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Regional Oral History Office
The Bancroft Library

University of California
Berkeley, California

Estolv Ethan Ward

ORGANIZING AND REPORTING ON LABOR
IN THE EAST BAY, CALIFORNIA AND THE WEST, 1925-1987

With an Introduction by
Norman Leonard

An Interview Conducted by
Lisa Rubens
in 1987

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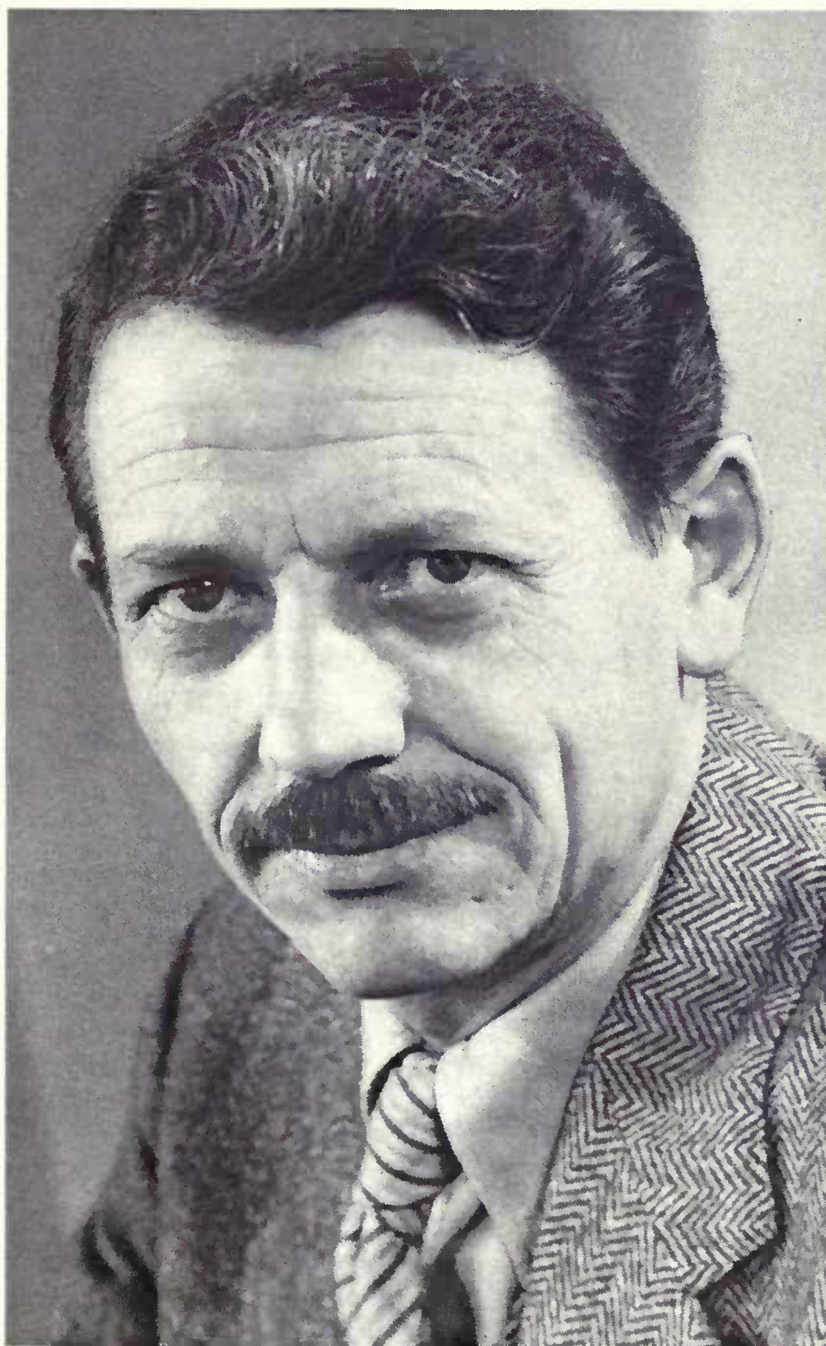

ESTOLV ETHAN WARD
ca. 1937

Acknowledgments

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Barbara Baroway
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PREFACE

For almost a century, San Francisco has been known as a union town, and the International Longshoreman's and Warehouseman's Union (ILWU) as its most active, progressive, and unique union.

Back in the 1950s, when the University of California still funded most of the research conducted by its faculty and staff, the University's newly established oral history program interviewed a number of San Francisco Bay Area's labor leaders; for example, Paul Scharrenberg (Sailor's Union), Jennie Matyas (ILGWU), Mary Gallagher (IWW), a variety of Teamster Union officials, and J. Paul St. Sure, representative par excellence of the employers in many collective bargainings. But in the following decades, as institutional research funds shrank and foundation funds became more limited to direct action projects, the oral history program of necessity focused more and more on fields that could fund their own historic preservation. A few brief labor history interviews were conducted, but only when they fitted in with another funded project such as the Earl Warren Era Project. The resulting lopsided documentation was noted and deplored by library officials, faculty, and scholars in search of research materials, but it took two private citizens, recently retired from labor union-related work and research to turn the situation around by their own volunteer efforts. They are Estolv and Angela Ward.

First, Angela Ward volunteered her secretarial skills to The Bancroft Library to transcribe a taped but untranscribed lengthy interview with Henry Schmidt which had been donated to the office several years earlier. Her husband, Estolv Ward, reading each page as it came off the typewriter, realized that his background had fortuitously qualified him to do labor oral histories. A newspaper reporter and court reporter in the 1930s, his sympathies had led him to throw in his lot with organized labor after the 1934 General Strike. He had worked for various unions and union-related agencies, and had researched and written on labor topics, including a book on Harry Bridges and one on Tom Mooney. He knew the Bay Area labor scene personally and through research, and realized that his reportorial and editorial skills would help at the editing level.

