean, one's on the Berkeley faculty and one is at University Hall. There was just no way to lick that—you couldn't move them. You just would have—

Chall: And some administrators move in and out. They move from the campus to the administration for several years and then they move back again.

Heller: That's right. You know, everybody looks back and wonders why the devil University Hall was ever built where it was and why it's such a terrible building on top of that.

Chall: Do you think Clark Kerr could have been saved if somehow he might have been willing to tender his resignation maybe six or eight months hence; that there would have been so much—

Heller: No, I never did believe that. I never thought he should be. I thought he'd lost his credibility in too many directions. No, I do not believe so.

Chall: How do you think he'll be remembered?

Heller: Be remembered?

Chall: Yes. As one of the great presidents of the University?

Heller: As one of the great presidents with great vision of what higher education was all about, great comprehension of—I would say sort of the needs. He was a compromiser too, you know. When he realized that the legislature was beginning to favor the state colleges, which were not a unified body yet, they were separate colleges, as
Heller: Ed Pauley had a maddening habit of always trying to talk to people directly and finding out if they would be president, which wasn't his job either. He wasn't chairman of the board. It was a maddening habit. Ed Carter was very inclined to go sound people out. It's no longer done that way at all. But Clark didn't like giving up that authority. You know, you can work it both ways, I think that's the best thing I can say.

And the Regents were slow to change the structure. They had changed some from when I came on, even. I think he's mostly referring to Ed Pauley in that article. I really do. Who was a bête noir, as far as he was concerned. He wanted to run everything.
Heller: against the University, he really led that study that led to the coordinating council—put it together. Arthur Coons of Occidental College was chairman of that committee, and others made contributions. Clark always claims that he was the one who brought together that coordinating council; set it up. To a degree he did. There were plenty of others working in there too to make some order out of this expanding chaos that was going on. And though it was a weak vessel, it did stop this insane expansion that was going on all over the state in higher education.

He knew when he was up against something he couldn't buck. But he did have vision.

And as for all the changes that were going on, what would be allowed in free speech and what wouldn't, there's no way I can go back into the shading of that. It changed all the time. The Regents were always hopeful this was going to take care of the central problem of these mob scenes, that they would give up. Of course, we had them later, too, with the third world movement, and People's Park.

Chall: I'll take that up at another time, and then we'll try to compare the way it was handled.

Heller: Of course, the Free Speech Movement broke itself up. And that was maybe one of the few things that I was marking time on, thinking anything that intense would break itself up, which it did, you know, as a physical force. It was scary. I expected people to be murdered around there all the time.

Chall: Basically, it was peaceful, but it was--

Heller: Basically, compared to Kent State or someplace like that, it was very peaceful and the University was never closed down for one day until Ronald Reagan closed it down during the People's Park thing. As I say, it seemed like a very important thing, not to let anybody close the University.

Chall: What about Harry Wellman?

Heller: Harry was just automatically named acting president. Maybe Ted Meyer had thought it out before. There were similarities, by the way, between Ted Meyer and Harry. They're both very able, but very gentle sort of people. I think that Ted probably talked to Harry during this difficult time. I have a feeling that he knew—I can't remember that Harry even was told ahead of time. He probably was. Because he was named then and there acting president.
Heller: I speak well for Clark, despite my criticism of-- You know, Bill Forbes is quite right, that Clark can't tell the complete truth. He doesn't know he's lying, even. He justifies and rationalizes. Bill is very literal, and when Clark said something he believed it. And he really was quite right about that. Clark just did not always tell the complete truth.

Bob Sproul before him got into all his trouble during the loyalty oath because he couldn't carry direct messages back and forth. To me the most important thing in an administrator of the University of California--I'm not going to speak about anything else--is to always speak the truth, unpleasant though it may be, and not to try to shade the truth. That's how the loyalty oath controversy started--or how it got underway with Bob Sproul not repeating what the Academic Senate said.
Chall: I thought, since we're going to be dealing with a good part of Reagan's administration, that we'd start with him. I wondered whether you could assess what were the chief characteristics, if you can, of the Reagan term as a Regent. Did they change from the beginning to the end, or were they the same for the eight years?

Heller: He didn't have any appointments to start with, put it that way, for two years. But, as I think I covered last time, Max Rafferty was a big supporter of Reagan's. And parenthetically, let me say that Reagan wanted nothing to do with Max Rafferty at the end. Max Rafferty just killed himself off from everybody by his outrageous behavior. That's just sort of parenthetical.

But when Reagan was first appointed, he took Max Rafferty's word on anything connected with the University, which was one thing that made things very bad, because Max Rafferty had no feeling. He was so right-wing and so sure of himself. He did influence Reagan at the beginning. I don't think he ever chose any appointees, but I think he felt he could guide them.

Also, when Reagan came in, we got Bob Finch as the new lieutenant governor. I mentioned all these last time, but not in this sense. Allan Grant as the newly appointed director of the Department of Agriculture.

Chall: He was the president of the Board of Agriculture.

Heller: Right. Ex officio Regent. I can't remember whether a new speaker came in with him.

*Portions of this chapter have been placed under seal.
Chall: With him came Unruh at the beginning, and then it was [Robert] Monagan.

Heller: Oh, then it was Unruh to start with.

Chall: Roger Pettitt came on the board during 1968-1969. I found that yesterday. And James Brett was representing the Mechanics' Institute in '68-'69.

Heller: Yes, that's correct. Pettitt was an alumni trustee and was only on the Regents ex officio for two years, voting only in one year.

Chall: Brett was replaced by Joseph Moore, who stayed on quite a while.

Heller: Yes. James Brett was a very, very conservative man, and not a good Regent, but he's a nice man. But not a good Regent. Weak, weak as a Regent and always over on the conservative side.

So it wasn't then really until '69, I guess—it was '69 that Reagan's first appointments—

Chall: Could it be '68? Because that's what I have on the list here, that he appointed Glenn Campbell—I think I'm right about this—and Dean Watkins.

Heller: They were his first two appointees, but I don't think—'68. That's right. He came in in '66. That is correct. You have that right. It was Glenn Campbell and Dean Watkins.

Chall: I noticed in my research yesterday that Dean Watkins was first appointed to replace Haldeman, who left in '69.

Heller: I didn't remember that.

Chall: So Haldeman apparently was a Regent during Reagan's administration.

Heller: That is correct. He was appointed by Reagan very much at the request of Bob Finch. As I think I indicated to you, Haldeman was not a particular friend of Reagan's at all, but he was of Bob Finch's. Bob always used to say, "I've got to make points I don't want to make, because I'm determined to get Haldeman appointed." Now, none of the nastiness of Haldeman had ever shown up at this point, and we were all very happy when Haldeman was appointed.

Chall: He might have been a good Regent. One doesn't know.

Heller: Well, he had been a Regent, you see. We had seen him as an alumni Regent. And we were all very happy. And that was when certainly—as you give me these dates—when Bob Haldeman gave that dinner for Reagan, he must have been an alumni Regent then.
Chall: I think so. He may have been appointed, then in 1968, and left almost immediately.

Heller: In '68, yes. He served from March 1st of '68 till--

Chall: I have '69 here.

Heller: Didn't you tell me that his first appointments were '68?

Chall: Yes. You see, Dean Watkins was appointed to replace Haldeman, so apparently he filled out his term.

Heller: I know that he left as soon as Nixon was elected president. He went to Washington. That much I remember for sure.

Chall: So Dean Watkins had in effect a sixteen-year term, because he replaced Haldeman.

Heller: Yes, he's still on.

Chall: And after that came William French Smith.

Heller: Who was Reagan's personal attorney, and a very bright man.

Chall: And he served as president for two terms, or chairman, I mean.

Heller: Yes, but so did Dean Watkins serve as chairman of the board.

Chall: Did he follow Smith?

Heller: I can't--I don't remember--

Chall: Well, I can always find that. I'll just keep going through.

Heller: You might notice that certain Reagan appointees came to the fore. Campbell was never elected chairman of even a committee. He was negative from the beginning. A negative person. Dean Watkins and William French Smith both are excellent Regents. It's not a matter of agreeing with them; I'm not agreeing with them; they're just first-rate Regents, that's all. And another later appointee--I'm trying to think of Reagan appointees.

Chall: I can give you them.

Heller: Well--Bob [Robert O.] Reynolds--I knew the second he hit the board that he was going to be excellent, and that he was going to be the first to break away from what I call the Alex Sherriffs dominance of the Regents, and he was. He literally was the first to be ashamed of the way he was being pushed around. Reagan appointed John Lawrence, who is still on and is a disaster. Bob Reynolds is now chairman of the Board of Regents, and has been a very good one.
Chall: What about William Wilson?

Heller: He's a very able man, who came on with no knowledge of higher education—none whatsoever—and some very wrong ideas. But he did keep asking questions. He and I would probably never vote together on many things. He did begin to realize certain misconceptions he had were all wrong. Such as, he came on positive that there was all sorts of misuse of funds at the University, misappropriation of funds, unfair granting of bids to contractors who were doing a lot of building then. Once he got the facts, he just straightened himself out. Just take this idea: he had something to do with building. What's he listed as? It just says "real estate" I think, or something like that. He was convinced; but once he was shown in detail the documentation that all bids for all buildings went out for competitive bidding and how they were watched and followed, he realized that this was just one of those tales going around that wasn't right.

Now, Bill Wilson has been chairman of the investment committee quite a bit. Conservative investor; feuded with Norton Simon all the way through; but he's a conscientious Regent.

Chall: Then we have Joseph Moore.

Heller: Joe Moore, I think I told you last time, just a very decent person. Very decent. I've known him many years myself, since I was a kid, and he's a--

Chall: He'd been a Mills College trustee, too, I noticed.

Heller: He'd been a Mills College trustee. But I knew him when I was a girl and his wife was one of my sister's very good friends. I've just known him. He remembers our place over in Ross. That goes a way back. We're personally very friendly. We often vote differently, but Joe Moore doesn't follow any special line. Nobody ever knows how Joe Moore's going to vote on anything ahead of time, because his reasoning is impossible to figure out. But he's conscientious, he works hard; I have a hunch he'd like to be chairman of the Board of Regents, though I don't think most people sit around wanting to be chairman. [laughs] I don't know of any who really did. But I think he'd be very glad to. Except for Ed Pauley, there was never any great plotting on who was going to be chairman of the Board of Regents.

Well, that gives you an overall idea.

Bill Smith was really a very good chairman, you know. And the same when Dean Watkins was chairman, who was just about the best chairman we'd ever had.

Dean Watkins understood the processes of the University and what belonged to Regents and what didn't belong to Regents. And though he was very conservative, he wasn't crazy conservative at all. He just
Chall: When you say that a couple of them were very poor Regents, what do you mean by poor Regent?

Heller: This once again is not going to be in the open part. Glenn Campbell has been in higher education all his life in a way. He's a Ph.D. from Harvard in economics. He's the head of the Hoover Institution.

Chall: That's right. I recognized the name and I couldn't remember it.

Heller: I think it's J. Glenn Campbell or something, there's some initial before it. He's a follower of the Chicago school of economics, and believes it thoroughly. He's not a very pleasant man, and he isn't really liked by anybody. He's always plotting. There were plots going on, led by Alex Sherriffs, in my opinion, that eventually boiled down to Glenn Campbell, Catherine Hearst, Allan Grant, and--let's see. There was one other--John Lawrence. They were always plotting: to overthrow Charlie Hitch; to get rid of Roger Heyns. It was really very bad. And everybody knew that they met with Alex Sherriffs on Wednesday night before Regents' meetings.

Chall: Did Reagan then switch his consultation from Rafferty to Sherriffs?

Heller: I've never known how much Reagan knew about that; whether he just said, "Alex, you take care of this." It was just well known. They'd come in and they'd vote as a bloc. Nobody else ever voted as a bloc. Often they'd have long documents. Well, you knew perfectly well they hadn't dug them up themselves. John Lawrence would never be able to dig out. And Catherine Hearst had these long documents, trying to prove points. It was very unpleasant. And they'd keep a meeting going and going and going.

They really never won their votes, except, before some of those came on, it was the ousting of Clark Kerr. But they really never won the things they were after. They were small things, I mean small things in the general scope of things, such as later on--I'm skipping ahead now, but my mind's going in that direction--they fought and fought and fought to keep the president, who was then Charles Hitch, from naming the new director of the Rad Lab on the Hill. They wanted--who they wanted, they never got him. I've forgotten the name, you see.

And then, when Lawrence resigned as head of the Donner Lab, when he became a Regent, because no faculty member can be a Regent, he wanted to control who his successor was. He wanted Hardin Jones, I remember that very well. But he didn't get him. That's why I'm saying this. Plotting and plotting and plotting went on. It was largely in terms of personalities. It was later on that this went on.

Chall: Hard in a way to know when it was, but it's good to get that in. In that respect, how did Hitch as president of the board handle himself--I mean, Hitch as the president of the University. How did he handle himself while all this plotting was going on?
Heller: He hated it. It was very distasteful to him.

Chall: I'm sure he did. But did he get paranoid about it?

Heller: I don't know if that's the right word. He just wouldn't talk to many people. He was wrong, and I've told him that. Well, for instance when Bill Smith was chairman of the board—and Bill did a very good job, really—he'd phone Ed Carter and he'd phone me. I would say to him, "Have you checked this with Bill Smith?" who was chairman of the board. He said, "No." I said, "You have to talk to your chairman." And he said, "Well, it's too hard to." He was wrong about that.
Heller: is conservative. I could talk politics with him easily, because he really believed what he believed. But he understood the role of a trustee, which a Regent is. He was immaculate on this, and he presided beautifully. He was very fair. And he understood—and this is one of the great principles, as far as I am concerned, of the role of a trustee or regent—it is that you support the president. If you don't support him most of the time, you get rid of him. Dean Watkins in particular understood that role. Always worked things out with Hitch. He, I think, was a little easier for Hitch to talk to, or he'd gotten to know him a little bit better.

The Appointment of President Charles Hitch

Heller: It started out [the Reagan term as Regent] with that terrible firing of Clark Kerr, of course. Then there followed a search committee, that I was on, for a new president. The Reagan appointees were not part of that. Well, there weren't any, except the ex officio, at that point. I think it was Phil Boyd who was chairman of that committee, or Ed Carter. It consisted of Phil Boyd, Ed Carter, Buff Chandler, me, and I'm not sure who the fifth one was. But we did a very, very thorough job. All over the country, talking to people. I don't remember who the fifth was.

Chall: I think I have that at home in my files.

Heller: The Reagan influence on the appointment of Hitch was really negligible. Except there was a holdover afterwards, after he had been appointed. Actually, the only opposition to Hitch, strangely enough was Dutton, who always objected to things. He objected, but he finally came around. And Norton Simon, who could always be difficult. He really didn't object to Hitch, he just objected.

So, you can see that really Hitch came on with good, solid support. It was interesting when you see how Reagan and Alex Sherriffs were trying to get rid of him later; some of them.

Chall: Why?

Heller: I guess there were different reasons for different people. I've always thought that Hitch had first come to the University on the recommendation of Clark Kerr as vice-president for financial affairs, or whatever it's called. I always thought that that was the basis of the objections. He had the tinge of Clark Kerr—you know that Clark Kerr had suggested him, not as president; Clark had nothing to do with that. I guess he didn't do things the way they thought they should be done; wasn't hard line enough. It's hard to say. But I've always thought that was behind it.
Heller: And then they tried to get rid of Roger Heyns as chancellor. They gave him a terrible beating later on, during all that Third World Movement and People's Park. And that, I've also believed, was always because Heyns had been appointed when Kerr was still president of the University. They thought he was part of a Kerr regime. I believe that to this day.

Chall: Otherwise, President Hitch conducted himself the way you would have expected him to do? With facts and honesty--

Heller: Yes. I think-- Hitch didn't accept right away by any means. He really gave it a lot of thought. He was a very thoughtful person. And this is a role he had never played before. He has a great capacity, great intellectual capacity. But--and I know this for a fact because he's told me, and it was no secret—he decided that if he were to be president, he'd have to recast the role of the president. It would be very different from Clark Kerr's style, which wouldn't have been Hitch's natural style anyway, and that the chancellors were going to run their campuses, and he was never going to set foot on the Berkeley campus, except for lunch or something like that. He would have nothing to do directly with the campus.

Clark Kerr had always thought that he could manipulate the students—which I think is well documented all along. So, Hitch, which was I think natural to him, separated himself from the students, and had nothing to do with the students. The students had to be handled through the chancellors. He was absolutely inaccessible to any student groups. That all had to be chancellors. There was a great change of style.

I don't feel that Hitch was ever at ease with students. Part of it was his deliberate decision, to stay away from them, and part of it, I think, was his natural inclination.

Chall: Well, during that period there were some terribly violent times on the campus that would have been--

Heller: Yes, but he had taken a position before all that violence. He thought out exactly what he thought the role of the president was.

That's the way Charles Hitch's mind goes. It's a very mathematical orderly mind. He's a lovely person. He doesn't make friends easily. Let me say that the committee, of which I was part, felt that this was a very good plan of Hitch's. That's how he could handle this University after the mess from the FSM and the Kerr type of administration. I thought it was a very wise thing.

Chall: In reading through the University Bulletin, just the few years that I did yesterday in preparing for today, one could sense that the Regents were focusing on issues very clearly. There wasn't a confusion about the president's role and the chancellor's roles--
Heller: There was an interesting little scene--I don't know whether I should record all this or not--when Hitch was elected. Well, it has to do with Reagan. It's sort of interesting.

Chall: Yes, I have something about what Reagan did from Lou Cannon's book. Maybe it's the same as what you have to say.

Heller: Finally, we wanted to be able to announce a unanimous vote if we could. It's always better if you can. Fred Dutton had come around after a few objections, but Norton gets very ornery on these things. He pays no attention until he comes to the meeting, and then he raises the devil. Of course, we were in executive session when this was going on. Norton just wouldn't. He said, "I'm just not going to vote for him. You're not going to be able to say it's unanimous." Buff Chandler was a very good friend of Norton's and she'd been on the committee. She begged him. She said, "I thought you trusted me?" or its equivalent. "Norton, I thought you would accept any recommendation that I would be part of." She said, "I wouldn't recommend anybody that I didn't think was right."

Well, Norton wouldn't and wouldn't. Somehow Reagan got in the act. He was sitting there. Reagan had voted for him (Hitch). Norton always had a reason for things that you couldn't always figure out ahead of time. I always said if he was going to head north, he'd go south first and then west to misdirect you. [chuckles] Gradually it became clear what Norton was doing. He wanted Reagan to ask him, Norton Simon, to support Charles Hitch; that he thought it was a good appointment. Then, all of a sudden you realized that Simon, who just clashed with Reagan like mad, wanted that direct commitment out of Reagan about Hitch. Of course, he was so right in the long run.

I've forgotten how the conversation went. Something that Norton said made Reagan say, "You mean, you want me to ask you to vote for Hitch?" Norton said, "Yes, that's exactly what I mean." So Reagan said, "Okay Regent Simon, I ask you if you will please cast an affirmative vote for Hitch as president." And Simon said, "If that's the case, I'll vote yes." This is more a Norton Simon story in a way, than a Reagan story.
Heller: This is what Hitch could do.

Chall: --any of that. You could take it away from the chancellors and you could take it away from the president as you did in some of these cases, but each time it was pretty clear cut and the Regents never got into determining guilt or innocence of students during riots or violence or anything of this kind--from what I could tell. I didn't go back to the Daily Cal to look.

Heller: Well, you can't always tell from the Daily Cal.

Chall: I thought it would be interesting today, to compare the styles, because there are obviously different styles.

Heller: Very, very different styles. Clark had a habit-- Well, this wasn't so apparent; it was very apparent to the Regents. In the social position--and there were many Regents' dinners and spouses and all that--Clark would always get over in a corner, and be talking to one person--planning, figuring out something. He never socialized in the normal sense, because he was so intense. He had something on his mind and he wanted to talk to whomever it was he wanted to talk to.

Now, Hitch would have none of that. We completely changed the style by never having Regents' meetings at dinnertime. That was partly Hitch's nature, and it was partly the idea that had been evolving in this period that our meetings must be open to the public. I can remember once when there were problems at Santa Cruz, Dean Watkins was a Regent by then. I think he was a fairly new Regent. We had a dinner at the chancellor's house, and somebody started to talk about how he would handle this messy situation the next day on the Santa Cruz campus. Dean Watkins said, "It's against the law." He said, "There is going to be no discussion of any processes or any determinations made, unless in open meeting." That's why I say Dean was very good on this. He understood these things. You know, Dean wasn't rah-rah for the students, but he understood the process. It was a combination of those two things that just changed those Regents' dinners completely into just completely social affairs. Perfectly pleasant, in which all the feuding Regents, whatever they were feuding about at the moment, got together and had a good time. And that was a great change in style.

Chall: After the dinners would there be any meetings, or would you just not meet until the next day?

Heller: Not as far as I was concerned, or any of my friends at all. There was really very little plotting, per se. I, over the years, got in the habit of--I usually had dinner the night before with Dutch Higgs and Phil Boyd, because the three of us all liked to go the night before meetings, and a lot of them came in early the next morning, taking
planes or driving. It was exhausting. You'd have to get about a seven a.m. plane in San Francisco for Los Angeles. The three of us always came in the night before. So we had dinner together often, but there was no plotting. Other people would join us, depending on who showed up.

Chall: So the Regents would meet on--

Heller: We'd meet on Thursday for committee meetings.

Chall: Have dinner, and then meet again Friday morning for board meetings. That's after Hitch?

Heller: That is correct. Well, we used to meet all day Friday. Over the years, we got the committees rearranged so that we'd finish up the business of the Regents, with a few exceptions, by noon on Friday. Oh, we used to go all day long. Never know if we'd get a plane out on Friday night if we were down south. Some of those Thursday committee meetings were very, very long. I'm laughing because I'm thinking of the Eldridge Cleaver situation, which was one of the momentarily very hot spots. Oh, I'll tell you. Till all this mess that you have on this page [outline] was over, the meetings were endless!

Chall: Well, I'm sure they must have been, because the Regents were beginning to take back some of the prerogatives that they had permitted the chancellors and the president.

Heller: That wasn't the important part. It really wasn't. I know it comes out in the press that way, but it really wasn't.

Chall: That's what it looked like when you counted the votes. Where do you want to start today, with the student unrest? We can do the tuition and finances second and start with the students.

Heller: This is in line with the Regents and what you were just saying. In March '69—I'm skipping, but it sort of ties in with what we've been talking about—when Herbert Marcuse was reappointed for one year by Bill McGill, chancellor at San Diego, that was an over-age appointment so that it came to the Regents for approval and was upheld by exactly one vote. This, by the way, is a good example of Dean Watkins as a Regent. He was new, but he was a Ph.D. from Stanford. He had taught a little bit at Stanford and he understood how appointments were made. He felt that if McGill had reappointed Marcuse, the Regents had to uphold that.

Every Regent would turn up at all these things. This wasn't really a big thing. You know, the Regents had always, up to not too long before, okayed the appointments of tenured faculty, but we had decided there were just too many lists and nobody knew what was going on, so we had voted to delegate it to the faculty and the
Heller: chancellors, reserving for the Regents the right to vote on over-age and over-salary standard appointments. After the Marcuse dispute—and perhaps partly because of it—there was a vote taking tenured appointments back to the Regents, with a slight change in the rules—if nobody objected, the tenured appointments were automatically approved. It's not something that I felt very strongly on. That's why I say it wasn't a great big issue.

Chall: But the final decision was passed thirteen to ten with one abstention.*

Heller: Well, I'm sure I was one of the ten, but I didn't care that much. This was not what I would call a life and death issue by any means, because it is the custom in most universities for a governing board to approve. It's just that—I can't remember when they abandoned that, but it was when I was first a Regent.

Chall: It had been about three years. According to the University Bulletin, those procedures had been given up about three years before that, so that it would have been about '66.

Heller: That's about right. I didn't feel very strongly one way or the other. I found the list a great pest, because I was rubber stamping. Then when we took it back again, we'd get these long lists, and if there was no objection at the following meeting, or any objection even registered up to ten days before the following meeting—well, don't hold me to that, maybe we had to have the list ten days before—the appointment went through. That was all. I just felt the University is so big, that you just didn't know who any of these people were. Well then, this thirteen to ten vote, with an abstention—I don't remember who that abstention was.

Chall: For a while, in 1970, and I don't quite know why this happened, but in the 1970 University Bulletins, the votes were published. It was very nice, I must say, to see who voted how, and I'll talk to you about that. But I don't know why it started in '70, and whether, in fact, it continued.

Heller: That was not a personnel issue, so that the press could report it if it wanted to.

Chall: But votes had never been reported that I saw in University Bulletins prior to these 1970.

Heller: Of anything?

Chall: As far back as I was going, to about '60.

*University Bulletin, April 26, 1969, p. 158
Heller: Well, remember we did an awful lot in executive session that went into public session later on. Bit by bit we realized that there was much more that had to go into public session. Interestingly enough, the insistence on a public session came from a lot of people. I think it's a simple procedure, because the vote on taking back that appointment privilege would not be an executive decision. It does not deal with personnel per se.

Chall: That vote wasn't published, but some were.

Heller: Well, I have no idea why. You see, a casual person thinks of this as an important issue, and maybe some of the faculty did. But it really didn't make any difference once it got changed.

There was a short period after it was changed when there was still all the excitement about who went to what rallies; who theoretically whipped up the troops to protest. Catherine Hearst—the aforementioned people, plus sometimes Ed Pauley—would object to some promotion that Roger Heyns was putting in. I remember that very well. One of them would say, "He was at such and such a rally." There were hundreds, thousands of people. I always thought, "How the devil did they know?" I had no idea who was and who wasn't. Sometimes the name would just disappear from the list, and the promotion—I don't really know. I guess Heyns would put it back to the faculty again to re-examine. They weren't people I knew, with rare exceptions, or knew of.

This is purely conjecture on my part. I always wondered how they knew so much, this group, about these individuals. I vaguely thought that there was some sort of a private service in the state that was supplying names of who attended all the rallies. Now, in recent years, we've learned that the FBI was doing a lot of monitoring.

Chall: There were one or two private organizations that were also keeping tabs on people.

Heller: Yes. But they had the names of everyone.

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Heller: I never know when to tell you when I think the influence of—I never know whether to say Reagan or Alex Sherriffs, because I think Alex Sherriffs did it—reached its peak and lost. As I say, they never really won the big issues. I don't think that that's been on the record anyplace. I knew there was a lot of grumbling around, and it was a matter of an appointment. The coordinating council had changed its rules, and there was to be one representative from the University—one Regent, instead of the three that there had always been before. The same for the state colleges. Charlie Hitch wanted to be that representative. He thought he should. There was a determined effort made on the part of these Regents that were fighting him, that I've mentioned before, that it would be Glenn Campbell, and
Heller: not Charles Hitch. You probably never heard of that. That was one of the most interesting fights we had, because it was the peak of it.

We'd had an educational policies committee meeting, and then we went into finance committee. I wasn't on finance committee, but I was sitting there. It was in Los Angeles. I suddenly realized that practically none of the members of the finance committee were around. On the Regents, most Regents sit in on all meetings. They don't have to, but most of them do, especially if they're around, and I knew they'd been around, because they had been there all through educational policies. I think Ed Carter was chairman of the finance committee—well it makes very little difference, but I think he was, and he was East. He wasn't there that day, and Bill Forbes was vice-chairman. I remember he was presiding. They were going through the routine business. I looked around, and all of a sudden, I realized that practically nobody was there of the Regents who had been there. I said, "I don't think you have a quorum around here." Ed Pauley was sick that day; he had not been there. I remember those two were missing. It developed that Alex Sherriff had pulled out every Reagan appointee to a secret meeting to plan strategy—and this is true, and I can corroborate it—of how to get Glenn Campbell appointed the next day instead of Charlie Hitch.

So the next day I, among others, said a few words. People who had been sitting around were people like Roth, Coblentz, and me, Bill Forbes, Phil Boyd, and Hitch, but none of the people I've mentioned before: Campbell, Smith, Reynolds, Watkins, had all been pulled out—had disappeared. I said something to Bob Reynolds, who I always felt really never meant to do anything wrong. He'd had no experience in these things; he was fairly new on the Regents. I said, "Bob, that's terrible that all you finance committee members disappeared yesterday afternoon." He said, "I know it, Ellie, I'm ashamed of myself. I'll never allow this to happen again." He said, "I was used, and I'm chagrined. But," he said, "I gave my word that I would support Glenn Campbell." He said, "I'm not going to go back on that, but I'll never do it again."

They had pulled out a couple they weren't so sure of, and one was Joe Moore. As I say, you never know how Joe Moore's going to vote. He often voted very conservatively. He was an old friend of John Lawrence's, and he'd often vote with John Lawrence.

So the next day, the vote came up, I think the motion was naming Campbell. I'm not sure which way it went, whether Hitch was nominated or Campbell, but I think it was Campbell. It was defeated by one vote—Joe Moore. They thought they had the votes. Joe would never commit himself; he was that sort of person. I want to make it clear that neither Ed Pauley nor Ed Carter were at the meeting. They were not part of this in any way. They just happened to both be out of
Heller: town. They were convinced they had the votes because they had the majority there. It was defeated by one vote, and it was Joe Moore's. That's why I always say you never know how votes are going to come out. Nothing is that solid, except that Campbell, Lawrence, Grant, and Hearst always voted together.

Chall: You didn't know why they were all gone, did you, until the next day?

Heller: No, but I had a hunch. Because you hear muttering, you can't help overhearing little mutterings. I knew that there were some who thought it should be Glenn Campbell.

Chall: Did Alex Sherriffs always come to Regents' meetings?

Heller: Yes, once there was a big fight about it. It wasn't a fight that it made enough difference to win--objections to his being in executive sessions.

Chall: I see—even that?

Heller: Yes. That he wasn't a Regent or an officer. Reagan got very nasty about it. You know, you have to pick the battles that you're going to win, or that you have a chance of winning. I thought, "What difference does it make whether he's present or not. We have quite a few officers of the board that are at executive committee meetings, or at least those who have any business, and it just doesn't make that difference." So Alex was always, always, always there.

Chall: I didn't know that until just now.

Heller: You didn't know that? Oh, yes, he never missed, so he knew everything that was happening. He really masterminded this. That's why I've never been sure how much of the detail Reagan knew about. He was just told what they were going to do and how to vote.

Chall: But didn't Reagan always attend the meetings as well?

Heller: Most of the time. If there was any important issue at stake, he attended a lot. That was a much bigger issue, basically, which was where Reagan and Alex Sherriffs sort of controlled the Regents. And they lost. That was the peak of their power standing together. So they lost it on Joe Moore's vote, just as the Marcuse, because it hadn't developed as far, was lost on Dean Watkins' vote. But they hadn't gotten together as much; it was early on.

Another great fight was the appointment of Philip Lee as chancellor of UC San Francisco. I remember that one particularly, because I was vice-chairman of the board at that point. I've forgotten the date. It was one of Ed Reinecke's first meetings, I remember that. I had to chair an awful special Regents' meeting, because Dutch Higgs, who was chairman, was in the hospital with pneumonia.
Chall: I know when that date was, but I guess I have it somewhere in the files.

Heller: That wasn't purely a Reagan fight. I would say a lot of people didn't like Phil Lee, or if they didn't really know him they didn't like his father, Russ [Russel Lee] who was my personal doctor. Phil Lee, when he was still at the clinic, had been one of Ed Heller's doctors. I've known the Lees since 1928. We really had a terrible time getting a chancellor there. It was won by one vote again, and I've forgotten—Somebody had occasion to know Phil or his father, and it was an unlikely vote from maybe Wendell Witter or somebody like that. Wendell Witter was always on the Reagan side too. We had two alumni presidents from Cal that were always on the Reagan side—Bill Hudson and Wendell Witter. I don't really remember who that was.

But I remember chairing three hours of that day, with an interview with Phil Lee at noon when he was there. I remember having to ask Phil Lee, through Charlie Hitch, of course, the president, would he be willing to accept the chancellorship on a very split vote. Phil said yes, it didn't bother him. I don't want to say that was an absolute Reagan fight. It was sort of one.

What I remember most is Reinecke, who kept thanking me every time I recognized him. That was just like him. A lieutenant governor, it was ridiculous! [laughs] I mean, if you preside you have to recognize whoever wants to talk. He was very smooth about how much he admired Phil Lee and all that, but he voted the other way. That was sort of a Reagan fight, but not quite, because Phil was known as a liberal, that was the problem, and his father was known as a great pioneer in medicine. It was sort of that way. But some unlikely person voted—you can probably even trace that.

Chall: Whoever is doing the research can trace that. We don't have to do that.

Heller: That was the subject of a special meeting that we held in great secret, because you do try to keep the chancellor's choice a secret. It does so much damage to—

Chall: Well, that is personnel after all.

Heller: That is personnel, there's just no question about it.

Chall: Since we're on the subject of people, why don't we go back and trace—
Eldridge Cleaver: The Guest Lecturer Issue

Heller: You want to go back to Eldridge Cleaver?

Chall: Yes, let's check on Cleaver, now.

Heller: That's a whole interesting story. There was a group at Berkeley, and you probably have their initials, because they were well known at that time.

Chall: Well, this was an experimental course. Are you thinking there was a group which set up this course?

Heller: Yes, these experimental courses, but they had initials. It was not very soundly conceived, because they let students push this thing around.

Chall: [looks through papers]

Heller: The Berkeley Academic Senate authorized this student committee, largely student dominated, to set up experimental courses.

Chall: The Board of Educational Development?

Heller: Yes. It was largely dominated by students. It's hard to get yourself back there, but students were really in there—that's it, the BED—trying to influence courses. I had felt, before the Cleaver thing came up, that the faculty was making a great mistake to lose control of course content. I felt that in general. It had nothing to do with Cleaver.

The Cleaver story never comes out right in the papers. The point was that, as you said [in the outline], he was asked to lecture for ten of twenty lectures in an experimental course, about which he knew nothing. I've forgotten what the subject was.

Chall: Well, let's see. The subject was Social Analyses 139x.

Heller: He might have known enough for one lecture.

Chall: It apparently had to do with race relations. He certainly knew that.

Heller: He knew enough maybe for two lectures.

Chall: He didn't have a title, however.

Heller: No, not at all. But he was an important black person then. He had written *Soul on Ice*. One of those phases. I thought it was crazy at any point to take an unqualified person to give ten out of twenty guest
Mrs. Edward H. Heller
99 Faxon Road
Atherton, California 94025

Dear Ellie:

I have asked Roger Heyns for a progress report on Course 139X and enclose his letter of November 5 to me. I hope it answers your questions.

Cordially,

Charles J. Hitch

Enclosure
PRESIDENT HITCH:

In reply to your inquiry about 139X, I quote the following from a letter to me, written in response to my request, from Professor Sheldon J. Korchin. You will recall that he has been from the outset the member of B.E.D. in close liaison with the course. The content of his letter agrees in all essential matters with my impressions and that of my colleagues.

"I have talked with Ed Sampson and Jan Dizard and, along with my own impressions, this is the situation in 139X as of now.

"There are about 73 registered students, who are attending all of the lectures and the assigned section meetings regularly. In addition, between 200 and 300 auditors have been coming to the lectures, more for those by Cleaver than for the other guests. Thus far, Cleaver has given four lectures, which have mainly consisted of historical perspectives on the status of the Negro in America and on the origins of white attitudes towards blacks, in which he has considered issues such as color symbolism, and the psychological meaning of slavery both to master and slave. In the second lecture of the week, Professor Winthrop Jordan, Nevitt Sanford, Troy Duster, and David Wellman have thus far lectured. Jordan spoke on the history of slavery; Sanford on authoritarianism; Duster on the roots of racism; and David Wellman on the views held by minority peoples of their problems contrasted to the way the same problems are conceived by professional sociologists. The first three of these lecturers were in the originally proposed group. Wellman, who is an advanced graduate student in sociology and a Research Associate for the Institute of Industrial Relations, stood in for a lecture originally scheduled for Blauner of sociology.

"In all of the lectures, both Cleaver's and the other guests', the format consists of a one hour lecture followed by a half hour of discussion from the floor. Generally, the questions are appropriate and searching, frequently drawing on the students' reading. The lecturer may be asked, thus, to reconcile his facts or opinions with material in the various source readings.
"A problem for the instructors has been monitoring attendance at the lectures. They have established a priority system in which first preference is given to those members of the faculty, student or employee community who were originally issued auditor's or credit cards; secondly, to persons who have made prior arrangements with one of the instructors to attend a particular lecture; and finally, any faculty member, student or employee who shows up, provided there is a seat available at 10 minutes after the hour. Some faculty colleagues and graduate students have volunteered help, and there have been no major problems other than the discomfort of the instructors and their colleagues in having to check the credentials of people interested in hearing a particular lecture.

"Until last week, there were five section groups. Sampson had two sections, the other three instructors one each. They varied in size from five to fifteen students. There were two graduate student co-leaders: one for Langer's section and one for Sampson's, who shared with them the task of leading the discussion group. Because of the small number in one of the sections, the students were consolidated this week into the other four sections. The sections are run in different fashion, depending on the styles of the individual instructors. Some are staying closer to the readings, others consider further the lecture areas. In all of the sections, topics for papers are being discussed. It is my impression that in some sections students may already be at work on their term papers. There was some delay in getting all of the books on the reading list. Many were on reserve for other courses, and hence were available. By the end of the first week of classes, books were ordered for purchase by the students. As of now, the instructors believe that students have access to all of the required and suggested readings.

"The section meetings apparently serve their purpose well. A problem, of course, is that the issue of credit for the course intrudes on section discussions, and has taken time from discussion of the course topics. I gather that the instructors differ in their permissiveness with regard to discussion of credit in class time; some wanting to keep the matter, however important it is to them and to the students, from consuming section time. Thus far, they have not been able to arrange to have the lecturers visit with sections, as they had originally hoped and planned. They do feel that the openness and freeness of the post-lecture discussions in the large sessions have, in large measure, served this need. However, they do hope to have at least Cleaver visit with each of the sections at some later date, so that students can discuss the material with him in smaller groups.
"I gather, from talking with Sampson and Dizard, that the course is going well. They are currently scheduling lecturers for the coming weeks, all of whom will be from the list originally proposed. Student interest in the course remains high and discussions are lively. Students are already or will shortly be getting down to work on their individual papers. Students seem satisfied with lectures and discussions, although some have voiced the complaint that Cleaver has taken too historical a tack, and that much of the material he's presenting is in scholarly works that they are reading. From their point of view, they would wish him to talk more about the contemporary scene and his role in it; he apparently feels that the historical and sociological context is necessary for the understanding of the contemporary problem.

"As you know, the instructors will prepare a full evaluation at the end of the course. Meanwhile, I hope these notes serve your present purposes."

Roger W. Heyns
Of course, it ended up on our changing the policy completely. But when we were arguing the Cleaver thing, I didn't think anybody should be kept from being a guest lecturer, within reason, on any campus. About half the board felt one way, and half the other. Hitch was president, and he had come in with a suggestion, which I thought was very sound, that it be reduced to two lectures. This was really policy by this point. But that it should go back to the faculty to re-examine this course.

We sat hour after hour arguing and voting about two lectures versus none. We were even. We were absolutely even. Vote after vote after vote. They'd reword it a little bit, and we'd still be even. This went on for hours. It was in Los Angeles. Ed Pauley was against his being allowed. I no longer remember how people lined up, but you can probably guess how they lined up from the things I've given you.

I can tell you one of the votes. They lined up so that Boyd, Carter, Coblentz, Forbes, Heller, Higgs, Hitch, Pettitt and Simon always voted together.

We were voting for the two lectures.

There were three votes taken. One of them was a tie; one of them was ten to eight; one of them was something else.

They were ties, I can tell you, all the way through, until the end. It got later and later and later. We were in Los Angeles, and Ed Pauley was giving one of his famous dinner parties that night in honor of President Hitch, who was the new president—comparatively new. When he gave a dinner party, it was really something. They were the most elaborate, most marvelous parties. Everybody enjoyed them. He could see the dinner hour approaching and passed, and nobody would ever get to his party.

I remember his saying to President Hitch, he said, "President Hitch, why aren't you willing to make a deal? You don't seem to want to compromise in any way." I remember Hitch saying, "Regent Pauley, I'm open to any suggestions as long as Eldridge Cleaver is free to give a lecture on the campus, or anybody." It wasn't Cleaver that we were voting for. Ed Pauley said that two or three times. We took a vote again, and it came out the same way. And then he said, "President Hitch, I'll make you a deal. One lecture, not two." And Hitch said, "Done." [laughter] So we had won our point. Because Ed Pauley was having a dinner party he agreed to one lecture. The point of the resolution, which I don't have, was that it was to go back to the Academic Senate to re-look at this thing. I can't remember if I was chairman of educational policies then, but I was certainly one of those that met—
Chall: You were in the membership.

Heller: Was I? I certainly was one of those that met with some members of the Berkeley faculty on this at University Hall a week or two later.

Chall: That was followed up by—you're right—your committee meeting. I don't recall whether you were the chairman of it or not.

Heller: It doesn't make any difference. I was certainly there.

Chall: Then there were some other votes taken at other meetings, but it finally ended up in December of 1968—it started out in September and then this was December—when the subcommittee of the educational policies committee recommended to its own committee and then to the full board that you allow some exceptions to be made in this matter—allow it to go to the president.

Heller: That was right.

Chall: I don't know exactly what happened on that one.

Heller: Well, it isn't that important. They pointed out that certain courses would benefit from a guest lecturer without any degree, and that there had to be some exceptions.

I remember the meeting with—I don't remember who were the members—with the Berkeley faculty committee, except I remember John Searles was one of them. John Searles was very hot for this Cleaver thing to start with, had been, and for this whole BED. You know, you always remember what you've done best, but I remember just sitting there and saying, "John, this is bad. The Berkeley faculty has really not lived up to its obligations of thinking this through, letting the students go ahead, and there's nothing that's going to convince me that Cleaver or anybody else who's not qualified can give ten out of twenty lectures." I remember his saying, "Well, if I can't convince you, I can't convince anybody on the Regents." That sort of broke the thing up. He realized there wasn't a prayer of converting anybody to this. He always said, "If I can't convince you, I can't convince anybody."

But that was a very edgy time, when the students wanted to say who was going to speak. You see, the Free Speech Movement had gone sort of wild by then. The students were going to decide who was going to appear in these experimental courses. I can only give you my personal opinion. I thought the faculty committee that agreed to this had not thought through its own responsibilities. You know, we never heard anything more about it.

Chall: Except that in July of the next year—'69—the Regents adopted a resolution concerning guest lectures in general, and under certain conditions they gave the powers back to the chancellor.
Heller: That's what evolved out of all these meetings.

Chall: But President Hitch said that that policy that had just been passed by the Regents was the most restrictive of any major university in the country, and that most universities had no regulations at all governing guest lectures. But that was the end of it.

Heller: That was the end of it. It really was solved by then. You know how something can go on and on. I can't remember that subject ever coming up again in any way.

On the point we were really voting, to allow Eldridge Cleaver to speak, I was on the liberal side compared to the others. Basically, in the eyes of John Searles and some of the faculty people that had been planning this, I was very conservative in my outlook. They couldn't see that I just didn't like it. I just felt it was a very bad precedent to start, and I don't think I've changed my mind yet on that. Though I haven't thought about it until today.

It was a mountain out of a molehill, that one. But you have to remember the excitement of those times. It got to be a joke once Eldridge Cleaver became a fugitive from justice.

Chall: They were emotional times.

Heller: Oh, they were very emotional.

Chall: I would guess, but I'm not sure, that after what the Regents had gone through with the FSM, were they more careful to try to find out what was actually going on on the campus?

Heller: I think so. I think more so. All Cleaver had going for him is that he was quite a magnetic personality, I guess, and he'd written one book, Soul on Ice. I remember several of the Regents reading it, and some of them thinking it was very good, and others thinking that all he did was boast about the white women he had seduced, which is neither here nor there, nowadays. You know, it really isn't. It didn't have great literary quality in my opinion. But that wasn't really the point of the whole exercise.

The Cleaver incident itself isn't important, but what it stood for had great importance.

Chall: In the same context about the Regents dealing with authority—the giving up of authority or the taking back of authority, which is really what the Cleaver issue represented—

Heller: No, it didn't. Because the resolution that I was fighting for and got finally, by getting into this Ed Pauley vote, was to put that authority right squarely back in the Academic Senate, to look at.
But the other side wanted to take the policy away.

To forbid him to speak; to take the policy away. No, that was the fight I was making: a), that anybody should be [allowed to speak], and b), it had to go back to the faculty; that the faculty really had to make the decision. I believe, and I think I was right, that once they really sat down and thought it through, they would change it, because I thought it was a very poor strategy they had followed. Most of the senate had ignored it, paid no attention to it. It was quite different from—I think we mentioned last time—when Joe Tussman set up his experimental thing. That was faculty controlled. That was deliberate. It was a faculty sponsored experiment. This one was controlled by students.

The Authority to Appoint Non-Tenure Faculty

What about the Angela Davis matter?

Do you want to skip to that?

Yes, because I think it has some parallels.

Yes, it had a lot to do with that. That's been so well publicized that I don't know—Shall I give you just my opinion of it?

Let me go back here and find my notes—I do know that you voted no almost all the time.

That's the lowest I ever got in votes. I was one of only six, at that point, Regents. I voted no on Angela Davis being fired by the Regents because I did not believe that an acting assistant professor's hiring or not hiring belonged at the Regents' level.

That's what I wanted to know, because that was the issue, really, there.

That was the issue, though you wouldn't have known it. Some Regents who I thought always understood this sort of issue, got so—There was such excitement about this, because she was a Communist, that they didn't vote the way they usually did. I knew we didn't have any votes for the principle. It's just one of those things. Dutch Higgs would always understand the principle, but he voted for her firing. Phil Boyd. There were people in sort of—Ed Carter—who had constant business/social pressures on them on this subject, and didn't think it was important enough—they thought she was a bum teacher and she should be fired. But we got down to only six people.
Elinor Raas Heller, '25—an Experienced Optimist

Mrs. Edward Heller is, by her own definition, an optimist. She is also a realist—and the combination serves her well on the UC Board of Regents.

Mrs. Heller, the realist, says, "All higher education is in for trouble."

And Elinor Heller, the optimist, adds: "I get very discouraged at moments, but I'm a natural optimist, I really do believe things come out—and then you get a new set of problems."

"People tend to think," she said, "that all the campus trouble began at Berkeley with the Free Speech Movement, but they forget that it was completely nonviolent, if dramatic."

"It had a perfectly good basis: free speech, the right to voice an opinion, even a political one. But it was manipulated by others, a few of what we now call the radicals.

"We don't really know any more who manipulates campus unrest. They move. In Palo Alto they've stirred up trouble in town—whoever 'they' are."

"I don't think anybody likes the violence. It makes me shudder, and the killing is the worst. But the attempts at burning of libraries—destruction of irreplaceable treasures—are senseless and tragic, too."

Mrs. Heller, whose late husband was a regent for 18 years before Governor Brown appointed her to fill out his term in 1961, took note of public reaction to student violence.

"The Legislature," she said, "is refusing to increase faculty salaries even to the point of cost-of-living raises. This has led to a breakdown of morale among the faculties."

"But the Legislature only did what the people indicated they wanted done."

Mrs. Heller was one of six regents who voted against ousting Angela Davis from her teaching job at UCLA. She explained her decision this way: "I was voting on the principle that appointments of non-tenured persons do not belong at the Regents' level; they belong at the campus level.

"The constitutional authority of the regents is unquestioned. We have delegated authority to the president of the University and, through him, to the chancellors to be responsible for discipline, courses and non-tenured faculty. We could take it all back, but I believe it should stay delegated."

"But that is one of the problems. The problems before the regents and the problems some persons believe should be before us are not always the same."

The regents' chief responsibilities, she said, should be fiscal policy and general educational trends. But these leave room for considerable differences of opinion among regents.

"So many things come up as problems," Mrs. Heller said. "There is no question in my mind but that we should be doing research as well as teaching. Yet, that's a quarrel now."

"And the attack against defense contracts is not a valid attack. The university relies on these funds to keep operating, and it's not feasible to cut them off with no means of replacement."

"As a university grows, there's always a question of new programs, especially at the graduate level, and with nine campuses there's more need. But now it is almost impossible to start a new program: engineering, for instance, has almost been brought to a stop for lack of funds."

Some problems, however, are not as serious as they might seem, Mrs. Heller said.

"Take ROTC," she said. "This is one thing the board is united on. It will be continued."

"One of my first votes as a regent was to abolish compulsory ROTC. But I am sure ROTC should be continued for those who want it, and there is no reason the program can't be improved."

Mrs. Heller heads the regents' educational policy committee, which, she said, "is concerned with all things connected with students: faculty matters except salaries, courses (ROTC for instance), grading, approval of applicants for grants, honorary degrees.

"These things originate with the committee, but we don't have financial matters, not even student aid."

She also serves on the grounds and buildings committee "and always on some special committee." Presently she is a member of the reorganization committee and one to advise UC President Charles Hitch on selection of a new chancellor for the San Diego campus.

And she feels she brings no special talent to the board of regents by virtue of being a woman.

"It's not being a woman," she said, "it's being a person—the individual and what he or she can contribute."

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Chall: I have Dutton, Coblentz, Heller, Hitch, Roth, and Forbes.

Heller: If you have it, that's right. I guess Simon wasn't around. There were only six, I know.

Chall: Those are the six I have, and that came out of the University Bulletin.*

Heller: I knew we were going to lose it, but it was a long dragged-out thing. I know that Bill Smith was chairman of the board then. He set up a special committee to look into everything about her lectures and what she had said, which had all been recorded somehow. Well, because she was a Communist, I guess, somebody had gotten around to recording it. Interviews with all her students had been collected, what they thought of her and how she'd influenced them. There had been a terrific amount of work.

Let me go back further than that. Chuck [Charles] Young was a new chancellor then at UCLA. I always felt that he could have put down this Angela Davis issue. It was not a matter of promoting her, it was a matter of giving her a second-year acting assistant professor's contract. That's what the actual issue was. She hadn't done one lick of work for her Ph.D., which is what an acting assistant professor is supposed to be doing, besides giving lectures. I always felt that he could have put that down way, way back. But UCLA's philosophy department— I can't remember the name of the chairman of the philosophy department down there, who was very left wing. His name has escaped me now, something like—I always think of Kadish, who was UC Berkeley law, but it's a name sort of like that. I think Chuck didn't have authority or guts to turn it down. It could have been turned down. It should never have gotten to Chuck.

I've seen some bad things put down very quietly by chancellors. Most people don't even know it. Like Emil Mrak. Nothing like that ever happened. He'd take care of it at a very low level. That was the basic problem of that, that Chuck got—I think was scared, because he hadn't really established his academic credentials. He had been appointed full professor, just before he became chancellor on Franklin Murphy's strong urging, so that he could become chancellor. I just don't think that he had his feet on the ground. I've told him so; this is not behind Chuck's back at all. Then he went back when there was all this fuss about it.

There were all sorts of legalisms. It went to the court; it went to Judge [Jerry] Pacht, I remember that. Of course, it was well established by this time that a Communist couldn't be excluded as being a Communist. Of course, that ruling went against the majority of the Regents. It should have. It was a correct ruling, in my opinion.

Heller: And then Chuck Young appointed a blue-ribbon commission of some of the most eminent faculty people at UCLA. Ben Aaron, I remember, was the chairman of that. Law professor. Very much respected person, he's still on the UCLA faculty. They brought in a report that really threw it back to the chancellor, unfortunately. There was sort of a paralysis. I don't want to seem critical of the UCLA faculty, because they're really excellent, but somehow, this thing—they were all getting threats all the time. While that blue-ribbon committee didn't clear her, it never came out and said she was pushed through against the wishes of most of the philosophy department, which is really what turned out, as I remember. It was a very star-studded group that didn't really clarify. You could interpret what they said in two ways.

As a result of all this, before any final action was taken, Bill Smith did appoint a Regents' committee to go over all this evidence: all the taped lectures; the opinions of all the students that were in writing; the blue star committee's report. I remember he said to me, "Ellie, I want you to go on that committee." I said, "There's really not much sense in putting me on that committee, Bill, because I'm usually very open-minded, but I have made up my mind that this is not a matter that belongs at the Regents' level. My mind is closed. It doesn't belong here." He said, "That's just why I asked you. I have to have one person on the committee that doesn't believe the Regents have a right to kick her out." Of course, he believed that she should be kicked out, and he said, "You would really be doing me a great favor if you will be a member of that committee and listen to all this evidence and read it all." He said, "I understand—" He understood theoretical positions like that.

So I had to plow all through these dull lectures of Angela Davis in which I couldn't find any inciting to riot or anything else. Most of the students were quite starry-eyed about her. I never met her personally in my life. Never.

Chall: I saw the report that this committee had written. Brought it back to the Regents as four or five pages. Maybe it's just a summary of the report, in the University Bulletin.

Heller: You mean against her?

Chall: The reasons why she shouldn't be on the faculty. I thought, this is grist for the mill and gives the Regents an opportunity to say she shouldn't be on.

Heller: I don't usually take a position before I've looked at the facts. But my position had nothing to do with her.

Chall: I had a feeling that this was a theoretical position.
Heller: This was a theoretical position and I didn't have any pressures on me; I'm not in business, I'm not in a community that bothers me. Nobody was bothering me about how I was going to vote. And parenthetically let me say that those votes were published, I remember, and I never had one letter or one phone call on the subject pro or con.

Chall: You had so many before!

Heller: Yes. Not a word. Nobody cared, really. But it was a very bad issue. To me it was very clear that if we started, as Regents, getting into appointments at that level that really belonged down in the department or in the division, we couldn't run the University. I still believe it; I know I'm right. But it's the only time such a thing ever came up to the Regents.

Chall: I see. So it really didn't change the policy of the Regents in that particular--these were non-tenured people. It was only the tenured people that they took back.

Heller: That was correct. It had nothing to do with her. I think maybe, without knowing any facts, it may have made some chancellors more careful, or think what they're doing if their instinct was against it. I always felt that Chuck's instinct was against giving her that second-year contract. Oh, it was very technical. She claimed she had a two-year contract; however, the signed document was for a one-year contract. The verbal commitment from the chancellor or the department or whoever--I've forgotten now--was, if she worked properly, she would be rehired the second year. But the contract was only for one year. No question of it. In my mind, it was not a Communist issue. But I can see the excitement. She was Marcuse's pupil. I don't think you'll ever have any of those excitements anymore, do you?

Chall: I don't know.

Heller: I hope not. It was very unpleasant.

Chall: Another unpleasant time came with the People's Park.

Heller: I don't know if I can start on that now, today.

**People's Park**

Chall: That was a simple matter of planning to use that piece of property for student housing or some other matter, and it got pretty violent.
Heller: It belonged to the University. It wasn't a matter then of using it for housing. It had been thought of in a long-range plan for housing, but there were no immediate plans. It's hard to say what started this. It was just the emotionalism of the time. You're almost getting into the flower children period of young people. Somehow, they decided to have a park there. I don't think it was against housing, then.

Chall: No, it wasn't. It was just against whatever you were going to use it for.

Heller: It was a general plan of the University. It was not a plan that was imminent. Then things got very hot, and they marched on the People's Park, and it was all started on the campus, and "Let's march to People's Park!" This whole thing, you know, is sort of horrifying to me when I think of the excitement over nothing. And to this day, there's excitement on that subject.

I can remember the decision was made at the Regents, after the establishment of People's Park, to hold a public hearing of the grounds and buildings committee at University Hall. Bill Coblentz was then chairman of grounds and buildings. I don't remember who attended it, quite a few Regents. I was on that committee; I was there. I know Dutch Higgs was there. I think he was chairman of the board at that time. I know he was.

Chall: Forbes, Grant, Heller, Higgs and Coblentz, of course, were members and also Hitch, Pettitt, and Reinecke attended. I think they were on the committee.

Heller: Yes. Well, Reinecke, you see, was not on buildings and grounds, but he wanted to attend—ex officio, which was okay. He sort of wanted it two ways; he didn't know what he wanted.

Chall: Also in attendance were Campbell, Moore, Pauley, Simon, Smith, and Witter. A lot of people came.

Heller: A lot of people were there. There was great excitement on this. Was that after they had seized People's Park?*

Chall: That's right.

Heller: I thought so.

Chall: There was a death, as you recall, that had resulted.

*See pages 627-632 for a continuation of the discussion of this meeting.
Heller: Yes. Shooting. That's right. It was really a very tense situation. I'm not sure that I never knew exactly where I stood on People's Park, because the issue was never extremely clear to me. I didn't feel we needed to build a dormitory over there. I never was really sure how I felt. I was perfectly willing to listen. But I've never been sure what the issue was. Whether it was just a lot of students wanting to give vent to some sort of emotion. It was more a flower children thing, because they marched to People's Park. Do you remember how all the people came out and gave them food? It was really quite peaceful in the end, despite the threats of the things, and they were feeling triumphant, the students, that they had won this fight.

But at that hearing, which was an all-day affair, we had some of the craziest characters from around Berkeley. Not as many students as non-students. This is a time of a lot of dope-taking--flower children, basically. They were all with their heads in the clouds about the fact that they must have this park.

[Interview 23: February 29, 1980]##

Heller: I have to find out where these meetings were where you say--

Chall: One was May fifteenth, when the People's Park exploded in Berkeley.

Heller: Should have been in Los Angeles. [Board of Regents meeting, May 15]

Chall: It was at UCLA. And apparently, there were some students disturbing--

Heller: But they weren't on the People's Park thing at all. You see, it just happened to come together. It was violent, and I've forgotten what it was about. In fact, I hardly knew then. It had nothing to do with People's Park. It was a local issue, and I've forgotten what it was. It was a mess.

Chall: Yes. They did disturb the meeting, I understand, and had to be put out.

Heller: That was the only time we literally had to adjourn a meeting. [tape interruption] I don't know where I was.

Chall: You said that it was the only time you had adjourned a meeting.

Heller: You put that May fifteenth meeting [on your outline], you see, and you asked the question did the violent action on the day before and during and after the Regents' meeting on May fifteenth come as a surprise?

Chall: I meant the People's Park. There were two things that happened--
Heller: Yes there were. But they were very separate.

Chall: Well, that helps if you separate them. I knew about the People's Park. Then I read that there was violence among the students at UCLA on the same day and you tell me that had nothing to do with the People's Park.

Heller: No. But it made it a very unpleasant meeting, the combination of the two. Now we were, if I remember correctly, vaguely aware of this People's Park thing, but we really didn't have the details. Roger Heyns, who was chancellor, was East on something. So his vice-chancellor Earl Cheit, came down, you see, too. If you know him, he's very, very factual. He gave us a complete, step-by-step, I thought, very careful analysis of—no, analysis is the wrong word—report on everything the chancellor's office had done, what had happened. It took a long time. And for reasons that have never to this day been clear to me, some of the Regents just couldn't stand him. They didn't believe him. They didn't believe a word. Some of them thought that Heyns had put him up to it; others thought that this was his own doing.

So there was just general fury on those peoples' part, led by Reagan, about the People's Park. I've never understood it, because I know Cheit and I think he's fine, but he gave these people the impression that he was covering up, or the chancellor's office had been very negligent; whereas I thought he was reporting and had watched it inch by inch.

You have to combine that with the fact that there was an uproar on the UCLA campus on a UCLA issue. Probably the worst storming we ever had at any meeting was by the UCLA students that day. You could shoot me, and I can't tell what the issue was. In fact, it was never very clear to me. We met in the Faculty Club there, which is a wooden building. It's not a big building, and it's got a lot of glass windows. I guess we had had other stormings of Regents' meetings. We never were so aware of it as there. They were breaking windows. There were curtains in that big general room that could draw so that the glass couldn't come in. Then they got up on the roof—it was a single story, not a high story roof. We thought they were going to come falling through. You couldn't hear what was going on. They chanted and they raved and ranted. It's the only time that I remember that we ever had to adjourn a meeting. I've forgotten whether it was adjourned for an hour or two hours or how long. I'll finish up the UCLA part, which isn't People's Park, but it's sort of interesting.

There was one little inner room someplace in the faculty club. This is one of the few good marks I give to Reagan—he has physical courage. He would not take refuge in that room. He always had his guards there. Every place he went he had them. They wanted him to go in there, and he said no he wouldn't. So we all sort of stayed
Heller: around. I think there was an adjoining room; we had coffee in it or something. We sort of stayed around in those two rooms, in the middle away from the glass. All this pounding went on; we never knew if they were going to come through the roof. It was the noisiest thing I ever heard. And actually, to end it up—the UCLA part—they were still surrounding the building when our regular Regents' meeting adjourned. We had to be taken out sort of one-by-one because this angry mob was still around. I still don't know what they were angry about.

I remember some of us were going to the airport to fly back. They got some cars drawn around on a side street, and the only way to get to them was to go down a steep sort of ivy bank—quite steep and fairly long. It was sort of a—you wouldn't even call it a back way out. It was a no way out. I still remember going down that thing with a couple of people trying to help you go down to get away from that building. If I remember correctly, people who lived in Southern California just waited around—didn't have to make planes—until somehow the crowd dissipated.

Chall: Didn't you usually have two-day meetings? Was this the second day?

Heller: This was the second day. I think it was boiling on the first. The worst part was the second day, because I remember how I got to the airport. It was really impossible, that's all I can say. That was really the beginning of the very end of any Regents' meetings on campuses after that.

It seemed as if it were connected with People's Park, but it really wasn't. The report on what had happened at the storming of People's Park and the tearing down of the fence and all the things that were reported in the press endlessly that I don't even need to go into, came at that meeting, because I can remember it very, very well. It was absolute fury on the part of some of the Regents. Reagan particularly. You know, at the handling of it, or at Bud Cheit, or at Roger Heyns for not being there. When these things get emotional, you hardly remember. But we did finish our meeting.

As a result of that—you asked something about Higgs there. What did you ask me?

Chall: I just wondered whether anybody knew what was the background of People's Park, because this had been going on for quite some time.

Heller: No. Nobody knew. We had become so used to demonstrations by this time that one could be a nothing demonstration, and the next one could be a big demonstration like People's Park. Of course, it's hard to explain how you get to expect uproar. So the seriousness of it got through to me some, but it could have been one of any other things. You combine it with the fact that there was this UCLA uproar going on. It was a very volatile situation all the time.
Heller: Though I don't want to say that UCLA was anything like Berkeley, except for that one time. There was another time when Chuck Young was inaugurated as chancellor that was a very touch and go thing. Great question about whether we could have the honor guard come in with the American flag and the California flag. There were threats and counter-threats. It was quite unpleasant. That was another thing at UCLA. There were a lot of outside people there for the inaugural. We had had a dinner the night before--this is one of the few things I remember--I just remember two or three of the people who were getting honorary degrees--we were still giving them then--and one was Buff Chandler. I guess she was no longer a Regent--I think I'm skipping ahead now, but as long as I'm at UCLA--

Chall: Doesn't matter.

Heller: One was Bob Finch, and one was [Daniel] Moynihan, who had just gone into Nixon's cabinet. I remember they were all three at dinner the night before, and it was decided, not by the Regents in general but by some group that was masterminding this, that they had to make those inaugural ceremonies as short as possible and not subject the honored guests to any unpleasantness. And the honorary degrees, believe it or not, were awarded at a lunch afterwards, not in public. It was an alumni lunch in the student union, which was perfectly calm [chuckles] which just gives you an idea of the temper of the times. There were no objections to any of the three people per se. Maybe there was somebody else, but I remember those three. I think, if I remember correctly, Buff Chandler refused to come to the luncheon, she was so angry. [laughs] That's incidental. She was furious that it had to be done that way--surreptitiously. That was later on, but it was part of the--

Chall: It was a long period of confrontation on the campuses. Several years.

Heller: But I don't remember--the anger was not at Young--I've forgotten what it was. Reagan had not been in very long.

Chall: I'm sure their newspapers will tell it. School papers generally cover these problems pretty thoroughly.

Heller: They may. I remember that Wally [Wallace] Sterling, the president of Stanford, came down, I think to speak. He was a good speaker for that sort of thing, you know. Full of humor. I went back on the plane with him and his wife. He was just so disgusted with Reagan, who just didn't understand what anything was about in higher education. Oh, I remember that very well as a byproduct of that. Well. Now I'll go back to People's Park.
Coping with Physical Confrontation

Chall: Let me ask you, while we're on it, what was the reaction of most of the Regents whom you can remember to this physical confrontation that went on, off and on, for so long toward the Regents? I'm not talking about what was going on on the campus, but toward the Regents, when your lives might have been in danger. Did you ever feel that way?

Heller: No. I can only remember two or three times being even vaguely apprehensive. But if you're going to do these things, you have to do it. I don't want to compare myself to an infantryman at the front lines of a war, but it's something you sort of take for granted. I remember three times essentially, where—the physical thing—you began to wonder what was going to happen, I'll say that. One—something I think I just barely touched on once—was the meeting at Santa Cruz. I believe that it's all part of the general times.

It was when what was called College Seven was coming on the line. Some of the students and faculty were determined that it was going to be named Malcolm X College. The Regents, including me, were equally determined that we would choose the name when we were ready to. So there was an uproar. It must have been after maybe the Martin Luther King thing. I don't remember. There was an uproar. But it was led by a huge black who worked in Santa Cruz. He was not part of the campus, but he was known to the campus. I think he was a labor person. He stirred these students up. We were meeting in College Four—Merrill—that day.

It was frantic. They wanted to get in. We were in executive session, and we weren't going to let them in. You know, just determined to force this thing. I always thought it was led by this massive, very tall, black, quite handsome man. All of a sudden, the doors to this, I guess it was the dining room at Merrill that we were in, I don't know, it was a big room—the doors burst open, and the students started to try to pour in. I don't remember how many students were involved, because we were on the inside. It got terribly nasty.

I remember it was—I guess it was finance committee that Ed Carter was chairing, if I'm not mistaken. I don't think it was when Ed Carter was chairman of the board, but it might have been. It doesn't make any difference for the effect of the story, but I do remember that Ed Carter was in the chair at that point, and Ed would not adjourn that meeting. He was determined to get all that business through. So we sat there, with all these students pouring in and this—I don't want to concentrate on the black, except—because there were plenty of non-blacks there, but he was so big and menacing. He kept starting to advance to the table and try to get
Heller: hold of the mike. It was very unpleasant. You didn't know what
was going to happen. I don't think Reagan was there that day. It
was the day before. I may be wrong, but I have a feeling he wasn't
there. Ed Carter kept that meeting going.

We had a U-shaped table, and I was on one side and the
chancellors were seated behind the table, as they often are, or the
vice-presidents, and this is the first time I ever had that happen.
All of a sudden somebody tapped me on the shoulder and it was Bill
McGill, who is the chancellor at San Diego, who had been a football
player in his time. He said, "Ellie, if you're suddenly grabbed from
behind, it's me. I'm going to drag you off into that men's rest-
room that's behind us." That was what I call a touch and go physical
thing. But we all sat there very quietly.

Chall: And what stopped the--?

Heller: Well, we had to yell. You could hardly hear a thing, but we went
through every item on that agenda.

Chall: So the students didn't press forward beyond the--

Heller: Yes they did.

Chall: How far forward?

Heller: Well, the black fellow was trying to grab the mike to speak, and we
were ignoring him. We were just listening to Carter and the motions.

Chall: Incredible. It really is incredible.

Heller: But the Regents--you asked about courage. Now you didn't move.
They just didn't move. Which I think is incredible. Finally, we
adjourned the meeting. I'm sure it was finance, because I remember
we had a meeting that night, so it wasn't Regents. We went to the
University House that night, Dean McHenry's. I remember Bill Roth
and a couple of others didn't come. They were out trying to cool
off the students, you know, to stop this. Unsuccessfully, by the
way. But they did it on their own.

Then somebody started talking about what our procedure should
be next day if this repeated itself. This is sort of an interesting
sidelight on Dean Watkins, really who was a new Regent--comparatively
new. And he said, "We are breaking the law. We have no right to
be planning when we're not in session." And he said, "I will not
stand for this." He was perfectly right, you know. I think it had
to be in the hands of the campus police and the dean and whoever was
in charge of that. But that's how it was--a terrifying thing. So
we sat through dinner chitchatting, as it were, when all this--the
Heller: students had a rally, not where we were. And that's where—I can't be sure—I know Bill Roth went. I've forgotten a couple of others trying to talk some sense into the students. But that was about the naming of College Seven.

When we built College Two we named it for Adlai Stevenson because he had just died and we thought it would be nice to name a college after him as it was being built; but we never were able to raise the outside funds necessary to complete the college. And so we made up our minds—I don't think it's in writing but it was well understood—that colleges would stay numbered until the funds were raised for them. If donors wanted to remain anonymous, okay; but if they wanted a college named after this person or that person, we would take it up in executive session and decide. Seven, you see, was not yet funded. Maybe they wanted it to be Martin Luther King—no, they wanted it to be Malcolm X. So to me, it was perfectly clear that we were never going to give into this demand. We had a policy. They're still not funded at Stevenson College, would you believe it?

Chall: Is that so? That's amazing.

Heller: Whereas all the others, like Cowell was number One. The extra funding was from the Cowell fund. And Merrill, and I've forgotten what number Three was. They've all been named, except College Number Five never got fully funded. And that's still number Five. And Seven, which is one of the most interesting colleges there, eventually was funded by a gift through the San Francisco Foundation from the Oakes Foundation. That was quite a long time afterwards. That was that Bermuda man. I think he was murdered. But there was a big family foundation, which somehow got into the San Francisco Foundation.

The direction of Seven had long since been determined to be looking at the roles of minorities in our country. It was not black; it was not anything. Strangely enough, there was no uproar when it was decided to name it Oakes, because there had been an Indian—do you remember?—named Oakes, who had been fighting the Indian battle of Alcatraz. I think he was eventually murdered, but it just had—it wasn't the something and something Oakes, it was just Oakes. By that time it had simmered down enough that it was acceptable.

Herman Blake, the brilliant black on the Santa Cruz campus, was eventually named chancellor. He's just done a first-rate job. The whole direction has been in the roles of minorities in the United States, in various fields—agriculture, or literature, or music, or science, or whatever. They really have a very interesting college going on. That's the end of that, not the beginning of it. It ended up very happily. That's what that one was all about. Well, that's one physical thing.
Heller: To finish up on Santa Cruz, I remember when I went out after this scene. Bill McGill just said to me, "Ellie, where's your car?" I said, "It's outside." He said, "I'm going to get you to your car, and you take off. That's the only way to calm this down." He was perfectly right. I never thought of staying. I said, "I can get there. They're not paying attention to me." I said, "It's perfectly safe." Bill said, "No." I don't usually do the male-female approach. But he said, "I'm pretty big, and I might as well get you to your car." [laughs]

The next day, the governor did come. There was still great tension on the campus. They had planned a big campus tour that day—you know, Santa Cruz wasn't terribly well known to most of the Regents. We couldn't have had too much business there, but we used to do some of that when we met on the campuses. We had two buses to take us on a tour, and people on to describe things. Of course, we never got off the buses, because there was too much tension. But when we left, we got in those buses. I got in, I've forgotten with whom I was sitting, but I was towards the rear of the bus. The governor got in and sat with some of his people in the back seat of the bus, you know, that goes across the back. So naturally, that attracted the students. So I was right there, and I heard them yelling things at him through the closed windows, of course. They were just yelling. The trouble was we couldn't start. Some of them had lain down in front of the bus.

Now this wasn't the majority of the campus at all. Once again, the governor was very cool. I have to say, on physical things as against emotional things, he was very cool, and we just sat there talking. The students were shaking their fists, I guess at the Regents in general, but mostly at Reagan, but not necessarily completely at him. As I say, he hadn't been there the day before. We finally got a campus tour, but it was very disorganized; it was terrible. When we came back, somebody came to me—this is the very end of the story, in a way—it was all in the papers; you can read about it to a degree—somebody came to me and said, "Where's your car?" I described it. He said, "Well, let me have the keys. We're going to put all the cars in one area so we can keep an eye on them," and then came back and told me in general where it was.

So when we finally got through that meeting that afternoon—I remember this so well—I was driving back to Atherton alone. I went out to get in my car, and we were all sort of dazed from this horrible meeting, and there was somebody leaning against the fender of my car, so that I couldn't get in. I said, "Oh, I'm sorry, I'm going to take off. I'm sorry to move you." And this man's voice said, "What the hell do you think you're doing?" I said, "I want to get in my car and drive home." It was the governor's car! [laughter] This is one time that I just was in a daze. Isn't that ridiculous? I told you it was a silly ending to a long story. But you asked me about physical things.
Heller: The third time I particularly remember a physical thing was I think—
I'm not sure whether it was the Kent State time, Third World Move-
ment, whatever it was, I can't tell you—where they surrounded us at
the administration building in Berkeley. It wasn't the time they
stood silent across the street. It was another time. We were in
the so-called—remember we mentioned last time—room without windows.
The campus police came in, and the Berkeley police, and said we're
going to have to let you go one by one. Most of us stayed at the
Claremont at that period; some others stayed other places. And
they said, "Who has his own car here?" I did; I had it in the well
right at the administration building there. There were some others
that did. So they said, "Where are you going?" I said, "I have to
go to the Claremont." I said, "Regent Higgs and Regent Forbes are
driving with me." So they told me how to go to avoid this mob scene
that was all over Berkeley. This is why I don't think it was People's
Park, because we were south at the time of People's Park. I remember
they told me to go down two blocks to the right, away from the campus,
then to cut over to Durant, and go up Durant and then over the back
road over to the Claremont. Naturally, I followed completely what
they said.

Somehow, that mob had spilled down, were coming down, as we
started to cross College Avenue—Telegraph, I guess. It doesn't
make much difference; one or the other. They were coming, and they
wouldn't let us go across. They were throwing stink bombs. It was
a mob scene there. Instead of going straight across, they made us
turn to the left, back toward the campus—they forced us.

Chall: Were they doing that with all automobiles? How would they have
known?

Heller: I think they were doing it with all. You're concentrating on your-
self at that moment. Your first thought is: cut across and ignore
them. I was driving, and Dutch Higgs had just gotten out of the
hospital with pneumonia, and that was what really scared me more than
myself, because we had to close the windows, and I didn't know what
would happen to his lungs. Isn't that terrible? Let me say he was
very calm, as was Bill Forbes. But we were being forced and then
I think—it's never been clear to me, what happened—the police must
have come along and scattered some of the people. And then some
students who were down there turned a little cooperative, and they
motioned us to keep on going right back to the campus. And then
suddenly at the next block, some students motioned us to turn left
again, so we could get out. Then I went, I think, all the way down
to Ashby before I tried to go up to the Claremont, though I wasn't
following police directions. But it was scary.

You know, when you're surrounded by—they started to—you didn't
know if they were going to rock and throw over your car. Those were
the three, to me, worst physical times. There were other very un-
Heller: pleasant ones, but those were the three where I wasn't sure what was going to happen next, where the things were going out of control. Now, that's one Regent's feeling about the physical end of it. There were a lot of unpleasant things. Well, if you want me to go back to People's Park--

Chall: Yes. Now we can do that.

Heller: Yes, now that I have described Santa Cruz and Los Angeles.

Chall: It's really a topic that I've always been curious about—that is, this whole matter of the fear which one could have felt.

Heller: There was not much. I would say the Regents behaved extremely well, with good courage, never hesitated to come to meetings.

Chall: The confrontation was certainly serious, but they were never that violent, except in People's Park when they began to throw rocks and bottles.

Heller: But we weren't there. You see, it was not a Regents' meeting. I wasn't always in the area of the campus, I was home I guess. That's why you have to distinguish.

Chall: I know that they eventually began to get very difficult for Regents' meetings as such.

Heller: Yes, they did. And for various reasons, of course. But People's Park—I was not present during the march. Of course, I followed everything that you possibly could. Actually, it was a highly emotional thing. Let's say, to start with, before—I'm not sure if it was after the march or before—you could check it out—we had an open meeting of the grounds and buildings committee.

Chall: That was after it. That was in June. You had meetings of the grounds and buildings committee at least three times, but on June seventh, I think--

Heller: A special meeting at the University Hall?

Chall: Right. You had a long list of speakers who came there.

Heller: Oh, it was endless. Quite a number of Regents showed up. I was on the committee.

Chall: Yes, they did. I have a list of all those who came, and it was a large number.

Heller: Yes. Well, as long as I got started on that. Fred Dutton was in Washington; though I believe he had been at the UCLA meeting, if I remember correctly. But anyway, it was decided to do it. Bill
Heller: Coblentz was chairman of grounds and buildings at that point, so he had to preside at the meeting. I was on it. Dutch Higgs was chairman of the board. I mention this particularly because it will give you an idea of the tension.

The day before we were going to have that meeting, my phone rang, and it was Fred Dutton, just hysterical. I've seen him that way before. This was part of Fred. I've seen him in politics before get into a frenzy on something. When he's over it, he's over it. I knew that, Bill Coblentz too, but Dutch Higgs didn't. He phoned me just screaming and yelling on the phone. I kept saying, "Calm down, Fred," and he wouldn't listen to me. He said, "If you have that meeting the blood will be on your hands!"

I discovered by that evening that he had made approximately the same phone call to Bill Coblentz, who was his good friend, and to Dutch Higgs. Well, Dutch didn't know what had hit him, because he didn't know Dutton that well. He had somebody reviling him. Dutch was no conservative. He was a good middle-of-the-road, very careful, very fair. It just shook Dutch up terribly.

Of course, he had no success with any of this as far as calling off that meeting, and we did have that meeting, and it was endless. We had some of the Berkeley City Council people there. I remember Ron Dellums, who has become so famous, was there, and the mayor, Wallace Johnson, who just died a few months ago was there.

Chall: Mr. [John] DeBonis?

Heller: Yes, I guess Mr. DeBonis. I'd forgotten him. I guess he was there too. It was an impossible meeting. Bill Coblentz chaired it very well, he just let them talk. He let them go on and on, no time limits; it was a special meeting. It was endless. There were not so many students as city people there, who were in a frenzy about People's Park. There was one man with his children, tousled hair—you felt you might be in the middle of a drug scene. You didn't know. I don't want to say that it was physically unpleasant. There were no mob scenes, because it was well known that only x number could get into that limited space. But it was an open meeting. Some people would leave and others would come in. We listened and we listened. I don't want to say my mind was made up at all, but the whole thing didn't make any sense. Wallace Johnson was trying to figure out how the city could take over the property, and he never could come to grips with it. Dellums was red-hot, as I remember, on the subject, but not particularly nasty. I think it was the best thing we could have done.

Chall: Well, by that time, the worst of the violence was over, and people did want to air their concerns.
Heller: We listened. It was hours of listening. But, you know, there's no way you'll answer back when you're at a hearing like that. There's nothing to answer. Each one had a different point of view about what should be done. Of course, it's never really been settled yet.

Chall: I was curious about your vote at the end of those meetings in June, before the Regents met again. You and Hitch abstained when the committee voted a resolution to start building housing within eight months. You and Mr. Hitch abstained.

Heller: I was against it. I didn't really want to go against I guess it was the campus planning committee. I didn't think it was wise. But I didn't know that much about it, and my instinct told me it was not good, and to this day I've known I was right.

I had told Roger Heyns, from the campus, that I did not feel good about that decision, about building housing there. I just thought we'd have nothing but sabotage if we ever got it built, whatever we built there would be sabotaged the whole time. I just didn't feel good about it. But there hadn't been a long enough interval yet. I've forgotten how the vote came out. Was it approved?

Chall: Yes. The vote from the committee on grounds and buildings, the committee vote, was six to one with two abstentions. You and Mr. Hitch abstained, and Mr. Coblentz was the one no vote.

Heller: If I remember correctly, recommendations for use of campus property come from the campus itself, from the planning processes, and come through the chancellor. This was one of the few things I ever disagreed with Roger Heyns on. I don't know that he was that strong for it. I must ask him about it some time. I see him all the time. He felt he just couldn't leave it in limbo, I think. But my feeling was not good about that. So I guess I abstained until I thought about it, just for a little while, and then I voted against it. To this day, they have never been able to build anything. They thought of selling the property, and I don't think they've ever found a buyer. It's sort of--do you want to call it tainted property?

Chall: I guess so. They recently had a confrontation over it within the last couple of months.

Heller: This was to turn it into a playing field, is that right?

Chall: Finally, the board voted in favor of a playing field and a parking lot in the interim, whatever that was going to be, and then construction of student housing.

Heller: I just thought that it basically had to lie fallow for quite a while. There was no constructive reason, in my opinion, to deal with that property. It had been there for years, belonged to the University,
Heller: and it was fake to say that we needed housing there. At least I think it was. We had plenty of other places if we were going to build any housing. Not fake; that's a bad word, but it was reaching.

They have never yet been able to do anything. Every once in a while it comes up and you see an uproar, at least in the Berkeley press, about it. It was a very tender subject. I think in some ways, though I guess, in the excitement of that march, didn't somebody get killed? Was he killed by the police?

Chall: He was, and nobody could figure out—I mean, there was no way of ever identifying the police, but it was certain it was.

Heller: It was somebody on a roof. Aside from that, it was a very emotional thing. It was not in itself nasty. You know, it was the time of the flower children, all that sort of thing, and this was the idea of a park.

Chall: Oh, yes. You mean the idea was good—for a park.

Heller: The idea was not in itself unpleasant. Whether the Berkeley campus handled that right or not by putting up a fence, keeping people out, I think is purely judgmental. I don't know to this day really what was the right way to handle it. It was a mob scene.

Chall: Oh, yes. And it lasted a long time. Reagan called out the national guard and there were confrontations daily with the pouring in of gas.

Heller: Reagan got himself just in an uproar about this one. I think most of us did not feel in an uproar as long as there were no confrontations. But it came awfully close to a confrontation with Reagan calling the national guard.

Chall: Well, the national guard was there, and the highway patrol, and once at least, the air national guard poured gas on the campus.

Heller: This is typical Reagan. I must say, I see it to this day. I wasn't sympathetic to a lot of the People's Park, and the rallies on the campus, and "On to the Park," remember, and all that sort of thing.

It was barely a campus issue, in a way. It was an emotionalism—do you remember the people of Berkeley fed the marchers? They had a very peaceful march, actually, despite all this—

Chall: They finally had one peaceful march on Memorial Day.

Heller: That's right. And the people of Berkeley fed the marchers as they came along.

Chall: But for two weeks they had confrontation daily with the police, or the national guard, where—
Heller: Well, I'm inclined to put the blame where maybe I'm wrong. Reagan just felt the Berkeley police couldn't handle it, because Berkeley police and Oakland police were not getting on very well at that point. Who was district attorney, what was his name?

Chall: Madigan was sheriff.

Heller: Yes. Not district attorney, Sheriff [Frank] Madigan was very hard line, and they couldn't work really with the Berkeley police at all, because their whole technique was so different. It was a very difficult time, I will say that. The Berkeley police force was not that big, and the campus police force could work with the Berkeley police. That part was okay. I don't think this was any formal action; this was Reagan on his own.

Chall: Chancellor Heyns has said that the reason that he took the action as quickly as he did at some point just before the fifteenth of May was because he had been told by the council that the University had to assert its rights, or I guess the people of Berkeley, or the students, or whatever it might be were going to take over. It was necessary then to indicate in some way that this was University property, and that he had expected a confrontation. He did it rapidly so that it wouldn't be as big as it was.

Heller: I think that would be Roger's technique.

Chall: Well, then, what did you feel about his argument on the twentieth of June, when he argued for the lease idea--leasing it, I guess, to the city of Berkeley, declaring that he didn't want to end this meeting this time forced to be in another adversary relationship with a community he was supposed to lead. He at that point seemed to have changed his position and wanted it to be a park or--

Heller: It wasn't that simple. The city of Berkeley was trying to negotiate something whereby they could lease it from the University. It was all in flux. I don't think it was a change of attitude, it was just changed circumstances, in a way. I don't want to defend Roger, but I think he acted as well as he could in a very tense situation. Always remember, there was Wallace Johnson, and the city of Berkeley. Most of them wanted to help, but were not able to make up their minds. And the attorneys couldn't make up their minds—what was legal, whether the Regents had a right to do this, and the city attorney couldn't make up his mind. It was just chaos. We never got straight answers to what was in our rights, to what was not in our rights. And part of the city council wanted nothing to do with it, of course. Still, it was there. I don't think Roger—I can see why he wanted that. I just didn't agree with it. I would have left it as a park. I would have left it open.

Chall: And just allowed the street people to take it, because they wanted to.
Heller: I figure on all these things, today's hot cause is not tomorrow's hot cause. Eventually, the interest goes away, if you don't get into too many confrontations.

Roger was very skillful in most instances. This thing, I think, took him by great surprise. It sprang overnight, and then he had the national guard and others to confront. I don't want to say he gave into pressure, but I think he meant it when he said he didn't want to be left with no decision. But that wasn't the way I felt about it. I felt that it should be forgotten, for the time being anyway--and let it be a mess. But I didn't win that.

Chall: No, but then nothing happened anyway.

Heller: Well, it really came out about the way I thought.

Chall: Is that the opinion of the other six who voted with you? Coblentz, Dutton, Hitch, Pettitt, and Roth, and Simon?

Heller: Well, I won't swear what Dutton's opinion was. Simon always voted against Reagan. Pettitt, I know, felt the way I did. Coblentz did. Hitch did. Who else was on there?

Chall: Roth and Simon.

Heller: Roth did. Simon--you never knew how he was going to vote until he voted. He always had his own grievance; you never knew what it was. I know the rest felt that way. Dutton, with a threatening phone call--he was very emotional--I don't know why he felt that way about it.

I really think time has proved that those of us who voted the way we did were right.

Chall: The only seven who voted against it were the ones I just mentioned.

Heller: Yes. But I was just thinking there were some perfectly good Regents who didn't vote against the park. Higgs and Carter, who votes quite well, usually.

Chall: They may have decided: "Let's settle it."

Heller: Well, they thought that was the way to settle it; I didn't. That's the simplest explanation I can find. Hitch and I, for example, had not discussed it beforehand. You know, votes come up in the Regents that you really don't know are coming. There's very little conference beforehand. Which is good, in a way, a lot of times. You have to make up your mind fairly quickly, very often. You can be wrong.
Heller: But I've never regretted that vote. It wasn't a protest, but I just didn't believe in what they voted for, that's all. Does that explain it all to you?

Chall: That's good; that's fine, surely. There are no right or wrong answers in this, you know.

Heller: You asked did I think that Hitch, Heyns and Cheit were cooperating in the best possible way?

Chall: Yes.

Heller: Yes, they were cooperating. There's no question of it. But you have to remember that at the same time—and I think I've touched on this—Reagan and his close people and Alex Sherriffs behind the scenes were out to get Hitch and out to get Heyns, to get rid of them. Cheit, incidentally, fell into that category, because he was the vice-chancellor. Cheit was sort of secondary. He wouldn't have come into it at all if Roger hadn't been away when it started. Yes, they cooperated extremely well, and Hitch, you see, did one thing that Clark Kerr never did. He let the campuses make their own decisions. Whether you think that's right or wrong, it's a fact of life, that's all. He would not have stopped Heyns's approach. He might have said, "I think you're wrong," or "I don't"—these things came up so quickly always. You didn't have time to think about them. And Hitch did not involve himself in the day-to-day campus things. He never went on the campus; he never saw these gatherings.

Chall: This was a campus problem.

Heller: Oh, the Regents got involved with it.

Chall: The Regents, yes indeed. I thought we would take up some of the other problems on the other campuses.

Heller: During this period, you asked, did I talk to anyone—Chancellor Heyns, faculty members, about what the issues were and how they might be resolved? There's never time to really talk about these things; it's crazy.

Chall: There was a month, but you had your meeting, of course.

Heller: But when things are happening right and left and in every direction—and it wasn't the only campus—very little time to think. I'm sure I talked to people. I remember one session when I went into Heyns's office, where he had—I think his name was Beall (William)—who was then chief of the Berkeley police, and eventually moved up to the campus and became chief of the campus police. A couple of people from Berkeley planning—I guess this wasn't directly connected with it. Heyns asked several Regents—I'm not sure if he did grounds and buildings or how
Heller: he did it--to come meet with the chief in his office to talk about the city of Berkeley's thinking about--not about People's Park, but about the whole south campus area. And they were all wrong. It's very interesting. They thought some of the buildings that the campus owned--they've always owned some housing there--could just be cleaned up and either emptied out or put under better--they were boarding houses. I guess they still are. They thought the whole south campus area could be patrolled and cleaned up. It just got worse and worse!

Chall: You didn't think that was a solution, is that it?

Heller: I listened to it. I didn't know. You asked about consultation. You listened. It's never been cleaned out yet. I still hear students say they don't want to live south of the campus. Isn't that true?

Chall: I think that's so.

Heller: Oh, I think it's true. My number three granddaughter is transferring as a junior to Berkeley next year. She's been at Wesleyan. And she's dying to go to Berkeley. You know, Berkeley is very much "in." She wants to be in a Co-op to live in. She's had the real dormitory life, but the Co-op pleased her very much. Last summer, when she was out here, she went to visit Co-ops, and she only applied for co-ops on the north side of the campus. There's still the word around there that the north side is a lot safer than the south side.

Let me say that other places--not only Berkeley--have trouble at night--every place.

Chall: And not just on campuses.

Heller: I talk about this same granddaughter, Annie Heller at Wesleyan, which is in Middletown, Connecticut. You know, really a very quiet place. She walks up to the library--she's on the other side this year from the library--with one of her friends always, you know, somebody from the house where she's living. Then there's an escort service, a bus goes every fifteen minutes to take students home from the library at night. And this is in the most calm, quiet, small place. Just to give you one example out of many that I know.

Number two granddaughter is at Colorado College in Colorado Springs. They have problems not to be mugged. They watch what they're doing, and go out in pairs and all that sort of thing. It's all over, unfortunately. Berkeley is just that much worse. It's much more intense a town. Well, that's enough of that subject.

Chall: I think we've covered all those questions.
Heller: You asked what did I favor on the site. I think I've answered that. Nothing. I think I have answered these questions, now that I'm looking at them. No, Heyns had not planned to resign when he made that statement. His relationship was just about the same all the way through with the Regents. There were a handful that were out to get him.

Chall: But he resigned in his own good time, didn't he?

Heller: Yes. He had a mild heart attack. He wouldn't resign while he was still under attack. He--this is again my opinion, but I'm pretty sure I'm right on this--he waited till he had straightened out as much as could be straightened out. He would not be pushed out. You know, he could have easily left after that heart attack or shortly, but he didn't. He stayed around for two or three more years.

Chall: I don't remember when he had his heart attack, whether it was after the People's Park.

Heller: Well, I don't remember that, but I know that he left--

Chall: It was 1972, I believe.

Heller: Seventy-one, I think. Because Al Bowker is leaving, and he came in in--

Chall: Yes, he resigned in '71. You're right.

Heller: But that was quite a long time after these events.

Chall: Yes it was, because the People's Park was in '69.

Heller: Yes. No, he was not going to be pushed. He left in very good shape with a very good reputation.

Chall: But the Regents who didn't like him never came around, do you think?

Heller: Some of them. Some of them learned how to get out of the influence of--I don't always say Reagan, I often say Alex Sherriffs. In the end I would say there was just a handful who were fighting him, and to no effect. When was it that the teacher's aides went on strike? That was when the campus was closed down--Kent State, wasn't it?

Chall: Now, the teacher's aides went on strike from time to time, and I'm not sure that I--

Heller: No, but when was it that all classes were stopped?

Chall: All classes were stopped after Kent State. Reagan closed the campuses in May 1970, May seventh, I think.
It is essential for our college and university faculties, students, and administrators to reflect on the grave consequence of current events and consider their responsibilities to themselves and to our society. In order to afford them this opportunity, away from the highly emotional conditions now prevailing on most campuses, I have today asked President Hitch and Chancellor Dumke to close the university and state college campuses for two days and over the weekend.

President Hitch and Chancellor Dumke strongly concurred in my recommendation, and accordingly have taken the necessary action for implementation. All campus facilities will be closed during this period.

I hope that this period will allow time for rational reflection away from the emotional turmoil, and encourage all to disallow violence and mob action.

Ronald Reagan Governor
Heller: Yes. But then when they opened them, weren't they allowed to have their classes in other places other than the regular—that's the part I'm trying to think of, because there's where someone was trying to murder (figuratively) Heyns. You can dig up that part.

Chall: We'll let somebody else dig it up. A researcher into the University history can work with your material and dig it up himself.

Heller: Well, they were trying to "get" Heyns. Bob Connick at that point was the vice-chancellor and excellent, marvelous. They insisted that they had to know what every single faculty member did with his class or her class—where it was held, and how many people attended, and what notice was given. It was a matter of hundreds of classes. Roger asked Bob Connick to run this down. One of the finest scholars on the campus. Bob Connick is very calm and very nice. It was almost impossible to run this situation down. But he talked to almost every faculty member or had somebody talking with him, finding out where their classes were held. This was the attempt to get Heyns. But I don't remember when that was. I believe that it was—

Chall: You think it a student strike or a teacher's aide strike, or some other concern of the—

Heller: No. It was more than that, because the teacher's aide strike was when Clark was still president.

Chall: Yes. It was an outgrowth of the FSM.

Heller: Yes. No, this was maybe Kent State—I don't know. You'd have to look that up. Connick was still his vice-chairman then. Then Connick resigned, having agreed to do it for two years, I guess. You know, he's an eminent professor of chemistry there, and did a superb job. And then Bud Cheit, I think, followed.

Chall: So he was vice-chancellor before Cheit.

Heller: I think. Then you can run it down, because that was the height of the attempt to get Heyns—And at the same time we were having problems with some Santa Barbara people, who were trying to get Cheadle, I guess. It was very disagreeable.

I was presiding at educational policies where there were some very unpleasant people. I would call them crazies. Not left wing, I think these were right wing, who demanded to speak about Santa Barbara. You know, you have to make a very quick decision when this comes up, because you're supposed to have sent word if you want to speak ahead of time. I could see that glowering look of Glenn Campbell and his demanding that this particular Santa Barbara faculty member be allowed to speak. As chairman, I had control.
Chall: Oh, this was when you were chairman?

Heller: No, I was chairman of educational policies. But this was a right-wing attempt to--God knows what. But this was John Lawrence, and Catherine, and Allan Grant, and Campbell. It was miserable. I had heard that these were terrible, you know, really. It was going to be miserable; they had no standing on the Santa Barbara campus--one man in particular.

So I just--this is a sidelight of what you do when you preside at these crazy things--I just made up my mind I wasn't going to recognize somebody from Santa Barbara unless Vernon Cheadle, who was the chancellor, presented them. I had to do it right then. I said, "Chancellor Cheadle, would you present the faculty member from Santa Barbara who wishes to speak?" You see, then it has authority. So I put it through the chancellor, and he could have refused to. But he had enough sense to do it. And the man was crazy, and nobody but those four or five listened to a word he said. But that's the sort of things we did all the time.

Chall: And he was a member of the faculty?

Heller: Yes. A right-wing faculty person. Just hysterical about someone on the Santa Barbara campus; don't ask me what. You forget the details. But this is the sort of nonsense that we went through in those periods. Terrible!

Chall: Well, it was a tough six years, basically.

Heller: Well, they were some tough years, you see. No, when I was chairman of the board was a different period. But I was chairman of educational policies, I guess, twice. I've forgotten exactly when. I know I was twice. There were some very tough decisions to make on the spur of the moment. You know, a meeting, if it goes according to program, is very good, it could be very easy. But you have to try to keep order. I know I was chairman later when we had another Santa Barbara crisis on the Santa Barbara campus. But that's a different story. You ask about some of these things; it makes me think of other things. That was a later fuss at Santa Barbara--much later, having nothing to do with any of this. Of course, we had Isla Vista always.

Isla Vista


Heller: Well, what can I tell you about Isla Vista without repeating? It happened I had visited--I think I was one of the few Regents who had ever seen Isla Vista. At that period, I used to try to spend a day at least on every campus to get to know them. I spent much less time
Heller: on the Berkeley campus, for example, than I did on the others that I didn't know so well. Isla Vista was a new phenomenon. I had gone over there with I guess Vernon Cheadle or if not he, with his vice-chancellor, to see Isla Vista, which hadn't grown up to the degree it has now. But it was a crazy place. You know, these people from outside—landlords had built this cheap housing, and there wasn't enough housing on campus, students were going over there—This was before mixed dormitories were the thing, and it was a crazy life over there. It was very distasteful to me.

Chall: It must have been distasteful to quite a few people—students.

Heller: Oh, it was terrible.

Chall: I had read, I think it was probably in one of the Daily Cals, that there were nine thousand out of the thirteen thousand students who lived there.

Heller: Well, when I first went, you see, it wasn't that way at all.

Chall: At the time of the uprising—

Heller: There was just a handful. This was before the uprising. But it seemed like a very distasteful thing. I remember going into it and saying, "Can't we do anything as long as there's housing there?" and getting a long, legal explanation that we didn't own the place. It just happened to be next door, and these enterprising real estate people were gambling on putting up cheap housing. There were more dormitories—sort of dormitories—than anything else, that we had no control over whatsoever. So I always knew there was a latent problem there. I could see the shoddiness of the work that was being done. The campus had nothing to do with Isla Vista. It was terribly difficult. There was no government over there; it was the county; it was a mess. These real estate people developed more and more, and I don't want to say greediness, but certainly they saw where they could make a dollar, I guess.

The location of the campus at Goleta in Santa Barbara was very difficult because it was an undeveloped area. There was really no housing available. That's how this thing started in the first place, probably. You see, there was no way when they took the Goleta campus of knowing about—foreseeing the students that would be coming there or other places. Santa Barbara was the nearest place with housing, and most of it fairly expensive for those times. You had an immediate crush.

I don't want to defend anybody about it, but I'm just saying you don't foresee. We built dormitories as rapidly as we could there. That was an expanding dormitory period. But you could never catch up.
Heller: I don't know what's happened to Isla Vista. That awful part, I guess, is past now. It's still part of the county. There were votes about should it be annexed to the city of Santa Barbara that didn't want it. I guess it's part of Goleta, which has grown more. Unfortunate things happened that you'd think should have been planned for, but it's awfully hard to foresee the forces and foresee that students were going to start to live in a different lifestyle. That campus was acquired before I was a Regent. I can remember going with Ed Heller to look at this site when there were just some military barracks on it. What was it, a marine base?

Chall: I've forgotten.

Heller: It was just out in the country. It was when Ed was a Regent that the Regents acquired it for a site because the Santa Barbara campus was down in the heart of Santa Barbara, and there was no room to expand. You know, the Santa Barbara campus had been a state college that was handed to the University. Well, that's all known history, that the assemblyman from down there made it his life's job to make that part of the University system, and then we had it. When I say "we," I was not a Regent then. And then we started building, and part of it is very well built, but you can't keep up with demand. That's all a general-- I don't like to concentrate too much on Berkeley because there were plenty of other problems too.

Kent State: Reagan Closes the University

Chall: Well, I think that all we have to do now is go on to Kent State.

Heller: Well, the Regents did not have prior notice that Reagan was going to close the campuses. I don't say some Regents didn't. He just announced it on a weekend.

Chall: He has the prerogative to do that, I assume.

Heller: He had the authority to, but the Regents, in general, had struggled never to close a campus through all those years. I personally was just furious with Reagan for closing down, because I thought we had waged a good fight. Actually, Kent State would not have upset the Berkeley campus, in my opinion, so much, because Berkeley had been through the throes of all these other things. When was Kent State?

Chall: May 1970.

Heller: We had been through so much. Of course, the Vietnam war sentiment was coming. But this was something that happened at a different campus,
Heller: and I don't think there would have been more than the usual uproar if Reagan hadn't closed down those campuses. I may be wrong; how can I ever prove that?

Chall: You can't, and I guess he--

Heller: It happened to be my philosophy that we'd been able to survive despite all these uproars and that this was not a Berkeley campus issue per se. The Vietnam war was becoming--

Chall: This was all part of it.

Heller: Part of it. But Vietnam war per se was never particularly a Berkeley campus issue. It was everybody's issue as it became an issue. It did not originate on the Berkeley campus like these other things.

Chall: Have we pretty well covered the whole problem of student violence?

Heller: I guess so. [chuckles] The worst part of the student violence, to me, was when they started trashing the campus, and when they went into the library. You know, I have a weakness for libraries, and to me that was the most offensive thing they ever did. Mindless. What were they accomplishing? I forgot what they wanted. Do you remember?

Chall: I don't remember what that issue was about. There was quite a bit of activity for the ethnic studies program; the Third World Liberation Front may have been part of that.

Heller: It may have been that. But to me, that was the--because most of the violence was not so violent, it was masses of people. There were spots which verged on being violent, but for the most part, it wasn't great physical violence.

I remember when Marty Meyerson was acting chancellor, they put the Charter Day exercises in the gym to have a confined space that they could control. You didn't know if there were going to be shots ringing out or anything. It was the most dreadful Charter Day. Very few Regents showed up for it. I did; I was a sucker. I'm never going to any more Charter Days. I went through them all in those bad periods when a lot of others wouldn't go.

Chall: Maybe you should go to one in a good period.

Heller: Oh, I have. But I did go to those. That was really a grim one. Nobody showed up. I've forgotten who the speaker was. I think it was an Englishman, Lord Murray of the Higher Education Commission. Doesn't make any difference; he was English. It was dull as dishwater. They had guards all over the place. The students were only allowed in the balcony. We came in a bus from University House, I think to Harmon.
Heller: I do know we came in a bus. [laughing] I laugh when I think about it. As we got off the bus, there was Mario Savio, handing out leaflets to every Regent. [laughter] It's the height of ridiculousness when you think about it.

But you know, nobody figured out what Mario Savio was about then. Then we sat on the stage—it was very uncomfortable in Harmon Gym, you know how barny Harmon Gym is—it was half-empty. All of a sudden, somebody poked me. There was Mario Savio up in the balcony, glowering down at everybody. You know, there was no physical fear, because we knew the campus police had a good handle on it, and there was actually no trouble at all at that meeting. It was just dull! It is funny when you think of the lengths to which things can go.

Well, I shouldn't end on Mario Savio, because he was sort of an incident, in a way. He was incidental to the whole thing.

Chall: It was a series of incidentals.

Heller: He was very useful to them as a spokesman, but I don't think he plotted whatever strategy there was.

Chall: I'm not sure who was plotting if anybody actually was.

Heller: No, it was day-by-day.

Chall: I wanted to discuss Reagan and the legislature, mainly Reagan at the beginning of his administration with respect to the finances of the University and the whole matter of tuition. We can let that go and start with it next time.

Heller: I think it would be better.
Governor Edmund G. Brown, Sr.: Grants, Contracts, and Overhead

Chall: Today, we're going to talk about the finances of the University--

Heller: A rather large subject!

Chall: A rather large subject, and I won't expect you to go into it in great detail. What do you recall about Pat Brown?

Heller: Pat Brown, I think—as we've touched on and anybody's touched on—was very pro-the University, pro-expansion. He was governor during the expanding times of the campuses and greatly encouraged them. In addition to that, the projected demographic figures showed a much larger student population—higher education population—than eventually turned out to be the case. But he was working from those assumptions.

Still, even with all that expansion, he felt—it was after I was on; of course, he had been governor not too long before—part of the money that we took in from the overhead of grants and contracts should be applied to the state portion of the government support. See, I was new to this process. He had a meeting at the governor's house, the old one, of course, the governor's mansion, one night, with all the Regents and Hale Champion, who was his then-director of finance. Hale put this proposal for taking the overhead. Oh, there was an uproar; that's all I can tell you. Let me say that I—Remember, I was very new to the Regents at this point but I knew what had gone on before.

Well, actually, in my opinion, Pat was so oriented toward the University that he didn't want to be too rough; he wanted to be as fair as could be. We ended up agreeing then that no overhead from private or government grants should go into the state funding, but
Heller: government contracts, and that would be basically the AEC [Atomic Energy Commission] overhead—that we should look at that. Eventually one-half of the overhead of government contracts went to the state to be applied to the UC budget.

I think that's continued to this day, though there have been attempts to increase it. But nobody thinks of Pat Brown as being the one who started this. But he actually did, or Hale Champion did. Of course, he was very generous in other directions, so it didn't hurt that much, because the Regents had been very careful with all this money that was theirs: the gifts overhead from grants or contracts, all was known as Regents' money. They could do anything they wanted with it. It's been very useful. We're had two or three funds that were very carefully sequestered and used for different purposes.

Chall: Did Reagan take some of the other monies from other grants?

Heller: He wanted to, but we fought it successfully, strangely enough. Oh, he was determined to cut everything. He ended up by trying to cut the budgets more than taking more from the overhead. That's where he ended up. I think. They started off thinking they could take it all.

What the Regents do with that money is very well documented with the opportunity fund and the different funds—some where the money will be returned eventually from the income-producing buildings or from student fees that the students have agreed that they wanted to use and put an extra fee on, and then some are just used as opportunity money for things that are not funded through the University. I think it's been very carefully used. It's all public information; whoever wants to see it can see it.

But aside from that, while Pat Brown was still governor, there was lots of money for building funds. There was a bond issue for University building that passed. I've forgotten how many millions of dollars, and a tremendous amount of building went on in that period, which was less and less as time went on with Reagan.

I don't say that's all bad. I think that the University had become used to asking for millions of dollars for this building or that building. I don't want to criticize it that much. I think there were plenty of ways the University money could be tightened up on. There was never any graft or anything like that. There was no problem in that direction.
Governor Ronald Reagan: The University Budget

Chall: So when Reagan came in and really wanted to cut—

Heller: Well, he talked tougher than he actually turned out to be. The budget did go up every year while he was governor.

Chall: Not by the amount requested each time.

Heller: No, no never. But it did go up. But he talked very, very tough. The reason, in my opinion, that the University kept getting more was that Governor Reagan wanted to punish Berkeley. After all, his slogan was "Let's clean up the mess at Berkeley." He discovered he couldn't cut Berkeley without cutting the other campuses, because that's the way our budgeting goes. It's by categories, but not by line by line of one campus versus another. He tried. He cut down enormously on the number of teaching assistants one year, because he just was furious at Berkeley teaching assistants who were going on strike and doing all sorts of things. I think—I don't want to say to his enormous surprise, but the surprise of those who were helping form his budget, that cut had spread through all the nine campuses. It didn't affect Berkeley any more than anyplace else.

This was the thing that Reagan when he was first governor did not understand, that you couldn't—well, punish is the only word I can think of, because that's the way he felt about it—get at one place or one department, that the budgeting of the University really is whole, and the authority as to how it's divided rests entirely with the Regents and the president, and the president would naturally confer with the Regents. I think it was a great shock to him. He tried various devices, but he got tripped up on them. You know, he had preconceived notions of what he could do. He had a task force—you remember he set up a lot of task forces on economy and government. I guess some of them performed all right; I didn't follow them. He had one task force on the libraries of the University. You remember the uproar on that?

Chall: Yes.

Heller: Have you clippings there?

Chall: Yes. [looking at newspaper clippings] There was a study team that recommended also that student fees be raised to the level equal to the cost of instruction.

Heller: Well, that never got anyplace. That was completely unrealistic!

Chall: And then here's the one about the libraries.
Heller: Yes. Well there was a phase in there when he wanted to sell all the expensive books in the library. That was what really created the uproar.

Chall: Oh, I do remember that now. It was the--

Heller: Is that in here?

Chall: I don't know. I don't think I read that all the way through. But I do remember it was the books that are in the special collections.

Heller: Yes, that was right. It was the special collections. He wanted to sell all the special collections and use that money for regular library uses. He had no idea of what an uproar he was causing. Some of his strong supporters, not only on the Regents but outside, started going after him for that. I think he was quite stunned by the reaction.

This to me was a great mark of Reagan's insensitivity. After all, it was as if it were suggested that the whole Hoover library at Stanford, with all its marvelous collections, be sold. I'm using that as an example because of the fact that a very conservative group is basically involved with that. Some of the most conservative people just wrote letters, phoned, screamed about this idea of selling the collections. That was the last we ever heard of that one. Absolutely never heard of it again. That one particularly interested me.

The expression that's used here in the piece you just gave me [San Francisco Chronicle, January 21, 1973]—that's in here, but there was another expression. Reagan always said we want to "cut, squeeze and trim." That expression, I think, basically came from Reagan's first director of finance, Gordon Smith, if I remember correctly. I was the only Regent who knew Gordy Smith. He was perfectly nice, but not very effective as a director of finance. He had lived in Palo Alto; that's why I knew him. I was on the Palo Alto Stanford Hospital board with him.

Chall: How about Verne Orr: Was it Verne Orr who replaced him?

Heller: No. I think Cap [Caspar] Weinberger was in there, if I'm not mistaken.

Chall: I have Verne Orr, but--

Heller: Verne Orr was in later. Verne Orr had been in the office of the budget, if I remember correctly, and a very able person. I don't know Verne Orr that well personally, but I know he had always been very understanding about the problems of budgeting for the University. I'd always heard that. I didn't have any direct contact with him. But once he accepted the position as Reagan's director of finance, he was
Heller: loyal to the governor and carried out what the governor wanted him to do. When I say the governor I'm talking about maybe Alex Sherriffs, maybe somebody else. Verne Orr came to a couple of Regents' meetings with charts and he just couldn't be moved on what he was going to do. He virtually didn't allow any maintenance or delayed maintenance.

I usually stayed fairly quiet on the finance sessions, though I certainly listened. I remember Ed Carter saying to Verne Orr, "The first thing you do when you have assets is to take care of those assets and not allow them to fall into disrepair." But Verne Orr could not be moved about this maintenance budget. You know, a lot of the buildings have gotten into terrible shape, and roads, and everything else.

To just jump ahead on Verne Orr, for reasons that I'm not sure of, the one Reagan administration officer that Jerry Brown ever liked was Verne Orr. He was, I guess, one of his first appointees to the Regents. I hear he's been a first-rate Regent. Now, he's loyal to the job and responsibilities of a Regent. I hear he's absolutely been excellent on everything. It's sort of interesting to see the way the--

Chall: I wondered about that appointment, because he really was very difficult to deal with. He did come to a Regents' meeting once and laid down the law and there was some question in the press that perhaps this was an anti-Hitch move as much as it was cutting back the budget.

Heller: Well, it could have been. I don't think anything Orr did was anti-anybody. I really do believe that he was carrying out his boss's instructions. But, this is hindsight.

Chall: This article here of November 17, 1972 from the Chronicle, written by Ron Moskowitz--

Heller: Yes. You can't always depend on Ron Moskowitz for reporting accurately.

Chall: It's a long article. Here he says that "Both Orr and Reagan have denied this." That it was an anti-Hitch activity. "But the Chronicle learned that Orr's speech was written in the Governor's office by press secretary Ed Gray, after a late night conference with Orr and several assistants."

Heller: Well, that would bear out what I just said.

Chall: Yes.

Heller: Now, these suggestions were not made at the Regents' meeting that it was anti-Hitch. You see, that's reporters. Ron Moskowitz got some interesting stories, but could be very inaccurate or very inattentive sometimes. That may have been an accurate one.
This is a long article about Verne Orr and how he wanted to cut the budget of the University.

I think that carries out just what I said about Orr. But I think he's fighting every inch for the University now. I especially inquired about him, because of that past background.

We didn't get such bad budgets really when it came to the point. We did get salary increases always. It hasn't been like Jerry Brown, who refused salary increases for state employees at certain points. We did get them, strangely enough. We didn't get much capital, though there was some money in that capital fund; it's pretty hard to get any capital appropriation, except for what they call minor caps.

From the state budget?

Well, more upkeep projects than anything else of major buildings. It was a constant struggle; I think that's the best way to put it. You know, part of it can be put down to the fact that Earl Warren had been very UC oriented and Pat Brown had been very UC oriented. Goodie Knight had basically been okay. All the Regents up to then were used to governors who wanted to help the University. Then, all of a sudden along came Reagan, who, in my opinion, wouldn't have minded putting down the whole University if by doing the whole University he could get at Berkeley, too.

I think Harry Wellman had the feeling that Reagan was really much more interested in private education, that he didn't really want to put a lot of money into state supported schools.

I think I mentioned this before. I had very few conversations with Reagan when he was governor just because of his nature. We never had any fight or anything, but one thing I could talk to him a little bit about was that he went to a small, four-year, private institution—I think it was Eureka College in Illinois—and I went to a small, private institution at Mills. He did once or twice talk to me about that being "the right type of education." It wasn't the private so much, he just didn't believe in all these graduate programs and all these research programs. He was implying, "Look at me, I did fine with a four-year college and that's all you need." This was really his attitude. I wouldn't agree with Harry Wellman that it was particularly private, because he really didn't do anything to help the private institutions in the ways of scholarship aid or things that might have been available to them. I think he may have sounded like that. I think it was the graduate institutions that he really just loathed.