And so Estolv and Angela began a ten-year team effort to preserve a piece of California's labor history, he researching, interviewing, editing; she, transcribing and final typing. They began in 1978 with Louis Goldblatt's oral history, a two-volume history of some forty interviews that took three years to complete. Their fourth and final oral history was with labor attorney Norman Leonard, completed in 1986. The Regional Oral History Office provided format and procedures and all the finding aid requirements, including launching of the finished oral histories into the network of scholarly research. Such funding as was needed came from unions, mostly the waterfront unions, workers and attorneys in the organized labor community, and from families and friends of the interviewees.

Estolv hung up his interviewer's shingle in 1986, pleading his eighty-seven years as excuse to step down to a less pressured job. He continues to

offer his time to the oral history office as proofreader and copy editor.

But this partial retirement was the signal the Regional Oral History Office had been waiting for, its chance to capture this long-experienced and thoughtful observer's own recollections of the many historic events and persons he had seen and dealt with. His close friend and colleague, Norman Leonard, volunteered to raise the necessary funds. Lisa Rubens, a California historian with a specialty in labor history, was engaged to take over Estolv's job of labor history interviewer, and Estolv and Angela were back at work, this time with Estolv on the speaking side of the microphone and Angela filling in with her own recollections when the memory trail grew faint.

As Estolv's oral history approaches completion, and Estolv approaches his ninetieth birthday, I take this opportunity to thank both Estolv and Angela for their service to history, and, by their documentation of labor history, for helping preserve the Regional Oral History Office's reputation for balanced coverage of California history. With the impetus they have provided, we look forward to our collection of labor oral histories continuing to grow, and, though he claims to be retired, we also look forward to many more years of copy editing and proofing by Estolv Ward.

Willa K. Baum
Division Head
Regional Oral History Office

March 1989

International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union

Oral History Series

Goldblatt, Louis, The ILWU in California and Hawaii, 1934-1977, 1980.

Schmidt, Henry, Secondary Leadership in the ILWU, 1933-1966, 1983.

Bulcke, Germain, Longshore Leader and ILWU-Pacific Maritime Association Arbitrator, 1984.

Leonard, Norman, Life of a Leftist Lawyer, 1986.

Ward, Estolv Ethan, Organizing and Reporting on Labor in the East Bay, California and the West, 1925-1987, 1989.

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INTRODUCTION by Norman Leonard

In his "Interview History" to my oral history, Estolv Ward states that he and his wife Angela have known me and my wife Marjorie for nearly half a century and in that time we became neighbors, friends and companions. It is through the eyes of that companionship that this introduction is now being written.

My first memory of Estolv in the flesh is in early 1946 shortly after I had been discharged from the Navy and had commenced again my work in labor law. A struggle was then going on in California over the decision of the Brewery Workers International Union to join the CIO. The California locals - or at least some of them - were for staying with the AFL and probably affiliating with the Teamsters. Paul Schnur, as leader of the San Francisco CIO Council, had designated Estolv as the CIO person to head up the effort to bring the California locals into the CIO with their International. There were legal ramifications in this struggle-- suits over local union funds, trusteeships imposed by the

International on the recalcitrant locals and the like. And I was the person assigned by my firm to handle such legal problems. So Estolv and I began to work very closely together.

I had, of course, been aware of him before that -- I had known of him as an official of the CIO in the East Bay and of his interest in the Tom Mooney case. My wife and I had been deeply impressed by his book "Harry Bridges On Trial", which dealt with the 1939 Angel Island hearing before Judge Landis. We also were aware of Angela's efforts to organize the employees of the Bank of America. But I don't recall that we ever actually met the Wards until this Brewery Workers contact.

We soon became friends and the relationship has lasted and deepened. I still remember with great warmth -- now with nostalgia -- how for many years the four of us met almost every Sunday at Mountain Home on Mount Tamalpais and hiked the mountain's beautiful trails. Although the hiking tapered off, Estolv's feeling for natural beauty has been evidenced through the years by his enthusiastic hard labor on the beautiful garden he created at the back of their Berkeley home.

We and the Wards still carry on a happy tradition. Angela and my wife have the same birthday, and for more years than I can count for sure we four have celebrated it together.

There have been professional connections as well. I was Angela's attorney before the House Committee on Un-American

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Activities. And I handled a grand jury problem for Estolv when he was subpoenaed to a Texas inquiry into the affairs of the Mine Mill and Smelter Workers International Union. Through it all I found them both to be concerned, committed and courageous people. But this is an introduction to Estolv's Oral History, so I must concentrate on him.

I think the most outstanding feature of my friend is his uncompromising honesty. At no time in the years I have known him has he ever dissembled or hedged about anything -- particularly about where he stood politically. Although this introduction is being written before I have had a chance to read his Oral History, I have not the slightest doubt that he tells it as it was and is, without any equivocation.

Further, he always wants to know what is going on all about him. He is immensely curious about the world and its people. This curiosity, this desire to know led him and Angela to become great travellers both at home and abroad. Late in the 1950s they travelled slowly around the world. For about two years in the '60s they lived in Europe, then Turkey and North Africa, most of the time in the camper in which they travelled. Angela's command of several languages made it easier for them really to communicate with the people around them.

Several times after that the Wards were back in Europe, living for months at a time in small communities in different

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countries. With the passage of time it became more difficult to travel. But their interest in the world has not lessened.

Estolv's curiosity about people has manifested itself in another way in recent years. He has been a volunteer interviewer, editor and general factotum for the Oral History Office of the Bancroft Library. This brings him into contact with all types of people and situations: not only labor people,1/ but others from many different walks of life and varied fields of interest and activity.