And that may be the reason why toward the last few years of his administration he was increasing the budgets of the state colleges percentagewise more than the University, because there was more teaching being done there.
Heller: There was more teaching being done, and there was more pressure from the state colleges. They had a broader political base at that point too, and the state colleges, in my opinion, were behind what they should have been as undergraduate institutions. I never really objected to the increase, I think the increase was valid, but I think maybe Reagan's reasons were not valid for doing it.

You should read an article—Governor Reagan's father-in-law [Loyall Davis] was a surgeon in Chicago, very well known. But he was one of these people that doesn't believe in research. There was an article written by him in one of the good journals in medicine, against research in medical schools and the wasted money on the research. He was a very fine surgeon. I think that Reagan felt just the way his father-in-law did, whom I never met. I may be saying wrong if I say he was very involved with the conservative part of the AMA [American Medical Association], but I feel he was. I think that may have influenced Reagan as far as medical school research went.

Chall: Jerry Brown was severely cutting back the health services of the University, threatening the medical schools, in a sense, when he came in also. It just seemed to be a carry-over from what I have here. I don't know whether he meant the same thing, but I know that he was cutting back on that budget.

Heller: I think you have me at a disadvantage, because I'm not sure to what you're referring. We were expanding on medical school budgets at that point enormously.

Chall: Let's see. Here's an article from the Chronicle of April 30, 1975, and there's a little--

Heller: That's on building plans. That's health sciences building, which is quite different from the research. I know a great deal about this. It was really a very complicated situation. This is about the Davis medical school. I was on the committee that was trying to negotiate with the county of Sacramento on that. I know a great deal about that. It's really a different subject. The subject was that the county government of Sacramento had done two things that were wrong: they would not pay us what they had agreed to—to take care of county patients—in our written agreement; and in selling us the building, they had not been—I don't know if I want to say careful or honest in their inspection of that county hospital. And to this day it isn't right. Part of it is a very bad earthquake situation. So we were fighting with the county supervisors of Sacramento. I hear that it's gotten better. But I was there when we did get a new contract. Have you ever worked with county supervisors?

Chall: A very little bit. But I think I understand the problem.
There were five of them in Sacramento, just to give an example. And they're very careful about the Brown Act, about never having a majority meeting together except in open session. So it was a very slippery thing. You talked to one person or you talked to another, and you never knew what was happening. But they finally designated two members of the board to meet with a committee of the Regents, of which I was one, on this whole county set-up. One of them was very, very conservative. I think he was a dentist. And then one was quite liberal. So what one would say, the other would negate. We met and met and met. Of course we had our Chet McCorkle and Clint Powell, who was dean of medical affairs, and then our general counsel met for hours and hours with them, for days and days. That's what the thing was. We thought we were going to have to build more to have a functioning hospital. It eventually was pretty well resolved.

So that Jerry Brown really wasn't cutting, well, he wasn't going to give you any funds.

Jerry Brown was not really particularly involved in this. Then there was a fuss about SF Med School, the dental building and Moffitt Hospital that was going on, too.

I remember in one of those articles Jerry Brown said he wasn't going to give a dollar to my health services, but maybe that was for the building. In his budget, he wasn't going to provide a dollar.

Yes. I read about that.

But that had nothing to do with--?

We had hoped to expand the number of doctors we could put into classes. You see, it just says [reading from article] "the scaled down program of Jerry Brown proposes that $12.8 million of the bond issue funds be used next year for urgent life safety and earthquake proofing work on the condition the state replace this amount during the following two years with state general funds." You see, that has to do with this county hospital. Everybody was covering a little bit on this. Nobody had discovered the inadequacy of that building, and that work just had to be done. I've forgotten the eventual outcome, but it was pretty satisfactory.

People can find that out eventually.

Yes, but on these hospitals--we took over or worked with three county hospitals: in San Diego, where we started up a hospital and then had an arrangement with the county hospital; Irvine, because the California College of Medicine was really given to us by the legislature not for Irvine, for anything. Here we had a medical school on our hands and it was in Los Angeles, but UCLA didn't want it, because it has its own
Heller: med school, which would have been the natural; it wouldn't take it. It didn't have a terribly good reputation, and it was run by a separate board of trustees. Finally, Irvine agreed to take it. It had to move to Irvine, and doing so, we had to have a hospital facility. We had to negotiate with Orange County to use their county hospital. At Sacramento we had the same situation.

The reason I'm bringing this up is that when you take over a county hospital, whoever has the county hospital, and we [UC] had three of them in this state, has taken over the hospital of last resort. The county has to pay for the indigents, those without any insurance. To get that money out of the counties--I hear that Orange County, though we negotiated the thing, is still not paying its bills. That's where I learned an awful lot about who pays what bills.

So that building program is really separate from the operating. You can't put the two together.

Chall: All right. That's cleared up.

Heller: I don't know that it's cleared up. I think San Diego's still not successfully negotiated. Of course, San Francisco and UCLA were in good shape. They carried different operations. No medical schools are in good shape, as you can probably gather, by the nature of the expenses and the third-party carriers of the insurance and the slowness of payments. The cash flow is always in very bad shape, but particularly bad in those smaller ones.

Chall: That was a digression that I led you down—I led you down that garden path!

Heller: Yes, you did, by giving me this clipping.

Tuition and Other Euphemisms

Chall: Sorry about that. We'll go back to Reagan and Reagan's battle for tuition. I don't know that he actually won that one either, but he certainly came close to it.

Heller: He didn't win exactly what he wanted, as you just said, he wanted the full cost borne by the students. There was a very split vote on the Regents when it finally came to a head. They never called it tuition; that was always the euphemism of educational fees, wasn't it?
Chall: Yes. In 1967 they were called finance charges, and later in 1968 they were called student fees, and one time Reagan wanted them called equal opportunity tuition plan. But, as I understand it from reading Cannon's book, Reagan several times came to the Regents determined that he would not only get tuition but that it would be called tuition, and each time he was voted down.

Heller: Right. So in that way he did not win. Talking about myself, I basically think I was wrong now in my position. I was very opposed, whether you called it tuition or reg fee or ed fee or whatever you called it, because I really was quite convinced that it would keep a lot of students from coming to the University. Of course, I was in the minority, because it was passed. But it was not huge.

Chall: But it took several times before it actually passed. The first time around, the Regents voted against it almost to a person, except for Reagan, I think. Then it went through a variety of moves, but then finally—there was one vote when it was voted to be $156 for three quarters and that was in January of '68, and then in April, the Regents reduced it to $81. I think the last vote on it in which I have your vote was in February of 1970, when you abstained from a vote—

Heller: That's right. You're absolutely right. You see, I had second thoughts. I had some second thoughts then about it, because I didn't think it was too high. If I had been forced to vote, I think I would have at that point voted against imposing it.

Chall: Why did you abstain? The others voted—it was finally voted sixteen to six with one abstention, and that was you.

Heller: Well, because I had my doubts. I had been very much against it. I began having my doubts but I hadn't—There were very few times I couldn't settle things in my own mind, and that was one of them. Since then, I have thought, "Well, the University has gone on; we've increased student aid as a result of that." It's offset itself. This is a thing that I hadn't quite settled in my own mind yet, though I had been against it up until almost the end. But I thought we'd gotten it down—if I can project myself back to my abstention—to a not unreasonable sum of money, with the knowledge that we'd be giving more student aid than we had.

Now that student aid is the sort of thing that comes, you know, to a large degree out of these Regents' funds that I was talking about a little while ago. That's the thing we have options on. If you trace it back, you'll see a great increase of student aid in through there, not only increases for minorities, but for all students. It's sort of taken for granted. It was horrifying at the time. I just wasn't clear enough about whether, gotten down to the amount we'd voted, it was going to be such a terrible thing. You don't find that I abstained very often.
Chall: No. There were a couple of times that I found that.

Heller: And when I did abstain, it was because I felt I hadn't been able to think something through.

Chall: Of course, when Reagan came in with the idea for tuition, it was the Regents, I believe, who convinced him—I'm not sure of this, and you can tell me—that the money shouldn't go to the upkeep of the University, but to student aid.

Heller: That is correct.

Chall: He had to agree, I think, to the use to which these fees would be put. But initially, I think he meant to support the University with them, is that right?

Heller: You've been looking at this more recently than I have.

Chall: I just wanted to ask you whether these assumptions of mine were correct.

Heller: This is basically correct, yes.

Chall: And the Regents really turned him around on that?

Heller: Yes, and the ed fee was used—certain things that had been supported by the state were paid for by the ed fee. I can't put my fingers on all of them, but one is, for example, student counseling, which is very important. That has been paid for out of ed fee. It's too hard for me now to think of the things that ed fee started to cover that the state had formerly covered.

We were getting it down. I believe when I abstained we hadn't quite decided where those fees were going to be used. I don't think it's hurt the University much, to tell you the truth.

It's not even worth going into. But there was a statement somewhere along the line, "Well, if the University had to have these fees, the state colleges should too. It was just as valid an argument." I'm not sure what they did; I've forgotten.

Chall: Well, they do have some fees.

Heller: They put in something. Not the same amount. That's quite a sizable fee, you know.

Chall: It was supposed to end at the figure of $600 a year in 1971-1972.*

Chall: I know that it's gone up considerably since then.

Heller: Now, I read statements in the paper that we may have to have much higher—I use the word tuition loosely—you don't hear any big screams any more of pain. This has happened in private universities as well as public—the enormous amount of student aid money that is available as tuitions have gone up.

Chall: The federal government has stepped in and helped too, the state government, so that helps. You know, the loans—

Heller: Those are loans. I'm talking about more grants. There's a combination of loans, grants, work jobs. And the state scholarship aid, though it doesn't go directly to any segment, has increased even, I guess, under Brown. I haven't followed it that carefully.

Chall: I don't know either. But I think there's a recognition that students are in need.

Heller: Once it was established, I didn't hear any great pleas. It didn't come to the Regents, because the campuses were taking care of the hardship cases then, and it didn't come up as a Regents' issue again.

Chall: Do you recall some of the arguments at the Board of Regents about imposing tuition early in Reagan's term?

Heller: Oh, there was just tremendous opposition to it, because the University never had. It's very hard to change things. You know, we never had, and we didn't think it was right.

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Heller: One thing I was thinking about abstentions. Usually the Regents or the administrators know pretty well why you abstain, but you don't take any heat for it. If you're used to taking a position, they realize you have some valid reasons in your own mind. I think it's terrible to abstain when your vote's going to mean something one way or the other. I usually knew by the time a discussion ended—and endless discussion—how I wanted to vote.

Chall: There weren't too many abstentions among the Regents, generally, were there? Not very often.

Heller: No. Ed Carter was the big abstainer. Not that he didn't understand the business of the University, but he had a great habit of abstaining quite often on minor things. We weren't sure if he had committed himself two ways or what, but even then, we said, "It's your privilege to vote the way you want."
Heller: I found usually abstentions didn't make—there weren't too many. Most abstentions are because you're not quite clear on the issue, usually.

Chall: The issues seem to come up again and again, so eventually—

Heller: They never go away!

Chall: Particularly on tuition. You went one way in January, and another way again in April.

Heller: That's because it got refined down, I think.

Chall: Well, it was changed almost in half—cut almost fifty percent.

Heller: I guess Harry Wellman was president then. It was a lot of hard work on Harry Wellman's part to bring this into a halfway reasonable amount.

Chall: Knowing that it was coming. There was an interesting—

Heller: You know, if you're just standing on principle all the time, you just never get any business done. You have to find a way out sometimes.

Chall: When the governor has his principles and the Regents have theirs.

Heller: Well, he was outvoted all the time at the Regents' meetings. Not all the time, but a lot of the time.

Chall: I was interested in getting your opinion about some of these statements that were made by Cannon in his book, Ronnie and Jesse, with respect to his chapter on the University.* Mainly it dealt with the tuition issue. There apparently was a meeting in February of 1967—

Heller: That would have been just as Reagan—

Chall: Right after he came in. Then the Regents commissioned a report on the subject which came in during the summer.

Heller: Right after he came in. I think January was his first meeting. Tuition came up at this summer meeting again.

Chall: There was a vote to impose tuition, and everybody voted against it except Reagan, and three ex officio Regents [14-7]. After this, the Regents went to lunch. During that period of time, with the help of Chancellor Murphy, some of the Regents drafted an alternative to that motion for tuition.

The change was, you wouldn't use the word "tuition," you'd call it something else like "finance program for student aid," and that it could be used for faculty enrichment and other uses to be determined by the Regents. The charge first was to be $250 and then it was changed to $200, and then after some amendments by Dutton, the figure was deleted altogether, by a voice vote. I just wondered how that went. Apparently, according to Mr. Cannon, those Regents, who were the Pat Brown Regents basically, felt that they had achieved a victory and they went off and had lunch together, and in the meantime, the other group worked with Chancellor Murphy to revise the motion and bring it back after lunch, without using the word tuition. Unruh, he said, was very angry with this change.

Heller: Well, Unruh could get angry at us for anything.

Chall: Unruh always took a stand against tuition.

Heller: Always, always.

Chall: And Reagan always took a stand for it, and so you were forced always to make a decision.

Heller: I don't remember a particular episode, but I could say this. Murphy had a great deal of influence among the chancellors and the Regents. Murphy, you know, was an active Republican. He was not a Reagan supporter or anything, but he was an active Republican. I do remember very well that he, Franklin Murphy, thought he could manage Reagan in relation to the University, and that he could get Reagan to come around if things were properly handled. Well, he found out he couldn't get him to come around at all. But Franklin pictured himself as the great go-between. Now that's a general statement about a particular meeting, but I think that would have been part of that, that he probably got—I don't know who, maybe even Buff Chandler, who liked him very well, who was one of those who voted against the tuition eventually. I think he might have gotten people who admired him particularly—I got on very well with Murphy myself, but I certainly was not part of that)—he might have gotten people like Ed Carter, Ed Pauley, maybe Bill Forbes, people who were willing to help. He was convinced that he could handle the governor in relation to the University and its budget, I remember that very well. Of course, he couldn't do a thing.
Chall: Cannon says here that after that first vote, when people left the meeting, that many Regents were dismayed by their own actions. They liked the governor personally; they respected him as a governor and a celebrity, a man of attainment. They were dependent on him for next year's budget requests, so they searched for another way. Then, with the help of chancellors and--

Heller: That might possibly be true. I think many Regents—there were two or three who had come in with Reagan, who would normally have supported him, like Bob Finch, Grant, but apparently they didn't in the first thing. Max Rafferty would always have. He didn't come in with him; he was in before. Max Rafferty was like Unruh, only the opposite, always standing for a position—I don't know if Buff Chandler had started to dislike Reagan that early. She did fairly early, but maybe not quite that early. Unruh was disliked by a lot of people too. I don't know how many Regents admired Reagan.

Chall: It's just an interesting term.

Heller: I would say that certainly a certain number of Regents knew he had just been elected by an enormous amount. He was going to control the total budget, and it might be a good idea to try to work with him. I would say that Franklin Murphy was the—though not a Regent, a chancellor—was sort of the leader of that thinking.

Chall: At that meeting he certainly did help.

Heller: Yes, because there were a handful of Republican Regents who started meeting with the governor before Clark Kerr was thrown out, before he became governor—Reagan—to try to work out these financial problems of the University. I of course was not part of that. Then, after he came into office, very shortly—this is all impersonal, nothing official—they asked me to join with them. They felt there should be one Democrat trying to work. I personally never actually worked directly with Reagan; it was through Gordon Smith. That's probably why they asked me, because they knew that I knew Gordon Smith.

It really didn't get anyplace. It was a no-compromise attitude at that point. But it really didn't work out that way. Actually, the University did not fare that badly.

Chall: That's interesting that it didn't. Did you find that Reagan's attitude toward the Regents was one of general hostility? His attitude, let's say, toward Berkeley was, and maybe toward the University to some degree, but what about the Board of Regents as such?

Heller: Well, somebody told him early on, "Maybe you're governor of the state, but you only have one vote on the Board of Regents." I remember his quoting that once or twice. He'd say, "Well, maybe I only have one
Heller: vote, but I am governor of the state." He was basically indifferent to the Regents that were on before he became governor, very indifferent. I won't say he was unfriendly; he did get unfriendly to some of them later on, on specific issues. But Chandler never made any secret of her dislike of Reagan, at least to me and to many others.

Chall: In terms of his principles and what he stood for?

Heller: Yes, and in terms of his attitudes. She had really a much broader base than he had of outlook. He really did have a narrow outlook, from my point of view. He didn't want his horizons to expand; he wanted at that time to mold everything the way he saw it.

Chall: I wondered about his attitudes, because again to quote--

Heller: I'll tell you, he loathed Unruh, of course, but Unruh was always baiting him. That was about a standoff about how the Regents felt about either of them. Unruh at that point turned me off pretty much too, I must say. I thought he was just being impossible, some of the things he did.

Reagan had a terrible fight with Bill Roth--I have forgotten if it was in executive session, but a terrible fight. He loathed Dutton, it was quite apparent. He didn't seem to dislike me or Bill Coblentz particularly.

He really basically ignored most of us. We were there. That was his attitude. Of course, as he got appointees on the Regents--

Chall: Then he could work with other people.

Heller: Yes. But, you know, some of his appointees turned out to be excellent, as I've said before. Excellent Regents. I think basically they disappointed him.

You know, when talking about Reagan, there I'm talking directly about him. I feel that a lot of Reagan's opinions and attitudes about the University were eventually, in detail formed by Alex Sherriffs, who was his education advisor. Not originally formed by him, but eventually.

Chall: Well, that's what you have said, and I guess that may account for some of it.

Heller: Sometimes Reagan would come in and just sit there, though there was always an uproar when he arrived because he had so much personnel with him. You know, he always had security people and a following and the secretary of the Regents always had to set up a special room for him with phones for his personnel. There was a big fuss about him. He just moved with an entourage all the time. Of course, the
Heller: only other governor I had served with was Pat Brown up to then, and Pat rarely came to Regents' meetings. And when he came, he came without any following at all. He just arrived. It was very different.

Chall: Did Reagan do some of this for effect, or was that the way he moved?

Heller: I'm not sure that I can comment on that, because whenever I saw him, that's the way he moved. Maybe he had threats, I don't know.

The Era of Governor Edmund G. Brown, Jr.

Chall: How about Jerry Brown? How does Jerry Brown move?

Heller: Jerry was very informal. There was more security all around by the time Jerry Brown came in. There have been quite a few—well, of course, there had been killings even before Reagan, even when Pat Brown was governor.

Chall: Well, the campuses were still in a bit of disorder some of that time.

Heller: Yes. Jerry Brown probably had people with him, but you were never conscious of it. He didn't look "surrounded." When Jerry came to a meeting, difficult though he was, he did move around freely. Out in the halls.

Chall: I see. He didn't go into a special room.

Heller: No. Between meetings, he didn't seem to have any base at all. He just seemed to be talking to people.

Chall: Did Jerry Brown come in with a different attitude toward the Regents than Reagan, or was it about the same.

Heller: I don't know.

Chall: Weren't you president of the board in Jerry Brown's first year?

Heller: Yes and no. Not when he was first elected. I was chairman of educational policies when he was first elected, and he used to appear there and make himself very difficult. He was the one who just took the attitude that faculty was spinning its wheels, and there was just too much paperwork, and there were far too many expenses.

When he came in, one of the difficulties that we had was this affirmative action program with HEW. If you remember, HEW picked Berkeley as one of its target institutions for affirmative action.
Heller: It eventually got all ironed out, but it was—There was no resistance to affirmative action, it's just that affirmative action, especially in the hiring of faculty, is very difficult to bring about when you're going by certain standards, because there's just not the pool to choose from of minorities or women. I think I've said this before, maybe when I've talked to you. You just don't have the same pool. There might be one or two departments at Berkeley that just wouldn't even make a search for minorities. Most of them really did make honest searches, and they finally got it straightened out with HEW. HEW threatened to cut off funds. The Berkeley campus—Bowker was then chancellor—did finally get it straightened out. But there was always an uproar. I don't know why Regents' meetings always have an uproar about them, but they do.

Chall: They certainly had for quite a period of time, but prior to that they were pretty quiet. I think things changed considerably.

Heller: Well, because they were not open to the public, and with perfectly good reason they were just not open to the public. Not the committee meetings, or the Regents, because the Regents were exempted under the Brown Act. We, bit by bit, began establishing our own rules of what should be executive session. To this day—

Chall: You're not covered by the Brown Act to this day?

Heller: Not per se. I mean, we can get together for social affairs, for dinner, for example, but we follow our own rules very carefully now. No business is conducted at any of those social evenings, and it used to be.

Chall: What about Jerry Brown as a Regent?

Heller: He doesn't listen. That's the first thing I'll say.

Chall: Is he like Reagan in that he has his own point of view about the way the University should be financed and run?

Heller: He made up his mind, you know, he was going to cut state expenses. He didn't have the University per se in mind, in my opinion, he just was going to cut from everywhere. You've seen Jerry Brown in action. He loves to come and ramble on on whatever he wants to talk about. It's absolutely maddening, because he will not pay attention to the business at hand. People have often said to me that I was the only one who could ever put down Jerry Brown in meetings. They think it was when I was chairman of the board, but really it was when I was chairman of educational policies.

Chall: How would you do that?
Heller: When the governor comes, he always sits between the president of the University and the chairman of the committee or the board. He would be there on my right hand side, and Hitch was president then, so Hitch would be there on educational policies. Jerry Brown doesn't know what time is. You've read enough about him to know how he'll go all night or all day and won't bother to eat. There is just no stopping him, or practically no stopping him.

Chall: He really does talk when he gets there?

Heller: He talks, and he asks questions, but he does not want answers. He wants to rile people up with questions, but he doesn't want answers. I did put him down quite a few times, very politely. I'd say, "Governor, this is all very interesting, but I have seven Regents who have indicated they want to speak on this subject, and I'm going to have to ask you to stop in the next minute." And by God, he would. He really would. I wasn't embarrassed to say that to him, but he got much more time than he should, because he wasn't listening. That's what really made me angry. He asked a long series of questions during that period when he was talking about the University administrative paperwork--what's the ink from the sea fish?

Chall: You mean the ink from the octopus?

Heller: Well, it was a famous expression he used. It was during this whole affirmative action thing. I remember that Mike Heyman who has just been appointed as chancellor--he was vice-chancellor for Al Bowker--had a huge document that was in front of all of us that was about affirmative action in all departments of Berkeley.

It was a big volume, but it was necessary; it was demanded by the governor. Jerry Brown just went on and on asking questions and not wanting to hear: why had all this been done, and why was all of this time wasted and all of this ink wasted? Because he was sitting next to me, I just whispered to him, I said, "Why don't you listen to the answers? You're getting some answers." Sometimes I could stop him talking. He ignored everybody; that's all I can say. He wasn't rude per se; I don't think that was his objective. He likes to make headlines.

Chall: Now he came in with fewer ex officio Regents. Only he and Mr. [Mervyn] Dymally and the speaker of the assembly, so he didn't necessarily have as much support from the administration as let's say Reagan had initially. I wondered if that made any difference. How is Mr. Dymally as a member of the board?

Heller: Dymally? Oh, Dymally was for Dymally. Basically, he liked anybody who opposed Brown. He really disliked Brown; he always was trying to undercut him. If he was present and I would stop the governor, then he'd come up to me afterwards and congratulate me. Anything that put
Heller: down Jerry Brown in any way was really what Dymally liked most. Dymally was affirmative action yes, but he really didn't want the chicanos in on his affirmative action. He wanted the blacks. I saw that over and over again with him. Dymally was a --Oh, I don't know how to describe him. I was not a great admirer of Dymally's at all.

People weren't inclined to be against Jerry Brown. It was rather interesting.

Chall: The Regents?

Heller: Yes. I remember the first board meeting that he came to. I've forgotten what the subject was. This was the first time most of them had seen Brown—I don't mean the Democratic Regents, but the others—or paid much attention to him. I remember that Dean Watkins, who was a Regent, sent a note over to me, and he said, "Why didn't you tell me Jerry Brown was a conservative?" You know, that's just what he sounded like. I nodded to him, I think. I remember we went out to the airport after the meeting, in the same automobile. I said, "I don't know why his conservatism is such a surprise to you." He said, "I had no idea he was this way;" he was very much against Brown. I said, "Then, you listened to what people said about him; you didn't listen to what he was saying." He was pulling a pretty conservative line in his campaign. That was the general attitude. He's no radical. There wasn't big antagonism to him right away.

He didn't come in against the University the way Reagan did. It was a quite different situation. I think at first they were rather pleased with him, but then people got awfully bored with Jerry Brown, who held forth for so long. Then he'd pick certain issues and take the wrong ones, and doesn't think it through. He goes for the headlines. I don't know if it's thought out; it's almost instinctive. You probably have some clippings there.

Chall: No, nothing really very much. I just wondered what it was like.

Heller: One day he started in the Regents attacking what we call the University Houses—the chancellor's homes.

Chall: And the salaries of the administrators—many of them were higher even than the governor's salary.

Heller: Yes. But he likes to make the headlines. He started on these "lavish mansions"—that was the word he used, these mansions. You know, there's one on every campus. I remember saying to him—I was not chairing then. It was some committee, I guess it was the board, and I was not chairman, because I remember I was across the table. I said, "Governor, how many of these University Houses have you ever been in?"
Heller: And he said, "Berkeley." I said, "None of the others? You could stop him sometimes that way. He said, "Yes." And I said, "Well, it's possible, by certain definitions, you could call the Berkeley University House and the UCLA one mansions. They're large houses, they're old, the University's had them for a long time. But you go to any of the others, and they're completely modest, cost very little, and have very little upkeep. I think you should stop using the term 'mansions' about it."

At that point, Dan Aldrich, the chancellor at Irvine sprang up. He always has a nice sense of humor when things get tough. He said, "Let me tell you about all the help at one University House at Irvine." He said, "There's a half-time gardener, and I'm it. [laughs] There's a fulltime maid and my wife is it." And he detailed how much he had for expenses down there, which is very, very low. You see, here the governor was being given the answers from around, but he didn't want to hear them. He had gotten the word mansions out on the campuses, and those were the headlines that came out. There's no real reasoning with Brown.

Chall: Even the two years you were on the board--

Heller: I was chairman part of it.

Chall: Yes, one of those years. Was his effect on the University a harmful one to the extent that you knew about it at that time? Was it any different from Reagan's in the long run or the short run?

Heller: Well, I don't think it was as harmful. Maybe I'm slightly prejudiced, though I don't like Jerry Brown at all, though I did vote for him. Probably I should have voted for Flournoy the first time, and the second time around I wasn't going to vote for Younger, so I was trapped. But I'm not for Jerry Brown at all. Maybe prejudiced is too huge. He did not do the damage. Reagan did the damage, I think, to the University, with his hatred. I just don't feel that Brown has the same hatred. He's been cutting down, but he also has increased the budgets, you know. But he has been a little more evenhanded with the state colleges and the University than Reagan was. He just likes this small is beautiful concept.

Chall: But Reagan's effect, even though he didn't always win, and you always increased your budget, do you think the effect on the University was--?

Heller: Well, yes, because there was so much plotting going on all the time that Reagan was in. And Reagan wanted to get rid of people. Now, I didn't see any of that in Jerry Brown. He never had his guns out for any administrator or any individual. It was a much less personalized thing with Jerry Brown. After all, Reagan, or Alex Sherriffs, was always out to get rid of Hitch, to get rid of Chancellor Heyns. You know, he wanted to get people.
Chall: And that had an effect on the Regents?

Heller: That had an effect on almost every vote we had. Trying to undercut the president or the chancellor. We won just about every vote where Reagan or his people would force a vote, but not by many votes.

Chall: So the harmful effect then was in the Board of Regents among the Regents. But how about on the University itself?

Heller: Well, it was always in the headlines.

Chall: I see. So it was public relations damage?

Heller: It was a public relations thing. I don't want to give the impression that I don't think the University is a great University, because it is. I always say despite all this, it's still a great University. I think no matter who had been governor, leaving out Reagan or Jerry Brown, the development of the economy, inflation, the change in demography, probably would have had an impact on the University, its budgets, and its building, and its planning. We really were forced because of those factors, not because of the governor, to re-look at all the long-range plans that had been drawn for the University or for the individual campuses. It was those factors that forced us to look at them. You know, they come over you bit by bit.

Kerr had had these beautiful long-range plans that were valid in their time, but had to be abandoned completely. You still see occasional talk about abandoning a campus or closing down a couple of med schools in order to meet the financial stringencies of the time. There's almost no way to cut down too far without doing some great big gesture. I rather doubt it will ever be done; but it does come up from time to time.

You know, it's funny to talk about this always in terms of Reagan and Brown, because well, Reagan was often at the meetings; Brown was frequently not at the meetings. They weren't a presence all the time.

Chall: Was the presence in terms of the budget felt with the directors of finance? I don't remember who Jerry Brown's first director of finance had been. Also, during the Reagan period and into the Brown period, wasn't the legislature beginning to get into the budget, making determinations about how much the University should get?

Heller: Yes. Well, not determinations, but they began to put in control language.

Chall: That was a new feature, wasn't it?

Heller: That was a new feature, and that's sort of--I guess during the Reagan governorship, but not necessarily because of him at all.
Chall: No. Right. But it was another intrusive factor.

Heller: Yes, because we are independent. Someday, the Regents are going to challenge the legislature about control language in the courts, I'm sure. When they go too far, you know: We'll give you X amount; we'll leave X amount in the budget if it's used for this.

Chall: And there were some in the late Reagan period when the legislature wanted to increase the money it gave to the Department of Demography at UC Berkeley.

Heller: That's right. But the legislature was really reached by some excited faculty members on that one. It really was not a so-called partisan political act at all. It was that it was a department that Bowker wanted to eliminate, because it just wasn't pulling its weight; didn't have good faculty. There were two things: there was demography and there was criminology. And very emotional students and faculty went to the legislature. There's been more of that in recent years.

Chall: There was also the Institute of Transportation at UCLA. I think that was the same year.

Heller: I've forgotten about that one.

Chall: Yes. I just wondered about the legislators' role in those, and also, as you said, the control language.

Heller: What I should say about the budget process is that during all these difficult times, I never saw the Regents fail to unanimously accept the recommendations for the budgeting, as presented by the president of the University, except that Reagan would sit there and say, "Abstain." Which was okay, I mean, he should. And I think sometimes the speaker would say "Abstain."

Chall: The lieutenant governor?

Heller: Yes. More the speaker even, than the lieutenant governor. The Regents thought that the president and his staff and the campuses really did very careful budgets, and they were never padded. That was one thing that we knew. So I think you have to remember that—-that whoever was governor, the president's budgets were accepted and passed on—sent up to Sacramento to the legislature. It was the governor and the legislature that started working on those budgets. So there was more unanimity than—

Chall: Than would seem.

Heller: The Regents were not trying to push one course or another. Those budgets are really very carefully worked out.
Chall: And even the Reagan Regents understood this?

Heller: Always, always approved it. I can't remember when there was ever any exception. You may prove me wrong on that, but I just can't remember any exceptions. As a matter of fact, they were approved quite easily, usually. We would have them sent to us ahead of time.

Chall: Did the committee on finance go over that?

Heller: It went to the committee on finance. They're much bigger than telephone books. and pretty hard to read, you know. I don't mean that they're not clear; they're as clear as any budgets I've ever seen. But it's more work than anybody could essentially do, but people would sample parts of it. We knew what our salary scales were. Of course, the salary budget goes in separately from the operating budget. I think that tells you something about the Regents—always accepting that. They weren't the ones who initiated the cuts by any means.

Chall: What about A. Alan Post in those days?

Heller: A. Alan Post?

Chall: Yes. Was there any relationship between him and the Regents?

Heller: He was very helpful in explaining, though he didn't always agree, certainly, with our budgets. If you ever knew him, he was a complete gentleman and completely honest. If he thought something was wrong, he would say what. Our president, or his representatives, whoever was there, would argue back with him. Once in a while, Alan Post might change, but he always had a reason. The legislature didn't always take his part. He was absolutely neutral. A wonderful person. I don't know the new legislative analyst, but I assume he's pretty much the same way.

Actually, the control language that's come in, has come largely from Democratic legislators.

Chall: Doesn't seem to matter? It's not on a partisan basis?

Heller: It doesn't seem to make any difference. We have sometimes been able, when I was there, to get the control language wiped out in the joint conference committee. We had some luck; there's been some left; but it's been comparatively minor. The students would lobby for certain things.

At one point, that student lobby started getting very effective and affecting the legislators. You know, they count votes in the student vote, and they would get control language in on certain things they wanted. They would give us X amount if it was done—whatever it was that the students were lobbying for at that time.
Heller: No great harm done, but I predict that someday there'll be a suit in the supreme court versus the constitution about how much control can be put in.

Chall: Because it has become a problem, is that it?

Heller: It has become a problem, but in more minor a way than a major way. I think someday there will be one. A couple of times we thought we should start it, but it wasn't major enough and a lawsuit is difficult at best.

Chall: From what you know, and I guess you can only go by what people have told you, but has the Board of Regents operated differently or been a different kind of board as a result of Jerry Brown's appointments? Is it changing a great deal?

Heller: Well, I think, from what I hear, that there are a few more special interests involved. You know, I've expressed my philosophy over and over: If you're a Regent, you can come from a special interest, but you can't push for your special interest.
The Choice of David Saxon as President, 1975

Chall: Today we want to start with the selection of David Saxon as president of the University. Here are the persons who were selected for the search committee: Carter, Roth, Heller, Higgs, Campbell, Reynolds, and Watkins.

Heller: Yes, that's right, and the committee decided to consult with chancellors, faculty, and student body, and alumni. But they didn't meet as a group. The chancellors met separately always, and the alumni met separately. There were a couple of students sitting with us. The faculty met with us some of the time, sometimes separately. No particular reason; it's just that in my experience every selection committee sets itself up just a little differently than the last one. There are no real rules about it.

Chall: By the nature of the people, or just--?

Heller: You could put it that—there's just no hard and set rules. However, in recent years there's much more input from many groups than there used to be.

Chall: I understand there were 260 candidates applying for that position. That came out of a University Bulletin.

Heller: Yes. But that you had 260 candidates applying for it really doesn't mean a thing. You advertise in the Journal of Higher Education—it was affirmative action advertising—and you get all these responses. And most of them are no good whatsoever. I suppose literally you could say there were that many people plus names that people sent in, but probably not more than a handful of them are serious candidates.
Chall: So that first screening can go very quickly, screening out--

Heller: No chance, because there's so much material to get through, to get rid of. Well, the committee doesn't look at all these things.

Chall: The committee doesn't?

Heller: No. Somebody on the committee--I've forgotten who did that screening that time.

Chall: It is somebody, then, on the committee?

Heller: No. I think on this one we gave this whole wad of things to the faculty committee, to screen out the obviously useless names. Now, I've served on so many selection committees, it's hard for me--

Chall: --to remember each one.

Heller: But we ended up by interviewing I guess about four or five actually. Of those we interviewed--I remember the chancellor's committee interviewed them; the faculty group interviewed them; and even the students--or the alumni, not necessarily the students, the alumni groups. Actually, there were more than that on it, because I remember--No, well, I'll tell you. The president of the Alumni Association sat with us the whole time.

Chall: He did?

Heller: Yes. That I remember and I remember--George Link. He sat with us always and gave us input from the alumni groups. Actually, the only good input, in my opinion, comes from the faculty committee on almost all these things. The only substantive input. The other groups go off on tangents. I would say the faculty committee. I don't remember who particularly was on that faculty committee for the selection of Saxon.

Well, they came from all campuses anyway. They work very hard. They really take it very seriously and they do an awful lot of screening of names. They make a very substantial contribution.

The chancellors didn't do too much screening, but they did interview eventually the candidates. As I remember, there were two or three inside candidates and three outside. I don't think it was off the record, but it doesn't make any difference. In a way, one was inside but outside--and that was David Gardner, who had just gone to the University of Utah.

In my mind, because I knew David and he was very serious, he was not a potential candidate because knowing David, though he loved the University--you know, he went to Berkeley, he was raised in
Heller: Berkeley and then he had been at Santa Barbara—I just felt he was not going to walk out from Utah after he had been there only a couple of years.

The alumni were crazy for him, for example. You know, they didn't look at the others, because they wanted one of their own, as it were. This is not to say one thing against David Gardner. But they didn't want to look at anybody else. Such is the matter of accommodation.

But I personally felt very strongly. I talked to Dave Gardner at length, and others did, and I was convinced that he would not want to be considered, you know, when it came down to the crunch. But there was this big push on from the alumni groups.

Chall: He did drop from the running, according to a newspaper at that time.

Heller: He pulled himself out eventually. I thought he had pulled himself out, in my mind, much earlier than it was publicly out, because there were those who just wanted him.

Chall: And until he publicly pulled out they wouldn't give up?

Heller: Yes. It's very hard to keep these things quiet at all. There are always leaks, most of which are wrong.

Chall: Toward the last, the only two names that were under consideration, according to the press, were David Saxon and Robben Fleming. Apparently it took the Regents two meetings to make a choice.

Heller: That is in a way correct. It shows the thoroughness with which the Regents approach a subject like this one.

Chall: That's all from the press here, the Chronicle. [February 20, 1975]

Heller: I knew Saxon, but a lot of the Regents and a lot of the faculty did not know Saxon, because he had been at UCLA and the alumni groups didn't—the faculty knew him to a degree, so he wasn't that well known.

Saxon basically was terribly surprised that he emerged. As a person, this happens so often. I remember back when we were looking for a chancellor at Berkeley after the Ed Strong-Marty Meyerson thing, and we selected differently then—I won't go into that. But there was a list of about twelve or fourteen possible chancellors for Berkeley. And for one reason or another, every time we'd meet,
some names would get scratched off the list. Nobody knew Heyns well enough, so he was never scratched off! I've often kidded Roger about that in recent years. You'd add some new names to the list, and then Roger would survive that round. It's sort of interesting the way--

That was a particularly tense one that we were doing. I'm going back a ways when I get on that, but this is all selection process. Roger has often told me that he had no thought of being selected as chancellor or of moving. He had a very good position at Michigan. But he was asked to come to a meeting, to be interviewed. He felt, as all good academic people do, especially administrators, that you had to help out a fellow institution. This way—to accommodate them or to give them any ideas, he would come out. And, lo and behold, he satisfied everybody who was on the committee, and he was it. He always said he'd thought he'd come out as an accommodation. But that was a different set of circumstances. We didn't have so many committees to go through then as you're having now.

But let me say that when I was sure—Oh, no, you asked about the two meetings. Yes, well, Saxon was there. He interviewed extremely well, really extremely well. This was all before the final choice.

Chall: With the committee?

Heller: Yes, with the committee. First of all, he knew the University. I don't want to say that's a plus necessarily; but considering the people we were looking at—this was the great plus for Dave Gardner, you know, if he had been willing to do it, that he too knew the University. So Saxon knew the problems of the University and he particularly knew the individual campus problems in relation to Universitywide. This is one of the things that he interviewed so well on.

The reason for second interviews was that Fleming was a very well-established president. The first time he met with us, and then he met with the faculty committee at the same time, I think it was all at the San Francisco airport. He had a terrible cold, the flu, and he interviewed very badly. Just very, very badly. And because of his tremendous reputation—and he obviously was very interested in the job, he might deny that now, but he was, there's no question of it—and because there were a couple of people who just thought he was outstanding in his reputation at least, we agreed to interview him a second time when he was not sick, before we came to any decisions. That's the reason for this period of time that elapsed.

He still never seemed to understand what the University of California was about in relation to Michigan. I'm giving you my personal interpretation. Though there were some that just were sure
Heller: that he would be it. He had a very fine reputation, you know, nationally. He just didn't grasp the statewide administration and the nine powerful campuses, you know.

I remember, for example—you were asking about process. You often remember the questions you asked rather than what somebody else asked. I said, "Well, if you were trying to get a decision accepted by the chancellors, and they were in disagreement partially or wholly, how would you handle it?" He said, "That's easy, I'd just put them in a room with themselves and let them knock their heads so they came up with the right answer." Well, that isn't exactly the way the University process works. He had some glib answers.

Anyway, Saxon had no thought that he was really going to be so much closer when he first interviewed, but he just interviewed extremely well. I remember one of the questions about Saxon was: had he ever had any experience in dealing with the legislature? Well, he hadn't; that hadn't been his job at UCLA. He was the vice-chancellor and really ran the place. He said, no, he hadn't. David was very honest in anything he said. Somebody asked, "Do you think you could handle going before the legislature for the University?" I always remember David's answer; it was so right. He said, "Well, I've gone before a lot of groups of people in Los Angeles and very diverse ones. I've always managed to get along with them, and get my points across." He said, "I would try to function the same way with the legislature. I would not be afraid of them." I remember that answer of his. That was one of the big questions about David --no legislative contacts. He's done very well in Sacramento, actually.

Also, he is not a tremendous speaker. Whether you need a tremendous speaker or not is anybody's guess. Charles Hitch was certainly not a tremendous speaker either. He had a good voice, but he didn't have-- We haven't had a tremendous speaker since Bob Sproul!

Chall: Yes. I wondered how many of these points that the Regents want, how many of them you have to put on top.

Heller: You have to come down to the points. This was the reason for the delay, plus the alumni group, working so hard on Gardner. They interviewed him. Dave Gardner is a very literal person. He had told me every word, for example, on the phone, because I wanted to know of the meeting with the alumni. They could hear what I couldn't hear in his answers, which was that he would be willing to come. I couldn't hear that at all. I heard him saying that he was devoted to the University of California; he'd do anything for the University; but he had an obligation where he was. And they heard that as a reluctance to say anything to disturb the situation at Utah unless he were asked. It's interesting how different people can hear different things.
Heller: I've forgotten who the chancellors wanted to start with. I think they were split. I think some wanted Fleming, some wanted Saxon, some wanted Gardner; I think it was split. You don't take too formal a vote on any of these things, because you just have to work toward a consensus. By the time we had settled on David, we had interviewed Robben Fleming and his wife in another round (nobody had ever met his wife), early in the morning one day in Los Angeles, and then David Saxon with his wife Shirley. It's really rough on these people, though David was not uptight about it, because he wasn't out really seeking this thing.

There was a special meeting that was called. It wasn't a regular Regents' meeting. We had to round up sixteen affirmative votes, because there weren't enough people around. We had a devil of a time finding enough people. There were one or two that would not vote for him. They had nothing against David, but they wanted Fleming or they still wanted Gardner or something like that. We stayed in that Biltmore Hotel, I think it was. We had a special room with lunch. Hours until we could get a couple more Regents. You see, we needed people way beyond—it was a special Regents' meeting, it wasn't only the committee. Only the committee could vote to start, you see, and then recommend to the Regents, and then the Regents had to vote. We needed sixteen affirmative votes.

Chall: People just hadn't come in? Some abstained, and some hadn't arrived, is that it?

Heller: Yes, because of the fact that it was a special meeting. Some were out of the country. Well, we finally held some people that were going to have to leave and we dug Norton Simon out of a meeting in Pasadena. But we didn't know if we had sixteen votes or not. I'm always willing to say how I'm going to vote. I don't mean right away, but I don't feel that I've got to hold out and surprise people; but certain Regents never like to commit themselves ahead of time. So when we finally got enough Regents there, we didn't know if we had the votes or didn't have the votes. I can remember one Regent was perfectly willing to vote for Saxon but thought he should wait a couple of weeks.

Chall: For a regular Regents' meeting?

Heller: Yes. Well, he finally gave in on that. He wasn't going to vote; he wasn't going to be present. He didn't believe in it. That's the sort of thing you run up against. You can see, once you're ready to choose, you really should do it.

Well, we did get the votes, thank heavens, late in the day we did. This was nothing against Saxon per se, but as I say, one person thinks it's too rushed and another that you should go back to these constituent groups one more round. I've forgotten the details now. But anyway—
Chall: What a grueling day!

Heller: Oh, it is grueling. But this had been going on for weeks, you know.

Chall: What about the committee? I'm interested in the make-up of the committee. Were the differences in the points of view of the people who were appointed—did that make any difference in the selection?

Heller: No. Bill Smith was chairman then of the Regents. The chairman, really, always tries to make up a pretty fair panel. If you look at this—Glenn Campbell was the most conservative there, and a Reagan appointee. Dean Watkins was quite conservative, but a very good Regent. I think I've mentioned that before.

Chall: Yes, you have.

Heller: But he is basically conservative, of course; a Reagan appointee. Bill Roth was always considered the most liberal of those on the committee. I was considered medium liberal. I'm sort of the middle group to which Ed Carter basically belonged, and "Dutch" De Witt Higgs belonged. So that's—I guess the way you'd break it down is maybe in Bill Smith's mind, Bill Roth and I, and then Ed Carter and Dutch Higgs, and then—Oh, and Bob Reynolds was a Reagan appointee, but very moderate.

Chall: So it was a moderate group then?

Heller: Glenn was the most, by far the most conservative on there, and I guess Bill Roth the most liberal.

Chall: Did it create any disharmony with respect to the ultimate choices?

Heller: No. Not really at all. I've seen it at one point or two on chancellors create a little disharmony, but at that point there wasn't any particular disharmony there. The committee itself was quite easy to work with.

Chall: Did Jerry Brown, who was governor then, take any interest?

Heller: Oh, you're right. I remember that Brown had Saxon come up to Sacramento to be interviewed. I don't think Brown particularly came to the meetings of the committee.

Chall: At the final Regents' meeting, was he there?

Heller: I don't remember. I just don't, because when it finally came up, it was unanimous. No, that's not true, because it was a special meeting where it was confirmed. But there was no animosity against Saxon. It was a matter of judgment. You can't have everything
Heller: perfect every time. There's always some-- Saxon, in a way, was an unknown quantity to a lot of people. I knew what a good job he had done at UCLA administratively.

Chall: Why? Is that because of your long term on the Regents, or did you know him before?

Heller: Well, because I knew him, and I liked him. I used to see him at All-Faculty Conferences. You know, you meet certain people and you just feel on the same beam with them. If Chuck Young was away, he would come to Regents meetings as the vice-chancellor. All the chancellors had substitutes if they were away someplace. So I had met him there. I knew that UCLA was being very well run in certain ways. I used to go visit the different campuses. We were urged to, you know, But I didn't like to go on prearranged meeting days, because then I had to see facilities I didn't want to see or go through motions.

I told Chuck Young that I'd like to pick a date to go to UCLA. I'd gone often enough; I knew the facilities; I knew the whole way around. I said to Chuck, "I don't want to move outside of--" I don't know if they called it Murphy Hall then, the administration building. I said, "I just want to talk to everybody in your administration and find out how UCLA ticks." I was with him a little while, and he turned me over to Dave Saxon. It quite quickly became apparent to me that Chuck was the outside man and that Dave was really running the campus. I understood when Murphy was chancellor how it ran so well, because Murphy was a very different sort of person. But things did go well at UCLA, you know, administratively. I discovered that it was Saxon. Not that he ever told me, but as I moved around that building, it was Saxon who was handling all these administrative things. So I had a high regard for his administrative capacity.

Chall: One of the reasons given in the press why the Regents might have been interested in him is because he was already cutting back some of the budget at UCLA at a time when it was important to do so.

Heller: He understood the problems, because the biggest budget problems at the University are the campus problems. The budgeting all goes via campuses almost entirely—not entirely, but almost entirely. He's doing a very good job on that.

Chall: And the time had come when Reagan and Brown were cutting back.

Heller: Well, it was time for everybody. I've indicated that before. David was able to do that. We could see that. That emerged in the interviews too, very quietly. Dave doesn't toot his own horn, but it emerged quite well.

I was terribly pleased that David had been chosen, but--
Chall: Did you lobby for him?

Heller: I never do.

Chall: On the Regents? Did you lobby a bit for him?

Heller: I never do that. That's the way to kill a candidate! I'll keep my opinion at the beginning. I'm anxious to interview all the candidates. I don't say I was for David from the beginning, because I didn't know what Robben Fleming was like, for example. But against Gardner, whom I thought was unlikely, and a couple of others whom I've forgotten—certainly not Bill McGill, who was never there, and another UCLA professor whom I like enormously, that I didn't think was quite right—Saxon stood out. The chancellors, by the way, all took themselves formally out of consideration, because that's always a possibility, for a university to pick a chancellor. They had a formal motion taking every one of them out. Aldrich could have been a potential president from Irvine; Bowker could have been a potential president from Berkeley, just to name two very obvious ones that were in the right age range. But they refused before we even thought about it and took themselves out. Which I think was smart.

Chall: I was interested in the fact that you also interviewed the wives or the potential candidates with their wives. How important is a wife in this decision?

Heller: Well, I asked myself that question. They can be quiet; they can be very social. It varies enormously. Go back to Kay Kerr, one of the ones I served with. Kay was very active in everything. She was an activist wife, I think you could say that. She was always organizing teas, receptions; she was in everything.

Ida Sproul was a sort of the ideal president's wife in many people's minds. She just tended the home and cared about her family, and knew the names of everybody. Ruth Wellman came in and, of course, Harry was only acting. I think she tried to model herself on Ida Sproul. But it's hard to say. She wasn't there very long. They'd go to the Women's Faculty Club affairs and they'd have these teas. Those things are sort of passe now.

Chall: But then, why did you interview the wife with the husband?

Heller: It's just the way things were done. We didn't interview them, we saw what they were like.

Chall: You didn't ask them questions?

Heller: No, not really. I don't think the wives are necessarily that important, but they can be a good asset.
They can be a liability apparently.

They vary very much, and the chancellors' wives vary a lot too.

Mrs. Bowker, I think, is a professional woman.

Rose Bowker is completely professional and she made it known before he became chancellor that she was not going to follow Esther Heyns's pattern. Esther was a lovely chancellor's wife. You know, very gracious, not high pressure. Her life centered around the Berkeley campus. She suffered with Roger during his troubles. But Rose made it known that she was going to be a different sort of chancellor's wife, that she would do all the formal entertaining that the job called for, but she would not be going to teas, doing any daytime activities. And it's worked perfectly well, very well. As a matter of fact, she likes the parties at their house better than Al Bowker does! She loves them. She's a good hostess. There is a lot of entertaining involved in all these things.

That doesn't change? Entertaining--

Now, nobody knew Shirley Saxon at all, had never seen her, including me. Maybe I'd seen her once, but not really. Nancy Hitch, in my opinion, wanted to do everything to perfection. And perhaps she found that big chancellor's house somewhat overwhelming. You know, we had re-done Blake House. The Hitches were the first occupants of Blake House.

Is that the one in Kensington?

Yes. Which had belonged to the University. You see, we hadn't been faced with a house for the president before that, because Clark Kerr had his own home. He never used what is now called University House at all. Well, he used it occasionally for entertaining, but otherwise not. It never entered his head to move over, because when he was chancellor of Berkeley, Bob Sproul, who was president of the University, just stayed there as the campuses grew, you see. So when there was a Berkeley chancellor, Clark, Bob Sproul would no more have moved out of that house after all those years--and it made no difference to Clark. He added on to his own home a little bit to make it good for the amount of entertaining he had to do. So it didn't bother him at all.

Then when Clark became president, it never entered his head to move to that house, which is really essentially Berkeley. It was a good decision. So we really didn't have the problem when Harry was acting president or Marty Meyerson was such a short time--He was acting chancellor, but Harry was acting president. Harry had his own home and just continued that way.
Heller: So we were faced with the fact that we had no place for the Hitches. They had a very small house in Berkeley. We had no place for the president to live. So we took Regents' funds and did over Blake House.

Chall: It's a beautiful place.

Heller: Well, it was quite controversial at the time. I remember many arguments about that. There were some of the Regents who wanted to tear it down, but others, of which I was one, felt it was too beautiful a place to tear down. We should redo it and make do with some of the peculiarities of the inside arrangement, which are strange, I will admit. It cost quite a bit. Of course, nothing now, but it seemed quite a bit at the time to redo and refurnish.

Shirley Saxon loves home with David. She doesn't feel compelled to go to all the Regents' meetings. In fact, she'd rather not.

Chall: You mean the wives also go to Regents' meetings?

Heller: No, she says she suffers: if he's under attack for anything, then she suffers. Very straightforward. Housekeeping is just easy to Shirley. So while everything's beautifully done, it's no chore to her. She doesn't suffer. She decided she didn't want any permanent help in that big house. Nancy had this Chinese couple and they couldn't speak English. Shirley inherited them. And Shirley just couldn't stand it, because she couldn't control her own house. She decided she could handle it perfectly well alone, and she just has somebody cater when she has dinner parties. Shirley also understands cooking. She's an excellent cook, and can tell caterers what to do. It's just easy for her, that's all.

Chall: Sounds like an ideal combination.

Heller: And Shirley doesn't get too involved in any campus affairs. She's really very interested in everything, but she doesn't get down to the tea parties and that sort of thing at all. Nancy Hitch did quite a bit of that.

Chall: Is that a change of times, perceptions of the role of the woman—?

Heller: I think it's a change of times. But it's quite appropriate. I think there are some people who still fuss a little bit. The Saxons have done an awful lot of entertaining.

Chall: Whom do they entertain? What's the entertaining for?

Heller: Entertainment? Well, for various reasons. We'll take Saxon; those are the ones I can remember most. There might be some important educational visitor from the East that they want to have people in
Heller: to meet. They'll make a list. Once I remember they had all the Bay Area legislators and their wives. And they always ask some Regents along with all of these. I'm not sure how they pick the Regents; but they don't have all the Regents, they have maybe three or four Regents and wives. Another time they had the presidents or their equivalent of all the Bay Area state colleges and private colleges.

Heller: To finish up on the entertainment. The Thursday night of the Regents' meeting, because it's basically Thursdays and Fridays, the president always, almost always, had a dinner for the Regents and the chancellors, or the Regents and the vice-presidents, or there'd be variations of it. Actually the Regents' funds took up part of the bills for that. It didn't have to all come out of the president's budget, but it was the president who organized it and he chose the place and selected the food and the wine. They're not late dinners. The Regents' meetings are just too busy. You just cannot do anything that isn't over by nine to nine-thirty. The days are just too long.

The president almost always, in fact, always, does have a dinner either at his home, if it's when the meetings are up north, or sometimes for outgoing chancellors or retiring chancellors, or vice-presidents or what have you. And they vary in degree. Some of them are without spouses; some are with spouses. And every once in a while, some Regent does a party on Thursday night. Regents never do any entertaining except on Thursday night. Most Regents who have a home that will hold people, usually eventually have a party of some sort.

Chall: During the course of what? A term, or--?

Heller: During the course of a term. It's not very often. I only had them here once, because this place is not well located for Regents' meetings. You have to figure a time element always with the Regents. It was very early on: I think it was my second year on the Regents. We used to meet in Santa Cruz on Thursday--maybe my third year--and SF Med School on a Friday. It was one day each. So it was very convenient to have a dinner that they came to here on the way to San Francisco. That's the only time I personally ever had the Regents. Others have entertained in homes, or clubs, or hotels. So I don't want to make the social life sound very glamorous, because it isn't.

Chall: But it is a factor.

Heller: It is a factor. Not all Regents go to all the dinners. Some usually go. I almost always went. Good way to get to know Regents. Only at the beginning, when Clark Kerr was president, would we have evening meetings with Regents. It was always--well, social is the only word to say. I don't mean very social, but it was not business meetings.
Saxon had a lovely dinner for me when I retired, but I was chairman of the board, so that was sort of an exception. He said, "Whom do you want?" Well, I said, "How many people do you want to have?" [chuckles] We made out a list, and could invite children, and a few of my very good friends on the Regents, and chancellor, and the vice-president, and a couple of faculty people that I was very friendly with. Very nice, as a matter of fact.

But presidents and chancellors are pretty busy with this nighttime thing, and the wives are pretty much behind it. They have to do most of the organizing.

I don't want to give the idea of great lushness. Of course, when Ed Pauley would give a party it would be something, and Norton Simon had a party. He and I went off the Regents at the same time, and our meeting was in Los Angeles. He decided to have a party out at Malibu at his home. It was the most lavish party I ever went to.

Chall: Is that right? Among all the others.