Estolv has continued to do this work and so to keep himself involved with the world despite the frailty that comes with advancing years and despite several recent heartwrenching losses in his family. In this he is a very courageous man.

As he gets older he is occasionally a bit cranky and cantankerous (as are we all). But this does not negate his genuine warmth and feeling for people, a trait he shares with Angela. It has made them a beloved and admired center of a wide circle of friends, and children of friends.

Indeed it is that feeling for people that made Estolv the radical activist that he was and is. He left what probably would have been a comfortable professional life as a newspaperman

---

1/ In addition to my Oral History, he has done Oral Histories of three leaders of the ILWU: Louis Goldblatt, Germain Bulcke and Henry Schmidt.

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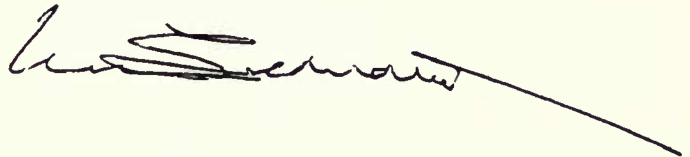
because he felt the need to fight for workers and their causes, because he believed they were entitled to a decent life and he wanted to play a part in bringing that about. In all of his life, in his trade union work, in his political work, in his writing, he has striven to make the world a more just and a more secure and a more peaceful place for its inhabitants.

I count myself lucky to have known Estolv Ward so closely for all these years.2/



September 14, 1988

2/ Marjorie Leonard has contributed significantly to this introduction.

INTERVIEW HISTORY

I prepared to conduct Estolv Ward's oral history with enormous respect and a good amount of awe. After all, I was a somewhat presupposing young historian coming to interview the man whose books and oral histories I had devoured, and whose views had influenced some of mine. I considered this work a privilege rather than a job; but nevertheless it was no easy task: I had my own research and curiosity questions, yet I needed to retain my professional stance by questioning Ward's assumptions, actions, and memory.

From the beginning, Estolv Ward was encouraging, twinkly, kindly, and gracious. At the first meeting we sat in the living room of his and Angela's charming Berkeley home--not far from where he had been raised as a boy. I admired his own photography that hung throughout the room; we exchanged pleasantries; and he clearly, by some measure, tested my mettle--did I have a sense of humor; did I really know the difference between a Socialist and a Communist; what did LNPL stand for: I obviously passed the test, because Estolv then suggested we begin, and I was escorted into the room where he had conducted several interviews, including those of Louis Goldblatt and Norman Leonard. This time he sat on the hot-history seat and I posed the questions.

Yet Ward, ever the writer, publicist, and intellectual, was a man who had a story to tell. And among his many talents is that of telling a good tale. Ward knew what <u>he</u> wanted to say, and how he would have structured the interviews. I often came to a session for which he had already written out what he wanted to say--a "no no" in the oral history business as he would readily say. And sometimes he became rather annoyed when I'd push him on a point or try to move to a subject that he had not intended to be opened. But he did yield and the interview grew into what I think--as an historian and writer--is more complex and rich than would seem by merely glancing at the table of contents.

It was not the best of times for Ward or his family. One blow after another befell them--particularly sorrowful and sudden deaths; Ward's own health failed and one interview was even conducted in his room at Kaiser Hospital. Although he rallied, by the tenth interview he declared he was finished with this enterprise. He had more stories to tell and there was probing and follow ups to be done, particularly on several aspects of his political and labor history. I especially regret not taping his recollections of the anti-Vietnam War movement--including his trip to Kent State after the four students were killed in 1970.

I became very fond of Estolv and Angela. Angela began to sit in on the later interviews and she was a marvelous addition: She helped Estolv recall certain events; more importantly, since their life together has always been a loving partnership and productive collaboration in every way, it was only fitting that they would join on this project. (Angela was interviewed for the Women in California Collection, of the California Historical Society, a collaborative project with the Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. There are copies of her history in the two sponsoring institutions, also in Labor Archives, Wayne State University,

Detroit, Michigan, and at The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley. We were able to augment Angela's oral history and update it in this interview.) Both Angela and I were eager to have Estolv continue his oral history; but we have not prevailed. I have continued to ask him about my own research projects.

Estolv had served as ROHO's labor history interviewer for a decade and I did not presume to impose my own editing on his oral history, nor would he have stood for any tampering with his own way of organizing and stating his life story. Aside from adding chapter headings and subheadings to the transcript, I turned over the editing and final review to Estolv. The transcribing, final typing, and indexing was done by Judy Smith, a longtime ROHO staff member who has worked most closely with Estolv and Angela in their oral history work.

All in all this is a delightful, informative, rich oral history. There is much to learn about social, political, radical, and Bay Area history; and there are little gems tucked away that include a wide range of useful information--for example, descriptions of the nuts and bolts of a host of jobs (reporter, labor organizer, photographer) and about various industrial processes; there are asides on the value of nudism and odes to specific aesthetic traditions.

This oral history reflects the life of a thoughtful and active man who lived through and contributed to the extraordinary history of the United States in the twentieth century.

Lisa Rubens
Interviewer-Editor

March 1989
Regional Oral History Office
486 The Bancroft Library
University of California at Berkeley

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

(Please write clearly. Use black ink.)

Your full name ESTOLV ETHAN WARD

Date of birth Mar. 29, 1899 Birthplace Los Angeles

Father's full name Louis Artemas Ward

Occupation Lawyer/Business Man Birthplace Cross's Mill, R.I.

Mother's full name Laura Mae Smith Ward

Occupation Doctor-Housewife Birthplace San Francisco, Calif

Your spouse Angela Gizzi Ward

Your children Eugenia (deceased), David, and Roger

Where did you grow up? First in San Francisco; then Berkeley

Present community Berkeley

Education Home tutoring until 13-14, then Washington School and Berkeley High School; then tutoring and Virginia Military In

Occupation(s) Business secretary; real estate salesman; stationery store salesman; newspaper reporter; court bailiff; labor leader; write

Areas of expertise Newspaper writing and editing; CIO labor representative in the Eastbay, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Nevad

Other interests or activities Photography; then oral histories, first taking them and now editing them.

Organizations in which you are active ROHO

Estolv Ethan Ward

Born 1899 in Los Angeles; father a Socialist lawyer out of Rhode Island; mother an ardent feminist, daughter of a San Francisco Quaker merchant, and possessor of a Ph.D. from Swarthmore and an M.D. from Boston Medical School. The infant was removed to San Francisco at age two weeks, and with _lacunae_ has lived in the Bay Region, mostly Berkeley, ever since.

Three and a half years of institutionalized instruction; otherwise his education came through tutors, travel, and daily family discussions.

Became campus reporter at U.C. Berkeley for the Oakland _Tribune_, proceeding to top rewrite, general assignment, and assistant city editor. Covered the San Francisco general strike in 1934 and in those three days learned things that changed his life. Became a founder of the local chapter of the Newspaper Guild and was fired and blacklisted by his publisher, Joseph R. Knowland. Became bailiff and court reporter for the California Supreme Court, meanwhile being active on his leisure time in the burgeoning CIO labor movement. Resigned his court job to become founding executive secretary of the Alameda County CIO Council.

In the next eleven years, he became successively first vice-president, California State CIO Council; CIO legislative representative, Sacramento, 1939; executive secretary, Harry Bridges Defense Committee, Angel Island trial, 1939; executive vice-president, California Labor's Non-Partisan League, 1940; radio writer, Los Angeles _CIO News_, 1940-41; organizer, Mine Mill and Smelter Workers' Union, in Los Angeles and Southern Nevada, 1942-44; San Francisco CIO radio writer, 1944; CIO-PAC director, San Francisco CIO Council, 1945-48. Following that, odd jobs and labor journalism.

Author, _Harry Bridges On Trial_, Modern Age, 1940; a labor novel published only in Polish translation, _Renegat_, 1953; _The Gentle Dynamiter: A Biography of Tom Mooney_, Ramparts Press, 1983; numerous labor and travel articles.

Interviewer-editor, Louis Goldblatt, "Working Class Leader In the ILWU, 1935-1977," two volumes, Regional Oral History Office, 1980; Henry Schmidt, "Secondary Leadership in the ILWU, 1933-1966," Regional Oral History Office, 1983. Germain Bulcke, "Longshoreman's Leader & ILWU-Pacific Maritime Assoc. Arbitrator," 1984; Norman Leonard, "Life of a Leftist Labor Lawyer," 1986.

Angela Gizzi Ward

Born 1910 in San Francisco; eldest child of immigrants from Italy who became prominent citizens in the North Beach district. Graduate of the University of California at Berkeley.

Worked at Bank of America until fired for attempting to organize a union among bank and insurance employees throughout the Bay Region. President and organizer of United Office and Professional Workers Local 34, San Francisco.

Later became secretary-treasurer of Local 700, Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers, in Los Angeles; joined her husband in a dramatic but unsuccessful effort to organize workers for Mine Mill in war plants in Southern Nevada, 1943.

Returning to San Francisco, she became an organizer of clerical workers at the Pacific Gas and Electric Company, achieving a first major victory in the local office-worker field, with equal pay for equal work for women.

On retirement she has assisted her husband in the preparation of oral history and other manuscripts.

I FAMILY BACKGROUND AND CHILDHOOD: INFLUENCES ON WARD'S POLITICAL SENSIBILITY

[Interview 1: 8 June 1987]##

Rubens: We are going to spend this first session talking about your childhood and background, with the focus on how you developed political consciousness.

Ward: I have a rather unusual parentage and birth and upbringing, my parents both being radicals, flaming radicals, for the nineties. My father was a socialist and a bit of a Theosophist. My father ran on the Populist ticket for district attorney of Multnomah County, Oregon, which was Portland, and he lost by thirty-four votes.

Rubens: Your father was a lawyer, is that right, from Rhode Island?

Ward: Yes. And my mother was an ardent feminist who believed that marriage was a dirty trick conceived by men to enslave women. I was her second child. She had been involved before.

Rubens: Let me ask you, then, a couple of key questions. Where was your mother born?

Ward: I think she was born in San Francisco. Her father was the owner of a store which you may or may not have heard of, Smith's Cash Grocery.

Rubens: What was your mother's name?

Ward: My mother's name was Laura Mae Smith. She was known as Laura; that's the name she used.

##This symbol indicates that a tape or a segment of a tape has begun or ended. For a guide to the tapes, see page 271.

Ward: My father, Louis Artemas Ward,* was born and brought up in Rhode Island in a house so old that parts of it, nobody knows when they were built.

My grandfather was George Hazzard Mumford Perry Ward, and my grandmother was Celia Perry. My grandfather, as soon as he got married--he was a whaler, a whaling captain--he took off on a voyage around the Horn to the Bering Straits and got home three years later to find out that he had a three-year-old daughter, or thereabouts. So he quit whaling and became a farmer.

Rubens: This is your father's father?

Ward: Yes, that's right. Many stories were told about life on the farm, how this house had the widow's peak--widow's watchplace. It also had between the first and second floors a railing which resounded when pounded.