Heller: It was just Norton Simon to a "T", but it really was something to see all that art there together. Early on Norton Simon had had the Regents for dinner too before he was divorced and he was married to his former wife, in a very simple home, and it was very nice. Of course, people liked to go to Norton's because of that magnificent art. But they've all had-- The Carters have had a couple of dinner parties, Bill Smith's had them, a lot of people have had them. Depends on the size of your house, really. That's enough on the social end.

Elinor R. Heller, Chairman of the Board of Regents, 1975-1976

Chall: That's fine. We've covered that. I want to now go into your year as chairman of the board. Were you surprised by your choice?

Heller: To the degree that a couple of Regents, not my closest old friends, had said, "You really should be chairman of the board, Ellie." It had never been mentioned; I'd never thought of it, because my mind doesn't just go that way. I said, "Well, that's silly." I was on the committee to choose the officers that year. I said, "I'm on the committee."

We persuaded Bill Smith to come back. He'd served two years and then I've forgotten who was chairman in between. Basically, I think we'd hoped to have had Bob Reynolds chairman, and he was caught up in business affairs. Somehow, we persuaded Bill Smith to come back as chairman, and he did. He'd served the first year.
Heller: You know you can serve for two years. I said, "That's silly. Bill Smith is there." The chairman of the board, by the way, does not come to the meetings of the nominating committee. It's just one of the rules that we have. And then to my surprise, I got to the meeting, it was all going to be pro forma as far as I was concerned and Bill Smith was there. Dutton started talking about—I've forgotten who started, Dutch Higgs or somebody like that—thought I should be chairman. I said, "I'm leaving this meeting. I don't like this, and I'm not going to be a party to this affair." And I walked out. It was down in Los Angeles at that Exposition Center. I was really quite embarrassed about it.

So I don't know what I did around that building. Nobody else was around; it was an off time. I guess there was another meeting taking place and I just wandered in; I didn't particularly belong in it. And then an hour later, Bill Smith came in and pulled me out of that meeting. And he said, "The nominating committee wants you to be next year's chairman." He said, "I've come to tell you, because I want you to know that I want you to do this." Which was very nice of him to do it that way.

I almost didn't do it, that's all.

Chall: Why?

Heller: I don't know. I don't know. I wasn't afraid of it or anything. I hadn't thought about it. But I had chaired a lot of difficult meetings. I had been ed policy chairman for three or four years: not constantly, it sort of changed around, which is an awfully difficult meeting to chair and hadn't minded. I had also been vice-chairman of the board twice. So that—

Chall: You could do it.

Heller: I think my chairmen, except once, were always there. I don't think I actually had to take the meetings except once.

I said, "Well, Bill, I think you should go along and do the next year." He was very firm about this, and so, I said yes. There had been a couple of Regents I knew really should be chairman of the board, and I tossed it off. You often do that in conversation; it's not lobbying. Just as some of us had said, "We really should have Bob Reynolds as chairman of the board" the time before. Nothing formal about it, it's just in conversation. So I really didn't pay that much attention to it.

I think maybe it was good to have a woman be chairman of the board, I don't know. I don't mean the woman's touch. I think it was just good to prove that a woman can chair as well as a man can chair.
First for the Regents

A Woman to Chair the Board

By Ruth Stein

There is practically a Heller chair on the Board of Regents of the University of California. Edward Heller served as a regent from 1942 until his death in 1961, and his grandfather before him was a regent for no less than 39 years. His uncle, the late Sidney Ehrman, was also a regent.

Now Elinor Heller, who was appointed to fill her husband’s unexpired term in 1961, has been elected the first woman to chair the board in the 107-year history of the university. She officially takes over today.

The other morning, sitting in the garden of her Atherton estate, Mrs. Heller, who is 70, laughingly called her election “a triumph for non-discrimination on the basis of age.” The board, she pointed out, is not ageist.

Her manner is as no-nonsense as the short-cropped hairstyle she has worn for years, whether it was in style or not, and her knowledge of the issues facing higher education reveals that she has done her homework.

Mrs. Heller, who comes from an old San Francisco banking family, has been interested in education since the late 1920s when, as education chairman for the League of Women Voters, she sat in on meetings of the San Francisco Board of Education. A graduate of Mills College, she served on its board of trustees for 33 years and was a member of the advisory committee of San Francisco State College.

She takes over as chairman at the same time as the new president of the nine-campus university. “I’ve known David Saxon for a long time. I know we will work together extremely well.” Still, Mrs. Heller admits, “There are bound to be changes.”

The Board of Regents is also faced with a new budget, which Democratic assemblymen have charged does not allocate enough for education, and which Mrs. Heller was worried Governor Brown would “blue pencil” even more.

Although she doesn’t agree with the new governor’s emphasis on austerity, Mrs. Heller believes he is “committed to higher education.” She diplomatically declined to compare him with his predecessor, former Governor Ronald Reagan, whose relationship with the regents was often fiery. “That’s dead and gone,” she said.

“Governor Brown is full of questions,” she said, adding with a laugh, that she’s “not always sure he is listening” to the answers.

“He’s going to challenge our assumptions, and it’s good for all of us to relook at issues. He’s also delighted to be challenged back — he does not resent your disagreeing with him.”

Mrs. Heller disagrees with Governor Brown’s criticism of the regents for paying $260,000 a year to maintain 11 “mansions” (as he calls them) used by the president, vice president and chancellors of the University of California.

“First of all, I don’t like his use of the word ‘mansion.’ It gives the wrong impression. They are just homes.”

She does not believe the homes are extravagant, pointing out that they are “open for every use under the sun,” including entertaining and student meetings.

Mrs. Heller also took issue with the governor for inferring that there are too many employees at UC earning more than $30,000 a year. “We know what competitive salaries are. Ours are not high as first-rate universities go. We’re lucky to have the marvelous people we do.”

In the course of a freewheeling interview, during which she was never without a cigarette, Mrs. Heller also spoke out on:

• The appointment of graduate student Carol Mock as the first student regent in the university’s history. “I’ve always strongly believed in the need for a student regent, and I’m just delighted with the way the committee worked out the method of selection.” She believes a student will bring “good insights” to the board and assured that she would have “full and equal status” with the other regents.

• More faculty positions for women and minorities. “I believe in affirmative action in general. But is is easier said than done. The university is very alert to the needs, but the pools aren’t as great as they should be.” She feels strongly that the university should not lower its standards in order to bring in women and minorities.

• Her concept of the University of California. Mrs. Heller believes the nine campuses should function as “one university” and hopes that campus transfers can be made “much less complicated.” However, she also believes that the campuses should have diversity — “that’s one of the challenges now.”

• The financial squeeze. The money being spent by the health sciences departments and university-run hospitals is the major problem facing the Board of Regents right now, Mrs. Heller believes. Unpaid

Besides education, Elinor Hel-

ler, 70, loves tennis, reading

and fine printing; once she

even learned to set type
patient bills at the five medical school hospitals skyrocketed to $45 million this year. "We can't let health sciences drain off other resources of the university."

Because of the economy, she said this is not the time for the university to expand and called the desire expressed by some campuses for their own law school "very dubious. There are too darn many lawyers who can't find jobs."

The argument has been made that colleges should be preparing students to earn a living. Mrs. Heller disagrees. "I don't think the university is basically a vocational school. A tremendous number of entering students don't know what they want to do. They need a broader education to start with."

However, she does feel that counselors have a responsibility to tell students, once they have decided on a profession, "what the job market is at that time."

Being a conscientious member of the Board of Regents takes up more time than Mrs. Heller can keep track of. In addition to meetings, there's all that phoning back and forth, "and I think about it a lot."

As chairman, Mrs. Heller will run the meetings and serve as an ex-officio voting member of every committee. "I hope the job doesn't entail a lot of speaking," she says, "because that's not my forte."

Her other interests include tennis (she's played since she was 12); reading "an awful lot" (one floor of her two story living room is filled with wall-to-wall books); and a passion for good printing. "Some people love painting, I love fine printing." Mrs. Heller revealed that at one time she even learned how to set type. "But I didn't have agile enough fingers."

In eight months Mrs. Heller's term as a regent expires and she says she has no thought of being reappointed. But, she added in her matter of fact way, "I wouldn't have to because my interest in education..."
Chall: Well, I think those are important things to prove.

Heller: When I think back on it, I think that was a good thing to prove. One of my good friends on the board—and I had been chairman of all these other committees—educational policies completely. You know, on the Regents, we always speak very formally and refer to the chairman or the Regent, or the president by title. You know, it's all sort of a formal structure. Of course, the question never came up until I took my chair at the first meeting of the Regents. One of my friends—this was in public session—pulled up his mike and said, "Say, what are we to call you? Madame chairman, or chairperson, or chairwoman or what?" I said, "I'm a chairman, and I don't want to hear any other [laughs] titles." So I was chairman from then on. But I notice that term "chair" is being used more and more.

Chall: Yes it is.

Heller: I feel quite firmly on this subject that the chairman is just a generic word.

Chall: It makes it simpler, doesn't it.

Heller: Well, it's just like president!

Chall: Except that it has the word man in it.

Heller: Well, what about chairperson? It has son in it. It's just generic, as far as I'm concerned.

Chall: So you solved that right away.

Heller: That was solved immediately. And I was never addressed as Ms. But that was beforehand. I had established I was never a Ms. So I was chairman, and that suited me very well.

Chall: You were the choice of the committee, you were not a dark horse?

Heller: Well, the only thing about dark horses is that everybody is a dark horse because the committee really makes its mind up ahead of time. The committees always, in all the years I served, came out with a unanimous recommendation. The most minor electing is for the officers of the Regents. The committee meets usually during the Regents' session for the nominating committee, and they xerox up a slip and pass it out to you very quickly and there it is on the report of the nominating committee. It's on the agenda, and "All those in favor?" "Aye." They don't even mention who it is. I've never heard any but unanimous choices.
Heller: I've known times when I was first on where there were some arguments in the committee, but they got ironed out. Usually it's really quite simple. Basically, they want somebody who's competent to chair a meeting, which is the main part. If you're a good chairman, it doesn't particularly matter what your philosophy is. You know I've mentioned before what an impeccable chairman Dean Watkins was. He couldn't have been better. You couldn't ask for a better chairman. Dutch Higgs is an excellent chairman.

Some preside at a meeting better than others. I think I have that ability to do it. The main thing is to be very fair handed, and let everybody have his say; recognize them; don't let anybody talk too long, which is a little hard when you're chairing when Governor Jerry Brown is present. But otherwise I have cut people off. I've just said, "We have to get on to the next item." I have a good sense of time, and I knew we were taking too much time without cutting him off pretty well. You have to be a little firm.

Chall: Well, that's what you're expected to be.

Heller: That's what you're expected to be.

Chall: That's part of chairing the--

Heller: That's part of chairing the meeting. It was interesting being chairman.

Of course, any Regent can go to any meeting, except the nominating committee. I served on the nominating committee three or four times over the years that I was there so that being an ex officio member of every committee makes only one thing different: that you have a vote. And most votes on the Regents, you know, are unanimous, or with a couple of nos. We get through so many items that take no time at all.

What I found interesting as chairman, though I found it to a degree when I was chairman of educational policies, was that as chairman I worked with the president on what would be on the agenda and what he was going to put on there. First of all, it's important if you're chairman, to know as much as you can about every item that's coming up. You don't talk, you talk less when you're chairman. But I think it's very important to know the issues. So you work with the president a great deal in that period.

But when I was chairman of educational policies, I worked with one of the vice-presidents always to know what the agenda was. Really, the committee agendas in a way are more difficult than--
Chall: That's where the policies are established and where the arguments are ironed out?

Heller: Yes. You really need to know quite a bit more about it, and you have to know, as much as you can, who's going to want to speak—who particularly wants to speak to the subject. Certain chancellors, vice-presidents—there are a lot of people to watch when you're chairing a meeting, because you've got all those who don't need special recognition, who are not at the table. There are all the chancellors and all the vice-presidents and the chairman and vice-chairman of the statewide Academic Senate, and occasionally somebody wants to speak from the senate about a particular campus. There are the student body presidents, who, in recent years, have been allowed to speak before committees. So you have eyes on a tremendous number of people.

The chairman always sits next to president of the University, whether you're chairman of a committee or of the board. I found that the presidents, when you were chairing, were very good at saying to you, "So-and-so wants to speak." Often I would have seen that they wanted to speak, and I'd sort of nod to them. They were good at keeping their eyes open. Of course, the Regents you can see, because they're all at the same table. There are a lot of people that have free access to speaking. Fortunately, a lot of them don't have to speak all the time.

Chall: They don't have to notify you officially ahead of time that they want to be on the agenda?

Heller: Not those people. They have to speak to the agenda always, though. That's one thing—we're talking about chairing—that I am very strict about. Keeping to the agenda, because there's always somebody who wants to stray from the agenda. I'm very strict about keeping to the agenda items. Sometimes I'd have to rule that it was out. I'd always say, "You can appeal my ruling; it won't hurt me at all if you reverse me."

Chall: They wouldn't do it very often, I'm sure.

Heller: No, I don't mind saying that. I think maybe a woman has a slight advantage that way.

Chall: Why?

Heller: It doesn't embarrass me if I was wrong on my decision.

Chall: That would be your particular type of woman?
Heller: Maybe. It didn't embarrass me at all, and they knew it. I'd always say, "Appeal my ruling." I'd often say that. I don't mind.

Chall: Do you think men are more embarrassed to be countered?

Heller: Yes. I just feel that. I didn't feel--it didn't bother me at all. And I had one other thing that I did as chairman. We really go by Robert's Rules of Order. Now, the only chairman I've ever seen who really knew those inside and out was Dean Watkins. He really knew them to perfection. I knew them, you know, pretty well, but when I saw that I was going to get into a parliamentary tangle, I would just stop the meeting, and I'd say, "Wait a second. I want general counsel to tell me what I'm getting into here." And I'd just throw it--you know, other people have parliamentarians, isn't that right?

Chall: That's right, they do.

Heller: I noticed some of the men got themselves into bad tangles because they didn't want to--I say men because they were only men--because they didn't want to ask for advice. I didn't mind a bit just saying, "Now, wait a second. I'm going to get into a tangle here. I want general counsel to tell me where I am."

Chall: Who would help you?

Heller: General counsel.

Chall: That was Mr. [Donald] Reidhaar?

Heller: Yes.

Chall: He would know Robert's Rules?

Heller: Knew them from the inside out.

Chall: I didn't know that was a factor.

Heller: Oh, he was marvelous at it. And he's very attentive. General counsel sits at the table. He's called on quite often for opinions, anyway, legal opinions. Reidhaar is excellent at following every word that's said, so you never catch him up short. I guess Tom Cunningham did it too, but I didn't have occasion to use him so much. But if you are not following Robert's Rules of Order, you can get into a mess, you know. Robert's Rules are required by the Regents' standing orders. In the committees there's a little laxity about it, a little more informality about the order of procedure, but just a little bit. On the hot and heavy arguments, you really do need some structure that you're working with.
Heller: There are other things about being chairman of the board. There's nothing special really about it when you think about it. I think your judgment is asked more often in between about items that are going on the agenda.

Chall: That's with the president.

Heller: I think so.

Chall: Then you had close liaison with David Saxon all that year?

Heller: Yes, or anybody he might designate.

Chall: Depending on the issue?

Heller: Depending on it. But as I say, as chairman, you only get certain items that are controversial that come to you. Most of them get ironed out in the committees, not entirely. Some Regents always try to reserve the right to have it come to the full board and not be voted on in committee. They have different reasons for it. Maybe they think they can get more votes.

Chall: Were the Regents, all of them, even those with whom you'd had differences in the past, were they on the whole cooperative during your term?

Heller: Yes. On the whole, they really were. And on the whole they were quite friendly with each other, strangely enough.

Chall: So it was a harmonious year?

Heller: Oh, you mean when I was chairman?

Chall: Yes.

Heller: I didn't have any problems at all. I always said I had an easy year. Somebody said, "Well, you don't stir up trouble." I said, "I don't know that that's--"

Chall: But troubles could be stirred up on campuses, having nothing to do with who was chairman of the board.

Heller: Well, I had a new president, whom I liked very much, that I got on with very well, we could communicate very well. I think it was a period—it often happens—sort of a—I don't like to use the word "honeymoon" period, but David hadn't become, I don't say he has, but he certainly hadn't become controversial at that time. You know, things that hit the papers the most are sometimes the least controversial. I think I mentioned to you last time about the budget process. How it comes in and it's always approved. It's a very carefully worked out budget. I've never seen any changes in
Heller: the budget. The president will come in—you see, we have all these Regents' funds, for example—with a great list of how that income is going to be used in the following year. The items are all very well thought out. They're almost always approved. There isn't always money for all of them, but they are very carefully done, to tell you the truth.

And there are certain items that appear over and over that the Regents always fund, like the Education Abroad Program. It does not come into the Regents' appropriations except that the sum that goes to the support of any student in the University may be used by that student for the year abroad and then we have to supplement that. They have to get themselves to their place abroad, but there are extra costs, because we have to send faculty over and make certain arrangements with the universities that we have the programs with, a few reciprocal advantages. So there's always a sum in there for the Education Abroad Program, which has been very successful always. Things like that. We have to pay for the director and his staff of the overall Education Abroad Program.

Chall: And the president of the University comes in with that?

Heller: The president comes in with all of these items; I have rarely not seen accepted—in fact, because they're perfectly sound. Sometimes, you know, the scholarships and grants, sometimes there's a move to get a little bit more scholarship money. There's always pressure for that though—well, they don't call them minority programs, but the underprivileged students—there's quite a bit of money for that. They vary from year to year, what they are. But they're always good.

But that whole huge supplementary budget comes right through the president's office. And every president I've ever seen has been very fair to all the different campuses. No one campus is favored over another.

We lend funds from one of our funds too, to the alumni associations of different colleges, different universities, campuses. We'll lend the money to get a drive going. You know, places like UCLA, and Berkeley, and Davis have such a huge number of alumni, that in order to get a drive in place, they need advanced funding, and then they eventually pay it back. We've loaned for student unions, which do not come under state funds, against pledges and student help and whatever. We usually issue, have always, while I was there, revenue bonds, which we could do. University of California revenue bonds have very high ratings, you know, because the credit of the Regents is very high.

Chall: You can issue revenue bonds without an election?
Heller: Yes. All we have to do is sell them and banks, investment houses are usually very anxious to get them. They're highest quality. So there's a lot of money. We built our dormitories that way—anything that can be repaid. But we had no trouble placing our bond issues. Our garages, you know, campus garages—those were all done with bonds. Now, I don't know what's happened to them now, with the interest rate, because our bonds are some very reasonable ones. When I look at the interest rates now, I think, "Good heavens, lucky they built everything that they did when they did." I'm just talking about the revenue bonds. You could no more have the three and a half percent, four and a half percent bonds. And we monitor those very carefully. The payments are always on the dot, the principal and interest. Some of them have a life of forty years. It's a big financial operation, too.

Chall: What about the investments which the students now, and other people, are looking askance at—some of these investments in South Africa?

Heller: Well, they were slightly controversial when I was there. I think we had one meeting where some students were acting up about South Africa. But it really belongs with the investment committee to make the decision. That's one of those iffy questions. I know perfectly well some of my own investments have some South African interests. Not primarily, but you can make a very good case. I'm not going out of my way to look for them; on the other hand, if they're good investments, I don't—as a matter of fact, I've personally gone so far as to write if they have anything in South Africa, what their policy is. You'll find that most places that have any interest in South Africa have a very good policy, which is equal opportunity employment, and prevailing wages. I don't feel very strongly on this subject, but some people do. It never quite came to a head. There was some argument. A preponderance of the Regents feel, I think—I'm not speaking for now, I'm speaking for when I was in—about the way I did. And I know that it came up a couple of years after I was off the Regents in much hotter form and they kept the same policy.

Mills has a good written policy on this. It's just when the emotion takes over. South Africa is not a constant emotion, I've noticed.

Another thing that never came up when I was there—I knew there was always a latent chance—that was the question of our laboratories. Livermore and Los Alamos. There's more anti-nuclear feeling, I think, now, than there was then. There was some, but we knew a little more about—That was the anti-war feeling, not the dangers of plutonium per se. It was always there. There are great prestige elements for the University for having those
Heller: laboratories. You can't deny the overhead that we get, which is a positive benefit. But I think the University—and this is talking in something I have nothing to do with now—is going to eventually—all research universities—are eventually going to have to come to a decision: Should there be weapons work within the University? And I don't know what the answer's going to be. But I never had to face that particular one.

There were some third-world problems when I was there, but they're constant. They're always being worked on, but it's easier said than done to get results, as you well know.

Chall: It takes a long time to go through the system.

Heller: Oh, does it ever.

Chall: What about working with the secretary, Marjorie Woolman?

Heller: Oh, she's fine.

Chall: Was that a responsibility of yours, or of the chairman? With whom does Marjorie Woolman work?

Heller: She works with all the Regents. She loves them all. If you're a Regent, you can practically do no wrong in Marjorie Woolman's life. She's their secretary.

Chall: What does that mean? What are her duties?

Heller: Oh, her duties are enormous. In fact, I think Marge retires in two or three years. It's one of those jobs that's going to have to be split up, because she's been there so long and she has so much knowledge. I don't think any one person can take it over. She's got to keep all the minutes, all the records; she's got to examine all the material that comes before the Regents from the campuses to the president's office to be sent out to the Regents, to see that it is properly worded, properly within the framework of the Regents' rules. She's forever having to revise things like that.

She is responsible for getting out all the materials for every Regents' meeting, every special Regent. You know, the materials are voluminous! Just to get it produced and sent out is not easy, and she demands perfection. She has about five or six people working for her there. A huge volume of things her office has to do. All the arrangements for all meetings. That may sound easy, but it isn't. You've got to see that the right chairs are there, the right number of chairs, the microphones are in place, the lunches are ordered.

Chall: I see, she has all of that.
Heller: She has all the transportation on her hands. Her office has. In Los Angeles, her office arranges all the flights, guesses about when we're going to get out and what flight we take back. She does all that; she keeps a list of who needs transportation. The one thing the Regents get that other people don't get is—we pay for all our hotel rooms ourselves—we do get met at an airport by University cars. That is the one thing. But she has to keep the schedule. Here are Regents coming in from all over. Some come from New York, and she has to see that they are met, taken to their hotels and to their meetings. It's constant. Whenever any Regents want anything, phone Marge. Want information, it's up to her. Some Regents ask for too much. I don't mean that in money, too much time.

Chall: What are they asking her for? Background?

Heller: They want research done on such and such a problem. I don't say she will do the research necessarily, unless it has to do with the Regents. But she'll get it moving, and provide the information.

Chall: By going back through her minutes, is that it?

Heller: Yes. She has to protect those files; she has to keep the open files and the closed files. It used to be all closed, of course. Under her custody, she has all the notes of the Regents going back to the beginning. Isn't that something?

Chall: Yes.

Heller: And she can lay hands on anything. And she has extra copies, usually. I've often asked her if she has such and such, and she'll have it in the mail the next day.

Chall: She knows how to find it!

Heller: I can't even begin to say what she does. She runs that office fantastically.

Chall: That's an important service.

Heller: It's a very important service. She has to keep in touch with the treasurer's office—the treasurer of the Regents—because there has to be back and forth between those two offices, and general counsel, who's also an officer of the Regents. So they have to meet together, and then she has to work completely with the person in the president's office who's assigned to the agenda items, as you can see. She has to see that all contracts that come before the Regents for approval are in proper form. Of course, the general counsel is part of that, but she has to be sure.
Heller: I can remember there used to be a rule that these government contracts—I've forgotten what happened to it—that you had to swear that this had been read to the governing body. Publicly read to all of them. I can remember when I was first a Regent that somebody would be standing over in the corner while the meeting was going on, reading this thing out loud. You know, these endless contracts. That rule has sort of gone by the boards. But she has to examine every single document and put the seal on it. There's a tremendous amount that goes through her.

Now that we have a student Regent, she has to arrange for the student Regent to have some place to operate from. There's no natural place. The students really don't want to work out of the ASUC headquarters, because most of them are trying to be Regents, and not that. So she'll find a room here or a room there for them with a phone.

Chall: Do the rest of you have a room, a place, if you come in?

Heller: No.

Chall: Just the student Regent?

Heller: Well, there are reasons. We never used it. I did everything out of my house; most of them do it out of their office. Some Regents keep their exact expenses. It depends on your nature, basically. Some of them have to keep their exact expenses. But those who could afford to, some of them paid every cent of their expenses personally; others don't. I don't know which does what, because I've never asked unless a person mentions it. I put in for my airline fares. I didn't personally take my per diem. I sort of followed Ed Heller's pattern, and he just said, "If I can do this job, I can certainly make that much contribution." It was convenient to do the airline tickets through her, and she'd pay those. I never kept mileage, driving to things. But I did use the University car—have it meet me.

Chall: Oh, yes, that's a convenience.

Heller: Well, that is very convenient when you get to places like L.A. International Airport. You don't always make your connections, either. Sometimes there's a misunderstanding.

But I think most of the Regents put their per diems and some put their mileages in. But the per diem does not begin to cover your expenses. I don't know what it is now, but it was twenty-eight dollars a day.

Chall: I think it's about forty-five now.
Heller: Well, it was twenty-eight when I was there. It's the same as the state per diem. Of course, the mileage was about fourteen cents then. I'm not sure. It must be more than that now. But you get an awful lot of service. The secretary of the Regents will write letters for you if you ask her to. It depends on your own facilities a lot, I think.

Chall: Did you use the secretary of the Regents, or your own secretary here for much of your--

Heller: I used my own secretary. However, somewhere along the line, the Regents never had their own Regents' stationery. Someplace along the line, when I was a Regent the decision was made to give everybody, every Regent, stationery. You know, it's the regular University of California stationery, and "Mrs. Edward H. Heller, Regent." Which is quite nice to have, as a matter of fact. I could of used that during the FSM when the letters were pouring in by the hundreds.

Chall: Yes, I wondered how you answered all those. Those were all answered here?

Heller: I just answered them on my own stationery. Most of them were very brief answers. A lot of the Regents didn't even try to answer those things. Some, I didn't answer. You know, they were too crazy.

Chall: You must have spent a great deal more time as chairman than you had as either a Regent or a committee chairman when you were the chairman of the board.

[Interview 26: March 26, 1980]##

Chall: You had told me that it required more time, naturally, to be chairman than to be Regent. We discussed a bit of that. Did it require more ceremonial time as well? Attendance at functions, and--?

Heller: No, not really. When I was first on the Regents, there was much more ceremonial time than now, because, well, basically, the decentralization has made quite a difference. You can do it if you want. You're automatically invited to every commencement, everything. I just made a rule for myself that I wouldn't go to any commencements.

Chall: You wouldn't go to any?

Heller: Well, good heavens! There'd be nine of them every year! Usually I would show up at Charter Day at Berkeley--march in the procession. That's really the only one I did with regularity.

Chall: I notice that--I think it was your last year--you spoke at one of the commencements.
Heller: That was earlier on. The political science department asked me to speak at a commencement once. Berkeley has the smaller commencements now, by departments. They had asked me. I'm a bum speaker. I hated doing it at all.

Chall: I was wondering why you did it, because you had told me you didn't like to do it.

Heller: Well, it was basically, I guess, because I knew a lot of them in that department and Ed Heller had always been very partial to the political science department, and they just made a good plea. So I said, "Well, I'll speak briefly." When I spoke there, it was the first time commencements hadn't had excitement. I really had to be awfully careful what I said; therefore I said practically nothing. If I remember correctly I did say that they'd have to get another speaker. They got, I remember Tom Blaisdell. You know him?

Chall: Yes, I know who he is.

Heller: He's emeritus now. I think may be he was emeritus then. It was a very simple ceremony. I don't remember what I talked about, I really don't.

Chall: But the main thing is, as the chairman of the Regents, you weren't required, or didn't do much in addition.

Heller: No. Just didn't have to do those things, thank heavens. You know, it takes so much time out of your life.

Chall: It was time enough that you took as chairman.

All-Faculty Conferences and Other Statewide Meetings

Heller: Yes, and before being chairman it took an awful lot. I much preferred going to campuses for non-ceremonial times, seeing what was going on. I don't think there's anything duller than sitting through long dinners. One thing I did as chairman, but I did it other times too with more regularity than any Regent while I was a Regent, and that was I used to go to what's called the All-Faculty Conferences. I don't think I ever mentioned those.

Chall: No, but I know what they are.

Heller: Clark Kerr*started those. There were a selected number adding up to maybe about 125 faculty people of all ranks from among the nine colleges. They'd gather for three days, usually on one campus or another. They'd just have all sorts of seminars and meetings, and

*The All-University Faculty Conferences were actually started by Robert Gordon Sproul in 1944.
Heller: and they'd usually have a theme. I happened to like that very much. I got to know a tremendous number of faculty from all over the University.

Chall: And you felt comfortable about participating?

Heller: Oh, very. Very.

Chall: Were Regents asked to participate?

Heller: Yes, but very few ever did. I think they were all asked, I'm not sure. I guess so. I was often there as the only Regent. I can remember Phil Boyd at a couple of them. See, most of the Regents don't take time. They can't, you know, for three days, for that sort of thing. I felt I got to know an awful lot about the University through those All-Faculty Conferences. They were very interesting. I'd go on a panel sometimes, if it was appropriate. Or if they wanted, I'd answer questions. There were periods where they'd like me to answer questions from a Regent's point of view. I always felt that Regents missed a lot by not attending those. They're not held every year. I think every other year--I've forgotten.

Chall: Did President Hitch continue with them in the same way Clark Kerr had?

Heller: Yes, Clark Kerr had started them. I remember the first one with President Hitch, because the faculty were very apprehensive. Clark Kerr had been at his most skillful at that sort of thing. He really was awfully good.

The last evening after dinner was always called the President's Question Box, where he let anybody there just pepper him with questions, and he answered them extremely well and very directly. In some tough times, too. I remember the apprehension: how would Charles Hitch do on that? As a matter of fact, Charlie Hitch did excellently. He was a very knowledgeable, informed person. I always felt the faculty began to have more trust in him after he participated in that question box. You know, it's two hours of constant questions.

I know some faculty just put up their noses about that All-Faculty Conference. Some chancellors like them and some don't. They're free to participate. I personally feel that it's a very good device. I've never thought of asking if they're continuing. I do remember the first time--I remember Dave Saxon was at an All-Faculty Conference. So I would assume he's continued it. There's very little you can do to show the cohesiveness of the University.

Chall: This would be a good way.
Heller: Yes. You've probably never heard of them before.

Chall: Yes. Harry Wellman spoke about them too.*

Heller: I always thought they were extremely good. Of course, you know the chancellors meet between Regents' meetings or before Regents' meetings every month. So the chancellors get together as a group. It's hard to confine what I did to the year I was chairman. I'm wandering a bit. But the more you've done before you're chairman, the more you know. That's all I'm really saying.

When Clark was president, he got in the habit of asking two or three Regents to the chancellor's meeting. Clark was very partial to the Regents he invited. He kept asking two or three or four of the same ones over and over again.

Chall: Were you one of them?

Heller: Oh, yes. They were fun, but they—you know what I heard a lot: there'd usually be one chancellor off on some subject or problem. But then after Hitch came in, and quite properly, I think, the chancellors with Hitch, decided that they just didn't get enough business done with Regents present. Which I understand. There are so many problems that sort of have to be solved administratively.

Chall: Why? Did they feel constrained?

Heller: I think so. Or some Regents would get them off the point. I think Hitch, and I may be wrong, seems to me he felt, and quite properly, it shouldn't be a select few. If Regents were going to be asked, he should rotate them. And then he just stopped.

I personally approve of the stoppage, because there are so many general problems administratively that really don't belong before the Regents that need to be ironed out. They do have to meet every month.

Chall: Do they meet all day? Do they take all day, at least?

Heller: They usually get together about three in the afternoon and work all afternoon and all through dinner. They have it maybe at Hitch's, or maybe at one of the chancellor's homes, someplace in an informal atmosphere. They get a lot done.

Chall: That isn't much time to consider all the problems that they might have in common.

Heller: Well, no. When you do it regularly, it seems to be a very good vehicle for--

Chall: Running a nine-campus university is not a simple thing.

Heller: Oh, by no means. It's very, very difficult. Now, of course, they're griping about the statewide half the time. They're not getting the proper service out of it, or demands are being made on them that they can't fulfill, or the level of their budgets--oh, it's no use even going into it.

Once in a while, there'll be a special problem that affects one campus that will interest all the campuses. I'm guessing because we weren't having them then, but I would guess the Angela Davis problem, for example, probably was of concern to all campuses, because if it happened at one campus, it could happen at all of them. Chancellors are a pretty strong-minded bunch, which is good.

No, I didn't have to do anything specially as chairman of the board, really. It's just that—you know, my own feelings of being a chairman—I just had to know an awful lot more. Conduct meetings properly.

Chall: So you really worked in the president's office quite a bit with the president.

Heller: Yes, with his okay. I didn't have to get a formal okay. He gave me a general okay to work directly with, you know, to communicate directly with any chancellor or vice-president. He knew I wouldn't be abusing it.

Workload and Ceremonial Obligations

Chall: Do you think you put more time in as chairman than previous chairmen, let's say some of the men?

Heller: Well, I had more time to put in than any of the previous chairmen. I've often wondered how they ever got it done. Of course, I know that when Dutch Higgs, for example, was chairman of the board, or Ted Meyer, who were both attorneys in very big and prominent firms, they made arrangements with their firms that most of their workload—they'd be relieved for two years, and their partners would carry the great bulk of their workload. Not all of it, because they just felt they had to make time. I don't remember how Gerry Hagar handled his—that was another attorney. Of course, it wasn't quite as tremendous a job then.
Heller: Ed Carter always seemed to juggle everything. He has a very quick mind, and he's very used to administration, and he can cut through things pretty well. I think Bill Smith probably had some arrangement—in fact, I'm sure had some arrangement with his firm. We had a lot of attorneys who were chairmen of the board. Ed Carter of course was not one. And Bob Reynolds, as I explained, just said he didn't have the time when he was first informally asked to be chairman of the board. But he's doing it now. He's at the end of his second year. It does take time. It has nothing to do with being chairman. I think if you're a UCLA-oriented Regent, you've got a lot of basketball games! [laughs] But I didn't feel any obligation to them. I always go to the Big Game up here, always have, and probably always will.

I have a personal feeling that the chancellors are perfectly happy not to have the Regents be part of a ceremonial thing. It used to be such a big thing. And the importance of it was exaggerated.

When Ed Pauley was chairman of the board, and before him, I guess, Eddie Dickson, which was Ed Heller's time, not my time, Ed Pauley wouldn't let any—he wanted to be in charge of every ceremony. That day is long since passed.

Chall: Ceremonies being Charter Days—

Heller: Charter Days, commencements, sometimes presidential visits. Truman came to Berkeley for a commencement, I think, That was before I was on the Regents. Jack, John Kennedy, came to Berkeley at the time of the inauguration of Ed Strong as chancellor. Lyndon Johnson came twice in the south. Once to UCLA—I've forgotten the occasion—and once to Irvine for the groundbreaking for the new campus. I remember being out in the field with nothing much completed. Eisenhower came to UCLA. It wasn't a Charter Day, if I remember correctly. I can remember where it was; I went down for that. When the presidents of the United States come, most of the Regents show up. I don't remember Nixon ever—I'm trying to think of recent years—Nixon ever showing up and Carter no, not to my knowledge.

Chall: That's the presidents.

Heller: I guess all but Nixon and Carter came to something or other, either when they were president or afterwards. I think most of those were when they were president. I'm not sure about Eisenhower, whether he was president or just through being president.

Those are great and glorious occasions in one way, but they're awfully expensive. Everything has to be done so perfectly, and then security, all that. It's the sort of expense that I think has gone out for the University. This is my best guess. I may be wrong.
Chall: Well, we'll see. I think that times may change again, but when you're concerned about budgets, I suppose that's one place where you can cut. And particularly if you think students are going to have demonstrations against a president or somebody else who is prominent.

Heller: Yes, well, that's true.

Chall: I think they even had demonstrations the day that Kennedy arrived.

Heller: I don't remember about that.

Chall: I remember reading something about that.

Heller: I remember the day he came, and it was a marvelous day. They had to hold it in the stadium, you know, because there was such demand for tickets, they couldn't do the Greek Theatre. I do remember that every single Regent showed up that time.

But the Charter Days, except for Berkeley, have been downgraded. Clark Kerr wanted everybody to have a Charter Day. It wasn't a natural day for any campus, except for Berkeley. They really rebelled against it. You know, it wasn't really their day, it was a Berkeley day. What is done now is that all the chancellors show up at Berkeley Charter Day, and usually the senior chancellor will speak. So that that's one time all the chancellors will come together in one ceremony that I know of.

Chall: Did you once tell me that when you first came onto the Board of Regents that some of the other Regents told you that you needed to be sure that you had a hood and gown ready for these special occasions?

Heller: Oh, there was something underway when I came on the Regents—I've long forgotten the origins because I wasn't there—but somehow there was a committee to decide on new Regents' gowns. I think before they had used just the same black—what you'd call trustees' robes—I guess. There was a committee. I do remember that Buff Chandler and Catherine Hearst, and I think Ed Pauley, were part of this committee. This was like, early on.

Well, I just remember a Regents' meeting—it's so silly when you think of it. Apparently there was an uproar about the color of these robes. Buff Chandler modeling these different kinds of robes that could be had. I don't think Ed Pauley modeled them, but maybe somebody did. Then swatches of material with the color. From that evolved that bright blue robe. You've seen it.

Chall: Yes, I have.
Heller: That became the official Regent's robe. It's sort of silly when you think about it. But it was a big doing and a great fight. I remember the only thing I had to say about it was—it must have been a few months after I came, because I wasn't bashful about speaking up, I do remember—there was a great argument about the caps. There was a great thing about whether they should be mortarboards or the soft caps. Oh, we had a terrific argument about that! I remember Ed Pauley saying, "Well, let the women"—at that time there were three women—"let the women wear the soft ones, and the men will wear the mortarboards." I just remember speaking up and saying, "Regent Pauley, I don't care which sort of cap is decided on, but I insist that the men and women wear the same ones." [laughter] That was so typical of Ed Pauley to say the women should wear the soft ones, sort of distinguishing. So actually, it's mortarboards.

Chall: And then if you have an honorary degree or a Ph.D. you have a certain color that's your own.

Heller: Yes. You have no hood for a Regent's robe unless you have your own. Bill Roth used to be furious, because he actually only had a B.A., though he'd done a lot of studying and was very well informed and very well read. He was infuriated that he couldn't have a hood. He used to tease me, because I had my—you see, no B.A. has a hood. I think they do nowadays, but for us they didn't have any. Before I was a Regent, you see, I'd been given that honorary degree at Mills, which entitled me to a hood. So I immediately had a hood. He used to be furious that I had a hood.

Chall: Somebody should have given him an honorary degree!

Heller: Actually, you feel sort of naked in those things without a hood. It's really very funny.

A lot of the Regents leave their hoods with the secretary, and she takes care of the gowns, too. She'll move them from campus to campus if necessary.

Chall: Another job for her.

Heller: Oh, yes, that's another job for the secretary, especially when we used to go to different campuses. She'd have to know who was going to be there. You had to buy your gown, by the way.

Chall: Is it yours? I mean, do you have your own gown now put away?

Heller: I did. I left it as an extra for anybody to use when I was through being a Regent. No, if I went to Charter Day, for the procession, I'd want a blue robe. But those who were Regents when that action was taken, each had to pay. I remember—I think they were ninety dollars. I can't imagine what they cost now.
Chall: Ninety dollars seems like a large amount of money.

Heller: That's quite a bit. I think maybe there were a couple of people who couldn't afford it, and the Regents' funds—I didn't know, you know, Marge Woolman does those things very skillfully. I think maybe a couple that could afford wouldn't pay for them too, I'm not sure.

That must have been about '62, so there's now an accumulation of robes. You can lengthen them and shorten them. After all, they're not form-fitting. But oh, that chore of that secretary's office moving those robes around all the time. You know, as we dedicated each new campus and inaugurated each new chancellor, x number of Regents would go to those things. And it was up to the secretary's office to get our robes there.

I kept my hood, I'd bring it home always, because I occasionally used it at Mills College, at the ceremonial things. It was too hard to dig it out of the secretary's office. Most people leave their hoods there too.

Chall: What about the Mills trustees? Do they have gowns?

Heller: They use the regular what I call trustee's robe.

Chall: The black.

Heller: Yes, and they have a good supply of them, though I do have my own. Somebody gave me that once. And it cost a lot less than ninety dollars, too, probably. About fifty.

No, Mills' are black with your own hood. That's one of the ceremonial things that I think there's less and less of. But that Regent's robe—I do remember wearing that over to--went to Hong Kong for the inauguration of Chun Ming Lee as president of the new Chinese University in Hong Kong. You see, he was a Berkeley professor.

Without going into too much detail, the only big university in Hong Kong was the University of Hong Kong, which was completely British controlled and very few Chinese ever were admitted. Very few. There were three very small universities in Hong Kong. One was sort of run by Yale—a little place, and then there were two others. They were all put together into one university and a new building site. And Chun Ming Lee was chosen as the first—I think he was called chancellor, maybe president. Clark Kerr and Bill Forbes and I went over for his inaugural, as did Vern Cheadle, the chancellor of Santa Barbara, probably a couple of others—Bill Alway from Santa Barbara too. The University Abroad program is under the Santa Barbara campus. That's why they were there.
Heller: I'll never forget wearing that blue Regent's robe. It had been shipped all the way by Marge Woolman to Hong Kong. It was one of those sweltering, steaming Hong Kong days. I just didn't think I was ever going to get through the day, you know, because they're heavy. I remember sitting there in those blue robes with Clark Kerr and Bill Forbes. Well, I would say we stood out.

A couple of Regents like to wear their own alma mater's robes. You know, they would come out in a red robe. There's always a couple of them.

Chall: Yes, I see them from time to time at a Charter Day when I go, but I never have understood what they were all about.

Heller: Well, if you're in the world of academia, and I'm not in it to that degree, these robes mean a tremendous amount.

Chall: I know that I am not one of the initiated, so I wonder what it's all about. It isn't fair to them, because they're all proudly displaying them.

Heller: Well, the colored ones that you see usually are Ph.D. hoods and robes. I can always picture Don McLaughlin, who, after all, was an undergraduate at Berkeley, but got his Ph.D. from Harvard; he almost always insisted on wearing his scarlet Harvard robe as an example. I just happen to know where he got his degrees, you see. Well, there's a lot of frivolity.

Chall: Is there somebody on the campus, I think he's a member of the faculty, who's responsible for seeing that all these ceremonial activities go—Garff Wilson?

Heller: I suppose each faculty has it, but the one I know is Garff Wilson, who is now emeritus as of about a year ago. But he has an office on the Berkeley campus, and he still takes charge of every inch of these ceremonies.

Chall: Is that Charter Day?

Heller: Yes, and commencements. He's the perfect ceremonial master. He gets the—what do they call the tall ones—the marchers who lead the parade? People like Glenn Seaborg or Ed Strong or Mike Heyman, who's the new chancellor. You know, they're very tall. You're always very tall if you're a marshall. Did you know that? They always pick very tall members. They lead it. And they work out the logistics. Did you ever notice how that all comes together?

Chall: No.
Heller: Oh, and when you get on the stage—I've seen this at other campuses, but I just know Garff Wilson's procedure—you get on the stage, you've been told where you're going to sit, but there is your name, tacked to the seat to make no mistakes. And it's all done according to Garff Wilson's protocol.

I'll only mention one more thing about that. At the height of the FSM troubles, very few Regents would go to the Charter Day at Berkeley. I was the senior Regent. I think maybe Bill Coblentz and I and some alumni Regent were there. There were very few; but I was the senior Regent. And as such, except for the speakers, I had to come in and move to the edge of the platform of the Greek Theatre—that's where the seating was. If anybody started shooting or throwing things, I was going to be right there.

I remember this very well because of the excitement and very few Regents. They interspersed vice-presidents of the University with us, and I remember that Earl Bolton was the one I walked in with. He was vice-president for university relations—I think was the title. I can remember Earl sitting there begging me to change seats so that he would be in direct line of fire instead of me.

I said, "Well, I haven't been caught yet, I think I'll let it stay." This is the height of academia, that's all I can say.

I don't object to it; I think it's a nice tradition that goes on. I'd just leave not be part of that, because I'm not really—Well, I guess any trustees of any university are part of that. I've done it often enough at Mills.

Chall: You must feel yourself a part, even though you may look at it objectively.

Heller: Yes. Well, I think it's a very nice part; but Bill Wurster used to tell me—he was very much a part of that—that he felt the traditions were slipping. And that's a long time ago. Because, he said, "When you address the president of the University at some occasion, you should always tip your hat, take it off before you speak." You know, if you introduce a candidate for an honorary degree, you say, "Mr. President, I accept so-and-so." And he said you should tip your hat. And he said, "Alas, I notice the other faculty members are not tipping their hats anymore." You rarely see that done. I think this all comes out of the English universities. Well, enough of that. You got me started on that. It really had nothing to do with my being chairman of the board at all.

Chall: No, but it's interesting. We didn't get to it before. As I recall from what you told me about Mills, about a third or more of the trustees are women, and always have been. Is that correct?
Almost half.

Almost half. No woman has ever been chairman at Mills?

No, not chairman of the board. Isn't that funny?

Well, I just wonder why.

I don't know. I couldn't possibly tell you. I don't think there's any particular reason.

You don't?

I thought of that, but you know, there's some awfully good women who have been trustees at Mills, too. I think the nearest I can come to, though I've never heard it discussed per se--I've been a trustee at Mills for a long time--there's a lot of fundraising needed in a small college, and approaches to business people. I think that is one of the reasons--the men have better connections into that. I would say that's one reason. I can't tell you why.

Well, it's just interesting. It took the University a long time to get one woman out of--I don't think there have ever been more than three women Regents at any one time. That was only once.

No, I think that was the most. It was that one period there. Buff Chandler could have been chairman of the Regents, but she was very busy at that point with the L.A. Times, you know. She was really working full time down there. She could have been. I always said to her, "They say I'm the first woman chairman, but you know very well you could have been."

But I've often thought about that at Mills; they've been excellent people, but I think the answer is that approach. That's something I've discovered; there may be exceptions. I know that I cannot raise money by going to businessmen. I just don't have the right approaches. I don't want to say it's a "scratch your back, you scratch mine," but men are much better fundraisers on the whole than women. And I think that has something to do with the chairmanship at Mills. There's no feeling about it at all.

Have you ever been on a nominating committee at Mills for chairman?

Oh, yes, off and on.

Never considered any women?

I don't remember. I really and truly don't.

I'm just curious about the reason, because there are so many over the years that you've had to pick from that would have been good. Well, we'll let it go at that.
Heller: I think I'll have to let it go at that, because that's about-- I was never asked to be chairman at Mills until after I had been chairman of the Regents. But I just said "No. I've had my fill of chairmanships!" [chuckles] You know, it wasn't that serious. Sure, if she wanted it, Mary Lanigar, who was vice-chairman of the Mills trustees, who was superb, could be chairman if she wanted the job. She went to Mills for two years, and then got her degree from Stanford. She was a CPA--I guess business school at Stanford, and then got a law degree from Golden Gate University, and she was one of the senior partners of Arthur Young and Company. She is one of the women in most demand for corporate boards now, because she has such qualifications and so much good sense. She's just first class. But I just feel--I don't think Mary wants that chairmanship. She's a superb person. She chairs the finance committee, which is not bad. And the budget committee.

Chall: It may take more time than she wants to give to it.

Heller: There have been very few women who have been chairmen of committees at Mills. Isn't that strange? I've never chaired a special committee. I'm not talking about now, because I'm sort of in a different category of trustee, but I don't think I was ever chairman of any committee. I've chaired special committees, a lot of them, but I don't think I ever--

Chall: But not permanent committees, no standing committees?

Heller: No. My chairing really developed on the Regents, strangely enough, where I did educational policies. It's neither here nor there; you don't feel any less part of anything. From the outside looking in it seems strange.

Chall: Well, you often wonder. These days, women ask the question.

Heller: Well, the women are very strong on the Mills trustees, very strong. They are not all so good, but then all of the men aren't so good either. It's a good question to ask, and there's no particular answer for it. But I don't think there's ever been any feeling one way or the other about it. The women certainly speak up and have their say on anything.

Committee Priorities and Preferences

Chall: Well, back to the University for a moment. In the order of importance of tasks that the Regents worked on over the years, as you knew them, what would you say would be the order of importance: budget, appointments, representing the University to the governor and the legislature, educational policies? Where are the priorities on the Regents, or did they vary?
Heller: They vary is the best answer. The number-one job of the Regents or of any trustees, not only the Regents, first and foremost I think—you'll find in any by-laws—is to choose a chief executive. They are responsible for the president, I'll call it, of the institution. I think you'll find that uniformly true, because they can delegate a lot of work.

I think educational policies as they come up through the campuses and through the president to me are very important.

Chall: But in general to the Regents?

Heller: Yes, I think it at the moment is the most sought-after committee. In recent years—when I say recent years I'm referring to my last years, though it has continued—whoever's chairman of the nominating committee sends out a slip asking you to list the committees you're willing to serve on—you'd like to serve on—in order of your preference. The number one choice: educational policies. They can't possibly put all of them on. Too many want to be on it.

That to me is very interesting, because when Ed Heller was a Regent, educational policies was a nothing committee. Finance was everything, and it was very powerful. Now, it's educational policies that everybody wants to be on. Almost everything except finance, eventually lands before educational policy to be processed before it goes to the board. To me it's the heart of the University; and where this subtle change came in I can't put my finger on. I think I told you when I was appointed to the Regents Ed Pauley—did I tell you that—was chairman of the board. And he phoned me right away—I had known Ed of course—and he said, "Ellie, I just want to know what committee assignments you'd like." It was a gesture on his part. And I said, "Well, if you're asking me, Ed, I'd like to be on educational policies." And he said, "Oh. Oh. Well," he said, "there's Ed Heller's vacancy on finance. I thought you'd like to have that." And I said, "Well, you asked me what I wanted, and I'd prefer educational policies." He was absolutely hysterical. He made Bill Roth give up his seat on educational policies and take finance.

Postsecondary Education: During and After Term on the Board of Regents

The Coordinating Council for Higher Education

Chall: I'm not going to leave the Regents yet. I wanted to ask you about the Coordinating Council for Higher Education and the California Postsecondary Education Commission. You were on both committees, weren't you?
Heller: At different times.

Chall: At different times. Could you tell me anything that you think would be important for us to know about either of them.

Heller: I would say that the Coordinating Committee for Higher Education was put together largely through the efforts of Clark Kerr and Arthur Coons.

Chall: I have the history of that. In terms of your activities?

Heller: Oh, in terms of my activities. Not much on the coordinating council, which was never very effective, in my opinion. The Regents had three seats on the coordinating council. It was usually the president of the University, the chairman of the board and one other. At some point, I was. It's pretty hard to get people to go to those, you know. You had so many meetings, and these keep coming up too.

Chall: How often?

Heller: Oh, once a month.

Chall: Were you meeting with appointees from other colleges?

Heller: Yes, state colleges have members, because they just became a system at that point when the coordinating council was set up. And the junior colleges did not have a formal system. Once they became the community colleges, they did. But there were three people from the individual boards of the junior colleges. I'm not sure how they got selected. They must have had some sort of informal arrangement. There were three members from the public at large, whatever that means. I guess appointed by the governor. And three members from the private higher education institutions. It was a very unwieldy group; it never knew what it was doing.

Chall: Who chaired it?

Heller: Different people at different times. I'll name you a couple that would mean something. Warren Christopher. He was on the state college board. He is now our undersecretary of state. He's from Los Angeles. He was an excellent chairman. Louis Heilbron, who was also from the state colleges. No, Louis—let me say that I think both Warren Christopher and Louis Heilbron were chairmen because they had been on the state Board of Education. I said something wrong there. The junior colleges used to be under the state Board of Education.

Chall: Oh, I see. That's how they were represented.
Heller: That's how they were on. They were both excellent chairmen. Arthur Coons was once chairman. It varied. Nobody liked that job very long. It was almost impossible. There was no form to it; there was fighting among the segments quite often. I think it was a very necessary thing to be put together, because I'm sure—it shows from that history—the state colleges and universities were proliferating so at that time. It was an attempt to hold it down—that proliferation. You see, that was in '59 or '60, that greatly expanding period. And it was an attempt to make some sense among all the segments.

I feel as if most of my time on there, except for the people that I met and the different segments, didn't get me very far. I don't mean personally—it didn't get us very far. I felt it was very important that the University be part of that. Some of the Regents just hated the idea. They didn't like to be a part of anything. They wanted to be dominant. That had been the attitude of the Regents, up to just around the time, as it happened, that I went on. You know, the whole scene was changing. The Regents had gotten pretty much what they wanted all those years with Earl Warren and with Pat Brown, and they resented being one of a group, a lot of them. I didn't happen to personally feel that way, and that's why I was perfectly willing to serve on it.

But it was difficult. It didn't have any good structure, that's the best I can say. It didn't have a good executive director. If you shot me, I couldn't tell you who was the executive director now [laughs], I don't remember.

Chall: The executive director was a state employee?

Heller: Yes, he got the budget from the state.

Chall: Actually, you were really just carrying out the law as it was set up. So nothing could be done much unless the law was changed anyway.

Heller: That is correct. The Master Plan for Higher Education is a state law. The coordinating council was sort of an instrument of the master plan.

Chall: To air your concerns as they came up?

Changes in the Composition and Terms of the Board of Regents, AB 770

Heller: The master plan did lay out, though it's never been held to, what percentage of lower division there should be to upper division students in the different segments. I don't know that any of that
Heller: has ever been basically changed, except the master plan was changed by AB 770, which is the basis of the Postsecondary Education Commission. That bill was a bill of Frank Lanterman, I think, when he was an assemblyman. I think it was his bill. And John Vasoncellos, Democratic assemblyman, was very involved with that. AB 770 altered the master plan somewhat, which is legislative, but it also changed the constitutional setup—some of the powers that are in the constitution—of higher education. That I was very involved with, because there was a punitive feeling against the University at that point. I don't want to say that Lanterman was against the University, it was just sort of punitive, that's all.

Chall: I see. What did this do? Did it give the state colleges more opportunities for graduate—?

Heller: Yes and no. It started out with desire to change the terms of the Regents, cutting it from sixteen years to eight years. My position always was that that was wrong, that twelve years would be okay. This was my personal position. The official position of the Regents was sixteen years. But because I was put into these negotiating sessions, I was able to express my own opinion on twelve years, which means that no Board of Regents is under the control of any one governor. The argument was that state colleges, which by then had become the state universities and colleges, only have eight-year terms. And I said, "Well, that's a problem to change the state college terms, as far as I'm concerned." We did get it at twelve.

They wanted it to take place immediately. Well, there was a dreadful time getting that all done, because the newer Regents, all of whom were Reagan appointees, you see, were going to fight this whole thing, because they were going to be cut short on their terms. Finally, all appointed trustees were grandfathered in through to the expiration of their term, which I think will be about 1990. All new appointees are for twelve-year terms.

Chall: Those would be all Brown's.

Heller: Those would all be Brown appointees. This is all constitutional changes. The chairman of the state Board of Agriculture was a Regent. That was taken out. The president of the Mechanic's Institute in San Francisco had always been an ex officio Regent. That was taken out.

The Alumni Association is a device, because in the original—in the constitution, article nine, section nine, it said there should be an ex officio member of the Alumni Association. And then when UCLA became a much bigger institution, Cal had always had that position, you see, a Berkeley graduate, so they formed what was called the Alumni Association of the University of California. It rotated between Berkeley and UCLA—the presidency, so that for one
Heller: year you would have somebody who was a Berkeley graduate, and one year someone who was a UCLA graduate. Now that's been expanded, which is not necessary under the constitution, because it just says Alumni Association of the University of California. But they have changed their rules. Oh, the new constitutional change was that they should be the president and vice-president of the Alumni Association, so that put two on. And then the Alumni Association, which now comprises all nine campuses, worked out their own complicated device, whereby it rotates. I think Santa Cruz is coming in line. Irvine came on line before. I think Santa Cruz will be the last campus to come on line. But they don't alternate; there's always a Berkeley or UCLA member plus one of the other campuses. I forget how it runs and rotates. It's a very complicated formula.

So there are always two now, and there are two what they call in-waiting. They're the vice-presidents, who attend the meetings, attend all sessions, but do not have a vote until they in turn come on as Regents. So there were those changes in the membership. The number of appointed Regents remained at sixteen. It's eventually going to be a board of twenty-four once all the grandfathered people are eliminated.

Of course, there's also that constitutional change saying that there may be a student member if the Regents determine there should be, and there may be a faculty member if the Regents determine it. I think that's above the twenty-four. The students, for that period, chose to have one of them be a Regent. And faculty decided not to, because of the conflict of interest, but did ask to have the chairman of the statewide Academic Senate sit at the Regents' table. Which sounds silly, but it really isn't, because you're right there in the center of the talking instead of having to raise your hand to be recognized.

Chall: So, in other words, he can participate but he doesn't have a vote, is that it?

Heller: That is correct. And the students also have a very complicated formula for choosing the student, and it comes down to a panel. It was very hard to get the Regents to accept the student member. That's something I was very much for, but I had a terrible time. I remember negotiating with the students. Santa Barbara were very strong with the associated students thing, and they were very sensible, too. And saying, "You're just never going to get this accepted unless you agree to submit a panel of maybe three names for the Regents to interview and choose from." There was too much distrust of students then. So they finally--the associated student government finally acceded to that. And I do feel that I really had a role in getting a student on the board. It was compromise, because it wasn't going to go forward otherwise.
Chall: I see. Are you the one that suggested the panel?

Heller: Yes. Worked with them. There was a committee to make this decision. This was just before I became chairman of the board. But I was very anxious to see a student a part of the board.

Carol Mock, the first student trustee, took office, was appointed the very same day that I became chairman of the Regents, and she was a superb student Regent. I never had a first-hand experience with any of the rest, but none of them has ever lived up to the potential of Carol. She understood what a trusteeship was about. These others were always after causes, I hear. Carol, really, she had to break the way, and she spent one sleepless night after another talking to other students; fighting her own way, having the students furious at her sometimes because she didn't think what they were proposing was right and she wouldn't vote for it. What they wanted. But she was awfully good. So there's a great potential for student Regents.

Let me say that isn't permanent yet. They're accepted on a one-year trial. Carol was very successful. I may have my figures wrong, but I think it was agreed that there would be—it would be extended to five years, and it has to be reevaluated.

Chall: It's almost that now.

Heller: It's just about that time. But there is a committee of Regents that interviews the panel, which has been selected by the students. It's very complicated. You know, one of these days we'll get another marvelous student.

Chall: Well, there's no reason to think you'll have all marvelous students any more than you have all marvelous Regents.

Heller: That's right. That's exactly right. There are problems about being a student Regent, and one is that it takes an awful lot of time out of your schedule.

Chall: They're usually graduate students, or have to be, I'd think.

Heller: Yes, they usually are, which really essentially means they almost had to delay their graduate work. I mean, they're doing some work, but not their full work. Few of the students have any means, and I've already discussed the financial arrangements for the Regents. So it's very, very tough, and no exception is made with them as far as travel, or per diem. It's very, very tough if you don't have money of your own. I remember perfectly well that Carol, who did not have any money, used to arrange to stay with other students wherever we went. It was really a very tough situation. The rules are very strict. But Marge Woolman, the secretary of the Regents, has really tried very hard to find office space some place for students and
Heller: provide them with a telephone, because it's really better if they
don't work out of student unions, because you're just inundated,
you know, by--

Chall: Pressures.

Heller: I think the faculty made a good decision. The faculty's very, as
far as I know, very satisfied with its decision to have its chairman
sitting at the Regents' table. They felt they had too much conflict
of interest. They'd have to be abstaining much too often. And still,
they wanted to be able to express the official views of the statewide
Academic Senate. And the individual can always express his views.
I think that's been good.

The California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC)

Heller: But that all came out of what led to the Commission for Postsecondary
Education. And the number of members was cut down. The University
only had two members, as do the state colleges and the junior
colleges, and there are more public members and two from private
universities. There's a vocational school representative. They
have more and more--

Chall: --types of schools.

Heller: Public school--

Chall: Did this supplant the coordinating council?

Heller: Yes. It takes the place of the coordinating council. Of course, I
served on that at the very beginning. One of the two Regents appointed
the very first round. It is tough to get a thing like that going, just
finding a paid executive is very difficult, because it has no funds,
and it's operating with whatever the governor will put in his budget
for it. And the salaries must be equivalent to state of California
salaries, which are notoriously quite low for executives.

You see, the University doesn't go according to that. It has
its own scale. But the CPEC salaries have to go according to state
scale. It's pretty hard to get good executives at that price.

Chall: Has that postsecondary education council functioned any differently
from the coordinating council? Is its mandate different?

Heller: Well, its mandate is quite different. And it's used much more. The
legislature refers a lot of things to it for study and examination
to report back on educational questions.
Chall: How does it do it when it doesn't have a staff?

Heller: Well, its staff—I've forgotten the number of paid staff they have—but except for the executive director, which is exempt from being a civil service employee, and maybe his deputy, I can't remember, the rest all are civil service people. And it's very hard to get good staff. You know, you beg, borrow or steal them from other departments. But they started to build it up.

There are enough funds to have employed—Well, for instance the legislature asked CPEC to do a survey—I'll give you an example—of engineering schools, because they were proliferating a lot. It's one of the—what should I say? I don't want to say vocational—professional departments that is less expensive to run than a lot of the graduate schools. You can even run them in the state colleges. They employed Fred Terman from Stanford, who was provost down there, and in engineering, who was just retired at that point, to do this survey. It was an excellent objective survey. The upshot of it was that no more engineering schools were allowed in any of the public segments. There are more than enough.

Chall: Does that mean expanding or contracting the engineering department at the University, or the other schools as well?

Heller: Frozen.

Chall: Frozen. Everything was frozen?

Heller: Well, it detracted in one way. There was an excellent man who was to set up engineering at Santa Cruz, whose name has escaped me, but he was just one of the best. But it froze it, and they could never develop the department. So he went to I think Irvine, which had moved ahead more quickly on engineering and had one going. It really essentially froze engineering, because there was engineering in the state colleges too.

And Terman was as good an expert as there was in the field. Just developed the facts and figures that we had many more professional schools of engineering in California than we needed.

So that's the type of thing that the legislature will refer to CPEC. Then when that study is made, it comes to the members of CPEC. Just to give one other example, there was a big fuss which still goes on about unionization of faculty members. Whenever I refer to this, that always has to do with the public segments, of course. That still hasn't been settled. There was a study made which most of us felt was no good, because it was so poorly researched, which recommended unionization (which per se I'm not necessarily against). But it was such a poor study that we just turned down unionization.
Heller: There were however a lot of very serious studies made by CPEC staff and some outside experts. There were studies of some of the junior college things for these non-credit courses. I say crazy. I sound like the governor—knocking them. But to stop the proliferation. There were studies of extension, because everybody went wild on extension at one point. And finally, there was an arrangement made, you know, what sort of extension goes into each segment. This is non-credit extension basically. And then the University—I've forgotten what the state college rules are; I don't want to say—the University Extension has to pay its own way. There's no budget from the state for it.

We've got all the toughest ones, because we have all the professional extension courses. Like law—attorneys are glad to have these extended credit things for lawyers, and they pay their way very nicely. Doctors are not as good about it. But there are a lot of very good professional medical extension courses. We have, as I say, the toughest. So that's why, you notice, you always have to pay for University Extension. But I think the community colleges extension classes are free.

This all comes out of CPEC, this gradual sorting out. Another thing CPEC did was to examine—Really, we just froze all new buildings of junior colleges, state colleges, or University campuses and bit by bit looked at all of them. The University wasn't too hard to stop, because it was just in a phase of thinking of two more campuses, but nothing had been done with it. State colleges own two college campus sites; and it was CPEC that determined what was to be done with those sites. They were actually sold, eventually. There were enough state colleges.

Junior colleges now have to go through CPEC. Though they're a county thing, their locations have to be approved by CPEC. I don't mean their actual geography within a county. To see that there aren't too many. You know, education has just gone wild in this state.

Well, that must give you a little idea. We also have—what would you call them?—proprietary higher education. There's a representative of that on CPEC. There are more of those than you think.

Chall: What kinds—?

Heller: Those are for profit. There are more of those than you want. It is estimated there are about two thousand in the state. Nobody really knows. But they are all available for public funds. It's terrible when you think of it.

Chall: Like Heald's College? Are you thinking of things of that sort? Private business colleges, or law schools?
Heller: Some. But most of them that you know of are accredited. They've gone through the accreditation process from this accreditation commission I serve on. But most of them don't apply for accreditation because they would probably never make it. I'm getting a little technical on this, but under the laws of the state of California, under the state Board of Education, in order to, I guess the word is incorporate as an institution of higher education, you have to prove that you have fifty thousand dollars in assets. Well, almost any one person or two people can do that now, and then they are eligible for student grants and loan funds. And there are some bad rip-off artists in the field.

Now, the good ones of those end up applying for accreditation, and the very good ones, of course, make it. In fact, there are some excellent ones. As I say, you can only estimate the number.

Chall: So there are no controls, then, on the granting of student loans, except this amount—

Heller: Fifty thousand dollars.

Chall: I see. Has anybody tried to change that law as inflation hits?

Heller: CPEC, after I was off of it, looked into that thing. It isn't directly under Wilson Riles [Superintendent of Public Instruction], it's under something else. And there is such a power fight there that I don't think I've ever really understood it.

Chall: Then what's the advantage of accreditation?

Heller: Well, I don't know what the advantage is; except they all want to be accredited to be respectful. There are certain advantages. You are eligible for research funds and certain grants, and federal loans, as well as your own self-esteem, or the institution's self-esteem. And all good institutions are accredited.*

The Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC): The Accreditation Process

Chall: How did you get onto the accreditation commission that deals with this? What is the name of that officially?

Heller: That's called WASC in capitals. WASC. That stands for the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. Within that western association, there are divisions for high schools, junior colleges, and senior

*More on CPEC, pages 720-724.
Heller: colleges. And I am on what is known as the Senior Commission, which is for all four-year institutions or graduate institutions in the state of California. The terminology is awfully hard to get used to, and there are four such accreditation groups in the United States, all of them voluntary, that have been going for years and years. They, by and large, do a very good job. It's completely voluntary. There's no federal money involved.

Chall: This is a private organization, this WASC?

Heller: It's a semi-private organization. I mean, all our meetings are public.

Chall: Yes. But funding it—who pays your executive director?

Heller: The institutions that are accredited pay dues according to their size per year. We have a budget maybe now of—I'm guessing on this—maybe $200,000. When you apply for accreditation, you have to put down a small fee. The large universities pay much more than the smaller places. And it is self-supporting completely.

It's a remarkable effort. There's one in the Northeast, and a southern group, and the Northwestern Association covers most of the United States, for some unknown reason. And Western, which I am on, it's the least number of states, is only California and Hawaii, plus Guam and a couple of places like that. But California is so huge we have more than we can handle.

And there are rules of accreditation that are set up among these various groups.

Chall: How did you happen to be appointed and when?

Heller: This is the end of my sixth year—'80, because I know they serve two three-year terms, and my next meeting is going to be my last. 1980—take it back to '74. How was I appointed? How do you ever get appointed to anything?

Chall: Who asked you?

Heller: Well, there was a great demand for so-called public members, and I fill that category easily. I don't have any professional degrees. It had been more professional than anything else, though it was very good. There are a lot of faculty people on it—it's not a big council; I think there are eighteen members—faculty people, administrative people, presidents of institutions. They vary; they try to get a wide spread. But they try to get some minorities on—with eighteen people there isn't much leeway—and some women and private colleges.
Chall: Eighteen people on your particular senior--

Heller: Yes, on the Senior Commission. It's a lot of work.

Chall: Yes. Let's see. You didn't tell me who called you and asked you to be on the committee.

Heller: I don't remember. I knew--you're really, literally asked by an almost non-existent board that meets once a year, formally, called WASC, which is membership from all these commissions. And whoever was chairman of that then asked me. It must have been somebody I knew. You know, you start moving in these circles and you know a lot of people. I just really don't remember.

When I got on there--let's see--Dean McHenry had just gone off, who was chancellor of Santa Cruz, and Dan Aldrich, who was chancellor of Irvine, was on. There were several state college people on that I knew in one way or the other. You know, as you start moving around in these things you keep seeing a lot of the same people.

Chall: How often do you all meet?

Heller: Well, what we do is this: Every institution of higher education of the senior group that applies for accreditation has to have formal visits, self-studies to see if they're eligible under the rules. I can't go into all the rules, but they're strict but flexible, because you have to allow room for all these innovative institutions that are springing up. It used to be much easier than it is now.

They may be applicants for accreditation. They have to be looked at by a study team to see if they're in any position to be applicants for accreditation. And then they are candidates, and they are called in-candidacy status for from two to maybe six years before they get considered for accreditation. It depends on the rate at which they develop. All the places that you know well are accredited. Well, that's true. They've been going for a long time. The well-established ones, whether it's the University of California, USC, Stanford, Mills, Occidental, that have had accreditation for a long time, you see, just have to be re-examined every ten years; the newer ones every five years.

How do we pay for it? It's all voluntary; and there are teams of professional people that go by arrangement to each institution that is either in re-accreditation process or accreditation process. There's the most enormous body of first-rate volunteers who will go in as teams; but the institution has to pay the expenses of those people, so that the WASC Senior Commission doesn't pay direct expenses. It's just one of the things in the academic world that people are willing to do. I don't know how they do it. I am not eligible to be a member of the accreditation teams, because I don't have a professional degree.
Chall: So what is your function?

Heller: Well, we have to have three meetings a year that go from two to three days. And when I say two to three days, they never stop. It's exhausting. Two of those meetings, three days each, are basically a hearing, a review by the head of the team and two members of the commission who have read every bit of material about the institution, reporting to the board. Though you have had all the materials to look at yourself, and questions about it. We review every single institution in the state that applies. It is an enormous workload.

And the third meeting of the year is basically policy, because we have to keep changing policy. You know, higher education is changing so, it's very difficult, these non-traditional things that are showing up. We've got to try to find some rules for them. They all want accreditation! You know, if they'd just be non-traditional and not want accreditation, it would be easy. But it's terribly difficult.

You know, graduate schools of parapsychology. Now, those don't come under the American Medical Association, you see. I just can't tell you the extent—all the religious schools and those are multiplying now. Though we do accredit jointly with the--what do they call it?--the Association of Theological Institutes. But you have all religions to look at, which is very confusing to me.

And I have to read x number of these as a reader after the team has gone in, and report what I see as weaknesses in the material they prepared. They all have to do their self-examination. Basically, what you're trying to do—as I say, these rules keep changing—is to look at this statement of purpose and what they're doing, and to see if they are living up to that statement. A lot of them put in—not a lot, but x number—put in false claims. They're not doing what they say they're going to do, or they do not have the courses they say they have, or they do not have full-time faculty at all, or they do not have a proper base library, or access to a good library.

Now, one of the great problems—I'm giving you a lecture on the problems of higher education!

Chall: This is splendid material.

Heller: One of the great problems now is basically that the rising costs and the demography of the student-age population—a lot of places are reaching for more students in different ways. One of the things has been establishing not extension, but campuses all over the United States, little places, sort of an extended university. Some of them are okay; others are under no supervision whatsoever. And it's
Heller: our job to make rules of how, in order to get a degree from those
minor things, they have to relate and be watched and conducted by the
main institution. It's just a mess—they're overseas; they're all
over.

Well, that's the sort of things. It's no use going any further,
because it will go on and on and on. We were always having to examine
new rules.

[ Interview 27: April 4, 1980 ]

Chall: We were [ last week ] just completing our discussion of WASC--

Heller: Oh, yes, we weren't on the University really at all.

Chall: No, that's right, we finished that. We're on education. You were
just beginning to tell me what it is that you do on that committee
and where you fit in as a non-academic person. Appeals, I believe.

Heller: Yes. When they don't like the judgment rendered, there's a whole
legal process—semi-legal, I would say—and they are allowed an appeal
on any of the points on which they were turned down. I have gone to a
few campus visits as an appeals group, because the appeals people must
be members of the commission. Then I'm okay.

I can do very well on the governance end of an institution, and
often if there's a weakness there, you know, I'll be used. I can do
well on finances. I can do okay on some points. Other things I never
touch, like how student records are kept and that sort of thing. It's
quite interesting. Of course, when you go on the appeals procedure,
you're really getting into a bad situation; therefore I don't go to
any of the good situations.

Chall: Yes, they've been passed.

Heller: Yes. But we're finding less and less—at least in my six years—of
these bad situations. There was such a rush when I first came on of
non-conforming, new types of institutions; some of which were valid,
but some of which just didn't do what the prospectus stated they were
trying to do. I haven't made up my mind yet whether they're being
more careful, and don't think it's so easy, or whether they're just
not trying for accreditation anymore, or whether some of them—I know
some of them have folded. Not most of them, but some of them.
There's quite a bit less of this appeals procedure in the last couple
of years.

Chall: That means by the time your group gets around to them, that they have
pretty good standards already, is that it?
Heller: Yes. You see, the only way you can judge standards, is not on your own standards, but on standards that they themselves set as what their objectives are. We can make certain rules. It's very hard dealing with these non-traditional institutions, because you have to make your own guidelines.

I'll give you just one example, and that will be enough: The great vogue for accepting life experience, and translating it into credits. We found institutions that were granting sixty units academic credit for "Life Experience," which didn't relate to what they were studying. I give you that as an example.

So we do have a general rule on non-traditional now, that has been accepted, that only at most thirty units can be accepted, and that those units cannot be accepted ahead of time, because they have to relate to the course that the individual student is taking. You know, all the cooking experience in the world isn't going to do you any good if you're taking entirely remote subjects. But there was this great vogue for--it really was just giving points for age, almost.

That's been straightened out to a degree. There are still problems about the amount of time which some of these--I want to emphasize that I'm only saying some of these non-traditional--give Ph.Ds. You know, there were places that were giving them in a year, or giving them really on non-attendance, almost like correspondence courses. They've tightened up on that.

Well, this is a whole range of experience, and it's been very interesting to me.

Chall: Do you find your philosophy of education changing if you have to make some decisions about these new-type institutions?

Heller: No, not necessarily. The only thing is maybe a greater realization of the change in the percentage of those who are not just regular students. You know, age, or weekend, or working. And there's honest effort to give--it's not like the good old summer school, say at Berkeley, where teachers could acquire renewed credentials or something like that. There's great variety. They don't have entrance requirements, a lot of them, which they don't have to have. After all, the junior colleges have no entrance requirements in this state, and some of them do extremely well. It's just a proliferation of institutions of higher education that certainly fulfill a need up to a certain point.

Also, lots of experimental religious groups, which are giving higher education degrees. Sometimes it's very clear what they're doing. But the traditional religious groups, of course, are still there and operate within a framework you understand.
Heller: But I will say that the members of the commission are quite open
minded, considering the fact that they basically come from the
traditional backgrounds. You know, there's this whole emphasis now.
That's why I guess I was the first non-academic person that went on at
least WASC. Now there's a great pressure to have at least three
members.

Chall: Are you the only one on that--?

Heller: Not now.

Chall: But you were to start?

Heller: Yes. There was one that was called non-academic, because he was not
employed in academia at the time, but he was from one of the educational
foundations and had a background. But he didn't really meet so-called
standards. He wasn't put off, his term just expired. He was very
good, as a matter of fact. But now they have a couple more people
like me.

You know, in eighteen commissioners, to try to get minorities,
and women, and non-traditional--well, we haven't really got the exact
non-traditional people on yet. They haven't been around long enough,
I think. It's very hard to find them.

Chall: To be accredited themselves as persons?

Heller: Yes. Well, I certainly find my experience has been helpful in certain
things very much. Maybe I can see a larger picture than some of them
are used to looking at. But they're getting much better about looking
at the whole field.

The more you handle these things, the more the rules almost
start to catch up with you that you've set yourself. You know, rules
of appeal and the procedures and all that. You can't get it all
down on paper. That's what the attempt is to do.

Chall: To codify it?

Heller: Yes.

Chall: Are you the only woman on the council?

Heller: No. No, there has always been, since I've been on, not the same one,
but a Catholic nun, I guess you would say. I've served with two
remarkable ones. Just marvelous. They are so open minded, it's
surprising. Though they come from traditional schools, they're very
good. We have an excellent person from the state college system in
the administration--vice-chancellor from the system, one of the vice-
chancellors--very good, has a lot of experience. There's somebody on
Heller: that I've known in the past who was on the state board of education at one time, and who's been very active in her own community and in the whole higher education field. They're pretty good.

They work like the devil! You have to drop out of that—being a commissioner—unless you devote the time. So that's enough, I think, of that.

More on the California Postsecondary Education Commission

Chall: Yes, I think that will do it. You said that you wanted to give credit --this is on CPEC--

Heller: On what?

Chall: CPEC, you call it CPEC, the California--

Heller: Oh, yes, we did talk about that.

Chall: Yes, and we really finished up, but then when I was leaving you said that you wanted to give credit to some persons who had made efforts in getting it off to a good start.

Heller: Oh, well, what I wanted to say was: Here was what was bound to be a huge state organization, written into law for the state of California, which had no established rules—didn't know how to get a dollar for its own budget, even though it had been legislatively established. They were really a quite good group of people—not all, but a number of quite good ones. One, I must say, I feel it never would have gotten underway without, was Steve [Stephen] Teale, former Senator Teale. He had just left the legislature, and he had been chairman, if I'm not wrong, of the Senate Finance Committee. He was a very powerful legislator, and a very nice man. He knew the ways of budgets; and really, without him, I don't think we ever would have gotten a budget. There's no source of funds for CPEC, except the state budget. You know, it's pretty hard to break into a new area. It was really because of him that we were even able to function at all.

There were two or three excellent people on that commission, I believe, and one was appointed by the senate pro tem. Actually there were three appointees from the senate pro tem, and one of them in particular, Roger Pettitt from Los Angeles, I had known, because he was an ex officio Regent when he was president of the UCLA Alumni Association. Just has one of these zeroing-in minds that can make sense out of nothing. He's an attorney.
Heller: And a second attorney who was on as a representative of the private colleges or universities was Burnham Enerson, who is chairman of the board of Mills College now. Ham Enerson, though a very quiet person, has one of these beautifully incisive minds. He never riles anybody; it's just the way he is. And he listens and listens, and as lawyers do, he takes notes all the time. When things were just no place, and all these commission members going in different directions, Ham Enerson would just quietly come up with a resolution he had written, or a recommendation. He was writing right there, and he would sort of bring it all together. There were a few outstanding people like that.

Chall: In the earliest days.

Heller: Yes. You were making something out of nothing. You know, even to get a paid director, which was allowed for outside of civil service, was a chore! There was no staff; there was nobody to even process the search. You know, it's insane; we didn't know what we needed! We did know that he would have civil service employees under him. We got a very poor person the first time.

Chall: Until you knew what you wanted, or needed?

Heller: Well, yes. CPEC—I guess all organizations annoy some people. But basically, I think it's done quite a good job, and it's shaped down. You've got some big civil-righters in there that have become very good now, you know, when they see how the whole thing's coming together. You know, the minority, and the students, and all that. They've become very good members, a lot of them.

They all, except for the Regents, and the state colleges, and the community colleges—there are three appointed by the governor, three appointed by the assembly, and three by the pro tem. They all have six-year terms, so it lends a stability, and most of them are quite good.

Chall: And are these overlapping terms?

Heller: Yes, they started it with overlapping terms. Now they're in a cycle. The others that I mentioned serve from term to term, appointed by their boards. I can't remember about the private colleges, but there are two—they are selected by the governor from a list submitted by the association of private universities and colleges—I've forgotten the exact term—so that he can't just go and appoint. And they've been pretty good about the list—the people they've submitted on it. I think those terms go the six years too, if I'm not mistaken. I may be wrong about that.

Chall: Well, that can be checked out.
Heller: Well, that gives you--

Chall: That brings us around there.

Heller: I may be wrong to select the ones I did, but they were the ones that I found particularly good. I found others very satisfactory to work with, too. There were not really any terrible ones. A couple just were indifferent.

It always amazes me in all these things how people are willing to use their time to do these really quite onerous and sometimes very boring jobs.

Chall: You're not alone, then, in being willing to do it.

Heller: Well, actually, CPEC gets more by law than the Regents do. Members are given, I think it's fifty dollars a day plus board and transportation. But, you know, it doesn't really amount to anything. But if you're on enough committees and go to enough committee meetings you do pick up a little. There was quite a discussion--this is one of the things that always interests me. They wanted to write into that law some salary, which I, being in on the partial drafting of this, very much objected to. You know, it was something, at that time, like $10,000 a year. That would be the equivalent of $20,000 a year now. I felt that the boards I've seen that have these sort of minimum but above subsistence salaries usually, especially when they're appointed by political bodies, attract some of the worst people, that you get better people on a non-paid basis than you get with the sort of hangers-on that want that yearly income. I believe quite firmly in that.

There are quite a few state boards that do pay, you know, these yearly salaries. They love them.

Chall: And you've seen enough of them to come up with this conclusion?

Heller: Well, it's a pretty big generalization to make, but on the whole, I just feel that you just get higher quality people on the whole.

Chall: In setting up the legislation, did you say that Lanterman and Assemblyman Vasconcellos--

Heller: Yes, Vasconcellos had an awful lot to do with it, though it had Lanterman's name on it. Senator [Albert] Rodda who was carrying this bill in the senate, always had his feet right on the ground.

Chall: And you think this has been a successful--?

Heller: Well, yes. I don't think it's recognized. I think it's recognized among the institutions that are under it. You see, the trade schools are under that; the proprietary institutions are under that. There
Heller: are all sorts of elements in there. I think it's recognized pretty well, but it really isn't known outside of—and I take it in the large sense when I say higher education. It isn't only higher education; the public schools are represented on that commission, too—out of the educational establishment. And I don't mean that in the traditional world of California.

They make some studies that I wouldn't choose or you wouldn't choose. It's a great convenience to some of the legislative committees now, they've gotten used to it, to say, "Well, let CPEC make a study of that."

Chall: That'll put it on a shelf for a while anyway!

Heller: Poor CPEC never had enough money to make some of these studies. So, you don't hear about it very much. But it's there, and most states have a higher education commission. What Rodda was, from my point of view, so good on was that he was determined that this would not be a super board. Great push from some quarters, including, in my opinion, Vasconcellos, as I remember it, to make this a super board and to make everything else secondary. You know, the Regents would be responsible to this board; the private colleges responsible—impossible situation!

Chall: Yes, that wouldn't fly very high.

Heller: And that has happened, you know, in some states, with the—whatever they call it—usually the commission on higher education or whatever. It has different names in different states. There are some places where it is a super board, and has all the top powers of deciding budgets, directions, all that. And CPEC is clearly not that; it is well understood that that is not its function. And though some of the original members came on with the idea that it should be a super board, I think that's long since been abandoned. It may spring up again. It would be pretty tough.

Chall: Yes. It would be.

Heller: Well, I'm giving you my own—my impression.

Chall: That's what I want.

Heller: I have to admit I don't even keep in touch with CPEC to any degree. The director, the present director, does come to accreditation once in a while—commission—or vice versa, because there are a lot of things accreditation does. Of course, we don't always serve the state of California, but it's so largely California that there's some intermingling from all of these groups.
Heller: But WASC, to go back to that, only has the four-year colleges and graduate schools, whereas CPEC has a much larger mandate. Therefore it gets very dull sometimes when they're on subjects that you're not the least bit interested in or know nothing about. It's very monotonous, and it functions much more according to legislative rules. Open hearings and—I don't mean that I mind open board meetings. Anybody can speak and make presentations and there's no time limit on them and it just goes on and on and on sometimes. It's sort of like legislative hearings sometimes.

Chall: If you think we've covered CPEC and WASC—

Heller: It's fine, as far as I'm concerned.

Chall: --we'll go on. I think we've done pretty well.

Heller: More than was necessary.

The Charles Drew Graduate School of Medicine

Chall: Now. I don't think we've covered your role on the Charles Drew Graduate School of Medicine. Were you appointed to that committee by President Saxon?

Heller: No. Saxon was the vice-chancellor at UCLA and he just was interested in the Drew School of Graduate Medicine. It grew out of—I think I already said—out of the Watts—

Chall: I see. I wasn't sure whether we had this on tape.

Heller: I don't know. It was a result of the great Watts disaster in Los Angeles. The most concrete thing that I know of that came out of the investigation that was chaired by John McCone, who lives in Los Angeles, to see how these things could be prevented again—the number one recommendation out of that, as I understand it (because I never did read that report) was that there should be a city hospital in that area. That King Hospital, I think it's called, is the great visual symbol of Watts. I don't know if you've ever been in Watts. It still has some very dreary, awful things.

But this is a matter of great community pride. So, sort of coincidentally with the emergence of this community hospital, a group of physicians set up the Drew Graduate School of Medicine, so as to provide basically minority doctors for that King Hospital. And some very fine people were on that Drew board, and it's not only minorities. They have others.
Heller: Somehow, Dave Saxon got involved with that. And they were looking for somebody related to the University who had some knowledge of medical education, which I had a little of. I guess. I don't know, because I just know that Dave Saxon, who was then vice-chancellor at UCLA, phoned me one day and he said, "You're going to be asked to be a member of the visiting board of the Drew Graduate School of Medicine. And I wish you'd see your way clear to accepting it."

Now, a visiting board is not nearly as difficult as being on the board of directors. Well, you do what all visiting committees do. But I got to know some of the members of the board of directors, of course, the visiting committee, and the professional people down there. But we didn't meet that often—about three times a year.

Chall: What was the function of the visiting committee?

Heller: What is the function of any visiting committee? You're told what's going on in the hospital.

Chall: And who are you supposed to report back to?

Heller: You don't report to anybody.

Chall: Was this window-dressing of some kind? I mean, what was the visiting—?

Heller: Well, there are visiting committees all over. Most schools of medicine have visiting committees.

Chall: Oh, I see. I don't know anything at all about them.

Heller: I wasn't on to have anything to do with the University. Dave had just suggested that I go on this committee.

Chall: And how long were you on? When did this start, do you know?

Heller: I was on—I don't know, about five years, maybe. I've forgotten. They don't meet that often, but it's always in Los Angeles, and it's—you know, a lot of the professional minority community down there and some of the neighborhood people have started to get into it to a degree. No, there's no question that it had a role.

Chall: Had a role. Is it finished? Does this graduate school still exist?

Heller: Well, that's what I'm getting to. It became clear to me that they wanted a full school of medicine. When I say "they," I'm talking about the board of directors, some of whom met with us, and the professional people.
Heller: I did know about financing in medical schools in the state of California. I did feel there wasn't a prayer that the legislature, much though it wanted to help the minority community, would ever authorize, out of the blue, another school. This was just the graduate part, not the undergraduate. And it was very limited; it had no facilities; its office was in an unused, small school building not too far from the hospital. I always kept saying that "You're not going to get any place this way." Of course, they tested it out some, and they found out it wouldn't.

Well, right after I went off the Regents, Drew was very anxious to somehow get connected with the school of medicine, because under the laws of the state of California, a medical school has to be attached to a university. You know, like when Stanford Medical School came back down here from San Francisco, there were x number who stayed in San Francisco, where they were first known as Presbyterian Medical School and now Pacific Medical School. They had to get attached to some university, and that's how they became affiliated with the University of Pacific. It's just the laws of this state.

Well, the Drew board wanted very badly to get a direct affiliation. And there was informal discussion back and forth with UCLA, but UCLA didn't really want them very much. Naturally, if you know the University, or medical schools of the University, they have a superiority complex second to none, and nothing's good enough for them. That's just the nature of things.

But it was a valid thing that Drew was looking for—an affiliation at least with a university. You know, they would have been just as interested in Riverside, or Irvine, or anyplace else. But the only really established place—they thought about USC [University of Southern California], which they were friendly with, but it was UCLA that they were really interested in, though USC would have been possible, as far as they were concerned.

It's not quite clear to me how this evolved, but anyway, I was no sooner through as a Regent, than David Saxon, who by that time was president of the University, phoned me and said, "I would like you to chair an ad hoc committee to look into the possibility of Drew and UCLA affiliation." And that was the hardest chairing job I think I ever did, because we had community people on this ad hoc committee; we had very good people from UCLA, and also the dean of the medical school at UCLA, and of course the dean of the Drew medical school, and professional people. And some of them were difficult—when I say difficult, that's the wrong word. They were emotional—the minority doctors, you know, who just can only think about the minority situation. If you've met them, you know what I mean.

We had somebody from USC; we had somebody from Los Angeles County, because the hospital it uses is funded by the county. We met every month for about a year, working this back and forth and back and forth.
Heller: Of course, I try to be very honest when I chair a committee, and I did say, "Now, there's no doubt in my mind at all. If UCLA and Drew were to ever get together, UCLA will only do it if they will think there can only be one dean of medicine." I just know this story too well; of course, I was right. If you're not willing to accept those terms, then the affiliation with the University—you might as well forget the whole thing.

This went very hard, not actually with the dean of medicine of Drew, but with some of the faculty people. Boy, they didn't like that at all! But after a year or more of very careful work—I had very good staff work, which UCLA happily provided for me. We had the university attorneys on that; we had the state higher education people, you know the ones who were concerned with medicine particularly. It was a big committee. But they met faithfully. We'd meet once a month.

We eventually, through many drafts, put together a final report, which had to be acceptable, of course, to Drew, first of all, but had to be accepted by the Regents. I kept saying, "If you can ever get this"—not only to Drew. It had to be accepted by the medical school at UCLA, as well as the Academic Senate at UCLA. And they had a lot of steps to take. You had to get an indication that the legislature would support it. I also said I had a good strong hunch that the legislature would approve this. You see, it wouldn't be a separate school.

So they finally drew up a plan, the details of which you could look up someplace. Strangely enough, you forget it. But you had to work out about who did the admitting of students. Drew wanted to admit its own students. They finally worked out a joint faculty admission commission, just for this. And they have sort of equal rights, but the final veto is with UCLA, really. You can't, as you well know, you can't say there have to be x number of minority admissions. You just have to hope because of the desire of minorities to service that area, which they assured me is strong.

It finally, after, oh, I guess a year and a half, worked its way up to the Regents. I told them that I thought if they could work it all the way through, I thought the Regents would accept this.

Chall: Did they?

Heller: Yes, they did, without any real trouble. I did not go to the meeting where it was presented, because I was no longer a Regent. (I've never gone back to a Regents' meeting. I just didn't think it was right to go back.) And I was right; they did accept it.
Heller: But it was one of the most complicated things I've ever done. It seems to be going okay. They had to start it very gradually. First-year students—some of the first-year students at UCLA, for example, take their first year at Riverside, because there aren't enough facilities at UCLA.

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Heller: Just to summarize it. I'm perfectly willing to admit I think I was the right person to chair that particular committee.

Chall: Right, I was going to ask you that, because it seemed to me that making this work would have devolved upon the right chairman—to keep all these disparate groups together.

Heller: Well, I think I was particularly qualified. I was known, I think, by many to chair things very fairly, which is important. And for everybody having a say without drawing it out too long. I think I was good at that. After all, I was well known to the University. I was known to the Drew people; I was not an unknown factor to them. While recognizing the difficulties, I have great sympathy with the minority situation in the professions and the importance of it. I think that was known to all the Drew people, not necessarily to the community people who were on Drew, but I think maybe they got around to finding it out.

And besides which, I'd been on the Stanford Hospital board, which was another complicated situation well known to some of them. And then with the University with five hospitals, I had been on a Regents' hospital committee—not a standing committee—for several years. We had so many problems with our hospitals, and our financial arrangements, and our county arrangements, that I had been at one level very involved with the whole medical school situation. So I think in this case I probably was a good choice for it. I think it ended quite well.

I did say I would only do it if I had a very strong vice-chairman from UCLA, because if you couldn't make it work through UCLA, you couldn't take a Drew vice-chairman. You had to get the UCLA approval, because Drew wanted this. I met somebody in this position I hadn't known before, who I thought was one of the most superb people in the University. Bill Gerberding. [spells name out] He was vice-chancellor He actually took Dave Saxon's place at Los Angeles—at UCLA. He is now president of the University of Washington. I was always broken hearted that there wasn't a proper chancellorship at least open to him in our system, because I thought he was just one of the very top people whom I got to know.

He was a marvelous vice-chairman, because he has the drafting ability that I don't have. We all know our own limitations, and I'm not a drafter. He was simply marvelous about putting the resolutions together and the decisions and sorting out—very satisfactory. We had all these legal problems, too.
Heller: As I talk to you, I realize I must check and see how this thing has worked. You see, it's been in existence now for about two years, I guess. Oh! There was one other factor in there.

It's in the constitution that all public medical schools must be part of the University of California, so that all funding for all medical schools for the state, has to go through the University of California. So even though Drew was very appealing in itself to the legislature, they couldn't give them any money unless it went through the University. That's how there was the first connection with the University. There was always an item in our budget for a small amount of funding for Drew Graduate School of Medicine. That's how they basically got their money.

Chall: This was even before they were connected to the school.

Heller: Because they were informally connected with UCLA to that degree. They worked a lot with USC at that point. But there was no future in their affiliating with USC, because there was no funding available. Whereas UCLA—or as I say they would have gladly gone with Irvine or wherever—you could get state funding. And there is a sympathy in the legislature for this extra funding. God knows it isn't enormous, but it's been enough for them to survive. Of course, they always have hopes of raising more money, and sometime having independent buildings and all that. This is just not the moment in history in which big buildings for medical schools are built. Though they do have that hospital.

Chall: So right now medical students who—

Heller: They are really UCLA.

Chall: They are UCLA medical students who are expected ultimately to become Drew students?

Heller: Yes, they are also approved by Drew. UCLA may accept them, but if they want to be Drew students, to work through the Drew school and the hospital in Watts, they have to be accepted by Drew, too. Very complicated arrangement, and that's why I say don't hold me up on the details. But it's very, very carefully worked out, and I think all the commas and periods of the moment got put in. It has to be very careful.

The hardest point for the Drew people to accept was they couldn't have their own dean, that there couldn't be joint deans. Actually, the dean, who was a superb person—he was a Harvard Medical School person—who was on the committee, got to be an object of hate on the part of the Drew faculty, because he understood the problems from the beginning. They were accusing him of giving in to the white establishment. But Harvard, happily, was just delighted when he decided to resign from Drew where he was taking this terrible beating and have him back on the medical school faculty.
Chall: What about the members of the Drew faculty? Do they remain independently Drew faculty members?

Heller: No. Well, they can, but they have to be like clinical professors at any of the med schools. They have to meet the standards that the med school sets. And this was the worry of some—I mean, it was never specified, but I knew it—that they might not meet the standards and would not become a part of the clinical faculty. I've never asked how that worked out; that's really not my business. But it seemed quite clear from those who knew—and now I'm taking the opinion of the medical people who were on our committee—that some of them were never going to meet the UCLA standards for faculty. How that worked out I don't know. Well, there was great fear, though some of them who were scared probably made it. It's not a very personal procedure. But they may have an affiliation with USC, which at that time did not have such tough standards as UCLA. I'm not sure how that worked out. That's all of Drew.

Once that was passed by the Regents, I wrote and submitted my resignation to the Drew Board of Visitors, because there was really no further role for me as a member of a visiting committee. You know, we all ended up very good friends, and I'm very glad I did it.

Chall: Yes. It must have been a satisfying end to a challenging assignment.

Heller: Yes, it was a tough one, I thought.

Chall: Sounds tough to me.

Heller: Well, you know whenever you're working without established rules in new fields, it's tough. I think it's the toughest thing you have to do in higher education.

Chall: To work without established rules?

Heller: Yes, to set your new rules that will work.

Chall: But you weren't setting rules, you were--

Heller: Well, only once before had that happened, and that was when the California College of Medicine was given by the legislature to the University, and we had to decide what to do with it. It became part of the Irvine campus, the medical school at Irvine. That was the only even vaguely similar thing. And a lot of the California College of Medicine faculty had to be dropped, because they did not meet Irvine's standards, even though Irvine hadn't had a medical school up to them.

Chall: It started out with high standards.
Heller: Oh, sure. I knew some of the battle, and I knew the ultimate result, but I didn't know the details. So I met some of the CCM people. We had to phase out their board of directors, too. Which didn't have to happen at Drew. I think Drew has its own board of directors still. But it has to do more with raising money for Drew than establishing curriculum.

Chall: So the Drew Graduate School of Medicine exists--

Heller: It exists. It exists.

Chall: --independent, but has its own identity.

Heller: It has its own identity. I know it's gotten its appropriations from the legislature. That's all I know for sure.

Chall: It probably takes a while to make sure that any of this is going to work out. It may take more than two years, of course.

Heller: Oh, it will take a cycle, six years, probably, to find out.
Farewell And Thanks

Let it be said without equivocation: The University of California is losing two of its best regents as the terms of Mrs. Edward H. Heller and Norton Simon end.

Mrs. Heller, who became the first woman to chair the Board of Regents, held her position as a moderate, enlightened humanist through the campus turmoil of the 1960s, when the university was under attack from many sides.

The word "gadfly" is used to describe Simon's role on the board. But he was much more than that. A millionaire industrialist and philanthropist, he, more than most, understood that the people of California have invested not only huge sums of money to support the university, but also have invested their most precious resource — their sons and daughters. Simon insisted on maintaining high academic standards and an atmosphere for open discussion when some regents would have curtailed it.

When the public at large, understandably boggled by sensational happenings on campus, called for drastic action against students and faculty members, Mrs. Heller and Simon, speaking out at regents meetings, could be depended on to emphasize that an independent university of high ideals dedicated to academic freedom is in the best interest of all the people.

The two regents were always proud of and forever loyal to the university. They saw it, quite correctly, as a bastion for truth and learning, to be defended and protected from those who would make it something less.

The people of California were well served by Mrs. Heller and Simon. They deserve a vote of thanks.

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UCLA's Highest Honor To Saxon, Three Others

President David S. Saxon and three other persons with close ties to UCLA will receive the campus's highest honor, the UCLA Medal, in UCLA's 64th annual commencement ceremonies June 19.

The medal recognizes outstanding local, national and international achievement.

The other three recipients will be Sir Laurence Olivier, distinguished actor, producer and director; Elinor Rags Heller, the first woman to chair the Board of Regents; and Los Angeles Mayor Thomas Bradley.

The Medalists will join Chancellor Charles E. Young and more than 100 UCLA administrators, faculty and students in the traditional commencement ceremony. The observance will culminate in the conferring of 7,600 graduate and undergraduate degrees.

President Saxon will deliver keynote remarks, and James Thayer, president of the Alumni Association and Regent-designate, will welcome the new graduates to alumni status. Sonja Hall, a bachelor's degree candidate from the College of Letters and Science, will be the student speaker.
The Tradition of Gifts to the University

Chall: Now, I wanted to talk to you a bit about the Heller gifts to the University.

Heller: Well, there aren't that many.

Chall: Let me start out with one that was set up many years ago, in 1923. The Heller Committee for Research in Social Economics.

Heller: I know very little about it, except that it was my mother-in-law, and it came about through her friendship with Jessica Peixotto.

Chall: Did you ever know Miss Peixotto?

Heller: I met her. She was a brilliant person. She was, I guess, the first full professor, wasn't she, at the University?

Chall: A woman, you mean.

Heller: Woman professor.

Chall: She may have been.

Heller: She was. She was certainly one of the very first, certainly the best known of any of them, in economics.

Chall: Either economics or social welfare. I'm not sure.

Heller: I think it was economics. I think social welfare hadn't come along then. [chuckles] With her was a young faculty person--Emily Huntington, who is still alive.

Chall: Yes. Emily Huntington took it over.
Heller: It was Emily Huntington who basically, as I understand it, developed this formula for establishing cost of living in the Bay Area.* Jessica Peixotto with Emily Huntington, talked to my mother-in-law about funding this. You know, funding of those things wasn't very expensive then. I've forgotten what the yearly gift was--about five thousand dollars, or something. I may be wrong.

Chall: I don't have that figure.

Heller: It's hard to believe, but it was the first one [cost-of-living research on family budgets], as far as I know, in the United States.

Chall: I think you're right.

Heller: I'm pretty sure, because I remember during World War II, strangely enough, when we were living in New England--the name Heller is common enough, but Heller from San Francisco is not quite as common, though it's common enough--and a number of people wanted to know if I had anything to do with the Heller Committee. I could say, "No, it's my mother-in-law, who has always supported this."

She just was sold on it, it's that simple. My mother-in-law, you know, had great loves for people, and Jessica Peixotto and Emily Huntington--they did have a most valid thing they were proposing. She funded it for years, until finally it became part of the economics department.

My mother-in-law was given an honorary degree, you know.

Chall: Was she?

Heller: When I was--no, it was when Ed Heller was a Regent. She was getting rather old, but the Berkeley faculty and the Regents decided to give her an honorary degree, and it was really because of her sponsorship for all those years of that program. And Emily Huntington presented her. She was scared to death. But she was pretty old by then; I think she was about seventy-nine or eighty. That's something that's been lost in history, that she has an honorary degree.

Chall: Eventually, as I understand it, the family support for that program was stopped.

Heller: Let's finish my mother-in-law. When my father-in-law died in 1926, she established the E.S. Heller Chair in Law, which you will find in the list of chairs of the Berkeley campus. It's supposed to be an endowed chair. But you won't believe it. The chair then was either $125,000 or $150,000. But it still carries the name. Every once in a while somebody will get in touch with me who has that chair. A man named Proctor, I think had it for years. There's a very nice younger man who has it now. Some friend of mine said, "Do you know who has the Heller chair?" So they've kept the name, though lord knows that money certainly doesn't fund it. But that's what those chairs were then. So that's established over there, and there's always been a Heller law professor.

Then one more thing up to Ed Heller's death. When the Student Union was being built, Ed Heller, who was then a Regent, gave a half-million dollars toward the Student Union. You know, there were some student funds, and some Regents' funds, and some privately raised funds. I don't know who ever decided--I guess Ed did--although we weren't much for naming things ever—the big lounge there is called the Clara Hellman Heller Lounge. You know, it's the second big room after the Pauley Ballroom.

The Heller Lounge saw some bad days during the FSM and afterwards, when it was completely occupied by street people. It was absolutely—well, you just couldn't face what had happened to it. It was defaced; they slept there all night; you couldn't get in there. They finally put a guard on that building and the campus police eventually screened. I think it's all—no carpeting anymore. People used to be free to come and go, and then they just had to screen student body tickets for use. That's all printed somewhere. It had to be completely refurbished. It's a marvelous room. Tht was his gift in honor of his mother. His mother was still alive, so it was not in her memory.

Then there's one other thing. Do you ever go to International House on the Berkeley campus?

Chall: Once in a while.

Heller: Because she always was very interested. There's always been a board of I-House, and she was on that for years. She gave them money—don't ask me how much; I've only caught up with it in recent years—to re-do the big room there. I don't know what you call it; the lounge or what. There's a plaque there, I discovered.

Chall: Is that so?

Heller: It's called the Clara Hellman Heller room. More refurbishing, I believe, is going on now. Clary Heller has been on the I-House board for a long time. She had been for many years. He's been on for quite a number of years; very interested in it. But I didn't know about
Heller: that room for years. She didn't always tout what she did. You didn't know what she did all the time, because that was her way of doing it. In fact, the Hellers didn't like publicity very much, and in that way I'm a Heller myself.

Chall: I see. Well, now we can get it in print. I found in an old clipping that your husband had presented to the University a lizard print—it was really a dinosaur, a cast of a large dinosaur footprint. [The Daily Californian, February 8, 1960]

Heller: Oh, that's nothing. That is absolutely nothing. I gave it to Emil Mrak.

Chall: "UC boasts a lizard print," according to the headline.

Heller: It's Davis--

Chall: It was given to the Museum of Paleontology at the University in late 1959 or early 1960.

Heller: I know what it is. Now I've got it. Mrak comes in there, later. Ed had an interest in a coal mine in Colorado.

Chall: Carbon County, Utah?

Heller: Utah. You see how accurate I am; I never saw the thing. It was eventually bought by somebody else; I can't even remember the name of the mine. They were doing some tunneling, and these dinosaur footprints dropped out of the ceiling. That's really literally true. An associate of Ed Heller's, who sort of kept an eye on the mining thing, whose name really isn't important, produced two of these dinosaur things for Ed. So Ed said, "Give one to Berkeley." That's exactly right.

And for reasons that I've forgotten, Ed said, "Well, bring the other one to Tahoe." And we had this huge thing on the porch at Tahoe, just as ugly as could possibly be. You know, it really had no connection with Tahoe in any way; it was always driving me crazy.

After I was a Regent and after Ed Heller had died, Emil Mrak, who was the chancellor at Davis, was up visiting me at Tahoe—Mraks were up for a few days—and he kept talking about that dinosaur print. And I said, "Will you take it to Davis?! I give it to you!" And he went home with this immense thing in his car. So there was a second one; you're right. That is not really a terrific gift.

Chall: It's not in the way of gifts, but it certainly is an interesting item.
Heller: Yes. Well, it's something that I would have forgotten about completely. I think there's also one somewhere around Davis, unless they've destroyed it, for all I know. They're very unattractive.

Chall: Well, I guess dinosaurs weren't exactly beautiful beasts, either.

Heller: No. But I do remember hearing about how they make tunnels. These things occasionally just drop out of the ceiling.

Chall: Very exciting. All right. I wanted to ask you about the discontinuation of the funding of the Heller committee. Did you decide to--?

Heller: It began to get more and more expensive, as I remember, and the Department of Economics began funding part of it. I don't mean it ever got terribly expensive. And, just eventually one of those things that was so much a part of curriculum, the Department of Economics just decided it was part of their department.

Chall: And you didn't feel the need to carry on private funding for it?

Heller: Oh, my mother-in-law was still alive when it was taken over.

Chall: Was she? And she didn't fund it any longer?

Heller: No, no. She didn't feel that personal. I think if I were to give any impressions I felt she was terribly pleased it had become such an accepted part of curriculum of the economics department. I do remember—you've come across that, haven't you?

Chall: Oh, yes, I knew about that committee.

Heller: It was for a Bay Area family of four, with two children, boy and a girl, I always remember that. I read one at one time. They didn't live on very much at that point. That started, I think, in the thirties?

Chall: It must have. Huntington was made chairman of that committee in 1935. It was established, however—that Heller Committee for Research in Social Economics in 1923, by Jessica Peixotto with annual donations from the E.S. Hellers, according to Emily Huntington.

Heller: I don't know about that.

Chall: So that really went back a long way.

Heller: I didn't know about that. Well, the Peixottos were an old San Francisco family and friendly with my parents-in-law. But I don't know what it did before my mother-in-law funded that study. I really don't. This is news to me.
Chall: All right. What about the remodeling of the Bancroft Library?

Heller: Wait a minute, you're too far ahead. We're doing the gifts. Because the most interesting gift, I think, that Edward Heller made when he was a Regent, he gave $250,000 to the University for the use of the Berkeley campus—but he didn't want his name on it; it was called the anonymous fund—and it was to give an income of $25,000 a year to the political science department in which he was very much interested.

But in writing up the gifts—I guess his attorneys and authorities of the University did it—it was written in, if the fund should grow, the second $25,000 should go to the history department. This is sort of over and above things that couldn't be done under the regular salaries or budgets. He expressed a preference, if it should ever grow larger, for the English department. I'm not sure whether that was verbal or in writing. I know the first two were strictly in writing. And further than that, it could be used at the discretion of the chancellor. It was in $25,000 increments.

Well, to this day, I cannot find out how it grew the way it did. There was always the anonymous fund, and not too long after Ed died, I had word from whoever was chancellor then—or maybe from the treasurer's office—that over $25,000 was coming in from that fund, and they would start giving it to the history department. Well, that went on for a while—this was when I was a Regent—and word came to me that a third $25,000 was coming in. That's about when Al Bowker—nine years ago—became chancellor, because he started reporting to me about it. So, by God, the third $25,000 has been filled. You won't believe this.

Chall: Did he give the money in stocks?

Heller: Yes. That's some other unfinished business. I have to find out from Bob Hammond, who knows the history of this thing, how it ever grew. Because, the stock was sold, and other University investments don't grow to that degree. Al told me that the third $25,000 was available for the English department. And at that point I said, "You know, Al, I've never heard how any of this is used." He said, "That's outrageous." He said, "I'm going to do two things: I'm going to get you an accounting of this fund; every year it's going to come to you"—because Ed had certain ideas that it should be used for certain things, but not others—and he said, "I'm going to have you meet the chairmen of the departments on this subject."

I remember lunch at his house with the department chairmen, two of whom I knew at that time. You won't believe it. Since then, a fourth $25,000 is just about complete, and it has gone to the comparatively new department of—that Bob Scalapino's the head of—Asian Institute—whatever it is. [Institute of East Asian Studies] That's been the fourth.
Heller: And believe it or not, this year I had a letter from Al Bowker which said it's starting on another $25,000 income. He said, "This will be my last official act." It isn't anywhere near a full $25,000, and he doesn't have to ask my approval, but he said, "With your approval, I would like to give this for the next three years to our Department of Classics." I thought, why get into the Department of Classics? But he knew that Clary and I both were very interested in this Nemea digs. It's going to those digs for implemental student support and all that. Isn't that an unbelievable story?

And after Ed died, somewhere along the line, I was asked if it had to remain the anonymous fund. I didn't feel it had to any more, because I hadn't given it. It's now known as the Heller Fund.

There are two Heller funds. There's another Heller who left a huge amount of money to the university if you ever look.

Chall: Well, I wanted to ask you about that.

Heller: Don't know who he is from Adam. And the University didn't know who he was. It's one of these gifts that came to the University in a will out of the clear sky. It was large--millions.

Chall: Oh really? With the name Heller attached to it?

Heller: Yes, but it had a first name like Daniel, or--I've forgotten. None of us know who it is; nobody's quite clear how the money--how this man was interested in the university. He came from someplace in Northern California. No, it had nothing to do with me.

But this Heller Fund doesn't say the Edward H. Heller fund; I think it's just called Heller Fund.

Chall: It is interesting to find out that it's grown.

Heller: It may be officially called the Edward Hellman Heller Fund now, I'm not sure. Isn't that interesting?

Chall: Yes, it is. How it grew from nothing.

Heller: Some department chairmen use it better than others.

Chall: But now you know what they're using it for, is that it?

Heller: Yes. I get it, and I always put it on Clary's desk, and he makes comments. He and I usually agree. Some of them understand instinctively how to use it to supplement the department. And others almost let it lie there unused, which makes me annoyed. I always say to Al, "Why don't we take it away and give it to somebody else?" But it does go--almost all the departments use it for some scholarship--graduate
Heller: scholarship funding, which I think is excellent. There's such a need for all of that. And it's used, not for entertaining in the ordinary sense, but it might be used to refurbish a room where the department can get together with students for conversations. I could dig out those things for you, they're on file someplace.

Chall: You've put them away where they can be found?

Heller: If you're interested in seeing them. I don't always approve them. I don't always keep them, because I remember sending them back last time to Al Bowker. It was just that last few months—with Clary's comments on them. I said, "I agree."

Well, sometimes they start using them for—you know, the vague word "entertaining." But basically, I think they've been very, very good. But it's not to supplement salaries; that's very clear. It's to make the jobs more attractive because of perks of the department which wouldn't be available.

Chall: Well, I'm sure every department could use a bit of it. Now, where are we chronologically? Are we up to remodeling the Bancroft Library?

Seller: Well, I've told you about the gifts. Now, if you insist, we'll talk about the Bancroft Library.

Chall: I didn't know about all those gifts.

Heller: I knew you didn't. And those were really very nice gifts. Oh, they were marvelous gifts. Well, after Ed died, I decided I wanted to give something to the University in his memory, and I gave a stock that Ed had that nobody even knew about. It had a market value, but it had to be sold very slowly—Data Design. I've always remembered that, and I gave it to the University with a letter, which is around someplace, that I carefully drafted. I had learned, being a Regent, that you must be very careful how you give gifts, or they get useless. I remember the wording. Clark Kerr was president. I said I was giving it to the University for purpose or purposes of the University—I didn't say the Berkeley campus—to be decided by consultation with me. I left it very wide open, though I had indicated to Clark that I really wanted it mostly to go for Berkeley. But I did not say it in the designation.