When they needed fertilizer, they would wait till the tide in Long Island Sound was very low, and that usually occurred at two or three in the morning. The boys, my father included, slept upstairs, and my grandfather slept downstairs. He didn't need a clock. There was, I guess, no such thing as an alarm clock. He knew when it was time to get up, and he'd pound on that railing and holler, "Jump up, boys, and hook on your jibhalyards." The boys would do that, and they would get into special carts with ribs instead of solid bodies, and the horses, and go down and get seaweed. That's how they fertilized the rocky New England soil.

Rubens: How did your father get from Rhode Island to Oregon?

Ward: I'm coming to that.

There were many, many stories about life on the farm as the children grew up. There were many children.

The weather was foggy and miserable, and many people died of what was then called consumption, including my grandmother (Celia) and my father's younger sister, whose name I don't remember. My father was told at the age of nineteen that he also was a consumptive and had two years to live, and nothing much could be done for him about it.

Well, in town, the tiny little hamlet there, was a man known as Welcome Tucker. He got the name of "Welcome" because his father and mother, when he was born, got into a fight over what his name should be and didn't name him anything but "Hey, you." So at the age of ten he named himself "Welcome."

Now, he was known as Welc Tucker. He was the village handyman, and he took care of everybody's little odd jobs and all

---

*My father never used the name "Louis." He was known as "Art." E.W.

Paternal Grandfather, George Hazzard Mumford Perry Ward.
Portland, Oregon

Paternal Grandmother, Celia Church Ward.
Rhode Island

Cousin Lizzie Hoxsie

Ward: the old maids and widows and so on, and he liked my father. My father left home and went to live with Welc Tucker.

My father noticed that he got a terrible cold every time he got a haircut and conceived the idea that if his hair were left to grow as nature intended, the back of his neck would always be of an even temperature. So he let his hair grow long, and he also went on a fast and took nothing but water for three weeks.

Welc was beginning to get a little bit anxious about the boy. He didn't want him to die. It was spring, and the peaches were ripe in the orchard. Welc took a bowl full of ripe peaches and set them on the dining room table and went on about his business. When he came back, the peaches were all eaten. That ended the fast, and from that day on my father never tasted anything except fruit and vegetables all his life. He lived to eighty-six.

Rubens: What year did he die?

Ward: Nineteen fifty-seven. The family, in the meantime, was moving west to Portland, Oregon. This was because of my grandfather's brother, Uncle John. The two of them, George and John, had crossed the Isthmus of Panama and got to California in the Gold Rush.

When they arrived in San Francisco Bay they had no money, but they had shotguns and ammunition. They stole a boat from one of the many vessels which had been abandoned in the bay. They got a good-sized longboat and rowed across the bay to what is now Alameda. At that time it was a haven for wild ducks. They shot wild ducks until that boat was loaded down just to danger's edge, got back with them, and sold the ducks to the San Francisco restaurant people at five dollars apiece. So they were in business.

They went up to the gold fields and didn't find much of any gold. My grandfather got scurvy and lost all his teeth. He was so sick that to save his life John had to get him home somehow.

But John didn't stay home. He was next heard of in what is now northern Mexico and New Mexico. He somehow or other enlisted the assistance of some Indian vaqueros, and they rounded up a great herd of wild horses left from the Spanish adventures in Mexico. They rounded up this herd, and with the Indian vaqueros John drove them west to the coast of California, starting at San Diego, selling wild horses to the ranchers up the coast, up the coast, up the coast, to what is now Portland, Oregon, and beyond. About where Vancouver is, he ran out of horses.

Ward: So he and his vaqueros rounded up a herd of wild elk and drove them south, selling them for meat. They ran out of elk at what is now Portland, Oregon, on the banks of the Willamette River. John by that time had a lot of money, and he bought about a fourth of what is now the Portland, Oregon, waterfront, and he lived there the rest of his life. He became "Mr. Republican" of the state of Oregon.

I remember him when I was a small boy, coming down to visit us on his way; he spent every winter in Santa Monica and the rest of the time in Portland. He smoked vile cigars and stunk up our house. [chuckles] We put up with him because he was rich.

Rubens: So we're talking about how your father got to Oregon. Was that because of John?

Ward: Well, John started a family there, and the rest of the family began to come from Rhode Island.

Rubens: What year was this?

Ward: The early nineties.

Rubens: Your father went to Oregon in the early nineties?

Ward: Well, he didn't go with the rest of the family. He was about the last among them. In those days it took ten days by train from Rhode Island, or Boston, to Portland, Oregon. There was no such thing as sleeping cars. You sat up. And they burned wood, you know, and they were just as dirty as the engine [chuckles] by the time they got there. Anyway, he got there and went to work as a longshoreman.

But he was of a slight, slender build, and the first thing he did was to lift a load wrong and he tore the ligaments out of the small of his back around into his testicles, and he had that hole under his skin in his back all the rest of his life.

So he went to work as a clerk in a law office, and at the age of twenty-one he went down to Salem and took the bar examination. He tells the story that he had become friendly with another young fellow who was also taking the exam. The night before the exam this other fellow suggested that they sit up all night and cram. My father said no; he was going to get a good night's sleep. So he got a good night's sleep, the other fellow sat up all night and worked, and they both passed.

My father bacame a lawyer. His clients were always indigent or nearly so. He had a great problem: he could charge a fee, but he couldn't collect it. The result was that he was <u>very</u> poor. He then met my mother.

A Feminist Mother

Rubens: Where did your father meet your mother?

Ward: In Portland, although she was, I think, San Francisco born. She, as I say, didn't believe in marriage.

Rubens: Had she already been to college when she met your father?

Ward: She had a Ph.D. from Swarthmore and an M.D. from Boston Medical.

Rubens: That was very unusual for a woman at that time.