At the moment the Berkeley campus had no project that interested me particularly. Just at that particular moment, Santa Cruz was a building. I think when I discussed the Santa Cruz campus with you I told you that we learned quickly not to name any place after anybody, or you wouldn't get the money for the extra provost houses and libraries and all that, which are part of the college system. The second college was named Stevenson, and they didn't have any money, because it couldn't be state money, for a provost's house, which is
Heller: part of the basic design of the colleges at Santa Cruz. Clark asked me if I wouldn't give $50,000 of this money to Santa Cruz for a provost's house for Stevenson college. Imagine building a beautiful provost's house with $50,000! And I said "fine." Ed had always liked the whole Santa Cruz idea. There's nothing attached to his name on that. I don't think it's known. Maybe Dean McHenry knows it. But it's not particularly known.

Well, Bob Hammond, who was treasurer, started selling this. It had a market value, but it was an over-the-counter stock and he had to sell it very carefully and very slowly, so as not to depress the market with it. He sold it over several years, and got a very good price. In the end, it was somewheres between $500,000 and $600,000. Gift stock—you're never sure what it's going to be, but it came out very well, fortunately, because afterwards, Data Design went down to nothing. And don't ask me what it was; I don't know. I certainly didn't want them to hold it. So there was this money being held.

Remember Berkeley began looking for $15 million at one point? I think when Roger Heyns was chancellor. Well, somebody at Berkeley knew there was this money that could be available. I guess there was a committee—I know Dan Koshland was on it, and I think—who was the predecessor in development over at Berkeley to Erickson? Joe—it was somebody I know. They came to me with a proposal that it be used to make the room opposite—you know the Morrison Room in the Doe Library—to make that usable for rare books, which were not then part of the Bancroft. The whole thing was just very confused, that's all I can say. The room didn't seem to lend itself to what they wanted. I didn't like the whole idea.

Along about that time, I was on the board of the Friends of The Bancroft Library, and I became very interested—this was before Jim [James] Hart was director—in seeing if the Rare Book Collection of the Doe Library couldn't be merged with the Bancroft collection. It just made no sense to have two separate rare book collections virtually in the same building. Fortunately, enough people worked on this so that it was done. You never know if those things will come off or not. It was made part of Bancroft.

Then came the question of possible remodeling of the Bancroft, which is a hideous building on the outside. You know what it looks like.

Chall: Just part of the library.

Heller: It's a box that was added on to the Doe Library, really. I don't know if you remember how it was before it got re-done?

Chall: Oh, yes, I remember.
Heller: It was just a rabbit hole of offices, do you remember? By that time, Jim Hart had come along as director of the Bancroft. We get along very well. He had the conception of the possibility of converting this mess. There had been thoughts of building a new Bancroft; there were all sorts of things. He started to work on it, seeing what could be done by converting and making use of that space. I didn't go into this with you about campus planning, did I? The architect of the Bancroft?

Chall: No.

Heller: It's just the ways of the University. You know, every campus of the University has a campus architect and/or the campus planning commission. The architects are usually resident architects. I'm not sure that they have them now that they're not doing much building. They select the architects for minor projects, this campus planning committee. Louie [Louis] DeMonte was the campus architect. So we got to the point where we needed an architect to see what could be done with this whole interior with the amount of money there was.

They recommended some very unknown architect. Alfred Heller, who is very interested in this project, my son Alf, got very interested. He said, "This is outrageous. Just because it's a minor project, in terms of dollars, doesn't mean you take a minor architect. You take the finest you can get. The smaller the project, the more important it is to get a good architect."

So, I reported this back to Jim Hart, who reported it back to the campus planning committee. I never went near the campus planning committee; I know better than to do those things. Jim Hart came and said, "Well, do you have any recommendations for who would be good?" That was, with the okay of the CPC. I said to Alf, "Well, I've got them moved this far; now you tell me who you think would be any good." He said, "I'm not going to recommend a firm, but I know the perfect architect, who's interested in the library, who lives in Berkeley, who could drop in on his way back and forth to work, who has superb taste, and would understand the value of getting something very good in a small way." It was an architect whose name at the moment I can't remember—maybe I could phone Jim and find out—who was with Skidmore Owings. He was not one of their senior partners, but Alf had great admiration for him.*

So then the whole dance was gone through again, and he was asked by the campus planning committee.

*The architect was Wallace Costa, according to James Hart, director of The Bancroft Library. [ERH]
I want to finish up briefly about the remodeling of the Bancroft Library, and then go into this other material.

Don't let me forget I found a little bit about how the joint UCLA-Drew medical school is going. I talked to Dave Saxon—he only knows it without details. He said it's getting on, but it's a much slower process than the Drew school ever dreamed it would be. Actually, it's slower than UCLA med school thought it would be.

What makes it slow?

I don't know. He didn't know. He said, "Well, if you phone Chuck Young or Sherm Melinkoff, you can probably find out." Well, it's very easy for me to get the president of the University, but I can't get the chancellor at UCLA!

You could, but you don't--

I can if I leave messages all over, which I didn't feel like doing. And I tried Sherm Melinkoff; his secretary said he's on his way out of the county. I said, "Well, forget this one." So that's all I found out.

All right. That's fine. Somebody else can get the rest of it.

I may be able to catch up with Chuck Young. Now I'm interested to see how it ended up. All right, you wanted to finish up on--?

Yes. The Bancroft Library. As we left last week, you had hired an architect in Skidmore Owings and Merrill.

Let me say that Jim says as a result of that, he comes in quite often, this architect, to the Bancroft. His interest has always continued. He has always been a member since then; paid dues, and comes to the exhibits. Isn't that interesting?

That is really fine. It surely is. Beyond Alfred's insisting that you have a good architect and plan it carefully, then did the family just allow it to be handled by Dr. Hart and the University?

Oh, absolutely. I did talk to Jim Hart about one or two things that I thought, if they could be included, should be. And he was not in disagreement with me. I've always felt that the more a library is an active center, aside from just the actual research, the better it is. And I was very anxious to know if they couldn't have a classroom there, to bring people in. And they have, you know, upstairs, in back. Also I was very anxious to see if there could be any printing done there. And they have the press, and they've got that all installed, and it is in use all the time.
Heller: Jim did keep me very much informed on what was being done, and everything was first class—the materials. I talked to Jim Hart just about the physical details last week, just to be sure. He said, "Well, everything has stood up." And to know the way a campus goes, he said, after this time, the rugs, which are excellent quality, needed cleaning. So he went to get an authorization from Minor Capital Budget I guess—you know, the fund. And they said yes, use so-and-so. And Jim thought, "I'm not going to take just anybody; nobody has this good a carpet." So Jim went to the manufacturer of the carpet who said, "Well, that firm's okay, but the only one I would trust is this one," and whoever controls Minor Capital Budget said go ahead.

Chall: That's interesting. Dr. Hart is a person with high standards himself.

Heller: Oh, amazing. One thing I think I must put in, because it isn't me. Though we had a lot of money in there, they were about $100,000 short of doing everything they wanted to do. It was really Roger Heyns, who was chancellor then, who, with Jim Hart, I guess, talked to—why can't I think of her name?—that nice lady and her husband, whom I know perfectly well—about the need for an exhibit room, because those exhibit cases are very specially controlled. I'll also provide her name—it will come to me in the middle of the interview. So they put in, I believe, $100,000.

Chall: Yes, I know there was somebody else.

Heller: I know her perfectly well. He's very well known; she's one of the Berkeley Fellows—Doreen Townsend, Calvin and Doreen Townsend. So that money was in addition to what I had given. You know, the most important visible part of the Bancroft, really—

Chall: Is that exhibit room?

Heller: Yes.

Chall: There's also the reading room.

Heller: Well, yes. It's used so much for people coming in to see the exhibits. You could have it bigger, but it has beautiful—I don't know if you've noticed the cases and the lighting and the temperature control. I think they're probably as good cases as there are anyplace in this area. Is that the end of the Bancroft? I don't mean the end, the beginning!

Chall: I just wanted to know what your role had been. Now, I want to ask you one final question, which may or may not have anything to do with you or your family—let me find it in my notes. In 1974, there was
Chall: established the Marco Francis Hellman Fund in the Bancroft Library for gathering materials on the history of California economics, technology and science, and to purchase rare books. Did you have anything to do with that?

Heller: No, not a thing. He was a first cousin of Ed Heller's, and he really had just become interested in the Bancroft, strangely enough. He had retired. He was a Cal graduate, of course. Just a week or two before he died of his coronary, he came over to see the library. Jim, of course, had always known him. He was terribly interested. As I remember the story, his most intimate friend and cousin, though not a cousin of Ed's, Fred [Frederick] Ehrman, wanted to do something in memory of Mick [Marco Francis] Hellman, and gave an undesignated sum to the University. Jim somehow persuaded the rest of the family--the immediate family, not our family--to add to that. And that's where that money came from. It was sort of a late interest.

Chall: This Ehrman you just mentioned?

Heller: Fred. Frederick Ehrman. He lived in New York, though he was raised in San Francisco. His father and Sidney Ehrman were brothers.

Chall: I see.

Heller: He was a partner in Lehman Brothers. He was a Cal graduate. As I remember, I didn't see Fred Ehrman from one year to the other, except he always came out for the Big Game from New York. Well, that doesn't really belong in there. What else did you have?

Chall: That's all. I knew they were related--but I wasn't sure whether you had anything to do with that.
Chall: So shall we go on now to the volunteer activities in the Palo Alto area, and start with the Stanford-Palo Alto Hospital? Tell me about your appointment.

Heller: How was I appointed to that board?

Chall: Yes.

Heller: Well, I was appointed just about two weeks before Ed Heller died. Stanford appointees are made, I guess, by the board of trustees of Stanford, but basically by the president of the university—or were made, because it's no longer a joint board. The whole hospital belongs to Stanford only and in consequence the trustees of Stanford University appoint the board. But previously there were six Stanford appointees, and six appointed by the city of Palo Alto, by the city council.

I had been interested in the hospital's moving down here from San Francisco, just sort of in a theoretical way, because Ed Heller was always talking about whether UC Medical School should be moved to Berkeley. There was a big row on that going on. Of course, the decision went the other way for UC med, but for Stanford, it went this way. So I kept asking questions just about how it was getting on. You know, you live in a smallish community, and people pick up that you're sort of interested. I had been told that Bob Alway, whom I knew, and who was then dean, I guess, of the school of medicine, the Stanford School of Medicine, had suggested me as a board member. I think that's the way these things happen. There were two vacancies, and he had also suggested my good friend Jim O'Brien, who was a member with me at the exact same period of time. I don't want to say I was eagerly appointed.
Heller: 

Anway, Wally Sterling was president of Stanford, and he had phoned that he wanted to come over and talk to me, practically immediately. It was when Ed was very sick. Wally, I remember, came over one Sunday morning, and Ed had gotten up—he had started to feel bum, but he had gotten up; he was in the sitting room. Wally put forth this idea. I said, "Well, you know, Wally, I haven't got very much time, and Ed is home." This is all in front of him, and Ed said, "Oh, I think you should do it, Ellie." Wally said, "It won't take any time at all. It's just one two-hour meeting once a month." And Ed said, "Well, I think you should do it."

So I accepted. And Ed died—Wally was the last visitor that Ed ever really saw out of bed. I've always remembered that he was the last person he ever saw, because he went off so rapidly after that.

But in the meantime, before he died—you never know with cancer when a person is really going to die—I had made an appointment to go over to the hospital and find out something about what the board did. Well, at that point, with Ed so sick, I always left word exactly where I was. I went over there—it was just to spend an hour or so. When I got there, there was a message: "Phone home." I phoned home and Dr. Russ [Russel] Lee was here. He said, "Get home, Ellie, I don't think Ed's going to live much longer." That's the way those things go.

I guess I went to my first board meeting probably in January, the same time I went to the Regents. It just happened to come simultaneously. And if you think that was two hours once a month—it was endless! Well, you remember what I thought about trying to form a new organization of the post-secondary when there were no rules? It was the same way down here, except that you had to keep a hospital going. It was a lot more difficult and more serious. We had committees upon committees and special committees.

When I went on, Bill Hewlett was the chairman of the hospital board, and a very good one, just sort of trying to make some sense out of this double ownership, and putting the structure together. But his term was almost up, and he did get off fairly soon after that. There were some very able people on the board.

The dual ownership was absolute chaos all the time. Not that the board members fought; it was that the constituencies fought, especially the city of Palo Alto. And you did read those clippings? Here we were trying to run an operation in the black, Medicare was just barely started at that point, collection of bills, allocation of costs between the Stanford departments and the Palo Alto departments. We struggled mightily. You asked [in your outline] if there was conflict on the board. No, there wasn't. We really got on quite well. They were pretty nice people all around, but we didn't know exactly where we were going.
Chall: And the board didn't have control over the finances, either, or did it?

Heller: No, we really didn't have control over that. But we had control over the use of the finances, and we had control over what came in. Yes, we did have control over the finances, on an operating basis.

But there never were enough. The hospital was, in my opinion and in the opinion of many, very badly conceived just from a hospital point of view, not a joint operation point of view. It's to this day very difficult. You know, the origins of who planned the hospital, nobody will admit to yet. I don't know if you know that.

Chall: You're talking about what hospital?

Heller: What is now called the Stanford Hospital. It was the joint Stanford-Palo Alto Hospital.

Chall: So are you still operating two hospitals, two plants?

Heller: No, it's one, now. But the physical arrangements are extremely poor. And though everybody down here uses it, because it has excellent medical people, and research people are just first rate from that point of view, probably none better, the facilities are really very lacking.

The operating rooms aren't enough; the surgeons are piled up; there's no air conditioning, which is unknown in a modern facility, built in 1959. They've been celebrating this whole year, twenty years of the hospital. I get invited to all these things. But twenty years ago everything was air conditioned. But they cut corners on account of money. It's a beautiful building; I don't know if you've ever seen it.

Chall: I doubt it.

Heller: It's very handsome. Stone was the architect who had done some of our embassies. There are two Stones who are architects. The joke always was that the Stanford trustees, who are the ones who chose the architect under the terms of the agreement, got the wrong Stone. They meant to get the Stone of Stone, Marraccini and Barrett, who are hospital experts. I don't think that's necessarily a true story. But I can assure you it's the most impractical building in the world.

They didn't even put in an ICU (intensive care unit), which is in every hospital! We kept having to carve out rooms for ICU. It still hasn't got a proper one. No air conditioning. For reasons that have never been clear to me the hot water pipes flush hot water into the toilets. You can't control the heat in an individual room—I'm not talking about air conditioning. If the heat is on, there's nothing
Heller: you can do to shut it off. I've had just enough personal experience--mostly when Ed was in the hospital with his cancer--but I was in for a minor thing for two nights twice, once for this eye thing. It just drives you crazy. The nurses' stations aren't in the right places. There's what they call a horizontal hospital instead of a vertical hospital. The doctors just have to walk walk walk walk walk. Theoretically, there's a Stanford wing and a Palo Alto wing, but the board had to keep shifting what belonged to whom and keep the accounting, depending on the population.

When Stanford first came down here--remember the Stanford doctors had practiced in San Francisco--the Palo Alto doctors were filling most of the beds. So, the load of patients came from the Palo Alto side. That's more than equalized itself now, but it didn't for quite a few years.

We had a weak superintendent of the hospital--that's what we called him. Doctors are very hard to control anyway. Then the staffs fought. There was a Stanford chief of staff and there was a Palo Alto chief of staff. They always met with the hospital board. I had plenty of first-hand experience with this. All nice people, but there's where the fighting took place. And in addition to that, Stanford has a really extraordinarily well known research faculty in the medical school. Nobel prize winners and great medical people, but they are such prima donnas. Some wouldn't sign their contracts, because they wanted them for themselves--each fighting for their territory. I think that still goes on. Am I giving you a picture of--

Chall: Yes. Of, at best a difficult problem.

Heller: --of difficulty? Personally, the worst time came about 1965 or in through there--I couldn't tell you the exact date--when the nurses, who do not belong to a union over there, I mean, not the usual nurses' union (they have their own association), were threatening to strike for higher wages. They were acting as a unit; they weren't part of the Bay Area strike. Nobody trusted anybody. Of course, your hospital superintendent should conduct all sorts of negotiations for personnel like that, but he just wasn't up to it. The board--you won't believe it--had to conduct the negotiations--

Chall: As a board?

Heller: --with the imminent strikers. We had the hospital emptied out of all but dying patients. You know how that happens in a strike. It was just touch and go. I well remember, for example, we met all Fourth of July. That was the way we spent Fourth of July, trying--

Chall: The whole board? The whole twelve of you?
Heller: Yes, the whole board!

Chall: And the representative of the nurses?

Heller: Well, we had acquired an attorney by this time who specialized in labor negotiations. The attorney for Stanford or the medical school or the hospital didn't know anything about this sort of thing. Arthur Mendelsohn, who lives here, is a great specialist in labor negotiation.

Actually, later I recommended him to President Hitch when there was a strike. Remember there was a strike against the Berkeley and SF campuses of the University? I'm diverging, but I just thought of it. The general counsel of the Regents--his whole office--doesn't know a thing about labor negotiations. I kept saying to President Hitch, "You just have to get a specialist in labor relations!" "Do you know any?" I said, "By happenstance, yes, I do!" And he took him. He's excellent.

So he'd go between the nurses and the staff and the board; he'd go all night, because that's the way these labor negotiations go. And these nurses--this is ridiculous when you think of it--didn't trust anybody's word. They didn't trust the staff; they didn't trust the board; they thought they weren't being told the truth. One morning I got a phone call from a couple of doctors on the med school staff, and they said, "You've just got to do something for us, Ellie. You just have to meet secretly with a small delegation of the nurses. They say they'll believe you. And they won't believe anybody else." Imagine my getting into a position like that! [laughs] It's ridiculous when you think of it. I said, "I won't do it unless you clear it with the doctors on the Palo Alto side too. I don't want to be doing just a med school thing." I knew we were in a terrible position. They phoned back and said, "Yes, it's all cleared, but it's a secret. You can't tell anybody." I said, "Where do they want to meet?" They said, "Oh! Not in the hospital, not in the hospital!"

Of course, I had gotten to know these chief negotiators of the nurses by that time, who didn't know what they were doing either. I well remember I met them and had coffee in Blum's candy shop, or whatever you call it, one Saturday or Sunday morning. You know, always crazy times. I gave my word that what had been offered to them was honest, and I would guarantee it.

I think their lack of sophistication made them suspect the male world. This is the only time I ever got singled out as the only female. [laughs] Isn't that funny when you think of that? I gave my absolute word I'd been in on all the offers. They weren't asking anything terribly unreasonable. It was basically they wanted more holidays, more basic pay, and differential for night work. It was the usual issues. I learned a lot about labor phraseology before I finished.
Heller: And, by God, at the last second, after all the patients except the very sick ones were moved out, we put it together. It was really a sort of terrifying experience. You asked me [in the outline] how it connected to other things.

Now, believe it or not, when there was this labor threat at the University against Berkeley and UCSF, I was in a position, because I had seen the academic mind in the Stanford Med School labor dispute at work, to give some advice to Charlie Hitch. And one of my chief pieces of advice was always keep somebody above and not into labor negotiations. I said, "Charlie, you're president of the whole University. No matter what things they call you"—Victor Van Bourg was one of them; [John F.] Crowley was another in San Francisco—"don't get into it. Make the two chancellors be the ones who are making the contacts, because then they always have a last resort to come to you with proposals." Van Bourg just screamed to high heaven about the Berkeley campus, and Crowley was just unbelievable. You know who he is, he was the--

Chall: Yes. But that's their role, though, isn't it? I mean, that's the way they play their part in labor negotiations.

Heller: I'll give you an aside on Crowley. After this was all over, the strike was settled—I've forgotten what it was about already; you always do—I was at a big dinner in San Francisco when Frank Sooy was inaugurated as chancellor of UCSF. I remember it was at the St. Francis; it was huge. We were all seated. The Regents who attended, and quite a number did, were scattered throughout the room, and by God, I found Crowley on my right-hand side, who was difficult to talk to to put it mildly. I stayed miles away from labor or anything else, because he didn't know me. This was not an inauguration; it was a dinner to welcome Frank Sooy as chancellor of the San Francisco campus—the medical school. It was a fine idea. There were people from all over San Francisco there.

When Frank Sooy got up to speak, he said he wanted to start by proposing a toast to the president of the University, Charles Hitch. Everybody stood up, and Crowley's wife was there, too, on the other side of the table. She started to get up, and he remained seated. He said (I've forgotten her first name), "Sit down! Sit down! Don't you dare ever rise to toast a man like Charles Hitch." And they sat while that whole roomful of seven or eight hundred people toasted Charles Hitch. He'd never forgiven him, because Hitch didn't conduct direct negotiations with him. You asked me how these things worked back and forth.

Before the hospitals were separated, before the ownership was put under one ownership, when we still had the dual ownership, there was a lot in the paper—I think you had the clippings—on the open meetings?
Yes, the decision to open them, and the fight about it.

It was extremely dubious if we (the hospital board) came under the Brown Act, because it was privately owned, much more than half-privately owned, in that the city of Palo Alto, just before this joint ownership idea was before it, had passed a bond issue for four million dollars to add on to its old hospital. Not very much when you think of it nowadays. Well, that seemed like a good idea, I guess to some of the Stanford people, to get that to add to whatever it could put in or raise. I do believe, and my figure may be inaccurate on this, but I think Stanford put in about eighteen million—or maybe it was a total of eighteen million, including the four million. But anyway, it was much more money from the Stanford side. They raised money from various sources. So in a way, it was a bigger ownership by Stanford.

Well, to get back to the open board meetings. I had had the experience of open board meetings on the Regents, and the city members had had the experience of open board meetings, but the city council in Palo Alto, like Berkeley, is just impossible! You know, everybody wants to speak, and you can't get any business done. They (the board) were very dubious; as long as we weren't strictly under the Brown Act, they weren't very anxious to open the meetings because of our knowledge of what happened in Palo Alto City Council meetings.

Maybe—I think I had an effect on the outcome of that vote. I kept saying, "We're crazy. The people will come to one meeting, and nobody's ever going to show up again, because it's just too boring to hear all these details." And that's the effect it had. We had the press and some people at the meeting the first time we opened it up. And nobody ever came again, though it was open.

Yes. But there just was the fuss to open it.

Yes, I was sure that it would go that way. I felt pretty sure, and I certainly was right. They never have the slightest problem. But some of these Palo Alto political types or community types were determined that we were misappropriating funds—I don't know what they thought was going on. Nothing was going on, unfortunately, except to try to work in the black. So that got over. But this took meetings and meetings and yellings. As I say, it never was the board members that were doing the fighting. They really got on extremely well. Well, you asked about that.

Then you asked about—I looked at this before you came, and now I've forgotten. [Reading] Was single management of the dual facility ever feasible? Was the concept doomed from the start? I'm not sure what you mean by that question. Of course, it is under single management now.
Chall: Yes, but it was going to be under a dual board forever. That's what I mean.

Heller: Oh, I see what you're talking about. It was doomed from the start. It had to be doomed. Yes, it was absolutely impossible. The city council, for its own reasons, wanted to get in. Actually, the Stanford trustees did not really interfere. Sometimes we'd try to get some help out of them. It's an impossible conception.

Chall: You said you had control over the finances, but you didn't have control as a total board over the rates, over some of the hiring--

Heller: Yes, we had control over the rates.

Chall: Let me check back on my notes here, and tell you why I thought you might not have had the kind of control that you needed.

Heller: We had control over the rates.

Chall: There was some discussion in 1964 about whether this board, this twelve-member board [reading] would have control over patients, income, rates, staffing, planning, expansion of the hospital center. Previously those were decided by the owners, who reserved the right of those major decisions in these matters. So, it looked as though for a year or so you didn't really have control.

Heller: Well, in a way they reserved rights, but they really didn't exercise them. Every time the hospital rates had to go up--of course, everybody is so used to hospital rates going up now, but it wasn't as well known then--there'd be screams of mismanagement. But they did go up, and always are pretty much on a par with community hospitals.

Chall: I have a note here too that in '64 the council deadlocked--this is the city council--four to four on the plan to let the hospital directors have complete authority over staffing, operations, and expansion of the hospital.

Heller: Well, that's probably true. I've forgotten--

Chall: Yes, I just wondered, because that would have made it so much more difficult.

Heller: --the details, but it did work out in the end. The expansion basically was that the old Palo Alto Hospital, which is not quite adjacent, but it's on Stanford land, and it's not five minutes by car, was sitting there empty. It had become an outdated facility. We finally got authorization from the city to make that hospital useful. And we got some money from the city.
Heller: Once that was done, we had authority now to do the remodeling and what architect to use, which was Stone, Marraccini and Patterson. We got the right Stone that time. It's been named the Hoover Pavilion. It's still so named, and it's been a lifesaver. You can't have major surgery done there; you can just have some minor surgery. They do have a small ICU there. The rooms are larger. You can get a single room. You can get much more attention over there, there's not nearly as much bustle. Most people that have the sort of illness that can go there, prefer it. Actually, they do some surgery in the hospital, and then take people by ambulance—the insurance covers it—over to the Hoover facility. I don't know what they'd do without that, because it's almost impossible to get into the hospital, you know. I don't know whether your East Bay hospitals are as jammed up—

Chall: No, they're not.

Heller: It's just dreadful. They have beds in the corridors all the time.

Chall: Why haven't they expanded it, or built another?

Heller: Well, they did expand it, but this was after I left the board, though the planning was underway. It's sort of a ridiculous story, and I think I know the story. Once it was single ownership by Stanford, they built a three-story building adjacent to the hospital, which was to have additional surgery. I've forgotten what else was to go there, but I do know surgery. Somehow, the specifications went all wrong, and it's been declared unsafe, and all they'll allow are offices in there, no patients. It was a very expensive do. They didn't make the doors to the rooms, I understand, wide enough to get a gurney through. This is hard to believe; this is what I hear.

Chall: This is very hard to believe.

Heller: Also, it had to join the former hospital. The slope of the level is too steep for interns or orderlies to push a gurney with a patient up it. It's insane. So it sits there, and it's used, I guess, for offices, and maybe some pathology work or something. So that's the one expansion. I'll tell you: there's everything wrong with it, and still, we all go there. Everybody uses it; people come from all over the world—

Chall: They do indeed.

Heller: —for treatment there. They are good, but you sort of wonder.

This is so minor, it's hardly worth the story; but I'll give you an example of it. I hate to share rooms. There's no way in the world, on something unimportant, you can get a room to yourself. I had to be in for two nights to have this cataract removed. I went in deliberately over Christmas. My doctor was perfectly willing to do the surgery the
Heller: day before Christmas. And that way, I could get a single bed, and
where do you suppose it was? In Urology! [laughs] That's the only
single room. I mean, it's nutty!

But everybody I know--I don't know more than two people who go to
San Francisco to be hospitalized, where there are comfortable facilities.
I don't mean UCSF, I mean any of the--they like it here.

Chall: And they're close to home.

Heller: Yes. Well, it is excellent care. So I get what your original question
is about. It was never feasible. There was fighting going on constantly;
the city was always saying it was the med school doctors that ran up
the costs, and the med school was saying the city council didn't know
what health care was all about. It was impossible.

That, too, helped me when I was a Regent, as we were adding med
schools. There was some question of dual ownership, as I remember, at
San Diego, Irvine, and Sacramento. Actually, the first thing I ever
said at the Regents--though I'd really been just on the hospital board
a short time. I can't remember which campus it was--it may have been
San Diego--they were considering dual ownership. Somebody was reporting,
one of the vice-presidents or something, and saying, "Well, it's been
very successful at Stanford." And that was my first public utterance
other than "Aye." I said, "It isn't successful! You'd better look
further into it." So I think I kept the University at least from
getting into dual ownership of facilities with counties or cities,
because it was such a mess.

Well, we jaunted along, meetings upon meetings upon meetings; that's
all I can say. Bob Glaser had become dean of the medical school. I've
forgotten what year he came, but it was around '65, '66. He came from
Harvard; he had a very fine background. Incidentally, he became one
of my best friends.

Chall: You were telling me that Bob Glaser had become dean of the medical school.

Heller: Yes, and an excellent dean he was, in my opinion. Well, he was a great
deal more sophisticated than the former deans or acting deans. They
really didn't have a proper dean, since they'd moved down. Yank
Chandler, Dr. Chandler, had been the dean for years in San Francisco,
and he had retired by then. They had a series of acting deans. Bob
Alway is a fine person, but he is quite quarrelsome, didn't really like
the job at all.

Bob Glaser really was a ten-strike when he was chosen. He saw
right away the futility of this, and he just made up his mind that he
was going to do everything to get Stanford to buy out the city, the
Heller: city's interests. Well, you could probably get the story better from him than me, but as I remember it first he had to get the okay of the Stanford trustees to even try to proceed. I was only second hand on these negotiations. I was on the board, but Bob was conducting the negotiations and would tell me some of what was going on.

Of course, the city was completely resistant. They smelled a rat. This went on for months and months and months and months. I don't remember how much Stanford paid the city; it may be in your clippings.

Chall: That information is available.

Heller: It wasn't outrageous anyway. I'm sure it was the four million dollars that they had originally put in.

Chall: Let's see. Stanford was going to pay the city one million cash and assume the city's bonded debt of $3.5 million, and guarantee continued community hospital care for a forty-year period. I guess that means community hospital care for a forty-year period.

Heller: That's accurate. The other part of it was that--I don't know why you didn't pick that up--about the community doctors' access to the hospital?

Chall: Well, I probably read it and just didn't put it in.

Heller: Because it's the big issue now. I have gone over this with Bob, whom I see quite often.

Chall: Is he still the dean?

Heller: No. He resigned. He'd just had it; those are terrible jobs. You're dealing with prima donnas and boards and staff and it's a backbreaking job, and he just had had it. He went East to be vice-president of the Commonwealth Fund. His friend Quigg Newton was president there. After a year he came back here. Before he came back, he was offered the presidency --I guess it's called--of the Kaiser Family Foundation, which is one of the huge foundations. He agreed to take it if they would move the offices of the Kaiser Family Foundation from Oakland down to this area so he could live down here. He had lived here for quite a while and loved it. He actually came from St. Louis, I think, originally, but he was very much of a New Englander, lived in New England quite a while. But he loves it here. They bought a home in Atherton, and he's got one of the biggest foundations in the state now that he's running. And then a few years later along came Roger Heyns as head of the Hewlett Foundation, and they share offices. That mostly interests me because they're both--Roger Heyns and Bob Glaser--such personally good friends of mine. And Roger's living in Atherton too!
Heller: Well, to get back to the hospital, it was Bob who brought this about. I must give him all the credit. I kept saying, "Bob, you're never going to bring it off. You'll have that howling city council and all these suspicious people thinking you're trying to put one over." He said, "No, I think I'm right, and I am going to put it over." And he did. Not put it over; that's the wrong thing. Get it accomplished. I think the terms were fair.

Part of that agreement was that all the community doctors who had access to the hospital were grandfathered in with access. The other part of the agreement, which you didn't pick up there, and I've checked this out with Bob Glaser and others so carefully, was that all community doctors who met the standards of Stanford as clinical doctors would have access to the facility. Palo Alto and Menlo Park have many magnificent physicians and they more than meet the standards of the clinical faculty; in fact, they have always been on the clinical faculty at Stanford. There's no time limit on that. I think the rest of the agreement was x number of beds would always be available for community patients. It was about a fifty-fifty split, as I remember.

You asked, what happened to the board after there was single ownership? It was no longer a board. It was an advisory committee to the medical school, to the hospital. It no longer had authority. The authority rested with the Stanford trustees after this deal was made. It was an advisory board to the dean—Bob Glaser was still dean. I wanted to get off then, and so did Jim O'Brien, because we could see that there was no authority left. You couldn't make decisions. And because Bob Glaser had become such a good friend of both Jim's and mine, he begged us to stay on, at least until he got it going. And we did stay on for two more years, I think. I think Jim and I each served nine years and maybe seven of those years were on the dual board. When Bob Glaser, then, picked the advisory board, he picked both from the council—city council members—and the hospital board members. So that it wasn't new, but we were advisory.

Well, still, they've got excellent people on there, and I understand it's been given more authority now, though I really don't want to speak to it, because I don't know exactly what that means. But anyway, I know the board approved the decision by Stanford, by the medical school, that the community doctors, except for those grandfathered in, would no longer have access to the facilities, to the use of the hospital, which is a terrible blow. It's still in negotiation. It's impossible. I don't want to go into the details, because I only follow them in the press and I hear discussion all the time about it, because there is no other hospital for them to practice in. For instance, the Palo Alto Medical Clinic, which is the biggest group of private doctors down here, where I am a patient, and I know the doctors and I know the management very well there, are having trouble getting new doctors, because they can't guarantee them access to the hospital.
Chall: The Palo Alto Medical Clinic?

Heller: That's a community facility. That's the one that Russ Lee started.

Chall: It's completely separate, then, from Stanford?

Heller: It's completely separate except that all their doctors were--well, almost all of them--were clinical doctors for Stanford, because they're very high quality. The Menlo Medical Clinic, which is the second biggest group of private practice doctors, is in the same bind. And this thing isn't settled yet.

Chall: Why do you think they did that?

Heller: Well, this is something I can't find out. I've tried to. Jim O'Brien, and I, and Bob Glaser, who doesn't want to get back into it, except that he's more than willing to say what he knew he negotiated. But the same old rivalries and misunderstandings persist.

You see, the only other hospitals down here--there's one district one in Redwood City that is very inaccessible from Palo Alto-Menlo Park, or there's a community hospital called El Camino south of here. They're both perfectly okay facilities, but I know all the doctors I know prefer practicing at the Stanford medical facility.

But they've got good members, I'll say that, on the board.

Chall: It's still the advisory board?

Heller: Yes, I think they have a little more authority than those first few years when I was on. It was really just a waste of time at that point. There's nothing worse to me than being on an advisory board and having no decisions, really, to make. Well, that, in a nutshell, maybe is the story of the Palo Alto-Stanford Hospital.

Chall: You were the only woman on that board all those years?

Heller: Yes, I was. But the only time I ever was used as a woman was on this nursing situation. Sometimes, though she wouldn't be a member, the president of the auxiliary of the hospital would come to the meetings and sit there. It's such a different operation. They were fund raisers--a small fund-raising arm. After I left, a woman was selected that you wouldn't know--Marian Wilson. She and her husband, Meredith Wilson--he used to be president of the University of Minnesota, before that I think University of Oregon, and then he was out here as head of the Behavioral Science Center--you know, the so-called Stanford Think Tank. She was asked to go on, but they moved back to Oregon permanently. He retired. I don't know that there's any woman on. There may be. I haven't heard.*

*Lately Linda Meier is a member, an excellent one. E.H.
Heller: Don't ask me why the city of Palo Alto never appointed a woman. I have no idea.

Chall: I won't ask you.

Heller: I have no idea.

Chall: Or why Stanford itself didn't?

Heller: I don't know why. It always made me laugh, because I had nothing to do with Stanford, but I was appointed. Maybe that's why. [laughs] Actually, Stanford for the most part had some very good appointees on the board. And the city of Palo Alto did too.

You asked me about a learning experience. It sure was. It sure was a crash course.

The whole point is you've got to keep an operation like that going. They're in much worse financial shape now than when I was on because of the mess on Medi-Cal and Medicare. The payments are so held up that they have a terrible cash flow. This is true at the university hospitals too, of course. Cash flow is just ghastly. It's going to break the university. There are so many millions of dollars owed to it. This is a general problem, not only at Stanford. The university hospitals have a speck better situation in that there's always a chance that the state budget will give some extra funds. But at Stanford it's just become a nightmare. And you know, they don't have a dean there now. They've been searching for a dean. They had one after Bob Glaser that some people liked and a lot didn't. He was very cold; I'll say that about him. I met him often enough. He just upped and resigned. I think he was probably forced out; that's guessing. Clayton Rich. It's been under an acting deanship.

Chall: How long has that been?

Heller: Oh, a good two years. They have not gotten a dean. Of course, they want the very best. I imagine it will stay in limbo, until a new president is chosen. Maybe I should say one thing more about it. The hospital was sort of Wally Sterling's baby, moving down here. He was always very interested and very supportive of it. Dick Lyman, who is now the president—I consider him just a superb president—but he's never gotten a rope on the hospital operation. I don't know that he's really tried. He gave it over to somebody in his office, an attorney, I think. Not one of the university attorneys, but an attorney who sort of works in his office. I think that's who it is; it doesn't make any difference.
Heller: So there's no really direct access between the medical school and the president of the university or the board of trustees. This is probably why they've had trouble getting a dean. Until there's a new president—I mean, it seems to me inevitable that whoever is the new president is going to be very much involved in the med school. It's one of the big problems at Stanford right now.

Chall: It's only an added problem to a university president, and I suppose nobody wants to take that on.

Heller: I just have a strong feeling it's going to be one of the priorities. Not every president can do everything. I don't want to take anything away from Dick Lyman, who I think has just been excellent. But he has not been deeply involved in the medical school. Maybe he was right, I don't know. This isn't my business.

As a matter of fact, I think they have a very good acting dean. He's not a great public speaker or terribly well known or anything like that, but that doesn't mean he isn't a good dean.

Chall: Maybe that's what they need, is a good dean.

Heller: I'll tell you. Those horses over there are pretty hard to ride. [laughter] I've often told my medical friends that academics are tough enough to get on with when you're on a governing board, but when they're academics cum medical, they're impossible egos. [laughs] Much though I like them as individuals. All right.

The Children's Health Council of the Mid-Peninsula

Chall: All right, so now we'll go on to the Children's Health Council of the Mid-Peninsula.

Heller: Well, that's a long name for a very small but good operation, which started about twenty-six years ago. It was sort of a gleam in Dr. Esther [B.] Clark's eye. She was the chief pediatrician at the Palo Alto Medical Clinic. She was my children's pediatrician, and everybody's pediatrician at that time. A perfectly marvelous person. Russ Lee, who's always full of things, who's head of—when I say clinic, I'm really talking about the Palo Alto Medical Clinic. He is always full of ideas, has been all of his life. I think he said to Esther one day, "Do something for children that isn't being done around here." I think it really started that way, and I know them all fairly well. So Esther went to different ones of her patients, and asked them if they'd go on the board of a children's health council—that's the name she gave it.
Heller: Once again, we didn't know what it was going to do, except it was going to meet the unmet needs of children. It was that general. Everybody was tremendously fond of Esther, and I don't think anybody turned her down. And for two years, I just never even went to a board meeting, because I didn't know what it was doing. I was just sort of being nice to Esther Clark.

Chall: But you were on her board?

Heller: But I was on the board. I knew almost everybody on the board, because it was just people I knew, that's all. But we were all asked by her, the original ones. They formed the board. Then the newly appointed chairman of that board was a friend of mine named Ann Frame. I went to college with her. Not that she was particularly good as chairman of the board, but she was a very tactful person. She did write very polite letters to all the members of the board, which in a very polite way said come to board meetings or get off. I thought, "Well, I'll try it." They had a young woman who was very good who was paid practically nothing as the executive.

Out of that grew this marvelous organization. It's always attracted the best board members; it's just been a superb organization. We long since have defined what we're doing, which is really serving the handicapped—not necessarily mentally ill—some slow learners; things that are not provided by any other facilities. So that if you put your finger on what you're doing, by next year it will be something else, because so many of the things we started doing have been absorbed by the schools. Built up a staff gradually. That budget that first year aimed for ten thousand dollars, and now we have a budget of a million and a half.

Chall: That's remarkable.

Heller: Isn't that amazing? You know, on a really small operation. But the one operation that was going here was known as the Children's Convalescent Home at Stanford, which is now called the Children's Hospital at Stanford. It's really part of Stanford Medical School now. They were basically quite jealous of the fact of another—any children's organization coming in. To a degree, they're rather social, or have been in the past—they might have dances and parties to raise money.

Children's Health Council, or CHC, is not that sort of an organization. They've had fine people, fine volunteers, fine staff, but it is not a research organization. That's one of the things we're very clear on. We are a service organization, and we have, as well as medical people, some of them part time, psychologists, psychoanalysts. Of course, psychiatry is almost the basis of the thing. Sociologists, speech and hearing people. When Stanford gave up its speech and hearing, then we took it over. We had a lot of
Heller: physical and occupational therapy. Now, the Children's Hospital at Stanford does most of that. We've given most of it up. As I say, we change what we do.

But we are eligible for Short-Doyle funds from the county. San Mateo does not give it to us anymore. If you know anything about Short-Doyle funds, the counties control. And San Mateo chooses to centrally control all its money.

Chall: What county is this?

Heller: Santa Clara, but we service San Mateo county; we're right on the edge there. But we do get a lot of money from Santa Clara County--Short-Doyle funds.

And we are also eligible--in such a complicated way I'm not going to get into it--to some degree for Medi-Cal patients. So there's some Medi-Cal. And the other thing, in the past three years that has become more important than any of those, is known as the Ed-Code. I don't know if you know about the education code.

Chall: Yes. It comes to your facility because you're partly a school.

Heller: Absolutely. Because we run classes. That at the moment is the greatest source of outside funds. We do not have research funds; we don't want them. And the rest is raised by contributions.

Chall: Oh, I think the fund raising has been really incredible.

Heller: Oh, it's fantastic.

Chall: Amazing. I read how that money came in from the women (auxiliary), besides the federal and the state funding.

Heller: Well, the auxiliary is only a small part of it.

Chall: The auxiliary did a lot of work.

Heller: They've done a lot of work. But I'll tell you, the board members are fantastic.

Chall: How do they raise funds?

Heller: They give, or one of them, for instance, just works with foundations, and puts in applications. She's become a complete expert. The board is both men and women. It's just some of the outstanding men in the community. Agnes Jarman has just made herself an expert on foundations. She's way ahead of all these development people that are highly paid.

Chall: That's a real gift, and it takes a lot of time.
Heller: Oh, does it! And then one of our men board members at the moment--it varies, but right now—Paul Wythes [spells name], it sounds sort of funny—is head of corporate fund raising. He makes contacts with corporations, and gets small amounts and big amounts. We budget all of this very carefully, it's very careful budgeting. We only use around fifteen percent of the money that doesn't go directly to children's services, which is a very low percentage. That includes your fund-raising costs, and all your other running costs. And we've been very careful.

I mentioned Children's Hospital at Stanford. They're big on buildings. They have some very expensive buildings and they have a huge debt. But that's their worry. I never ask what it is any more. I'm not talking about their operation, which I hear is in trouble too; they've had lots of trouble, because they're more research. But they built these very, very elaborate buildings. And they're next door.

Well, to double way back: the Children's Hospital at Stanford, which was then the convalescent home, and had been there a great many years, is on Stanford property. We operated from a small house in Palo Alto when we were very small, but when we were looking to have a little bit more territory, there was plenty of land that this convalescent home had. Working carefully with Stanford, Stanford agreed that we could use some of this land, but we'd have to get the okay of the convalescent home, because they had the dollar-a-year lease. So we pay a dollar-a-year for the property we have carved out, but we decided early on that buildings would be a minor thing, and they've always been minor.

Our first building was one of these old long houses that were where SRI [Stanford Research Institute] now is—Dibble Hospital down here during the war. I think they were bunk houses. We bought one of these long buildings, that had to be sawed in two, from SRI for one dollar. Then we had to get about twenty permits to move it, because that was in Menlo Park, so you were dealing with two counties; you were dealing with the city of Menlo Park; you were dealing with the city of Palo Alto; you were dealing with the Stanford University. And the permits to be had—plus all the health and all the other things—to get permission to move this one building that we bought for a dollar over on to our property—It gave you a pretty good understanding of the nonsense of permits. You know, fire, health—the difficulties in getting one.

Well, we did get it moved over there. Somebody volunteered to set it on foundations for us, and we got it all painted up and sawed up the inside—the walls were quite adjustable—and made our facility out of that.
That gave you two buildings.

No, we put it all in one with a sort of back wing. Then we were just bulging out of that, and decided we needed an administration building. That's where all the offices and meeting rooms of the staff, and what you might call a board meeting room are, but it's used for everything under the sun. It's just one general thing. I don't know what they are--xerox machines--I don't think we have anything that good; it's always second hand.

But people are wonderful about contributing goods as well as money. When we decided we wanted this, Frances Brainerd, who was that first executive secretary, who was still with us--got the contribution of an architect to draw up this simple building that we wanted. By God, she got contractors to come and do it in one day.

Set up the building?

Yes, they had all their people donating their services. We had the building done; we had the paint donated. Well, it actually took a day and a half, but it was what you'd call a one-day operation. The damndest operation I've ever seen. We use that to this day. Those are our two buildings. Isn't that amazing?

Yes, it is. It's a very successful enterprise, and much needed.

Now, let's say that the staff is always pressuring for more space and more buildings. The only thing we've done--because the public school population has dropped off, there is a school not too far from us that we have been able to lease from--it's actually in Menlo Park--is move our school over into those leased facilities. Presumably, on the demographics, we'll be able to keep that space, because our school has developed enormously, because of the new Ed-Code.

I'm sure that the schools are glad for you to take it on.

We have a hard time, really, getting a proper person to run it, because we needed really an M.D. who is a child psychiatrist; and there are very few of those in this part of the world. We have a man who really knew nothing about business--no doctors really do. But he's learned. He didn't know how to make a budget, or how to set salaries or anything else.

I don't want to call this a perfect operation, but there's so much cooperation from such good people. That board is fantastically good; that's all I can tell you.

Now you've been on it for many years, but most bylaws require board members to get off after a certain number of terms.
Heller: I've been off twice for a year.
Chall: Just twice in twenty-five years?
Heller: No, I guess not. Once. Yes.
Chall: Long terms?
Heller: No, they're two five-year terms. Yes, so I've been off twice for a year, and I always think I won't go back. But it's a particularly nice community organization.
Chall: And you enjoy the work? Does the board job require much time?
Heller: Not the board so much as--I've been on the finance committee for a long time, which is sort of the heart of the operation. The executive committee I go on and off of. Once in a while I sit in as a lay member--there's a professional advisory committee of very top professionals in this whole field. There are lots of them down here. Some of them with the public schools, some of them with the med school, some doctors. We have at least two doctors on the board, usually. They're usually pediatricians. We happen to have a psychiatrist too.

And Esther Clark, who just had her eightieth birthday, is fantastic. She's as active as you are. She's amazing; she's just amazing.

Chall: Does she still work in this organization?
Heller: She certainly does. She never misses a meeting, she pays attention, she works on it. I don't want to make it bigger than it is. It's just a very nice example of what community groups can do and not depend on--oh, we do have state funding; we haven't had federal funding. We're always very conscious of the fact that that state funding might dry up at any point. I don't think the Ed-Code will at the moment, but I think Short-Doyle is just bound to from the nature of things.

We've been very careful with our money. Years ago, we created something--you've probably never heard such a name--it is known by initials of OSR--Operation Stabilization Reserve. The objective is to have three-quarters of a year's expenses in reserve that cannot be touched without two-thirds approval of the executive committee. It's never been touched. But we don't have three-quarters, because our budget keeps expanding all the time. But we do have a nice reserve because of that. This is twenty-five years. I've done the budgeting more in recent years. I chaired it last time. We'll accept a deficit position. Like last year, we accepted $75,000 as our total deficit. By God, all but one year, we've come out in the black. It's hard to believe the way the money pops in. Of course, now we're showing up in bequests. Money just comes. It isn't out of the clear sky; you work for it.
Chall: Yes, well, you have people working at it. You're allowed, apparently, as a non-profit organization to keep a reserve of this kind.

Heller: Yes. Oh, yes. It has specific purpose. Oh, yes, we have an official audit every year, I assure you. There's more required in an audit, as you know, every year.

Chall: And they don't come cheaply, either. They cost several thousand dollars.

Heller: They donate. There's always some firm willing to donate. We've never paid for it. It just goes on the books as a cost, but then we get the off-setting donation. About three or four years, usually, and then change. This year, Price Waterhouse is going to do it. They're willing to do these jobs. Oh, they're very careful audits.

Chall: It probably helps that you're all living in this area and you're all friends with one another.

Heller: I've met quite a few people, very nice people, through that board, strangely enough, because they're all ages. There are a lot of very good young men. You know, this is such an area for bright young men. There are so many of them.

Chall: That's right. And how about bright young women?

Heller: The women are harder to get. You get the older women. For the most part, younger women are going into jobs.

Chall: Won't they serve on boards?

Heller: To a degree, but they've got their homes to manage. We get them, to a degree, but they're harder to get. That's true all over, as you well know. The whole thing of what I think is called volunteerism is a big--

Chall: It's been drying up a bit.

Heller: Yes. I can understand it. When women have to run their homes and take care of their children and probably do the cooking, and a lot of them are working full time.

Chall: It would be difficult to go to a board meeting.

Heller: Though the auxiliaries do pretty well on their volunteers. We run a very nice restaurant up in Ladera, and we have a salvage shop, and various ongoing operations.

Chall: You brought the Boston Pop here a few times.
Heller: That's the thing I've always done. It's not the Boston; it's always been the San Francisco Symphony, with Fiedler conducting, till two years ago. This is our twenty-first year now. He conducted every one of our symphonies. At first he did it free, but the world of music has changed. Nobody's free anymore. We paid him in the end. This will be the third year that we haven't had him. But that's—we're on our twenty-first—we call it Summer Symphony. It's in the Frost Amphitheatre. We're the only organization that's ever been allowed to use the Frost Amphitheatre at Stanford. Just one of those things that when we started nobody else ever had, and we get it every summer.

And we have a huge day. It's always lovely. Outdoors, at five in the afternoon. People come with—some of them come early with box lunches or suppers or wine and they sit there. We have had over ten thousand people, but Stanford has established new rules. Nine thousand is the most people they will allow us.

Chall: But even filling nine thousand for an affair of this kind is amazing.

Heller: Yes. Well, last two years has been more difficult without Fiedler. But we'll get it built up again. People will just have to get used to the fact. Fiedler was not that good, you know. It's a lovely family day. And most of the kids in the area have grown up going to Summer Symphony. It's just one of the things you do. And it makes a lot of money for us.

Chall: I was impressed with the brochures that I read.

Heller: Oh, it's marvelous. That's always been my baby from the very beginning.

Chall: Working on that Summer Symphony?

Heller: Yes. You see, I get—as does any organization—we have what I would call contributors, not just the seat-buyers, and we have different classifications, you know. A $500 contribution, and a $300, and a $125, and then sponsor's seats, which are more than the regular seats. I take charge of that part of it. Those are nice sums of money to collect. They're rather easy.

Chall: You do have to know the right people.

Heller: As a matter of fact, that's what I was doing this morning before you arrived. You have to start it about three months ahead of time.

Chall: Calling—?

Heller: No. I started it by calling, but people had never heard of the Children's Health Council when I started it, much less the Summer Symphony. But now, to most people, I just say, "Here we go again."
Chall: Do you send them a letter?

Heller: Yes. But I can make them quite brief. Most of those contributors don't care who is going to conduct. But the funny part is I couldn't get those people to contribute if there weren't an affair.

The Council on Arthritis and Metabolic Diseases#
[Interview 29: April 18, 1980]

Chall: Last week after we finished you said you didn't want to say much about the Council on Arthritis and Metabolic Diseases, which is next on the outline.

Heller: Well, there's very little to tell because it was a three-year appointment and there were only three National Institutes of Health at that time. I think there was a cancer one, a heart one, and this one on arthritis and metabolic diseases. I was appointed in '49. I remember this very well, because Truman was president. He had a secretary for health, an undersecretary named Oscar Ewing, called Jack, whom I knew quite well--don't ask me why; I've forgotten how I met him.

Chall: Politics, perhaps.

Heller: Politics. Undoubtedly politics. He was pushing what was called at that time "socialized medicine" like mad. I once asked him why he was so--went so far on it. He said, "Because to move an inch, you had to go way out," because the AMA just fought it to death.

Somehow it was established that he could appoint a lay member. I'm not sure whether to all three or what. Anyway, he asked me to be the lay member of the Council on Arthritis and Metabolic Diseases. I knew nothing about it, obviously. Obviously. I almost didn't do it. But I thought, "Well, I'd like to see what it's like."

The other members were all doctors. They didn't meet that often--two or three times a year.

Chall: In Washington?

Heller: In Washington always. After I'd been on there maybe about a year, some of the people told me they were scared to death of what Jack Ewing had imposed on them before I came--a Democrat, a woman, an unknown, non-professional person--and that I was a great relief to them. You know, they thought I was going to come in and tear the place apart with socialized medicine.
Chall: All of these members of the council were doctors except the one lay person, being you?

Heller: Yes, as far as I remember on the arthritic one. All top people in the field, they were a quite impressive group of people. I think some of them may have had something to do with—it's so long ago—no, I think it was more research people. But they really okayed the final grants to institutions of federal funds. The initial survey for the grants went through a very technical process, and then a list of x number—there was a limited amount of money being referred to us for final approval or disapproval. That was all there was to it, because it was a—I guess you'd call it a political appointment, because in '52 my appointment expired and that was the end of the whole thing, as far as my connection was concerned.

Now, I don't know how many institutes of health there are; they're in all sorts of fields now. It's been from the beginning, if I remember correctly, one of the few non-partisan things that members of Congress from both sides of the aisle supported. It never got into the socialized medicine argument, it just got into the research/health argument. You know, everything's an experience. You can see why I have nothing more to tell you. I had three years on it. Now you can see why I didn't want to discuss it any further. Nothing against it; it's still going on. And you know, the appropriations are just enormous.

Chall: Were there any controversies that you can recall with respect to the grants?

Heller: Occasionally. But I really didn't know enough to get into the real controversies. The only thing I can remember doing is finding out that they were only giving to the most recognized researchers from important institutions. I felt they'd do well to try to spread it. You know, just the most prestigious medical institutions were getting research grants. I can understand perfectly why they need a name that they know as the head of a research project. But I thought they could have taken a chance. And they did. I think that's the only definite contribution I can remember making—spreading it a little bit wider. I have nothing against the most prestigious ones, but it seemed like a good idea to me if it had been authenticated as a sound research project, though not so well known, to move it out a little bit.

[tape interruption]

Chall: Now we're on again.

Heller: Okay.

Chall: So your term ended when Eisenhower became president.
Heller: Yes, that was really the whole thing, that maybe it led a little bit into my eventually being on the hospital board. I can't say really that it did, but it might have. Everything you do gives you an insight in a way on something else.

Chall: It would have been a good experience, I suppose, for the hospital board.

Heller: Well, it gave you good insight into medical research, and in a way, the appropriation of government funds. I don't say they're all done the same way, but I, at least saw the operation of one. And the lobbying for those funds too, to get the appropriations. Not that I was part of it, but I knew about it, of course.

Chall: Where is the lobbying done?

Heller: In Congress, right at the Capitol.

Chall: To get the appropriations for the council?

Heller: That's the tough part, even after it's been voted, to get the appropriations through. There was one lay person on the Heart Institute --I think she was on heart, or maybe cancer--maybe I'm guessing--Mary Lasker.

Chall: Oh, yes. Probably cancer.

Heller: She was another lay person on a different board. She was one of the finest lobbyists for National Institutes of Health, and I think continued for many years--probably still does. I know that she not so many years ago was given an honorary degree by SF Medical School.

Chall: Her name is quite familiar in this field.

Heller: I think she came originally from Chicago, married--her husband did. He was very wealthy, I understand. She's really quite a lovely person. She's way up into her eighties now. They went to New York. She loves entertaining for good causes. She also has been over many years a very active Democrat, I guess. I don't think I've seen her since at a dinner--[interruption for telephone call] That was about all. The Laskers were also very generous in contributions to fields of health.

Chall: Yes. I think there may have been something in her family that created this interest. I don't know what it was.

Heller: I just don't know. They're very public minded and generous.

Chall: She was the only other lay person whom you remember?

Heller: I don't remember. I just do remember Mary Lasker. Maybe there was one on every board.
Chall: But one is not very many out of a board of how many?

Heller: They weren't big at that point. Maybe ten to fifteen people. They were not big. I was paid. It's the only thing I ever was paid for. You see, they were professional people. I think you got a hundred dollars a day for each meeting, plus your expenses.

Chall: In 1949 that was not too bad, probably.

Heller: No. Professional fees.

Chall: You were also national committeewoman at the time, so you could have done some political business while you were in Washington.

Heller: If you did. Those things never seemed to time out the right way. When you're national committeewoman there are forty—there were fifty, I guess, then—forty-nine others, and there's very little you do at the national level.