Ward: Very, very. She was the valedictorian when she graduated from Boston Med, and her topic was Yosemite. She was an outdoor person, very much so. In the summertimes, when she'd come back from college in the East, the first thing she would do would be to hire a donkey and find a dog somewhere that liked her and take off for Yosemite.

Rubens: By herself?

Ward: By herself.

She was a very dear and close friend of John Muir. There is a story of a night, of some sort of a romance between the two, at the head of Waterwheel Falls on the Tuolumne, if you know where that is.

Rubens: Who told the story? Your mother?

Ward: No. I think my aunt had--[chuckles]. Well, anyway, they were unquestionably very good friends.

Rubens: And what were her parents like, that they sent her to Swarthmore and then to medical school?

Ward: I have this memory of her father: I remember being taken--I must have been somewhere between three and four years of age--into this big store. It was on the gore of Market, Drumm, and California Streets, and the building was thirteen stories high. I don't know how much of it they occupied, but they certainly occupied a great deal.

And I remember going down the aisle, hanging onto my mother's hand, and the clerks bowing and scraping, way down to the back to a little tiny office, rather dark and gloomy and crowded, and this man with a beard down to here [gestures]. I don't know what the talk was about, but anyhow he stood up, and he was six-foot-seven. My mother was five-ten.

Rubens: This was your grandfather who was six-foot-seven with a beard to his waist?

Ward: This was my grandfather. I remember her saying that we were going to see grandma, but I don't remember grandma at all.

Rubens: Your mother got her degree from Boston Medical School but never practiced medicine?

Ward: Never practiced.

Rubens: And you believe your parents met in Portland?

Ward: Yes, I know they did.

Rubens: But you were born in Los Angeles.

Ward: Well, as I say, my father was--

Rubens: Struggling.

Ward: He couldn't collect a fee. His big pride was that he defended a man for murder and got him off--that sort of thing. But no money.

He heard of a law job opening in the little town of Los Angeles, which was nothing but a hamlet then. So he and my mother, she very pregnant--oh, wait a minute; I'm getting ahead of the story.

Since she didn't believe in marriage and she was in love with my father, she was willing to live with him right then and there. Nothing doing! No, sir! He was a New England Puritan, and you did not have sex except when you intended to have offspring; that was the only purpose of sex. Anyway, it was a standoff for quite a while until finally she gave in under the promise that all right, she would marry him, and as soon as there was an offspring they would get a divorce and live happily ever afterward.

So here they were in Los Angeles, and the job that he was looking for did not materialize. They were living in a little old white house, so I've been told, right close to the corner of Figueroa and Broadway. My mother, who had had a child previously--

Rubens: She had already had a child?

Ward: Oh, yes. I was her second child.

Mother, Laura Mae Smith Ward

Fragments of

My Soul and Winter's,

by

Laura M. Smith

A Sight That Lived.

A cliff; deep snow; a moonlight night;
A pair of long, slim Norway skis;
A figure kneeling; peering far over the icy ledge.

Down, down below, deep in the canon's white
There lay a curious thing.
There lay a mimic city in the snow,
A tiny little mining, mountain city
With one long straggling street.
And dancing lights from under low log roofs
Where Joe and Mary ate their boiled potatoes
And gave the baby some.
And gaudy signs and yellow lights from ten saloons,
And one red light, laying a warm, slim finger on the snow—the drug store.
And little hurrying spots, all black, a-moving to and fro from butcher shop to store.
I bent again—and listened—and took my breath in small—
Ah yes! with muffled, mellow notes
Yet clear and faint and sweet—
The hotel supper-bell!

Silent I gazed—
There was a curious something thus—watching above at men's dear doings—that held me very still.

And when I moved away on my Norwegian skis, there was a white hush in my heart—
Made of the moonlight, of the snow, and of that other
Something, on its height, that watched, with luminous light, o'er everything.

Perhaps.

I think I must be the wild-child of the Norsemen.
I think I must be the offspring of those fierce men who rode the northern seas.
I think I must be akin to the Newfoundlander, to the Esquimaux, the Laps and Fins.
I think I must be the young of all of these.

An Ecstasy.

Oh, I have not lived half enough!
Oh, I have not breathed half enough!
Oh, I have not climbed half enough!
I have not leaped and danced and strode the earth one-half enough!
I am crazy with the fierce energy that burns through all my veins!
Oh, there is a snapping, crackling *life* and *force* within my brain!
Oh, I am exultant in the keen joy of bounding, glowing health!
Oh, let me never die
I am so glad to live!

A small poetry book written by Estolv Ward's mother and presented as Christmas gifts, 1896.

Rubens: Your father's child?

Ward: Oh, no, no. More about that later.

She told my father what to do--they had no money--and he did, and I got born at 6:20 in the morning.

Rubens: Eighteen ninety-nine.

Ward: Yes, March 29, 1899.

Then somehow or other they got back to San Francisco.

A Socialist Father

Rubens: Was your father a socialist by now?

Ward: Oh, he had been a socialist for--

Rubens: When did he join the Socialist Party?

Ward: Who knows? I don't know.

Rubens: Did he belong to the Socialist Party?

Ward: I don't know that he ever <u>belonged</u>, but I know that he considered himself to be a socialist, and his friends were all socialists.

Rubens: And did your mother ever actually belong to the Socialist Party?

Ward: Oh, I don't think she--

Rubens: She was not a joiner?

Ward: I have the impression that she was apolitical. Her big thing was women's rights, and she was anti-marriage and all that sort of thing.

Rubens: But she never wanted to work while the children were young, or she didn't find--?

Ward: Well, no. They got back to San Francisco. I was two weeks old, they tell me, when I arrived in San Francisco.

My father landed a job at ten dollars a week at a little exporting/importing firm down on California Street, and they lived in the highest-up cottage on Bernal Heights. My father's

Ward: allowance was ten cents a day. He walked to work and back from work, and his lunch cost ten cents.