Chall: You could always go in and say hello to the chairman.

Heller: [laughing] Yes, if you wanted to.

The Mental Research Institute of the Palo Alto Medical Research Foundation

Heller: I served a very brief time on a mental research group board in Palo Alto. I'm sure they did good things, but it just didn't interest me, that's all. So I just resigned. That seems to be the easiest thing to do when you're bored. I've done that on other things. If I really am bored with something, I get off it.

Elinor R. Heller's Board-Selection Process

Chall: You can tell that you're going to be bored within the space of one term?

Heller: Well, certain things I've done, and I know it's not for me, and I just get off.

Chall: What's your criteria about whether it's for you or not?

Heller: Oh, whether there's any contribution that I can make, other than financial.
You can do that off the board.

I can do that without being on the board. Or sometimes—early on I went on a couple of women's type boards, and I just couldn't stand the chatter, and I just got right off of them immediately. I got off the symphony board, for example, because I was on that huge board. It still exists. The whole thing was run by an executive committee, which I had no criticism of at all, but I thought, "What am I doing here?" So I couldn't even drag myself to the annual meeting. That's about all the meetings they had at that point.

On the other hand, Clary, in a way took my place on the symphony board. They asked him when I resigned. He's on the executive committee and very involved.

That's where the work is done, the decisions are made.

I just don't like to serve on boards that you don't have a function for.

Yes. You want to be on a board where whatever you do can make a difference?

Yes, where I think I can have some input at least. But I don't like to sit in stony silence with no chore, no anything.

You don't like to be a rubber stamp?

Well, I don't mind being a rubber stamp, if there's very good stamp work and I know what I'm stamping. But these things are so vague I don't know what I'm doing. I think it's one thing to okay some carefully thought out things, but it just isn't for me.

You pick your boards, or you get off of them if you find you--

I don't pick them; I get invited. I've refused from the beginning to go on a lot of boards.

You're selective, if you can be selective.

Well, on some things you can. Some you're asked to go on as a favor, and you might say, "Well, I'll try it," and get off. It varies. I've forgotten all the boards I've refused. I can assure you I've refused an awful lot. I don't mean to boast; it's not anything important, it's just—your name gets in the semi-public eye and you keep being asked. That's really true.

That's right. And you can be on a board practically every day of the week.
Heller: That doesn't suit me either.

Chall: So there is a selection process.

Heller: I guess so. I never really thought it through until talking to you this minute. It doesn't hurt me to say no.

Chall: How often have you been a chairman or a president of a board?

Heller: Never, except for the chairman of the Board of Regents. I really didn't want to ever. Let's see, how can I explain it? I never thought about it. I've refused some chairmanships. Of course, you know I was president of the associated students at Mills College in my senior year, and in my high school class I was president of the student body as we called it. I think Ed Heller used to make a little fun of me about, "Now you've done enough presidencies. Let other people do it." You know, it's so many years ago, I've forgotten.

I did know that the whole time I was married—while Ed was alive—that if you're chairman or president or something, you really have to be available all of the time. I think this is what it really came down to. I chose personally to be able to take off with Ed whenever he wanted me to.

Chall: I see. So, not being president or chairman of a board was not because you weren't asked, but because you chose not to.

Heller: Well, occasionally.

Chall: You must have been asked, because anybody who's on a board for any length of time and has any ability whatsoever is asked to be president.

Heller: Well, it's the sort of thing I've put out of my mind. Once I've been asked, I can't even remember.

Chall: Well, I'm sure you were. So you haven't even been president of the Children's Health Council?

Heller: No.

Chall: My word! I don't see how you could have managed to avoid that.

Heller: It's worked very well. One thing, if you're chairman, you have to be awfully quiet in meetings.

Chall: One can't usually give her opinions, but it's possible to let them leak out in some way or other.

Heller: I enjoyed the work on the Regents, not only chairman of the board, but I really most enjoyed being chairman of educational policies, which, in a way, is sort of the heart of the University. I did that several times.
Chall: That kind of chairmanship doesn't preclude your having opinions or expressing them when you're on a committee, does it?

Heller: No. Actually, the chairmanship of the board doesn't either, but when you're managing a board of that size, you really can't—you can summarize very often, or do something like that, but you can't talk too much. In a committee meeting, you can talk more. I'm usually rather careful. If I have a very strong point that I want to make I ask somebody else to chair temporarily. No, the committee meetings are less formal and you generally can express your opinion quite well.

Chall: Did you ever ask somebody to take your seat as chairman of the Regents so that you could express an opinion?

Heller: I can't remember. I may have. One thing, I never had a conflict of interest, at least, which so many chairmen do have. I never had any business conflict of interest so that I couldn't partake of it. I don't think so. I really don't think so. I'd make rulings sometimes, and then I'd say, "You can appeal this ruling if you want." They never did.

Chall: Somebody has to take the leadership.

Heller: I don't take offense if I've made a ruling and anybody objects to it, wants to take the appeal on it.

Chall: I think it's Mrs. [Emma] McLaughlin in her interview who said about you that you enjoyed being in a position to know what was going on.

Heller: I guess that's probably true. I don't think I'm nosy or—what's the word I'm looking for?—gossipy. I'm not petty or anything, but I do enjoy knowing what's going on, just as I like to read the papers or magazines or—I'm just my general interest in things. I think Mrs. McLaughlin is probably quite right about that. But you have no idea of how many things I don't know anything about.

Chall: You probably know less about more subjects—how shall I put that?

[laughs]

Heller: Some friends of mine last night brought me home, and said, "You ought to go to a movie with us Saturday, something "Odyssey into Outer Space." I said, "No! I just don't like outer space and things like that, science fiction things." They said, "You don't know anything about it. Have you ever seen one?" I said, "No." They said, "Well, it's high time you read at least some science fiction, some well written science fiction." I said, "What are you trying to do? Broaden my horizons?" [laughter] These things don't captivate me. I admit I've never looked into it. Have you?
Chall: Outer space?
Heller: No, science fiction type of things.
Chall: No, actually, I'm not sure that I've read any.
Heller: I don't think I have enough imagination. I think that's the problem.
Chall: You like things to be more--
Heller: I don't like reading imaginative books about the future. I like more factual things. The only book on a projection that I can remember that I ever enjoyed was George Orwell's 1984.
Chall: I see. And how about H.G. Wells?
Heller: Not particularly. I thought Orwell was particularly right. And it just occurred to me we are almost there--1984. I really guess I should re-read that, though I'm sure that the news will be full of--
Chall: By 1984 they will be making comparisons, and I hope they won't be too close.
Heller: I can remember part of it. Big Brother was watching everything. I don't like--I've tried reading Kafka, for example. You know--
Chall: That's grim. Kafka's very grim.
Heller: They're grim. Orwell's wasn't so grim, really. I loved his books about the Spanish Civil War.
Chall: I haven't read Orwell's books on the Spanish Civil War.
Heller: He saw the issues in the Spanish Civil War before anybody that I knew of. Most of them were either on one side or the other, and there was no in-between phase. He sorted it out awfully well, I thought. This is about my looking into the future, which I don't do very well.

Public Television in the San Francisco Bay Area: KQED

Chall: Well, you're a down to earth woman. Shall we go on to the KQED board?
Heller: Sure. They were four-year terms, and I was on for two terms, 1968-1976. I was asked to go back after I'd been off after the two, but I refused.
Chall: Shall we start with that?
Heller: It's struggle, struggle, struggle on finance. It's very hard to make a lot of people on the board understand that—which I learned well at the University—that a board doesn't do the programming. That's up to professional people. All these people wanted to get into programming and it's always poverty stricken, you know. Finances go from hand to mouth.

You asked—I don't remember how I was asked to go on the board, I just was. But I had been one of the charter members of KQED when—what was his name—the superintendent of public education—?

Chall: Vaughan Seidel.

Heller: Vaughan Seidel. I had met him somewhere in—it was about 1950, '51—someplace in through there. He told me about this hoping to get a channel. There was some woman from the East who was head of the Federal Communications Commission came out here and talked about the possibilities of—it was really educational TV then. He had my interest, and I remember I sent him a hundred dollars. So I was one of the original founders of KQED, though I didn't think of it that way. I just made a contribution. I was not a TV addict; I knew very little about TV; I hardly ever watched it.

Chall: It was very new then.

Heller: Oh, it was terribly new. But it seemed to have infinite capacity. My daughter, Liz, when she graduated from Mills, one of the first jobs she had was working at KQED when it was a tiny little organization under Jim [James] Day, who was their paid person and Dick [Richard] Moore, who is still there, sort of retired, doing programming.

Chall: I have a Dick Moore—

Heller: No. Wait a minute. Dick Moore was one. He was there, and he was executive—when I was on the board—chief executive officer. But he was not very good. He was a dreamer; he wasn't practical at all.

Chall: I have a few names. Jonathan Rice was another early one.

Heller: That's what I was thinking of. Jonathan Rice was there. And he and his wife, who's just died, became good friends of Liz's.

So I'd been interested in the station from the beginning. Liz, my daughter, Liz Mandell, who was not then married, worked on the the first TV auction. When you think of what they do now, with their organization! They didn't know, then, what they were doing. You know, somebody suggested an auction. She would just sit in the office, pick up the yellow pages of the phone book, and pick out something that looked good. I remember she took something that sold boats and got a thrill because she got an outboard motor. That was a big item that she got.
Heller: There were three or four of them just working. Nobody knew anything about KQED, never heard of it, much less, of an auction. I think their goal was $5,000 that first year.

Chall: Let's see. I have an article here that I clipped some time ago about KQED.*

Heller: Jonathan Rice has been writing these articles.

Chall: Jonathan Rice wrote it, and I don't know what he said about the--

Heller: Well, it was very small then. Maybe $10,000.

Chall: They needed to raise $67,000 just to keep the station going. I don't know how much they raised from the auction.

Heller: Oh, they didn't raise anything like that in the auction. But they did raise some from--I gave some, my mother-in-law gave some. I'm sure my mother-in-law did it because her granddaughter was involved. I had always been interested in the station, I must say.

Chall: Yes, Jonathan Rice says that you gave $1,000 at that point.

Heller: That may be.

Chall: I think they were going to close the station for a while.

Heller: He's quite accurate in remembrances, and I think his mother gave a thousand dollars.

Chall: Yes. His mother and Mrs. Heller—you.

Heller: Jonathan remembers these things very well.

Chall: But you went on one of the first boards then?

Heller: No. I wasn't on for a long time.

Chall: Were you on during the time when Mrs. Charles was the president?

Heller: Yes. I went on when Morty [Mortimer] Fleishhacker was the president first, and then Caroline Charles.* At the end Caroline--Caroline as she would have called herself--had her stroke, and Howard Nemerovski, who was vice-chairman, took over as chairman. Many were the fights. That's an awful sentence to use, but--

Chall: Those were difficult--wasn't there a strike at that time?

Heller: We had the strike, which was extremely difficult. I think Jonathan's probably covered the history of this pretty well.

Chall: He probably has. I only have the one article that I took out, but from your own point of view, of course, it would be--

Heller: From my own point of view, that strike got very personal and very bitter. It was led by somebody--basically by Dick [Richard] Meister, who was their labor reporter, who was very, very bitter. He had been put out, because he just was a poor reporter. He worked the staff up. It was a very awkward strike. It really was.

Chall: That was a strike created by the Meister firing rather than for more--

Heller: Well, it's hard to know. You know, the results of the firing showed up in the strike, let's put it that way. After all, salaries have always been way below regular TV channels. Working conditions have improved now that they've acquired the new building. It was a very unpleasant strike. They would swarm our meetings. Of course there were many people in that strike, but I personally really only knew the Newsroom people who were on it. George Dushek was sort of the one who came into our meetings. He wasn't a bad little guy at all, but he got awfully wound up in that. When I say little, it's because he's physically little. Got terribly wound up in the thing and was very vehement about the strike. It was basically a salary against hours thing. It was really an engineering strike, if I remember correctly. It was the engineers who struck. I've forgotten the issues; you do forget those things.


Chall: I see. Those are easy to come by.

Heller: Yes, they're easy to come by. It was really the engineers, and then--

Chall: It's hard to cross a picket line, of course.

Heller: Yes, and the Newsroom reporters--whatever they called it. I guess they called it news then--they had barely voted to unionize, but they all had to go out because there had been a majority vote.

We had pretty good communications with some of the strikers. The engineers were impossible. It was the operating engineers; I remember this. Just all lived in a different world than I did. But it was long and difficult. They'd try to have these--what do they call them?--when you phone in--your pledge nights. They didn't use to have the solid pledge week; they'd have them occasionally. Those who were against the board, or pro-union or whatever, pro-Dick Meister, used to jam up the switchboards with calls so that nobody could phone through if anybody wanted to pledge. It got so nasty.

I'm no expert on strikes, but it was such a small operation, we were very much involved with this.

Chall: What was the board able to do during that time? What could the board do and what did the board do?

Heller: Well, just tried to keep money coming in to run the place, basically. I think it was just before that strike or about that time that Walter Johnson was elected to the board. He was the head of the retail clerks which was a very powerful labor union. He's still on the board, by the way. He had just come in, so he, of course, was automatically on the labor side. He's a tough labor man, that's all you can say. It was good to have somebody like that on the board; I don't object to that.

It eventually got solved, but in the meantime, there was this whole bunch, mostly from the city of Berkeley, trying to get rid of the board of directors.

Chall: Yes, there was that.

Heller: Led by Larry somebody or other--Hall?

Chall: I'm not sure I have all that information. I do know that there was an organization--

Heller: I think they called themselves Friends of KQED.
Chall: There was Friends of KQED, but there was also another one, called Members Action Program [MAP] that also worked to open the board--

Heller: Yes, well, that was part of it. It was all really the same.

Chall: --to open up the board to other people, and have open meetings.

Heller: Oh, that one. Well, eventually we did open our meetings, but once you open them up, then nobody wants to really come. We semi-opened them, in that the meeting space was limited. I think we allowed fifteen first come-first served. But Larry Hall was always there. People--so often I've found this if you have closed meetings--they think terrible things are going on.

Chall: Well, of course they do. Yes, Larry Hall. He was on the Committee to Save KQED. [Bay Guardian, December 12, 1975]

Heller: Yes. I hear that eventually he gave up. He was fighting to get the KQED membership list, and I think he got it at one time. Not that the board gave it to him, but he did get hold of it. He mailed out ballots for a whole different slate, but none of them were elected, actually. No, that's not true. Two were elected from that: Carol Levene, do you know her? She worked for Bob Johnson, vice-president for university relations, or whatever the title was, office.


Heller: Yes. He had been a sometime KQED reporter on legal affairs, but not my idea of a good board member. He may have been a perfectly good reporter as an attorney. But he and Carol would plot and plot and plot to no avail. Actually, Carol broke away from that Larry Hall group eventually. She left them in disgust. Rather a difficult gal, but full of--I didn't mind her personally too much, but she was a difficult type of board member. Yes, they did elect two people that time, and then we changed our methods.

It led to a sort of change of method in that the nominating committee not only comes from the board now, but there are outside members on it. They submit a slate, and then you may be nominated, as you know, by petition. I think only one or two people were ever elected by being nominated by petition. One of them is perfectly good.

Chall: Nancy Jaicks was elected to the board, I think as one of these off--

Heller: Nancy Jaicks and--

Chall: She had been endorsed in 1975 by--
Heller: No, she wasn't so bad. She was eventually put on on her own. She wasn't so bad. Jane Kennedy, on the next round, and Marty—what was his name, on the Cal faculty—

Chall: There was Steven Barnett, professor of law at UC Berkeley, whom MAP endorsed.

Heller: That was after I got off the board, right in through there. Whatever year he was elected I had just gone off the board. They made very poor board members except for one. If you read the minutes of the board as it's published in Focus, you will always see that their motions were defeated or didn't have seconds. They were always against everything. Well, you can't get any place on a board when you're doing that. Nancy Jaicks, I think, was put on the regular slate eventually. The first slate was where Carol Levene got on.

Chall: I see. I don't have that one.

Heller: This must be the second slate.

Chall: No, I think this is the first. [1975]

Heller: I know Carol Levene made it.

Chall: That was a write-in vote, Carol Levene.

Heller: Well, maybe hers was a write-in. I know that she hadn't been on the regular slate, but she was disgusted with Larry Hall. I never knew what he wanted. He's one of these—I guess, I only saw him when he came to board meetings—he'd speak for five minutes. He never made any sense. We didn't know what he wanted. Eventually, after several years, he gave up. His slate got less and less votes. I heard that he's down in Los Angeles, and he's trying the same tactics with whatever it is in Los Angeles.

Chall: Your name isn't among those on the list of candidates in 1975. I think you say you went off in 1976.

Heller: That was right after I went off.

Chall: Yes, so you went off by the time the strike had—

Heller: I see now the list you're talking about.

Chall: That's the Bay Guardian's article.

Heller: The Bay Guardian was less than accurate on most of its reporting on KQED. Jerri Lange was an excellent board member. Was this MAP who endorsed these people?
Chall: The ones that have stars after them, yes.

Heller: Oh. Barnett went on, but he was one of the negative people. I think he got off eventually. Dolores Jiminez--[pause]. You see, these weren't necessarily endorsed by MAP.

Chall: They weren't?

Heller: I mean nominated by them.

Heller: I think my term ended just about here. At the end of 1975.

Chall: In those years that you were on the board then, was Vaughan Seidel ever the president of the board?

Heller: No, no.

Chall: Mortimer Fleishhacker and Caroline Charles.

Heller: Mortimer Fleishhacker it was, and Caroline. Morty used to go on being president forever. And then Caroline made a determined effort. She wanted to be chairman of that board, and a very good chairman too. Morty loved to be chairman of anything. He was good in some ways. But he was not very communicative with his board members. He had selected Dick Moore to succeed Jim Day. Jim Day was still the executive when I went on the board. Caroline and some of us felt that Dick Moore was really quite a disaster in that position. A lovely man, but just a disaster. The paid person, whose name I forgot, in charge of finance, was not very efficient either. We just felt it was a very inefficient operation. It was no big, great, open quarrel. But it was just a quiet thing. Eventually—it was within the board—and a new chairman was selected. I think Morty finally withdrew.

See, Morty had gotten the bylaws changed. That was what started it all. Without telling anybody, he just announced they had been changed, because his term was up. He would have had to go off, and he just announced new bylaws.

Chall: Which would allow him to stay on?

Heller: Allowed the chairman of the board to stay on even though he was supposed to get off.

Chall: Dear me!

Heller: That really sort of got my goat. I really don't want to talk against Morty, because I don't feel anything against him. But it's never good to have any one president too long. I think that's a fair enough statement. Caroline was just itching to change certain things. She was a take-over gal. I don't know if you ever knew her.
Chall: I've met her.

Heller: She really was—of course, it's sad that she had that stroke, because she isn't the person she was. She had humor, not good looks, but vitality and high mind. She exhausted herself getting things done. She was elected chairman of the board. I can't remember—I think Morty just pulled out. He knew the votes were probably going to go to Caroline.

Chall: Even when he changed the bylaws then?

Heller: Oh, no he was reelected after he changed the bylaws. Oh, yes, he was reelected that time.

Chall: So it was the next time around; she had to wait.

Heller: People had just gotten tired of him. He had done a lot of good things. He had attracted some corporate support, which was important, and KQED in a way became a little bit more respectable. People thought at first it was one of these left-wing outfits. You know how those things go, which it wasn't. It just showed it had more on and to this day has more on than the regular TV stations. Caroline did a superb job. But she knew she had to get rid of Dick Moore. That was important.

It wasn't terribly democratically run, but it wasn't a great secret either. I was on a search committee to replace. They had no mechanics for a search committee. The executive search firms did not exist at that point to any degree. We wouldn't have had the money anyway to appoint one. Eventually, Bill Osterhaus showed up. He did a quite good job for a while. After I got off, apparently he was paying less and less—he was just not a people person. He never communicated with people, it was awfully hard. I remember Caroline—she used to just force her way into his office almost to get him to listen. It's a job you take because you think the station should survive. I can't say it was pure pleasure.

Chall: This was a difficult board. It was a difficult problem to manage.

Heller: Well, it was a difficult board; a very difficult board to manage. It wasn't run like any other boards I've ever seen. People were allowed to talk and talk and talk and talk, which I find extremely difficult. There were always people blocking things. Still, there were very faithful members who worked very hard to get contributions, to have a development office that could present things properly for underwriting. It really, for an almost fly-by-night group, has done remarkably, I think.

Chall: I guess they've had to finally get an understanding about how you manage a station.
Heller: Some people on the board were very sophisticated and others not at all. I can remember when I first went on, Shirley Temple Black was on the board. Of course, Shirley had been in movies and/or TV all her life, and she just wanted to get into programming. She was a very difficult board member for that reason. I like Shirley, but she just couldn't understand why she was being kept out of programming. You know, she would have liked to have been on TV all the time. That's why I say you get a great variety. Certainly in those early years—and I wasn't on in the very earliest years, there was no great loyalty built up. It's not like the usual boards, but people do work hard, do spend an awful lot of time.

First when Morty was president, and then right after Caroline was president, we also had the problem of chicanos--the Mission Rebels—is that what they were called--breaking up our meetings all the time. It's funny: we never had black problems. But we always had black problems as members. But we only had Herman Gallegos. He's a chico that's on every board in San Francisco. I think he was the only one. They called themselves chicanos in San Francisco. Now you have to go into Hispanics and Latinos—I don't know what you call them, but they certainly called themselves chicanos then. Their methods were to break up our meetings.

I remember we used to go to an inexpensive restaurant, various ones, for a lunch meeting, and they came and—they're terrifying looking, because they deliberately dress absolutely outrageously. You know, leather jackets and wild hair. And they came into this restaurant, it's opposite Jack's on Sacramento Street, just breaking up the meeting. Fleishhacker was chairman then. It's absolutely impossible. They won't let you talk. Demanding God knows what. I don't think they were demanding board members so much as demanding the Mission Rebels be allowed to have programming.

If you knew anything about public communications, you can't give in to demands from any one group. Then Caroline took over as president right after that. Sometimes I wondered whether Morty wasn't glad to get out from all this mess. Caroline, I think, was petrified part of the time, but she doesn't show it. We had to switch our meetings to the—the whole KQED's new studio wasn't built, but we had the front part of that building that had been Channel 32 before. We met in a small room up there, and we had sandwiches. And they'd come and surround us at the meetings, and stand around. Some would say—you'd try to eat and get a cup of coffee there—"Imagine eating when we're starving. We don't know where our next dollar is coming from."

It was the leader of them, Ray something or other, that was the chief spokesman. They were more difficult than the people over at the Berkeley campus, because it was a smaller, more compact group, and you didn't have any protection from them. I never felt anybody was going
Heller: to take out a gun, but they certainly were right on top of you. If anybody ever was crazy enough to, he could have done anything. They were just wild.

Chall: Did anybody work something out? Go speak to them, try to find out what they wanted?

Heller: Tried to, but they didn't make much sense. Actually, a program in a way developed out of that, but it was developed by our program people, not by them. This still goes on. You know, the Open Studio program?

Chall: Yes.

Heller: That, basically, developed out of a small grant, which was not for any particular group, but just to have local people. The chicanos have had some part along with many others in that Open Studio program. So maybe you can say they opened up the Open Studio thing. It seems to me—and I may be wrong—the board agreed in budgeting to budget more in Open Studio. I think the grant had run out, and we budgeted more for that program, which I think is a pretty good program very often. I don't watch it all the time, very seldom.

Chall: Have you found that sometimes this intimidating, abrasive activity from the outside is seemingly the only way to get the attention of boards that are well set, established? In the last few years, it has worked. It's not been easy, but it seems to work.

Heller: It's hard to say.

Chall: Mau mau tactics, as they call them.

Heller: Well, I think maybe. I mean, it worked to the most minor degree, in that this Mission Rebel group didn't get what they wanted by any means. They wanted to take over the whole place practically. But we have more minorities on the board than there had been, and some of them are just excellent, and others not too good. The struggle always is to find people who really will spend time and work. The board meetings are very difficult at KQED.

Chall: How long are those meetings?

Heller: Endless. And they always meet about four in the afternoon. So many of the people work. And, as I say, in eight years I found those went much too long.

Chall: How long?

Heller: Seven-thirty, eight, eight-thirty. Sometimes they'd be over earlier. But they were just-- And they were once a month. And of course, there were some committee meetings besides that.
Chall: Were you on any special committees?

Heller: I've forgotten. You serve around on different committees of the board. I guess I was on—I've forgotten.

Chall: But you were on a few that would meet separately?

Heller: You all do certain things. I've really forgotten. The committee work is, I think, maybe a little stronger than when I was on. I really know practically nobody on the board now. I don't say I don't know them, but I'm not in touch with them. I think the last people that served with me just went off. I think it must be close to seven years. I noticed Cynthia Glasser was named there, and Phil [Phillip] Armour, and they were among the last group that came on when I was there. They're good board members, too.

Chall: Did you get involved in the controversy over Newsroom, cutting it back? Or was that after you left?

Heller: Well, Newsroom had several controversies around it; I don't know which one you mean.

Chall: I was thinking primarily of the one to cut it down, but that came--

Heller: To a half hour?

Chall: Yes.

Heller: It had to be done. You see, that had been Ford Foundation financed for so long, the amount of money was outrageous that was spent on it. It was just sort of assumed Ford would go on financing it forever. It was a program that I think most of us liked very much. Of course, the business community at first just hated that program, but I think they began to like it; I think it's quite a bit improved from its early days.

But it's a terribly expensive program. You had to make room in your budget. You were just having it dominate, budget-wise, the whole station. There was a lot of fluff in there too, in Newsroom. They antagonized a lot of people.

Chall: Well, if you're going out for money from the public, you have to watch the antagonisms, I suppose.

Heller: And of course, there's always been this fight about corporate underwriting, which I write off as absolutely pure nonsense. They have no control of programs. I wanted to control some of those Newsroom programs, because they wandered all over the lot. Even though I was a great follower of Newsroom, it used to drive me crazy sometimes because they'd go too long on a subject that wasn't of any particular interest. I think they've tightened it up quite well.
Chall: Well, they've had to. It's only a half-hour, and the small staff--very small.

Heller: Actually, the only one I miss out of Newsroom now is Rollin Post, whom I felt was excellent. There was a big fight in Newsroom between Joe Russin and Mel Wax. You see, Mel Wax was the moderator, and Joe Russin, I guess, sort of planned the programs. There was a terrible fight there. It had nothing to do with the strike or anything else.

Chall: Probably personality as much as anything else.

Heller: Yes. Joe Russin has moved from one post to another to another. He apparently can't stick with--

Chall: He seemed like a very, very bright person from what I could see on Newsroom.

Heller: Yes, he is, but he--

Chall: Somewhat acerbic or abrasive or something.

Heller: I liked him well enough. And Mel has an awfully good presence on TV, but it's hard to know how bright he was or wasn't. But he really should have been a reporter; he's a very good reporter when he's on a subject that he knows.

    I liked in recent years Rollin Post the best of them. I'm sorry he's at KRON; I don't think they give him anything to do. But he has certainly a better salary than he had. But I was friendly with two or three of them, knew them quite well, like Jim Benet, who's the education writer.

Chall: Would you have known him from other days?

Heller: I had known Jim before. I think I knew him when he wrote for the Chronicle. Rollin I had known for ages, because he and Clary both lived in Bowles Hall at Cal at the same time. I had known him since he was a kid.

Chall: Had you known his parents? Isn't he related to Langdon Post and Marjorie--

Heller: Langdon is his father, but Midge is his stepmother, not his mother. His mother lived in Southern California. He father, Lang, divorced his mother, I guess when they were very young. But he lived with his father--maybe it was when he came up to Cal that I thought he lived with his father. Midge and Lang--second wife--did have a daughter. Yes, I used to know them in politics.
Heller: The story of KQED is a very hard one to tell, because it's still a little the same way. But it does survive. And to finish up the nominating process, I've noticed now in the past few years that the regularly nominated slate is elected hugely over the petition candidates. It's all sort of settled down. There's no stirring up of the animals. And they have kept it afloat; you must say that.

Chall: They certainly have. They've got a station--

Heller: I don't know how big the budget is now--

Chall: Well, it's bound to get a little bigger every year.

Heller: Oh, sure, it's quite big.

Chall: I think they're established, and of course now there is some federal funding, isn't there?

Heller: Well, that's a sort of, yes. It's a very difficult subject, that whole Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

Chall: Did you work in any way on that thing?

Heller: No, I only used to hear about it from Caroline, who really was in on the beginning of that. It used to be that the public television station managers would meet. They just didn't get on at all. This was during the Nixon administration. It's well known that Nixon hated-- The Corporation for Public Broadcasting had been set up with federal funds, and Nixon was just well known to be determined to break this whole thing up. He only appointed people who were anti-the so-called public broadcasting stations. It was really--well, that's well documented.

Chall: So Caroline Charles on your board and others had to--

Heller: Caroline got the idea that the chairmen of the different stations should meet as a group. And because she was one or two of them that brought the chairmen together, she was on their executive committee. They formed PBS or enlarged it. There was a very good man from Texas on there who was one of the leaders of it. I heard it from her. It's all second hand; but they did begin to make some sense of it and work out a relationship with the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. It's a very complicated thing. It's all been quite well documented.

Let me say that Caroline Charles was very much part of that, she had an awful lot to do with it. And Nemerovski used to do some as her vice-chairman. He knew quite a bit about it, too. So I think there was a fine contribution.
Heller: The other interesting thing was that when I was there—of course, we had acquired Channel 32 by gift. But the FCC said we'd have to keep it on the air an average of x number of hours a day. I've forgotten who owned Channel 32. It was private. So we got that into action. It was really just replaying some of our programs to start with.

In acquiring Channel 32, we acquired the building it was in, and some property out there on—what is it, Brannan? Well, wherever it is now.

Chall: I think that's right.

Heller: But we never had enough space. We had the old studio down on Fourth Street—it was just falling apart—where most of the broadcasting was done. So the staff was split. And our newsroom operated—they had all their machines down there, and then they used this Channel 32 offices.

Morty started, but Caroline really pushed it through—getting hold of more property—buying more property at a reasonable rate that came on the market then, and then raising the money to put up the present building. It's connected to those front offices. The corner offices had been subleased to somebody, and Caroline finally got them out of there. They had a long lease. Oh, it took years to get that done, but she did do that and she got that whole building underway, then she had her stroke. She never was there for the opening of it.

Chall: That was sad.

Heller: It's not a bad facility, you know, now. It doesn't compare to the good things, but it isn't bad at all. And I must say that she was the one who pushed and hauled and worked on and got people working on getting the funds to put that up.

Chall: What about the radio? Were you on the board when it was decided to become public radio?

Heller: Yes. Radio was run by a very nice Englishman—somebody or other. It's a different facility. I always like the radio. It's a rather simple operation. It isn't very costly. It operated almost separately, though the head of radio would come to our meetings. Now it's part of the whole KQED, as you notice, FM. And of course, they've dropped Channel 32; it's dark. I don't know exactly what status that's in, because I'm not on the board—I've never asked. But I know they couldn't afford to run it—you know, to run both channels. Whether it will revert to the FCC or what—I'm not sure what the status is. As I say, I'm not close enough in, and [laughing] I don't want to get back in! There are so many headaches. But I think public broadcasting in some form or other is on the air to stay.
Chall: Yes. Let's hope so. Although I did read recently, I think it was Frank Mankiewicz who said that he thought cable television would ultimately do away with public TV.

Heller: Yes, I read that. We'll wait and see. Public television—whatever you want to call it—has opened up some things, like some of the very most popular programs, you know, have been replayed by the commercial. Like "Upstairs Downstairs" is the most prominent example. That started running on Channel 2 eventually. Many of these things have been rerun, but they never had the sense to take them in the first place.

I see nothing wrong with having British broadcasting when they do such good things. There was a huge sum of money given, I guess by the federal government for American television to put on a production like the BBC. Did you ever see that? It was "The Scarlet Letter."

Chall: I remember, but I don't think I saw it.

Heller: You know, in series?

Chall: Yes.

Heller: It was most elaborate and detailed—true to colonial New England. It was just terrible. It was terribly expensive, and that's the first and last I ever heard about it.

Chall: Yes, there are smaller groups in the United States and in the colleges that seem to be able to put on relatively good public broadcasts. Maybe that's where it should be encouraged.

Heller: Yes. Oh, it should be encouraged. Now I can get here Channel 60, that I never heard of but by mistake. Do you know what Channel 60 is? It's the community college of San Mateo.

Chall: Oh, yes. They do a good job. I've seen them.

Heller: And I can pick up a program an hour or two later if I've missed it on Channel 9. Still, I especially watch during pledge weeks. While Los Angeles or Sacramento or San Francisco are all doing these pledge weeks, Channel 60 never appeals for a cent. Someday I'm going to write them and say, "How do you maintain yourself?" It's obviously community college funds.

Chall: Yes, it is. They do have, I think, funds for community service.

Heller: But not much, do they?

Chall: No.
Heller: But this Channel 60 is on the air most of the time. Once in a while it has a local program, but when I see it it's usually—I can pick up McNeil-Lehrer on that at ten-thirty at night, if I don't see it at six o'clock. In fact, I like that better at ten-thirty at night. I can pick up tennis on it. I think they rarely originate, and it's just between programs that they identify themselves. There's never any publicity about themselves. They may run some programs in the morning that I don't know about. I've never thought of even looking. You know, some educational ones.

Chall: I would guess they might.

Heller: Of course, for a long time we did get a lot of money from school districts, and still get some at KQED. It was a big program. That's what enabled it to maintain itself for a while.

Chall: That's how it started, basically.

Heller: That was the idea then.

Chall: Yes. It's moved on.

Heller: I've milked the KQED subject dry, I think. I haven't told you anything about it.

Chall: About what?

Heller: I really haven't told you about it, because it's all so well documented.

Chall: I just wanted to know what your feelings about it were, what you recall. I think you've done that pretty well.

Heller: Well, I know I had to drag myself to a lot of those board meetings. There were some very nice people and interesting people on the boards.

Chall: It's hard for you to get a handle on all this, then.

Heller: Oh, we never got a handle on that board. It never had anything in common with anything else.

Chall: Well, chalk it up to experience!

Heller: Well, a few of them were good friends of mine: Caroline Charles I'd known for years; Mel Lane from Sunset whom I'd known was on for quite a few years. They had pretty good board members.

Chall: Yes, it has, despite the criticisms. What about your being on the board of directors of The Stanford Bank? What is that?
The Stanford Bank

Heller: It is no longer. I'm going to stop--[brief tape interruption] The Stanford Bank was a local bank in Palo Alto. It was a group of people who got interested in starting a local bank. This has happened since, but not at that time. There hadn't been a local bank down here for umpteen years. There just were the branches of B of A, Crocker, Wells Fargo, UCB, et cetera. People were fed up on branch management. You know, branch management sometimes is very good and sometimes is very poor; they were just fed up on it.

It started, unknown to me, while Ed was still alive. A couple of his friends got him sort of interested in the conception of a bank. Well, then he died before it really got underway, or he got sick, you know, toward the end of his life and didn't participate. A group of them applied and got a charter. It was a state bank, which is a long, long, process. The reason you thought I was appointed along with Dave Stone was that they had two vacancies that they hadn't filled yet on the board that they were forming; it hadn't ever functioned yet. So that Dave—who was somebody I knew well—and I were appointed to the bank while we were applying for the charter to the bank board. It was an excellent board.

Chall: About how many people were on that board?

Heller: Small. I think about nine or ten. By the time I came on, they had selected a president for the bank, who was Kirk Jeffrey. [spells name] And Kirk had had long banking experience. He was, when he was appointed, vice-president of First Western Bank. He lived in Palo Alto. He came from the Midwest where he'd had very fine banking experience. I've forgotten the name of the bank, but he was vice-president there. He also had a law degree. He remains an intimate friend, but I had never met him up to then. But he had a very good reputation in everything he had done.

He decided he'd like to do this, to run a bank, instead of being in that big corporate First Western thing. He came for a lesser salary than he had in San Francisco, but he decided he really did know the banking business; he'd like to do it. It was an excellent choice, by the way.

Let's see if you'd know any of the original board members. I don't think you'd know them. You might know some. Don Putt was the first chairman of the board. I think the only chairman of the board, now that I think of it. It went on for quite a while. Dean Watkins, whom I've often mentioned as a Regent was director. That's where I first got to know Dean, before he was a Regent. Fred Terman of Stanford. You know, he was the one who was behind all these electronics firms—Hewlett Packard and all of those.
Chall: Psychologist, isn't he?

Heller: No, his father was. Fred Terman was an engineer. He was a psychologist at Stanford--his father. But Fred was a great one with a slide rule. He and Dean Watkins could work those slide rules. It was before you had the little tiny computers. Dave Stone, who's basically in the oil and gas business in Texas. Charlie [Charles] Black, that's Shirley Temple Black's husband. Well, this goes on. There were more than that, I guess.

But they were all sort of pillars of the community. Pat Carey, one of the real estate firms down here, very well known; Ed Ginzton, head of Varian. Genius; he was a genius. Russ Lee, the doctor that I've often referred to.

It really was a bank that represented sort of a community. Now, who gave them the idea that they should have a woman? I was one of the first woman bank directors ever. You know, now it's quite the thing to have a woman, but I was on. I enjoyed it. I learned a lot. Kirk Jeffrey was an excellent banker.

So I was in on the bank from the very beginning. We eventually acquired a piece of property and built a very nice bank. Operated in the black always. I learned the limitations of single banks, then, too. I also learned, which is the end of the story, after about eight years, that when you're good, which we were, larger banks will always try to take you over. We resisted a few, but then Union Bank of Los Angeles came along, and made such a good offer, that we had to divulge it to the shareholders. You know, you have no right not to give them the option. Of course, they made such a nice profit on their bank stock, it was just about unanimous, eventually. The directors--we were all very reluctant to make the final offer to the shareholders. We dickered quite a while with them; we got very good terms. By that time, Charles Anderson, president of SRI, Stanford Research--well, now it's just SRI--was on the board. We hated to give it up, because we knew that it would just be part of a chain; it would no longer--

Chall: Yes, and back to the branches again.

Heller: But we did dicker until all our employees were very well taken care of, excellently taken care of by the Union Bank. But Kirk--Jeffrey--would never allow his board to do one thing about him. This is Kirk. He just wasn't going to allow it. He said, "We'll just see what happens." So they offered him a vice-presidency, at a very good salary, in Los Angeles. He had to move. And then they put in a nothing manager, locally, as these branch banks do, and they were not interested in personal contacts. It had had a very good reputation as the Stanford Bank. As an unimportant branch of the Union Bank, it lost its identity.
Heller: Eight or nine years, I guess.

Chall: That's all. Just barely got a good start.

Heller: I guess it's just about eight or nine years. But it was so successful. Kirk moved to Los Angeles, but really hated it. He had the title, but he had been used to being a president by this time. Eventually, he took early retirement, which is good retirement, came back here and has a magnificent job as an American consultant in everything for a very wealthy Hong Kong Chinese-- You know, he's had so much experience that it's sort of interesting. I saw him last night. I see Kirk all the time. I learned a lot from being on the bank from the beginning. You know, if I'd gone just on one of the big bank boards--which I was never asked to do--I never would have known how a bank operated. But this way, Kirk insisted that every bank director rotate committees every six months so that we learned all of the different operations of the bank. You know, loan, bonds, credit--I've forgotten what all the committees were. He just insisted we had to know the whole operation.

Chall: I would suppose that some of these people might not have known a great deal about the banking business--even those who were businessmen.

Heller: Well, they were pretty smart, all of them. They learned very quickly, and Kirk was a very good teacher, and they were all honest, honorable people who were not in it for the money. None of the directors had a huge investment by any means. You had to have a minimum of 500 shares, I think, at—I think the directors had to pay $12 a share, though I think that went on the market for $20. We sold out somewhere between $37 and $38. That's pretty good. We didn't want to. We really didn't want to.

There have been some others that haven't done very well, but there's one starting right now. I said, "No, I'm"—you know, they offer you shares. I noticed Clary's on the sort of founding committee. I said, "No, I've had my experience now in local banking." I don't mean to go on the board. I know the eventual fate of this will be it will be sold out, if you're good. Otherwise, you're in trouble.

You know, this was something I enjoyed. It was my one thing I really did in the business world, as it were. I made some very good friends in that board. It met very frequently, because of the newness of the thing.

Chall: For how long? Maybe a couple of hours at a time?

Heller: Yes, usually. Those were well-organized meetings. There was quite a difference. We knew everything that was going on. And Kirk was an excellent manager, and had excellent people. People liked working for him. It made quite a difference.

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Chall: You were just finishing last week talking about your experience with The Stanford Bank, and your last statement was, when the tape ran out, "I learned that banking--"

Heller: Oh. I think I know what I was going to say, but I may be wrong. I learned that banking is really a matter of pennies. It's not a big, spectacular making money thing; but you have to watch every penny, and controls on supplies. That you won't show a profit unless you watch pennies terribly carefully. That was, I think, what I was going to say. Now, of course, remember I was in a single bank operation, but it was very successful. But, boy, the month by month supply budget--it was just watched terribly carefully.

Chall: That would be a surprise to me, too, I think.

Heller: All I can say is at this moment I don't think I'd want to be starting up a new, individual bank. There is one starting up in Palo Alto now that quite a few people I know have gone into. More slightly younger people. The idea of a home-owned bank is very appealing to a number of people. And it is much more personal.
SUMMARY

XVII A RETROSPECTIVE LOOK AT PERSONAL AND COMMUNITY INTERESTS AND ISSUES

Philosophy of Governance

Chall: All right. I wanted to take up just a little bit about your overall attitudes about boards, what we might call boardsmanship.

Heller: I don't like that expression.

Chall: [laughs] All right, we won't use it. Philosophy of boards.

Heller: If you have to use a word, I'd rather have it governance.

Chall: Governance is a good word, all right.

Heller: It's not a bad word.

Chall: That's a good word. You've said that you always believed in the separation of policy from administration when you've served on a board. Many people don't realize that, or see it. I wondered what you would do when you were on a board to help others understand this?

Heller: It's easier said than done. Unless you're in a position say of chairman of a board, you really seem to be butting in if you try to tell new board members what it's about. When I was chairman [of the Regents], we only had one new board member, who was the first student member, Carol Mock. She was anxious to hear what a governing board should be doing; it was all so new to her. And let me say—I think I've referred to her before—she got the point of a board very well and not getting into day-by-day operations.

Most boards try to give an orientation to new members. Old ones have written documents. But I don't think a particularly good job is done on that. You just sort of have to learn it as you go along.
Chall: In let's say just the other boards that you've been on, when somebody was getting into administration, would you be inclined to say, "That's an administrative matter which I think is usually handled--"

Heller: Oh, I've said that often. Often.

Chall: So you would teach as you go along?

Heller: Oh, I certainly have, whether I've been chairing or not chairing. I've often said, "I don't know what we're getting into this for. This is a matter for administration." I've pointed this out, at least when I was a Regent, whenever the Regents got into what I considered administrative or faculty matters. My votes were against getting into them. I hold that as a sure philosophy.

There are occasions—and I'm not talking about the Regents particularly—if your chief executive, or your executive, or whatever you want to call him, doesn't function, that a board has to get into some administrative details. I think I gave you one example on the hospital board, when our administrator was so poor that the board had to get into labor negotiations. We really shouldn't have been there, but there was really, at that point, no alternative, and really no harm done, because in a way that's our responsibility if the administrator we had chosen was not acting properly, to take over the functions.

This is why I do believe, in general, that boards, however they're chosen—governing boards—whether they're elected or appointed or nominated or what, should choose their own chief executive. I think there should be a direct line of responsibility. I see so many municipal, say, or county boards—remember I've never served on any—where the chief administrative officer has been elected and so have the board members, too. Say school boards. They each feel that they're in charge. I just think it basically is the wrong philosophy of administration. I'm talking about boards I haven't served on, really. I like the system whereby city council or town council or county board of supervisors—the members choose their own director, really.

As a matter of fact I like the chairmanship rotating, as it does in so many town councils or city councils—boards. Or in smaller communities, or medium-sized, where the mayor is not elected, but is chosen from among the board members. Of course, that's a weak form of mayor, but it's a strong sort of board. Well, this is just a particular philosophy of mine.

Chall: I think you once told me that you saw your role on boards as a problem solver, if you had any role at all.

Heller: Well, you're putting it too—In retrospect I see it as a problem solver. I don't think I thought of my role as being that. But I can in retrospect see that I was probably most effective when I could look
Heller: at all the arguments, and try to find some path that would reconcile multi-sides of an argument and find a way through. I just seemed to have the sort of mind that does that. That's not a great leadership role particularly, in itself, but that's where I obviously am the most effective as I look back. I can hear what's being done, and I can usually just pick out at least the heart of the argument and try to move on that and get rid of a lot of superfluous talk that's been going on.

Chall: That's very important.

Heller: I don't want to say I conceive of myself that way; I never thought of myself one way or the other. This is sort of retrospective.

Women on Boards and Various Issues Pertaining to Women

Chall: That's what we've been asking you to do these days. What about women on boards in general?

Heller: I think I've given you hints about that all along. Women are people, as far as I'm concerned.

Chall: How are they viewed on boards generally, in mixed boards that you've seen?

Heller: On the boards that I've served on, they've been fine. There are exceptions. Most of the boards I've been on, I've been one of one or two women, and they've been treated equally. But as soon as a woman starts being fussy--

Chall: What does that mean?

Heller: --she's not effective.

Chall: What does "being fussy" mean to you?

Heller: Not talking to the point. Making remarks that are not zeroed in. A lot of women have a bad habit of talking too much and not to the point, I have found. Now I don't say there aren't men that do that too, but they seem, for the most part, to manage to just keep quiet if they don't get the point. This is just a personal experience. And then they're not paid terribly much attention to or annoy people. Some women have some very bad habits on boards.

I don't find it, say, on the Mills trustees. I do find varying degrees of ability. One of the things I've found on some boards--just drives me crazy--with women. I've never found it on Mills trustees
Heller: or Regents—(on the hospital board and bank board I was the only woman), but on others, they sit there and they do needlepoint while they're listening. It just drives me crazy. If they want to do needlepoint, don't bring it to boards, that's all. It's an annoying habit to me and I know it irritates a lot of other members.

Chall: Does it indicate that they really can't be listening?

Heller: Maybe they concentrate better. Maybe it's just like me with cigarettes, that I concentrate better with a cigarette, which probably annoys other board members too. [laughter] But I don't think it's a particularly female habit. But you never see men at boards knitting—

Chall: [laughing] Hardly!

Heller: It's just that I think women should learn not to bring their female—what do I want to call it—graces?—habits, per se, to a board. On a board they should concentrate completely. But I've known a couple of good women that do that needlework, knitting sort of thing. But for the most part they don't. I don't know if you've noticed this or not.

Chall: I've seen a few on boards.

Heller: Yes. And for the most part, they're the least effective members. I'm never sure what they're thinking about. You know, I'm just giving you my personal prejudice.

Chall: That's all I'm asking!

Heller: That's all you're asking for, I trust. But I find women are treated really equally.

Chall: And that's true on the Mid-Peninsula Children's Health Council?

Heller: Oh yes, absolutely. We have a few that aren't as good as others. That requires some board members that have different abilities than others, that's all I can say. They have certain abilities that are needed in a small organization like that, such as being in charge of the small garden over there, keeping that up, because there isn't enough money to have professional help. It's one of the chores of volunteerism.

On the other hand, I don't think women should be strident or demanding women's rights, or presenting the women's point of view per se. I think inevitably you're doing it without thinking about it. Just as a businessman is inevitably reflecting some of what he thinks; but I don't think they think of themselves as being businessmen on boards.
But I don't know. The training of women is something I don't think is possible. I think they just have to emerge, and as they do emerge—more and more women are being put on boards, you know. I think there've been quite a few strides made. I don't think any bank board would be without a woman or two anymore. I'll admit in this area, the same ones tend to be chosen for quite a number of things. It's not good, but I don't believe in saying we have to have a quota for women, or fifty-fifty representation per se.

Years ago, before I got into politics, you know—I don't know if I referred to that—that fifty-fifty representation was required on the state central committee, and the Democratic National Committee, too. I'm not sure what the equation is now. There are so many members of the national committee; it's not just two per state anymore.

But I'm not sure if it's an equal number or not. It did not work badly in politics. But that's a different matter.

It's hard to say if it hadn't been required whether it would have come about, and the same is true of these public and private boards, whether it would have come about if there weren't a public policy more or less demanding it. But that's something to be seen in time.

But I do think women more and more are being represented on boards. I think it's basically an outgrowth of World War II, and women going into the work force.

It has taken more than a generation to surface.

Look how long it took to get votes for women, which seems perfectly obvious now and everybody takes it for granted. I've often wondered, if I had been anywhere near voting age before the—what amendment was it that gave—?

Nineteenth.

Nineteenth. Whether I would have been a suffragette or not. And I sort of doubt it; I'm not sure.

Well, what about your interest in the Equal Rights Amendment, or in some of the organizations that take a stand for women: NOW [The National Organization for Women] and the National Women's Political Caucus?

Oh, no interest at all. I am for the Equal Rights Amendment just because I think certain constitutional rights or laws out of the constitution are not equal. Though I don't object so much to the
Heller: protection of women as some groups do. Equal rights—look at the excitement in some of these women's groups about the draft. They're not opposed to the draft, but they're certainly opposed to women—

Chall: Not being accorded equal opportunities.

Heller: I would vote for Equal Rights Amendment. Though, you know, years ago the League of Women Voters took a very strong stand against equal rights, and I saw the logic of it very much, though they have changed their position quite a bit. There is some logic in not having an Equal Rights Amendment, but I'm happy to have it.

But I don't like the strident women. I just feel for every strident woman's voice, women's causes slip backwards.

Chall: How do you think that women would have got where they are now, with respect even to the Equal Rights Amendment, if there hadn't been a certain amount of stridency? That doesn't come from pussyfooting.

Heller: Well, I'm not sure. Because, you know, the first thirty-odd states, there wasn't a great deal of pushing and hauling in the legislatures. It went through very—look at the state of California. It went through very easily. Isn't that true?

Chall: So it seems, now.

Heller: Yes, I think it did. You didn't see a lot of women's groups particularly taking the lead, pushing it through. I haven't examined it, but I'm under the impression that the first thirty, thirty-one states went through very easily. Now you've got—

Chall: You've got the rough states now.

Heller: Now you have a few very rough states. It's not quite clear to me, for instance, why Illinois won't vote it. I can understand some of the southern states, I think. Actually, I don't understand the South. But after all, it was very hard to get rid of unit voting in the South or to allow blacks to be registered in the South. I guess I think of the deep southern states as somewhat different from the North. That's one of my prejudices showing, I think. It doesn't have anything to do with women, per se. I just don't understand Illinois. I just don't. Isn't Nevada one that hasn't equal rights?

Chall: Yes.

Heller: It's hard for me to understand that one. I'm sure there are internal politics that I don't know about.

Chall: What do you think about the trend in the women's movement? Do you think it's a good one?
Well, I don't follow it very carefully. What is the trend?

Toward equality in all respects. Change in attitudes in the home, for example.

Well, of course. I believe in everybody being equal, actually, and if women have been treated unequally— I think they should be admitted to all professions or jobs. I think the labor unions—some of them—have been absolutely terrible. But they've been terrible about blacks, too. A lot of them have lived sort of in a macho world. That's true. I recognize women's limitations in matters of strength, probably. Well, there are unequal rights or there were for years for stewardesses on airlines. I never thought twice about it, did you?

No, not until it was brought to our attention.

Did you ever think much about it? There were no married women allowed. That was unequal too. I can't say it bothered me.

I think that much of this has been brought to our attention in the last decade by women who have been in the forefront of looking at these things.

Well, I don't doubt it. I don't want to put them down. I just don't want to have to have anything to do with them. Basically. I've listened to parts of some of their conventions that have been televised or on the air, and they just drive me crazy. But their male counterparts, whoever they are, would drive me crazy too.

I would never care for Bella Abzug, or a male like her. There is just nothing that would make me follow her. I don't really follow these people very much. Gloria Steinem—I don't know what she does. I just know she wears big glasses. I know that—what is the name of the gal who's so ugly? One of the leaders of the—

Oh, one of the major leaders—Betty Friedan.

Betty Friedan. She doesn't seem quite as strident to me as some of the others. You're asking my opinion. I couldn't bear to go to one of these women's conventions, though I've gone to League of Women Voters conventions, which were fine. They're usually fine leadership. But they're not talking about women. They're talking about issues. But I can't help feeling that that's the way women develop. I know it's slow. I don't think you and I quite agree on this. I know you're trying to stay out of it.

I'm no anti, but I'm anti-strident women. I've heard, for example, somebody I like enormously. Jing Lyman, the wife of Dick Lyman, the president of Stanford, is very women's rights oriented, and I admire her; I think she's very good. But she started talking
Heller: to me one day about "We should try out women on boards by letting them have one term and rotate." I said, "I just can't go along with you, Jing. I think that's a put-down of women." That was one of her schemes. I don't know if she ever put it in effect. It's like trying out a black, and trying out a chicano, and not giving them regular terms. Jing Lyman, for example, in the field that she's been interested in down here, which is basically public housing and things like that, has made a terrific contribution. But not necessarily because she's a woman; it's just because that's her interest.

I don't say I quarrel with people, because I really don't get into it very often. Obviously, my particular friends with a few exceptions like Jing, are not very women's libbish.

Chall: Do you think that's a sort of generational thing?

Heller: Yes. I don't want to say cyclical, because I think once it's over it's going to be taken for granted. But I still hate a count of the top women executives and how many there are in the country. I just know for a fact that in one field, and that's say, for college presidencies, because Mills is very much a place where you'd be looking for a woman, there are five or six very highly qualified, and of course, everybody wants them. You know, they're first rate.

You start going below, and you really don't, on the whole, turn up many women. You turn up women's names. I know that the University of California looked and looked for a woman chancellor on different campuses, so far, unsuccessfully and without prejudice.

Chall: Well, it's going to take a while before they come up.

Heller: But I think in another ten, fifteen years, there are going to be women really well trained for this. Look at Hannah Gray, president of the University of Chicago. There is a woman, the first woman that I know of, that's been president of a major university. As far as I know, she's just been superb.

Chall: They have to start from some bottom rung, and work up. It takes a while.

Heller: She started as provost at Yale for quite a while. As I understand it, the Yale search committee had no interest in her as president of Yale, and I can understand why perfectly well. Then along came the University of Chicago, and I gather that she's just been excellent. The president of Smith College, I hear, is marvelous. She's a Canadian, by the way, Jill Conway. First rate. But it's interesting that she is a Canadian. There are some other good ones; I don't mean to say there aren't.

Chall: But it takes a while for them to start on a bottom rung and work up. Men have done this for years.
Heller: Yes. And in the university-college field, there's always a difficulty because a lot of them are married. And what happens to the husband, and can he adjust? You know, there are a couple of places that have tried pairs. It's been disastrous, as you probably know—whether they picked the wrong person or whether the combination was a disaster. That does not seem to me to be the way to go.

Chall: Some people think that women bring very special assets to public life that men don't bring. I wonder if you have that feeling? It is claimed that they're more honest than men, for example. Do you think that's so? More moral?

Heller: Some are. Some men are more honest. I don't think you can make a sweeping thing. I think women have a little less, basically, a little less ego, that they must be right, therefore they can admit mistakes of their own or the institution they're serving. It may be that; I'm not sure. I just think anybody can bring assets who has assets. But what are the women's assets?

Chall: There are some women who think that women are more moral, they're more honest. Those are the kinds of assets.

Heller: I think women who go into public life, or into public boards, are basically more interested in issues. I think that that maybe is a generality.

Chall: That they're more interested in issues which affect family, do you think? Child care, the environment, war and peace—those issues?

Heller: Not more than men. Maybe a greater percentage are interested of those who come into public life. Maybe more conscious of—We shouldn't generalize. I haven't really given enough direct thought to this subject.

Chall: Well, there are some women who feel this. That's their philosophy, and one of the reasons for promoting women into public life, and then there are others who just don't believe that's so. I wondered what your perceptions were.
Heller: I guess we haven't had enough examples yet of women in public life. They don't seem to stand the wear and tear quite as well. Whether this is due to their family situations, that's one of the things I don't understand. I know, for example, in Santa Clara County, almost all the major positions, the leaders, were women, up to this year. Janet Gray Hayes is mayor. They tried to oust her. She seems to have stood up pretty well. Leona Egeland was assemblywoman, and as far as I know, did a first-rate job. She's retiring. There was an excellent person, Geraldine Steinberg, who was on the county board of supervisors, who was just absolutely outstanding. She's been on for six years, and she's retired. She said the wear and tear was just too much; she had to give up her family life. I think this happens to women very often if they're married. I don't know much about the Leona Egeland thing, but I did see in the paper something about a problem with her husband.

Chall: Right. They are divorcing.

Heller: Yes. That came out of that. Of course, you see plenty of divorcing, particularly of congressmen. Have you noticed that? And Senators.

Chall: One of the reasons for not having women in public life was they would say "what about your families?" But they never asked men that question, and many men left their families.

Heller: Women don't seem to be able to let go of family responsibilities, of their day-to-day responsibilities.

Chall: That does make it difficult.

Heller: I don't think they do, anyway, as well as men. There seems to be certainly in my case, to get back to the personal, I always felt my first responsibility while Ed Heller was alive was not to pamper him—he encouraged my going into all these things—but to be in a position where I was always available to go off and do something that he wanted to do. Whether it was to travel, or business—it was never thought out. He really did encourage my doing everything I did. So there was no opposition from him, and I never really thought it out. And I think a lot of women feel that way.

Chall: While you weren't the typical housewife, you were a typical wife.

Heller: Yes, I was not a typical housewife, because I had help, I wasn't worn to a frazzle by having to do housework and cooking. There were ample funds, and still—

Chall: You were a typical wife.

Heller: —I was a typical wife, I guess. Now some of these things have changed, as you well know. It would not have entered my head that I would go on with a career once I got married. But when I got married right after
Heller: college, it would no more have entered my head to go on, say, and take a law degree, which is what I thought vaguely I would do before I was engaged to be married. But nowadays, I think you would go on.

Chall: And what about your granddaughters? Do you see a different perception? You have one who's married.

Heller: I have one married. Yes, I think she has. Though very devoted to her husband, it would never enter her head not to have a job. That generation just does have jobs, and she really worked until she landed herself a job teaching in Cleveland, which is sort of hard to go in from outside.

Chall: But she was prepared for it. She was professionally prepared.

Heller: Yes, she took an M.A. She took a teaching credential in fifth year at Berkeley and did prepare herself for it. That was before she knew she was going to get married after a year. But I don't think it was ever—Though her mother, Ruth Heller, my daughter-in-law, who is a marvelous person, has raised those kids, and so has Alfred, marvelously independently. But Ruth, I don't think, would ever think of going off and not being home.

I don't know how, say, Miranda, my eldest granddaughter will be, if and when she has children. But I do think those perceptions, don't you, have changed, about jobs?

Chall: Oh, yes, I do. Does that bother you any?

Heller: No. How could it?

Chall: Well, I just wondered. That's part of the new attitudes about women.

Heller: Oh, no. I just have to accept whatever their sex habits are—I don't even know. I know that in general, it's a different situation. I can't tell the difference between a male friend and a male boyfriend. I'm not sure what it is; I never ask. I can suspect, but I don't really know.

Chall: Well, those are the changing mores—

Heller: Which is okay.

Chall: That's one of the questions I asked you before, and you claimed you didn't know what my question was. But really, you do.

Heller: No, no. That doesn't bother me at all. The only thing that I—it's passed, now, as far as I can see, with this younger generation—I hated that very sloppy period, with the flower children and the drugs. I don't think I ever got with that—though I saw an awful lot of them.
Heller: My own grandchildren just missed that period. I don't know if I could have identified with that. I could understand it sort of. Just be very thankful that I didn't have anyone personally involved. I've seen the heartbreak of some of the families whose kids went too far on drugs.

And a lot of the—not a lot, but x number of the young women like to have children without being married. This is quite the thing, and it's okay with me if that's the way they want to do it.

Chall: Do you have any special feelings toward the issues of abortion right now that are so controversial?

Heller: I'm for abortion. Yes. I have always been for it; I've always been for birth control. I remember being furious when we lived in Massachusetts that there was no sale allowed of any sort of contraceptives in, I guess all of New England, certainly in Massachusetts. It just infuriated me. I understand the Catholic Church's tradition; they're entitled to it. But it just infuriated me that it was trying to be imposed on everybody else. And that goes back to World War II, when I first began thinking about it. I never could come to grips with that. That's the sort of thing I can't come to grips with. No, I am for abortion. Not forced abortion, but freedom for abortion. Consequently I see no reason that public funds shouldn't be used for abortion as much as any other medical care. It's not that expensive. In fact, it's less expensive than if they have the children and are then on welfare. That's a sort of flip remark to make, but—well, you've heard me on abortion now. I can't run for public office with my firm feelings.

A Personal Look into the Past, Present, and Future

Heller Family Interests

Chall: Some people have said, to return to an earlier discussion, that politics ruins marriages. Did it have any special effect on you and your husband?

Heller: Oh, no, because Ed Heller loved politics. He never wanted to be active per se, but talking politics and knowing what was going on, and supporting candidates. No, he was—well, I was inclined toward politics by my upbringing. I was interested in the whole process. Ed loved them.

Chall: So really the two of you worked together in politics.
Heller: Yes, and the only time that we really disagreed, and not that much, which I went into ages ago, was on Helen Gahagan Douglas. No, he was the one who got me to agree to run for national committeewoman in 1944. It never entered my head to do it.

Chall: He accepted this.

Heller: It was sort of a male plot [laughter]. Which I didn't mind. You see, my mind is never set on anything. Polling—it was within the delegation. I really didn't care whether I won it or not. I'm just that way, that's all.

Chall: Some people feel that your relationship with your husband was so close, and somebody once said—I don't know whether this was a friend or not—that if he took snuff you would sneeze, and that it was only in the last number of years since his death that you came into your own. Do you think that's apt?

Heller: I don't think that's true at all. I really don't. I think I explained my feeling about the role of a wife, which is an entirely different thing. Certain things aren't important to me. If Ed didn't like parties, big parties, it was okay with me not to go to them. That's the sort of thing that I would go just right along with him. There are certain things that to me aren't worth fighting about. I'll give you a silly example: I learned early in life if we were going out to dinner alone in San Francisco, he'd always say to me, "Where do you want to go?" I'd say, "Let's go to Jack's, or let's go to this." He'd always object to whatever restaurant I picked. He'd say, "No, I don't want to go there. Let's go someplace else." I suddenly realized it really didn't make that much difference to me. So, at a certain point, I'd say, "You choose. I'm perfectly satisfied wherever we go." It's a matter of what you really want to do, what you think is important. Now, maybe some people would interpret that as if Ed took snuff, I would sneeze. It isn't so. It's a matter of values.

The only thing I can remember forcing him to do—and he really liked it—it's a silly one too—when My Fair Lady first opened on Broadway, we were East, and I had heard it was marvelous. I said to Ed, "There's only one thing I want to do when we're in New York, I want to see My Fair Lady." Well, the tickets, for that time, were exorbitant; you know, you had to buy them from a scalper. There was only one night he was free—it was a business meeting—and he had to pay a crazy price for not very good tickets, even. He said, "This is ridiculous. We can see it next year." I said, "No, I insist." And Ed never liked a musical more in his life than he did My Fair Lady. That's the only time I can remember just saying, "I insist that we're going to this."

My trouble is—well, it's not my trouble—my nature is that a lot of things aren't that important to me.
Chall: Makes it easy to get along.

Heller: Does that explain some of it?

Chall: Yes it does; that's just fine. You're doing fine.

Heller: Ed had a fine mind, and I got an awful lot of information from him. I enjoyed it. I enjoyed business discussions, listening to them, not getting into them particularly, but absorbing them. Ed was always happy to have me around. That's how I got into this political thing, really. I was the only one of the wives who ever was interested in all this political discussion, you know, and I'd sit around and listen to it. You learn a lot that way. Not deliberately--

Chall: Did you learn a lot about his business practices, too? Did he bring some of that home?

Heller: Quite a bit. He liked to talk. Ed was not a detailist, but he loved to talk about different ventures he was in. I always found it very interesting. Well, once in a while, not. But mostly tremendously interesting. So in that way, it was a very satisfactory marriage. It wasn't each one off doing his own thing, particularly.

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Heller: You know, all I'm telling you is sort of retrospective, because Ed and I would not sit down and philosophize about where we wanted to go in life [chuckles], or what we believed. We neither of us had that nature at all. So nothing was really planned in that way.

Chall: Do you think that people ever really did much of that anyway?

Heller: No. We were neither of us very introspective. Ed had a more volatile nature than I did. He'd get awfully mad, and then he'd forget it. He'd never stay mad overnight, either at me or his mother or anybody else. That was his nature. It was volatile. But he had a much more original mind than I have. Much more. Very original mind. Mine's much more logical. That much I do know.

I think I did say what he once said to me about investments, didn't I?

Chall: I don't remember.

Heller: I've used it so often; I've thought of it so often. At some point later in life, he said to me, "You are plenty smart enough to be the executor of my estate. I have absolute confidence in you. And you're also smart enough to know that you don't know anything about investments, and that you'll get somebody else's advice." And he said, "I have no doubt but that you'll do it that way." He didn't leave any instructions at all about who to go to or what to do. I've thought of that so often. I think I did mention that.
Chall: No, I don't ever remember your telling me that.

Heller: Well, I agree with him. I understand the theory of investing; I understand about dividends and rates of return and all that, but I don't know about individual investments, and have never made it my business to know. And because of that, I never would serve on the investment committee of the Regents; I've never served on the investment committee of Mills. On The Stanford Bank, because I think I told you that Kirk insisted on rotating, I did serve on the bond investment committee of the Stanford Bank. But really we were using the service of the Crocker Bank at that time. But I've known enough to stay off of all of it.

I think I've been wise. I'm not going to get into the physics field either, which I don't know.

Chall: Yes. Did your son Clarence take over the management of the family funds?

Heller: Yes, for the most part. Alfred now, recently, has gotten interested, and has a good mind for it. But he's never had the training for it. He used to say, "I don't want to know anything about this. I don't want to have anything to do with it." But in recent years he's gotten more and more interested. He basically does his own investments, except we have some things in common, naturally, through inheritance, or he and his sister and brother do have something in common. Lizzie has a good business mind—my daughter, too. But Clary has been the one who had—he didn't go to business school, but he did have very good investment training at Dominick & Dominick in New York after he was through college.

Chall: Was it planned at that time that he might work with his father?

Heller: Well, his father really didn't want him to go into the investment business. He didn't believe in the son going into the same business. But Clary really—that was his interest. Schwabacher and Company, which Ed was a partner of, had Dominick & Dominick, which was a fine firm in New York—I don't know what they called them—as their correspondents, I guess, in New York—I've forgotten the exact term. Because of that connection, Dominick took three or four apprentices to teach them the business. They were a very fine, old established firm. That's where Clary got his training, which in some ways is better than an MBA. You know, on the spot training. So he lived in New York I've forgotten how long—year and a half, and then came back and started working at Schwabacher.

Chall: Even while your husband was living?
Heller: Yes, even while Ed was living. But he's always liked business. He hasn't got Ed's great flair for originality, but he's very sound. He can analyze things and look into them. And he enjoys business, and he understands it.

Chall: You have to like what you're going to spend your life doing. At least one hopes one will.

Heller: Well, it's very interesting. None of my children has really wanted to make money. They don't have that power feeling that some people feel a successful business brings you. They just don't have it. They're not driven by that at all. Ever since Schwabacher and Company went under—which had nothing to do with Clary; it had a lot to do with computers and so on—Clary has never taken a salaried job. But he has an office over at Thomson McKinnon, which was the eventual successor there of Schwabacher. Alfred never wanted a paying job. He said he had plenty. He's done very constructive things. He started California Tomorrow, which is the great environmental organization.

Chall: He still is active in California Tomorrow?

Heller: No. After sixteen years, he got out. I think I told you that. I don't know. He had guided it, and he had said, "If it's any good, now it has to stand on its own." I think he pulled out with three months notice. He still contributes to them. Clary, who was always on the executive board of California Tomorrow, has stayed on. It's still thriving. But Alf put money into it. Alf never wanted a salaried position. He's very disciplined. He disciplines himself, but he gets different interests all the time. He's known as quite an expert in the country, in general, on the environmental questions. He's asked to national conferences, and to be on panels, and to be the official delegate to international environmental things. He went to the big one in Stockholm and to one in Nairobi. He knows that world very well.

Liz has really been the only salaried person in recent years. At least until she started having her children.

Chall: And how's her business coming along? Her gallery?

Heller: Well, it's slow, as any business like that will be. Liz has a very good head for what she's doing, and she knows just how much she's willing to put into it until it would be successful. She's very clear that if it will go in that amount of time, whatever it is that she set, within the dollar limit, fine, she'll go on with it. But she knows just what she's doing in relation to that.

Chall: What about your activities in the coming year or so? I noticed, I think from what you told me, that you'll soon be going off the accreditation board, and so you'll have the Children's Health Council and Mills College. Are those two going to be enough to keep you busy?
Heller: Oh, we'll see. Something always comes along. That's the sort of thing, that just when you think you're through, something else comes along. Of course, I have long been interested in and an active member of the Council of Friends of The Bancroft Library, and this will continue to be important to me. Though I'm getting older now, I don't feel awfully old. It's funny, always when you think things are done--I won't do anything I don't enjoy. That's certain. You know, that doesn't challenge me.

Chall: Do you have any other community activities besides the boards?

Heller: Not particularly. I'm always interested in some local activities, but I don't get into them. I've done my years of spending hours stuffing envelopes and ringing doorbells or collecting funds for various causes. I've gone through all of them, and now there are plenty of younger people to do those things. They get very boring after a point, you know.

Chall: You've never been involved in any way in Atherton city politics or town politics, have you?

Heller: No, because it's impossible. Well, as a matter of fact, we just had an election. I was mildly interested; Atherton is so small. Nan Chapman, who is very good, was running for town council and I and many others supported her. Not because she was a woman; that was one of the things I liked about her. She never mentioned the fact that no woman had ever been on the town council. She was on local issues, and this is one of the reasons I liked her. By God, she defeated the incumbent mayor.

Atherton is so small, there's no tax base. The big issue right now is on the June ballot, which--I don't know if it will pass or not--is to raise the tax rates.

Chall: The property tax rate?

Heller: Yes, which you can do with a two-thirds vote. There's a ceiling on it; it's not very much; it's not going to cost anybody terribly much. There isn't enough money now to repair the holes in the roads, or have lighting so that you can see your way around Atherton at night, or read street signs. You've probably noticed you never can find street signs in Atherton. You know, there aren't many issues at all. But we do have a police department and a very good one. I am told, and it's arguable, I guess, that we have marvelous training, we get the very best people, and they leave because salaries are so much better every place else. Some people tell me that isn't so, and I don't follow it that closely. But I know there's a great turnover of very good police, and I am not hipped on the subject of police protection, as a lot of people are. As you probably realized, it's not one of my subjects at all. And fire protection.
Heller: There are really no excuses. We have a city manager who gets paid so little it's just awful.

Chall: It's probably good training ground, as they say.

Heller: We have a new one now. They usually stay for years. There's a city manager and a city clerk. Atherton is a very simple place to live in. County has never interested me. I'm basically a San Franciscan. And San Mateo County has always been sort of part of San Francisco, to me, and I continue to be interested in San Francisco issues. Down this way, I'm much more interested in Palo Alto and Santa Clara.

This is historic. When we were first down here, San Mateo and Santa Clara were one congressional district. It's just the way those things worked. Our local newspaper was published in Palo Alto. I've never developed San Mateo County interests. I am vaguely interested in who's on the board of supervisors, but I'd never dream of going to the meetings. Clary is a lot more interested because he was raised down here—you know, on all the local issues.

Chall: Maybe some of his friends are active.

Heller: We have a very interesting congressman, Pete McCloskey, who keeps things stirred up for us. I supported him from the minute he ran, which proves I'm not always for Democrats. I was always for Pete, and always have been. I don't agree with—how do you agree with anybody all the time?

Chall: In your social life, you have maintained, I've noticed, friendships over a long, long period of time.

Heller: Oh, some, yes.

Chall: And you continually add to your group of friends.

Heller: I think that's fun. I like that. I don't mean that I go out to add--

Chall: But you have.

Heller: Yes, I do. And that's very satisfactory.

Chall: Do you have kind of a schedule about having your guests for dinner and lunch in your home and going out to friends?

Heller: No.

Chall: You had told me that your mother-in-law, Clara, when she grew older, had adopted a kind of schedule for keeping herself busy in the evenings, so that she wouldn't be alone. I wondered if you do anything similar.
Heller: No, I like my own company. I refuse many more invitations than I accept, because I don't like to go out and be bored, or what I think's going to be boring. And I don't like the movies, particularly, which a lot of people do. I enjoy being with people that I enjoy; that's all there is to it. I like lively minds, some of which are my own age, some of which are quite a bit younger. No, I have no schedule whatsoever.

Chall: So you're at home alone in your suite here.

Heller: By preference, mostly. I like it.

Chall: And you read.

Heller: I read. Last night, I watched an hour of TV. I don't know if you saw it—Baryshnikov on Baryshnikov—

Chall: I did.

Heller: —which vaguely disappointed me.

Chall: Yes, it vaguely disappointed us, too.

Heller: That's my problem. I go to movies, which I haven't gone to at all lately, and they always disappoint me. Now, a book you can put down if you're disappointed in it. That's funny. That Baryshnikov should have been marvelous, shouldn't it?

Chall: Yes.

Heller: And I don't know what it was that didn't satisfy me. It didn't hold together particularly.

Chall: It wasn't as good as it should have been.

Heller: No, it wasn't.

Chall: You're not alone in the house, though, at night, are you?

Heller: No, no, absolutely not. But I wouldn't mind being alone. I'm not a bit fearful. I drive every place at night. I'm just not a nervous person; that's all there is to it. I don't drive the freeway too much at night since this cataract developed. It's not bad, and I can drive it if I drive slowly, but I hate going over to Berkeley at night. If I don't have the exact directions, I have the worst time reading those street signs.

Chall: Who doesn't, even with good eyesight!
Heller: But I drive down here. As a matter of fact, I prefer not to be picked up if I'm going out to dinner. Other people are very uncertain about the hours they're going to keep, and if I go by myself, I can keep my own time. I will go with—there are some people that I know how they do things, that I will go with. I like being independent, I must say that.

My son makes me laugh—Clary makes me laugh. The only thing I hate to go to alone are funerals. Of course, I avoid funerals as much as I can, but Joe Bransten died this week. He was an usher at our wedding. I remember Joe, who was Brandenstein family. I can remember him—I must have been no older than nine years old. His mother's parents were Alsatians, as were my grandparents, the Raas family from Strasbourg. My grandfather Raas who lived with us, of course had been very friendly with them. There was just that small colony of Alsatians. I remember Joe Bransten, who was almost four to five years older than I was, but he was then Brandenstein, coming to our house in San Francisco to see my grandfather's stamp collection.

I know my grandfather died when I was ten, so that I was probably nine. I thought it was so exciting to have this big boy in the house, and he ignored me completely! [laughs] That's how long I've known Joe. Probably before, but I remember him that long.

It wasn't a sad funeral at all. He lived a good life, and he had an easy death. Did you notice his family asked for contributions to the--

Chall: Yes. The Bancroft Library.

Heller: —to The Bancroft Library. You see, he's the brother-in-law of Jim Hart.

Chall: I knew they were related, but I didn't know quite how.

Heller: His first wife was Jim Hart's sister, and she was the mother of his children. Joe Bransten was always interested in books; he did a lot with the Book Club of California. I think he was on the Friends of The Bancroft Library Council a couple of times. And he just—not too long ago—gave that marvelous collection to the Bancroft. I don't know if you saw that exhibit—his collection on tea and coffee—books and artifacts that he had collected over the years. He gave that whole collection to the Bancroft. It was on exhibit maybe a year, year and a half ago, when he gave that. He was interested in a lot of other things. I think it's great for the Bancroft.

Chall: The Bancroft will do well. That was a fine gift. So Clary took you to the memorial service?
Heller: Yes. So Clary phoned and left word he'd be here at noon—it was a one o'clock thing—take me to the funeral and even give me lunch after. That's a big thing for chintzy Clary to say he's going to take me to lunch. [laughter] It was sort of old home week up there.

Chall: Where was it?

Heller: At Emanu-El. I knew an awful lot of people there, obviously. I didn't mean to get diverted. It had to do with the things I don't care to do alone. I would have met my sister, I would have met any one of dozens of people if Clary hadn't decided to go. He was fond of Joe, and the kids are sort of the same age. They're all good friends.

And I prefer not to go to weddings, alone, but I will. In fact, I prefer not to go to funerals period. Anytime I can think of an excuse not to go, I don't go.

Chall: Well, when you have your old friends like this, I guess sometimes it's hard.

Heller: My sister and brother-in-law happened to be sitting right behind us, just by chance, because Clary and I walked down and took the first empty aisle seats. I found my sister and brother-in-law behind me.

It was a perfectly nice ceremony. It was a memorial ceremony, twenty minutes, I guess. When it was over, I turned to her and I said, "Remember, I don't want any sort of service at all." I said, "Clary, I hope you heard me." I've said it to my children over and over again. I hate the things.

Chall: Well, there are reasons for having them.

Heller: Well, it's everybody's own preference, like abortion, except that has to be legal. I guess I have to have a certificate of death or something.

Chall: That you have to have, but you don't have to have a service.

Heller: But I want a cremation, thank you, in case anybody reads this and has any doubt.
Long-Time Staff Members

Chall: I wondered how long you had had a secretary. Is Alice Adams a private secretary, or does she work for the family in some ways?

Heller: I can't answer it in one word. She worked for sixteen years for my mother-in-law part time. She had been the secretary for Bishop Parsons, the great Episcopal bishop. It wasn't full time, and she used to work part time, a couple of mornings a week or something like that, for my mother-in-law. When my mother-in-law got older, she worked maybe three days a week. She could tell you; I've forgotten. I'd known her for a long time. When my mother-in-law died, we were at Tahoe, as I think I mentioned, and we had to rush down from Tahoe for the funeral. We went right back, as a matter of fact. That was not a sad death either, because she was--

Chall: Did she die here or in Tahoe?

Heller: In Tahoe. She died at Tahoe. We rushed down and I got to the house—we had to still make those funeral arrangements—and here was Alice, with her notebook in hand.

Well, I'd started to work with her before then. My mother-in-law died, I remember well, because it was on Clary's birthday, August sixteenth. In May or June of that year, though she didn't know she was going to die, she had moved down here permanently. She had sold her city house, or Ed had sold it for her at some ridiculously low price. But it was a huge house. I don't know if I ever described that to you, that four-story house in San Francisco. You know, sub-basement, and a basement, the kitchen was in the basement, and you had a--

Chall: ——dumb-waiter?

Heller: Yes. A dumb-waiter that brought the food up to a little pantry on the first floor with a big dining room. Then there was a second floor with the bedrooms, and there was a top story with maids' rooms and a linen closet. I don't want to say it was that many million rooms, but it was big.

Ed, in arranging the sale, agreed to have that house emptied in thirty days—an accumulation of years, and she was the greatest accumulator there ever was. You see, Ed was an only child, and you don't think he'd do that sort of thing. So I had to get in and do it, and Alice—I guess my mother-in-law had told her to help me—and the two of us cleared that house in thirty days. It was day and night, exhausting. We had to have auctioneers and we had to have art people in. I can't even begin to tell you the difficulties of cleaning out a house like that. Of course, I ended up—I would ask my mother-in-law
Heller: about a few things, because she was down here—rather feeble, but she went up to Tahoe, so she wasn't that feeble—but she didn't want to be bothered. I did ask her about a few things. I ended up filling several old trunks with a lot of things and shipping them down to her Atherton house, where she had a big attic. I just shipped them there, and then she died in August. So I had worked with Alice up to that point.

Alice showed up, and we immediately took her on full time, because my mother-in-law's estate was so complicated, to take care of all the secretarial correspondence work. And then, of course, before I knew it, I had that huge Atherton house to be sold, which is also mammoth. And with all those things in the attic, we had just moved in, to clear out. Let's see—my mother-in-law died in August of '59, and we sold that in '60. I remember, because the people who bought it were named Robert Kennedy. Everybody thought, during John Kennedy's presidential campaign, that one of his family, Robert Kennedy, had bought it. But it wasn't; it was a different Robert Kennedy. So I remember the year.

So then we spent all that year clearing out that house. Those clearing out stories really deserve a biography of their own, they were so complicated. That was in 1960, and it was in April of 1960, just as this was starting to go on, the sale of part of her property—we sold eleven acres all together—that Ed discovered he had cancer. He died in December of '61. So Alice and I were always working on my mother-in-law's estate and doing things, and then when Ed died, I had another estate on my hands. So by this time, she was just full time. I used a back room for her.

So from '61 on she was working full time for me. You see, I was appointed a Regent immediately, and there were reams of paperwork connected with it and all that. But she's a quick worker and we did get through things, so by that time, I had a full-time secretary. I told you I couldn't answer that very quickly. She's about to retire, you know. She's seventy-one now. She's full of beans, but she said she does get tired.

Chall: Oh, but how can you get along without her? You're going to miss her terribly.

Heller: I'm going to have to. She's looking for a replacement.

After Ed died, we eventually set up what was called Heller Properties with an office in San Francisco, and had John Sherwood in as sort of manager of Heller Properties. Alice worked part time up there with another secretary and a bookkeeper, and two days a week down here. She went back and forth. But more and more she was working more down here, because Clary was working out of Thomson
Heller: McKinnon down here. I, in the meantime had taken my daughter Liz's old room and set it up as sort of an office for Alice—we call it "Alice's Command Post"—So Clary basically does most of his work down here. Especially once he got that cancer, where he didn't feel like rushing to town—though he's fine now—he just sort of shifted everything down here.

She worked for all the family for a while, but there was also another secretary. Now she really works for Clary and me four days a week down here. But there's never enough time; there seems to be so much always to do. And of course, she does some things for Liz, and some things for Alf, keeps things straight. She's going to break in whoever is new. You know, you can't replace somebody like Alice, who has all those years in her head.

Chall: Yes, that's very difficult.

Heller: I told her she's just going to have to have this girl get a new filing system, because I can't find anything. She can lay hands on anything, but I can't. So there's where we are now.

Stella [Hietala], my maid, who has been with me since 1941 and is so lovely, is sixty-five. She's always said she's going to retire. She has her parents' home outside of Ukiah in Redwood Valley, and she's always said that she was working toward that. Some of her family's up there. I can't replace her, either, after all those years. Stella was East with us during the war, and Liz was how old—ten, maybe, ten to eleven. So she's sort of grown up with the family. But her family is sort of like part of ours, too. She has lots of family and nieces and nephews. They've all been very friendly. They're Finnish people—they're American born; their parents were. So there'll be changes around here.

Chall: I should say. Adaptations.

Heller: I don't feel sorry for myself at all; I've been just very lucky. I'm not going to spend one minute really worrying about it. I have always said that if I can't keep this place up properly, then I'll have to move out.

Chall: Does your son live on the property somewhere?

Heller: He has a separate entrance. His grandmother gave him—his property was part of hers. But it is adjacent, but not very close by.

Chall: I see. So that was not the big house which she had moved into.

Heller: No, no. He built his own house. As a matter of fact, he was building it when she died. He had started it. He had said, "Just because I'm a bachelor, it's ridiculous that I have to live in a small apartment
Heller: all my life." So he built a very nice house. You've never seen that
over there. It's very nice. And it's next to my mother-in-law's pool,
and so when we sold the property, he kept the pool. So the swimming
pool of this place is over near Clary's.

We always said Clary was lucky. Alf and Ruth Heller were living
up in Grass Valley in this tiny little house. I guess they had
a couple of children by then, little ones. but they were living so
simply. They didn't want any of my mother-in-law's things. They
didn't have any room. They wanted nothing to do with it.

Liz was not married, and she did take a few things, because she
did acquire a little house in San Francisco before she went East.
But Clary really fell heir, because he was just building a house. He
furnished his house out of his grandmother's things, except for some
drapes and carpets. He really did very well.

Chall: Yes, I should say. Probably rare and beautiful furniture that you
can't find anywhere, now.

Heller: Now Alf says to me, "Why didn't you make me take more things?" And I
said, "I had to push everything on you." He did take her--she had
some very nice small Keith and Hill paintings. You know, they were
the California painters. Hill's things have gone up in price; they're
crazy. He did take those, because they weren't big. I gave a lot of
paintings to the Legion of Honor museum. Liz took a few of her things,
and I moved a lot of things over here. You asked about Alice, and
there's where we got to. I'm sort of long winded.

Chall: That's all right.

Heller: We can cut all this out when it comes through.

Leisure Hours: Reading and Tennis

Chall: We won't, though, it's an essential part of your story. How do you
choose the books that you read?

Heller: Heaven knows.

Chall: Do you browse in bookstores and read reviews?

Heller: Yes. I go, and I read reviews which usually don't tell me very much,
but I use now, almost completely, Shirley Cobb's bookstore in Palo
Alto. She is well known around here. Her father was the great base-
ball player, Ty Cobb, who lived in Atherton when he retired. Shirley
Heller: started this bookstore. She had quite a bit of money from her father. You know, as places change, there are so few personal places left. Shirley Cobb's is one of the more personal places, you know, as Books Inc., or Dalton, or this or that—it's no fun at all. So for contemporary reading, I just go over there and I know I can return anything if I start to read it and don't care for it. I would say books are my biggest extravagance. I like books, as against paperbacks.

Chall: Oh, I see. You like to hold it.

Heller: I like the feel of a book. I never feel quite real with paperbacks. Besides which, of contemporary things, I've read just about anything I want to read before the paperback comes out.

Chall: Also the print is a little easier.

Heller: Yes, the print is better. I have, though, occasionally—I remember when I was reading what's-his-name's Berlin Diary—


Heller: Shirer. You know, it was a massive book, and we were traveling—or I was traveling quite a bit at that time; I can't remember if Ed was alive or not. I went and got the paperback, which is—

Chall: --thick enough as it was.

Heller: It was one of the thickest books I ever saw. I just cut it up when I'd go traveling, and I would take as many pages as I thought I would read on that trip.

Chall: Good idea.

Heller: And I don't feel as if I'm desecrating books when I cut up paperbacks. Then when I'd come home, I'd go back to the hardcover. It's not a bad thing to do, though.

   Ed Heller, you know, was a tremendous reader. When we traveled, of course, we used to travel by train and by ship every place, we had what we called the book suitcase. Ed had one specially made just for books. It was huge, and quite heavy obviously. That is one thing that—you know, some people can't travel without cosmetics or—but Ed couldn't travel without quantities of books. I feel quite a bit the same way. It's more difficult now on planes to travel with—but I always like to have plenty of books with me. I may not read them—

Chall: Your security blanket.
Heller: Yes, it really is. I enjoy them.

Don't ask me what sort of books I read. I don't read trash, and I don't read romance, which is usually trash, not always. It varies, so I can't even begin to say what I read.

Chall: Do you share your reading with other people with whom you can talk about a book?

Heller: Well, I don't know what you mean by sharing.

Chall: I mean, do you pass along a book, or do you have friends who may read the same books so you can talk about them?

Heller: Rarely. But a lot of my friends tend to read quite a number of the books that I read. They do it on their own, and we often enjoy the same books. Very few novels, because there aren't very good novels for my tastes nowadays. Once in a while. It's hard to find good novels.

Chall: Do you like biographies?

Heller: Depends; yes. Some I like very much. I like a certain type of history: I like well-written history, like (what shall I give you as an example) Barbara Tuchman, who I think is marvelous. I've read every word that she's written. Recently I've read a great deal about World War I and World War II. I think I'm personally most comfortable with the period of my own life, maybe. I just read an awfully good book on Vienna at the end of the last half of the nineteenth century. But I'm sort of more comfortable with things that I vaguely experience.

I don't like these projected books about the future. I don't like them at all.

Chall: *Future Shock* and things like that?

Heller: I don't like them. I've tried them. The only one I ever liked was George Orwell's *1984*. Well, that may be an exaggeration. It's the only one I can think of now that I've ever liked.

Chall: Do you still play tennis once a week, twice a week?

Heller: If not more. You won't believe it, but I just started taking tennis lessons once a week. I haven't had a tennis lesson since before World War II, and I decided it was quite time to sharpen up some of my strokes. There's a young fellow down here who will go to private courts; and he is young. I started just about a month ago, and I said, "Now Matt, I'm seventy-five years old. I don't want to learn any new grips, but you can certainly sharpen up my strokes. It's so long since I've had any lessons."
Heller: Really, the art of teaching has changed, quite a bit.

Chall: Are you learning? Do you feel that you--

Heller: Yes! I've sharpened up my game. It's fun!

Chall: You play tennis twice a week, then.

Heller: Yes. Sometimes more, but at least that often.

Chall: What kind of traveling are you planning?

Heller: Nothing special. I'll probably go to Greece next trip with Georgianna Stevens, who's one of my very good friends, who's one of my contemporaries who's in great shape, and whose company I enjoy very much. We've been talking about going to Greece quite a bit.

I'm amazingly contented at home. I've taken quite a number of trips, and I'm toying with China, but everybody tells me how strenuous it is.

Chall: Well, if you can do Greece, you might be able to do China.

Heller: Well, the thing is in China, they can't guarantee a room to yourself. And I'm afraid I don't like to room with somebody, and I don't think anybody wants to room with me, either. I think it works both ways.

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Chall: You once told me--I think this was one of our first, early interviews--that there was a biography of Edward Heller written by [Edgar] Kahn, I think. I had seen it listed somewhere.

Heller: Oh, it wasn't a biography.

Chall: A profile of some kind? You said you didn't like it, and there were errors in it.

Heller: Yes. It was dreadful.

Chall: Neither The Bancroft Library nor the archives has it.

Heller: It doesn't belong in it. You go to the California Historical Society, it was in its bulletin. That's where it was.

Chall: Did you want to comment on it?

Heller: No. It was so inaccurate. I never even complained, it was so bad.
Politics: The Old Methods and the Reforms

Chall: I am moving back now into politics, and I just wanted some summaries.

Heller: Okay, if I can.

Chall: Oh, you can. You had once said that (of your position as national committeewoman) you never did feel important, because you weren't, and for very good reasons. That's a quote, almost direct. I wondered what was the reason why you were never felt important.

Heller: Well, the things is: There were forty-eight states, I guess, each having a national committeewoman and national committeeman, and you were one state. I saw so many of these people come and think they were very important who were within their own state. Nationally, you're just ignored. You were just one needle in a haystack. As far as California went, it really carried no power; it carried some responsibility.

But California is basically like two states politically. I knew some of the people in Southern California; there's such a crazy assortment of people that I'd be like a duck out of water whenever I'd go down there. They just did things differently, and I guess they still do. But at the time that I was there—I'm not talking about me—the people active in politics in Northern California were much more unified; you could control the vote of a national delegation better.

There is no real importance to it, that's all I'm saying; there really isn't. I met some interesting people. And because I was eventually put on the executive committee, whatever that meant, really nothing, of the national committee, I did get to know a few very interesting people. It was really when Truman was president, and you'd go to a meal at the White House, say, and he had his whole cabinet there. I got to know a few people very well. Usually those I liked I got to know.

Averell Harriman I got to know quite well, and I liked him very much. I knew others, but I didn't care for them that much. Politicians are—Averell Harriman and Adlai Stevenson are exceptions in politics.

Chall: So you didn't take yourself too seriously?

Heller: Oh, Lord, no. I would have been out of my mind. I just got so I hated all these meetings I had to go to out here.

Chall: In California, though, you seemed to have had more of a place. At least, you were called upon. I've just listed a few of them. You checked on the selection of Will Rogers for the Senate race.
Heller: Yes, I think because nobody else knew what to do. It was just a dirty job.

Chall: It had nothing to do with ability? Of course, you did work very hard against the anti-Truman candidacy in 1948.

Heller: Yes, that I did. I had some effect on that with a couple of very good allies, such as Oliver Carter and Jack Shelley, too. He was a congressman then and mayor of San Francisco eventually, but he was a very strong ally at that point.

Chall: You did have some place in the California scheme of things.

Heller: Yes. In that way I did. But I hated to go to all these local meetings, and all the counties. For a while I enjoyed it, but there used to be so much drinking at those things. I'm not anti-drinking, but it just got into petty fights and hangers-on—God knows what they wanted—because there were no spoils around. Not always the most lovely people by any means. I think it was good for me probably to meet all these sorts of people. I could get on with them quite well, actually.

Chall: Perceptions of you that I've come across were that you were very influential, you were a smart politician, you were consulted, you had good ideas, and you were not treated in the inner circles as most women were.

Heller: No, that I wasn't. I really wasn't.

Chall: And that you were courteous to the simplest Democrats.

Heller: Well, I had always felt I should be courteous. I didn't have to make a great effort. It's quite easy for me to be nice to people. They sort of interest me. And nobody has to be important, as far as I'm concerned. Some of them were quite interesting, and some were very dull. But I think you really can be nice to people.

Chall: Did you find that there was more drinking among the politicians or in politics than there was, let's say, among other groups that you've been in, like maybe the Regents, those meetings of the Regents that you talked about?

Heller: Oh, infinitely more. But one of the things in Northern California—and I'm talking now about Northern California, though I guess it was true nationally—in the Democratic party there were so many Irish people. They are, for the most part, very heavy drinkers.

Chall: Maybe that colors it, do you think? The drinking?
Heller: Well, it's just part of it, that's all. One of the exceptions that I think of that I mentioned before—Bill Malone was not a drinker. He took one drink; that was all. But he is sort of the exception of the Irish politicians. Oh, boy, did they drink!

I'll tell you who was a big drinker—Bob Kenny. I always found if I went to election-night parties, especially if we had a successful candidate, I'd have to pull out at a certain point, because it would just degenerate into a big, drunken affair, and I always feel when it's time to get out, that I would get out. Sometimes, if you were in other counties, you couldn't get out quite as easily. Good heavens, Ed Heller was a heavy drinker and not an Irishman. But all he would do would be go to sleep at around ten o'clock. That was the effect of his drinking. But some of these things at the state central committees—Oh, there was just terrific drinking at those. And then we'd get to a point where nothing made any sense. Then it was just time to leave and get into your hotel room or wherever you were staying. I didn't find that very good. I don't want to say what's going on now; I don't know.

Chall: No. I just want your own recollections.

Heller: When I used to go to Sacramento—I think that's changed quite a bit—there was a lot of heavy drinking among the legislators, also. But I think those—not necessarily Irishmen—political people did drink quite heavily at that time.

Chall: It makes a person who isn't drinking uncomfortable after a while, doesn't it? Or maybe even feel a bit endangered.

Heller: I didn't feel endangered, but it just wasn't attractive to me. I found that mass drinking is just unattractive to me. I think that's probably why I don't drink much. I like to be in command of my faculties.

Chall: Now, in terms of your financial assistance in campaigns and during political—your husband was said to have been very generous in his donations to candidates, and I think we've talked about that, expecting nothing in return. He and you and your mother-in-law in her day gave money to candidates, and to help keep up headquarters, and loans—

Heller: No, no loans.

Chall: Didn't you make a loan?

Heller: None of us ever gave loans.

Chall: I remember that battle with Trott had to do with a loan that you had made.
Heller: Well, that may have been, but never to candidates. That was a little
different. Ed had absolute principles: never loan, give. But never
loan. He said he'd never get it back anyway, and why have it on your
books. You might as well just give.

Of course, we didn't give in the way it's been done in recent
years.

Chall: But it was still a substantial amount compared to what other people
were giving at that time.

Heller: I suppose so.

Chall: Did you ever give funds to individual officeholders that might help
them with their expenses? Let's say, a congressman, in the days when
you could do that sort of thing. Would you ever help somebody with
his--just casually give them some money?

Heller: Not that I remember. I think that maybe Ed and I maybe helped Jack
Shelley out once or twice. He just never seemed to live within his
small income, and he was always about to get into trouble. Often
they would be small sums: maybe $500 or something like that. No,
ever did. That was all.

Chall: Roger Kent once told me that among the money raisers in the early days
that Ed Heller was sort of the boss. He took charge of finance campaigns
and everybody knew who was in charge--he was. So when he died, he left
a vacuum, and there was all kinds of scrambling to replace him. Other
people finally did, but at first, it was apparently a problem.

Heller: He was not thinking about training successors. In a way, Bill Roth
took over on some things. Bill worked with Ed quite often, and he did
quite a few finance chairmanships, as I remember.

Roger raised money quite effectively himself. He'd write to
everybody he knew, especially assemblymen, state senators. But,
you know, the sums were so small in those days. He'd always say,
"I want twenty-five dollars from a hundred people for so-and-so." You
would just send it in. He really did raise--Of course, they
didn't need the money they need now for campaigns.

Chall: It's astronomical now.

Heller: It's just an entirely different scale. I remember my mother-in-law
once gave a congressional candidate who lived down here, who really
didn't have much prayer to be elected, a Democrat, can't think of his
name now (it doesn't make any difference), he was running against
Jack Z. Anderson, who had been the longtime Republican congressman for
these two counties. She gave him $2,000. That's the only sum that
Heller: sticks in my head. He almost dropped dead. In fact, I was stunned when she gave him that much. You know, you really gave much smaller sums, except for the very major candidates. The most I remember is those billboards that Ed got hold of in repayment of a debt that this billboard company owed him. I think it amounted—he probably would never have collected it—but it amounted to about $18,000 worth of billboards. That's the biggest sum that I remember.

The whole Roosevelt campaign—I told you about—was $30,000. Well, we really thought in very small sums. Any time you talk about political campaigns then, you just can't put them into the modern day text. Billboards were the biggest things we had. There was maybe a little radio, and there was no TV. There were very few paid professionals. Pat Brown was the first one with a professional. I remember Harry Lerner. He didn't get that much. Harry got less and less effective. He was a negative sort of professional. He could tear down. Once Pat Brown was in office, he wasn't any good, because he didn't know how to be affirmative about anybody. But Pat always insisted on Harry Lerner in his campaign. He thought it was a good luck omen. He was ahead of a lot of—There are great professional businesses that have grown up recently, too.

There was Whitaker and Baxter in those days that performed for the Republicans. I don't remember anybody except Harry Lerner who was really set up in business. If you wanted names on the ballot by petition, there was that professional—somebody Robinson.

Chall: I don't know that; it sounds familiar.

Heller: He'd collect signatures. We had to use him when we qualified the so-called Brown delegation after Truman got out. I think we had ten days to qualify. I've forgotten how many signatures we needed. So we got him in. I think the signatures were ten cents each. I don't know what the going rate is now.

Chall: I don't either, but it's more than ten cents, I'm sure.

Heller: Oh, I imagine it's about a dollar, at least.

Chall: What do you think about the idea of public financing of candidates, the way they do with the president now.

Heller: I'm not sure. In theory it's fine, but you can see in practice that it's sort of goofy, isn't it?

Chall: Well, it certainly presents problems.

Heller: It certainly presents problems. It doesn't really account for inflation. You don't have to accept it; therefore you have no limits. I really do like the individual limits on contributions. That I do like. You know, the thousand dollars. But there are so many loopholes there.
Chall: The political action committees become the loophole.

Heller: All sorts of groups. They don't go out and ring doorbells directly, but they do indirect—I don't know of anybody that really rings doorbells anymore.

Chall: For money, or for—?

Heller: No, for votes. These political action committees—I know that Nixon, you read about it—had them by the dozens. But that was really before the limitation went in.

Chall: But they're still around.

Heller: But he did it to hide the source of his funds. I think it's very good that the source can no longer be hidden, and that you cannot give money to give somebody else to give money for you, as used to be done. You know, people would hide the fact that they gave—this is a little later on—$25,000, say and they'd give twenty-five people each a thousand dollars to be given to one candidate in their names. There are lots of studies written about that. That's now illegal. I like that, and I really like the campaign spending limits, except they've gotten to a point where I wouldn't be a treasurer for a political campaign for anything in the world, now. You have to sign a statement. You could perjure yourself so easily—keep track. You know, if there's a campaign limit of $500, say, for an office, and you want to have an event at your home to raise money, benefitting the person, you've got to include what the food and drink at that event costs in your total $500. It's become sort of crazy, that's all.

Chall: But the general philosophy of it is all right?

Heller: Yes, if you get rid of a lot of the loopholes. I've never quite made up my mind what I think about it, and it's very acute right now. It only accounts for a two-party system.

Chall: Yes, you can see that now with the Anderson campaign.*

Heller: Anderson cannot take federal funding. He obviously has come to terms with that. But you think there must be some better way, but I don't know what it is, because you know how many parties there are on the ballot all over. It's just like the Congress has to keep making exceptions with the FCC for candidates' nights and debates and so on. In general, it's a good idea.

*John Anderson, Republican congressman from Illinois, ran for president as an Independent, in 1980.
Heller: Now, if you're asking me of what I think of the political reforms of how you select delegates—You haven't asked me that.

Chall: No, I haven't. I'll ask it.

Heller: I think it is so complicated, with every state making its own rules, that it's ludicrous. Just ridiculous. That's representative democracy, I guess. You get chaos, I think, out of it.

Chall: You don't think it's any better than the way it used to be, where the committees would make the decisions as they did in California, putting people on the ballot?

Heller: I think there's a middle way that could probably be achieved if anybody would ever agree on it. You know, whereby you could have some district caucuses maybe. But not a big thing, not confine it to only who got elected. It's a matter of who packs the caucus. That's all there is to it right now.

Chall: Do you believe in a national primary?

Heller: Not really. But I would love to see some way, and I understand about states' rights, that there could be uniform primary rules. You can see it this year if you follow the elections, with this proliferation of primaries. It's to democratize the system; instead of which, it's narrowed it. Here you are way ahead, and the candidates are virtually picked. So it doesn't do any good at all.

Chall: Which means you're practically doing away with the conventions.

Heller: Conventions are a whole other subject. They're media events now.

Chall: But that used to be the way to come to grips with the choosing of the—or the nominating the candidate.

Heller: I don't know what the rules are anymore. I think the Democrats have gone insane on their democratic processes. I haven't gone to a convention, but I follow them, you see, since '60. But there always seems to be chaos. Don't you feel that way?

Chall: They allow so many Democrats--

Heller: What I mean about media is, the more chaos, the more the media likes it. At best, they're a great American spectacle, in which you influence nothing as a candidate.

Chall: Well, the candidates, as you say, will probably be picked by the time of the conventions.
Heller: It looks that way. But maybe something will happen. Somebody said, well, Carter could get into trouble any day, and Reagan can always show his age.

Chall: But you still do have enough voting on the first ballot, at least, that might do it regardless of whether they're in trouble or not. Aren't they all committed?

Heller: Not all of them. No, not all committed. Each state is different, and obviously within California, Democrats and Republicans are completely different. But that's the subject of a bigger book.

Chall: Yes, it certainly is.

Heller: But basically, I do like the campaign limitations.

Chall: Someone has said that with respect to the practice of private campaign contributions as a principal basis for electing people to office, that "The private campaign contribution in real terms is nothing more than a form of liberalized bribing with delayed timing, which is made all the more unfair, because it is available only to one sector of our society--the wealthy."

Heller: Well, I don't call that a big exaggeration. A lot of people, I think, gave the way Ed Heller used to give or I gave. There were some that certainly wanted ambassadorships. Those are pretty well known. And they gave hoping to get them. I don't say they got them, but I think there were some that were very anxious to do that. I guess there were others, but I don't know, who wanted business favors, introductions in the administration; I think that was very, very much done. You know, access to what--FCC; any organs of government; committee hearings of Congress?

That was true to some degree; but you have to look on the other side of it. Look at the enormous labor contributions. I don't know if you think of that as wealthy or not. Those were enormous in the annals of labor endorsements. [brief telephone interruption]

Chall: You were talking about the labor--

Heller: Well, there are many people who complain about the influence of big labor. I don't know if you could think of that as wealthy, or representing the not wealthy people. It depends on how you look at it. Look at the

Heller: medical associations. Is that wealth or not? You know, the lobbies of this kind--teachers' lobbies. It depends on what you think of. I think there used to be people who wanted favors, and I guess some of the better-known ones, and I only know it by reading, are people like Robert Vesco.

I found the big contributors around here, basically, wanted their egos satisfied over the years. They wanted to be invited to the White House or something like that. This is Republican as well as Democratic. I know a lot of big Republican contributors that like to have access, not necessarily to the oval office but to various White House people. There were never any big secrets about that. I know the ego of a lot of people in politics. That I've seen. They like to sound important to themselves.

And I'm sure there is a certain amount of--there was a certain amount--I don't like to use the word bribe. I guess there has been some bribery; it shows up in the press every once in a while. I think people who want certain legislation accomplished I think to this day try to support. Whether it's truckers or milkmen or milk lobbies or what have you. I think it always goes on. They want to try to influence legislation. But I don't think they necessarily buy votes; I don't know.

I personally have seen just no effects except vanity. Why did Roger Kent do all he did?

Chall: He just enjoyed it, I think.

Heller: He didn't want to be a judge. You usually thought lawyers who would work that hard wanted judgeships. He didn't want one. All he wanted--do you realize--after he was state chairman and worked so hard--was to be on the U.S. Postal Services stamp--whatever you call it--committee, that decided on the subject to be on the stamps. That's what he really wanted. And he got it. I think that was with John Kennedy. That's what he wanted. He had never made any bones about it.

There are various reasons that people do things. I think mostly they don't want anything. Some do. And to this day they do. I wouldn't take that extreme a position at all.

Chall: I just wanted to quote it to you and see how you reacted. What do you think the role of a political party is?

Heller: I don't know. A convenience.

Chall: Do you think they should take clear-cut stands on issues, or compromise, reconcile differences?
Heller: Well, I don't think they do take clear-cut stands. I think the party platform is there, causes excitement at the moment. I've never seen a candidate that really follows a party platform. There's a great deal of fuss made, and then I don't see where candidates follow it. And I say this nicely.

There are so many silly things that get into party platforms. If they're annoying enough, if you have enough people coming before the Platform Committees on issues, they get their particular issue on. For a long time it was about the Free Irish or something. Right now the hot subjects I guess are abortion and women's rights, and minority rights, and everybody's—I was going to say for motherhood, but that doesn't apply to abortion very well. There are great fights in the Platform Committee, and I think that's all right. I think it lets the more excitable, emotional people vent their feelings.

I was never asked to, but I never would have dreamed of suggesting that I serve on the Platform Committee. It's dreadful work. You go on for weeks, and you're exhausted all the time. It's simply terrible. But certain types of minds like that.

Chall: Do you think it's mainly then, to find some way to win an election?

Heller: Basically, yes. Even if the candidate ignores it. But mostly it's—there are vague differences in the party platforms, and don't ask me to identify them, because you forget them from year to year.

Chall: Even issues come up that weren't even considered in the party platform, let's say, registration of young men.

Heller: Yes. That may show up in a platform; I don't know.

Chall: The parties right now are dividing on that issue, too.

Heller: They sure are, or registration of women. So when you win these fights with a small, very small majority, you really haven't accomplished much.

Chall: What do you think the role of a political party is? Or are you back to saying you don't know.

Heller: I told you. It's a convenience. You tend more to like the positions in general taken by one party than another, but that isn't really true, necessarily. Southern Democrats have always been extremely conservative, with a few exceptions. I actually think Jimmy Carter is an exception, and I think Lyndon Johnson, strangely enough, was an exception, even if I didn't care for him.
Heller: I think the role of the courts is probably in the long run much more important, and the appointees to the court have extreme influence, I think. And they come out of political parties, too. I've never seen a non-partisan appointment, have you?

Chall: Off-hand, I can't think of one, although I suspect there have been a few.

Heller: Yes, but you've seen conservatives and liberals. There's no real— it's a vehicle. The constitution doesn't call for political parties.

Chall: Do you think that parties can be effective, that there's some way that they can be more effective than they are now? Or that they were when you were more active?

Heller: No, because I think the more rules you have, the worse they get. I think the Democratic party as a result of McGovern is worse, rather than better. There are so many rules that you don't know where you are at all. Look at the splits in the Republican party, though it's basically conservative. But there's no role for liberal Republicans, as John Anderson is, if he's liberal, or where there's no role for Nelson Rockefeller nationally. That's a better example. Don't you think? There's been very little role for conservative southern Democrats, what I think are the southern Democrats. In the Congress, they've had some role.

I basically think party labels are less and less important. You hear less and less, "I've always been a Democrat." You look at the polls that are taken now, with the people who don't like either of the candidates. It's not "Are you going to vote Republican or Democratic?" That's not the way the polls are taken anymore. Isn't that true?

Chall: That's right. Even in some of the states the crossover in the primary ruins—

Heller: Well, that I've never understood, because I've never lived in one. It seems to be logical to people who live in them.

Chall: But it certainly doesn't do anything for parties. So you're not sure what parties can do to become effective. There is a role for them.

Heller: I don't think anything, basically. I think the parties are for those who like to be active politically, basically. State central politics are ridiculous, they're so poor. I only speak of the Democratic.

Chall: Yes, you only know that one.

Heller: They're always going on national issues. I was never very effective in the state central committee. I never tried to be, because I didn't like it. But I always used to argue, "Why does the state
Heller: committee go into national politics? Why don't they center on state politics for their platforms?" I was always ignored. We always had great national issues that were being voted on. I got no place with that argument. This was when I was in office.

Chall: I think we're about finished. Let me ask you one question that relates to women in politics. Many people have said, and they still do, that there was no place for a woman in politics in the early days unless she was either thought to be or about to become somebody's mistress. Women just didn't have any other role in politics. Did you find that women were that much demeaned in politics when you were in there?

Heller: No, not really.

Chall: That that was the general idea about women in politics?

Heller: No, I don't think so at all. I think there have been a lot of influential women, and I think that's changed quite a bit. Look at -- they take a different role. Pat Harris, who was out here this week, secretary of HEW [Health, Education and Welfare] is a complete politician, I guess. She seems to have quite a bit of influence.

I think women on the whole do not make very good candidates, because you see how many run, and they're not awfully effective. There are exceptions, but if you ever took a list of the number of women who run that aren't elected, for the most part they seem to run in hopeless districts.

Chall: That was where they usually allowed them, if they were going to run.

Heller: I personally will not belong to this group that--the bipartisan group to elect women?

Chall: National Women's Political Caucus?

Heller: Yes. I won't belong. Because I will only vote for people if I think they're good. I just couldn't belong to any group that identifies, you know, with just one sector. It seems ridiculous. Any more than I will support every Democrat. I wouldn't dream of it.

Alben Barkley, when he was vice-president of the United States--he really was a wonderful character in many ways, complete politician, but charming and delightful. He'd always go around making speeches--he loved to: "Vote for every Democrat on the ticket!" [chuckles] I could never be that way.

Chall: Anything else you want to say that I've left out of my outline?
Heller: No. Not now.

Chall: Then we are finished. If you find you want to say something, you just go ahead and say it. I suspect we've covered your life and times, and much of your philosophy of life quite thoroughly.

[Added by Mrs. Heller after reviewing her transcript]

In reading over these interviews, taken at intervals over a period of about ten years, I realize that perhaps some acknowledgements should have been more strongly emphasized. I deliberately tried not to talk too much about my children and family. On the other hand, in covering my term as a UC Regent I seem to have neglected somewhat my two staunchest friends on that board—Bill Roth and Bill Coblentz. Although I have spoken with admiration of Buff Chandler and Ed Carter, I haven't paid enough tribute to other excellent and very helpful Regents, such as Phil Boyd, Dutch Higgs, and Bill Forbes, with all of whom I worked so closely and congenially. Two others who were not appointed by a governor but served by reason of their positions—Ted Meyer, president of the Mechanics Institute, and Roger Pettitt, president of the UCLA Alumni Association—were on the board for a comparatively short time but proved to be outstanding Regents. There were also, of course, some wonderful chancellors, such as Emil Mrak on the Davis campus and Roger Heyns at Berkeley.

Now in my eighth decade, I reflect back with gratitude on these fine associates, and on all the other friends and colleagues who have been my co-workers in a wide variety of endeavors. I take these closing lines as opportunity to express to all of them my deep appreciation for their continuing friendship and for the guidance and support they have given me so generously over the years.

Transcribers: Alison Nichols, Matthew Schneider, Judy Smith
Final Typist: Marie Herold
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