My first memory was of lying in a tent by my mother's side, with the rain pattering on the tent in the morning, and I remember her tickling the soles of my feet to make me laugh. Then I remember getting old enough to go up on the hill to play with the nanny goats on the top of the hill and to go down a block to meet my father coming home from work. It was a lovely little house, just covered with flowering roses and bushes and things.

Rubens: Who lived in this house? The two boys? What was the first child?

Ward: Well, I never saw him. I'll tell you about that.

Rubens: All right. But we want to just establish who was living there: it was your father, your mother, and you in this house.

Waard: That's right.

You see, my mother liked everything about having children except taking care of them after infancy.

My father got fired because this little company joined forces with another little exporting and importing company, and their work forces--they had a few too many. He was the last hired, so he was let go. But in a few days they had to come after him, because in the short time he had been there he'd gone through their contract files and they discovered that he knew more about their contracts than anybody else.

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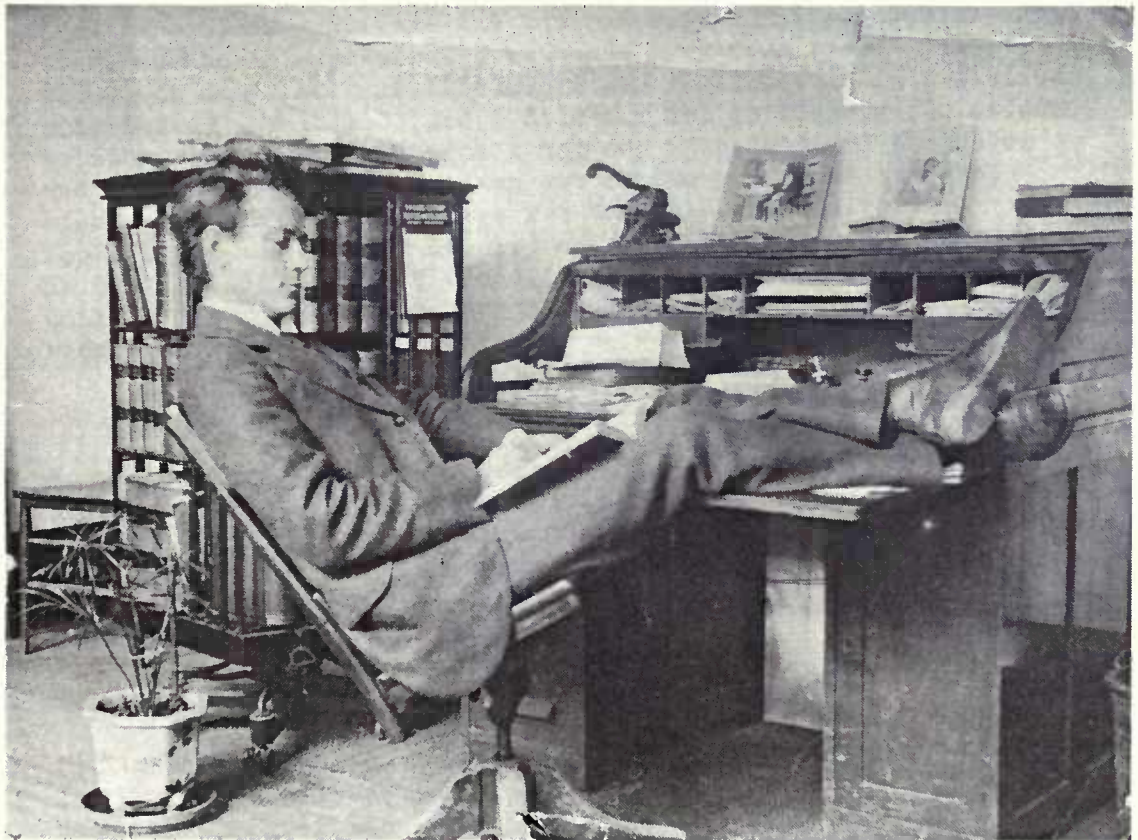
Ward: So he got his job back, and things picked up. We moved to Berkeley, to an old white house--even then it was old--on what is now Hilgard Street, but it hadn't been cut through at that time. The streetcar ran to the bottom of the Euclid Street hill, and we had to walk up Euclid to Cedar, turn up Cedar, and then go through the field down to this old house. I used to play in that field.

One morning my father woke up and he'd been bitten on the hip, apparently, he thought, by a tarantula. Anyway, he was all swollen. He went to work, but he couldn't last all day. He had to come home. He was in great pain, and he came home early in the afternoon; and The Stranger was there.

I was always told to go out and play when The Stranger came, so I saw The Stranger running through the field down towards

Father with Estolv, age three. March 1902. Bernal Heights, San Francisco.



Louis A. Ward, Attorney. Portland Oregon. (The revolving legal bookcase is still in Estolv Ward's home.)

Ward: Euclid, pulling on his clothes as he ran; and my father with a very strange look on his face; and my mother weeping in the bedroom.

After a couple of days, late one evening, the three of us went down to the Oakland Mole and he put my mother on the train; she was wearing a white tam o'shanter. I remember that white tam o'shanter as the train pulled out, and her waving good-bye. I never saw her again until I was twenty-one. How I got home that night I don't know, because I fell asleep on my father's shoulder.

So we moved to 1743 Delaware Street. It was a one-story cottage, to which my father added a high basement. The first person who took care of me was an elderly Seventh Day Adventist woman named Auntie Plowman. I hated Saturdays because from Friday night till Saturday night I couldn't go out and play. I had to just sit there and be a good boy all day.

Well, anyway, I got smallpox, so my father laid off work. I don't know where Auntie Plowman was, but she disappeared and he took care of me. My face was covered with these big pustules all over, and he told me to keep my hands away from them. "They'll itch, but don't scratch because if you scratch your face will be pock-marked for life." And I didn't. But as these pustules were getting ripe, I woke up from a nap one afternoon and the cover had taken off one of the scabs out of the corner of my nose, right where the nostril joins the forehead. I was very apologetic, and I think I cried or wept about it. But he told me it was an accident and I couldn't help it. I had the scar there until I was up in my twenties. It gradually disappeared. So I recovered. He prospered.

Rubens: What was he doing?

Ward: He worked for this export/import company. It was a company with branches all over the world, and this was just the West Coast branch. A man named Shainwald was the manager. The treasurer was Milton Morse, who was the brother of James R. Morse, the man who founded the company and who lived and operated out of the headquarters in New York.

Rubens: What was the name of the company?

Ward: The American Trading company. Milton Morse was the treasurer in San Francisco, but he was almost blind. This man Shainwald, the manager, was stealing from the company and my father caught him. So Shainwald was fired and my father was appointed manager. The next day the earthquake and fire happened. So here he was, the manager of a firm where the office was on fire.

Ward: I remember him walking with me from 1743 Delaware Street to the waterfront that night, watching San Francisco burn. He and other businessmen had gone down to the Oakland estuary and rented a ferryboat to try to get to San Francisco to save their documents and things, to do what they could. They got to the waterfront but were turned back by the National Guard; they were not allowed to land. That night he took me down, and we watched it burn.

When he could get to San Francisco, the safe was in the basement of the remains of the building, and when they opened the safe there was nothing but char. So he had to go with his hat in his hand to all the firms with whom he had contracts and ask them to please give him copies of them and to honor those contracts. They all did.

I was brought up--I don't think I ever wore such a thing as a pair of socks.

Rubens: You had long hair, also.

Ward: Long hair, down to here [gestures], longer than these haircuts now.

Rubens: Your house was a vegetarian household?

Ward: Oh, yes. My father persuaded his older sister, Nettie, who had become a teacher in a normal school in eastern Oregon, to come down and run the house and take care of me and teach me, which she did. I didn't go to school till I was about thirteen or fourteen.

Rubens: During this time did you receive letters from your mother?

Ward: My father did.

Rubens: What did your father tell you about where your mother was?

Ward: I have the impression--I don't think that he told me much.

Rubens: Did he speak ill of her?

Ward: I think maybe Aunt Nettie told me more than--I believe my mother spent much of her time around Coos Bay, Oregon; and she had other children: a boy who also had an odd name like mine. She had Eilla. He later renamed himself Phillip. And she had a girl, Truth, who I believe, so far as I know, is still alive and lives in Vacaville.

Aunt Nettie made my clothes; I wore little khaki pants above the knee, and I forget what kind of a shirt. She made all my clothes.

Ward: I was an oddball. I didn't mingle much with the neighboring children. When I did to some extent, I was a little bit too farfetched for most of them.

My father took care of old Socialist friends, including a man whose name I can't now recall who came down with typhoid while visiting us and died at our home. And Aunt Nettie got sick with it. The result was that something had to be done, so I was sent up to friends named Van der Linden in Santa Rosa, and I stayed there for about a month.

There were several Socialists in Santa Rosa, including old Cornelius "Daddy" Van der Linden, and his son Peter and wife. Also the owner of the Neilsen Furniture company, which is still a name, I think, in the trucking business in that part of California.

I got my first kiss from a girl, one of the Neilsen family. I know it was very exciting! [laughs] And I got locked in the Santa Rosa Public Library. This happened when I was eight years old, and I was in a corner of the shelves reading a travel book about "darkest Africa" when the librarian locked up to go to dinner. Peter came and got me out, a very scared kid.

Anyhow, Aunt Nettie recovered, and I went back home.

Let's go back to the earthquake and fire for a moment. I remember the earthquake; I was seven years old then. My father and I slept in twin beds in the same room. I woke up one morning, and the chimney was tumbling down on the roof over our heads, the dishes were crashing in the pantry, and the beds were like this [gestures]. For some reason or other, I couldn't open my mouth, and it stopped. I was just about to say, "Daddy, what is it?" when it began again. I wet the bed. [laughs] But we all survived.

At the time of the earthquake, just after the earthquake, my father felt that he wanted a basement. This house on Delaware street where we lived had no basement, so he had it raised to what was virtually a two-story house with a big, high basement. It was up on blocks. It had been raised, but it hadn't been built under yet. When the aftershocks of the earthquake came, the house rocked and wiggled and shook, but nothing happened.

One of the Socialist friends had an old biplane that was stored in our basement--this was after the earthquake and fire---and people passing by could see in the basement windows, and if they looked they could see the wings of this plane. Why we had it there, who left it there, I haven't the faintest idea. But when I was in my early teens we left the plane and the house and

Ward: everything and moved up to 1512 Oxford Street in Berkeley. The house is still there; I pass it every day when I go down that way.

There were two boys who lived next door who went to Waashington School, and I got friendly with them. About that time, not only did they suggest that I might like to go to school--they thought that would be nice--but also my aunt was running out of her ability to teach me, because she only had a normal school education herself. So she took me down to the school and I met the principal, whose name was H. P. Glessner. He used to be known as "Horsepower," but not to his face. He later became principal of Berkeley High. I ran into him again when he was ninety.

But, anyway, he was very much concerned. Here was this boy with these funny-looking clothes and long hair and so forth. Also, he had no idea of what grade I belonged in; nobody did. He was very concerned about it. He said, "It would be terrible to have to demote him, so let's start him low and see what happens." So I was put in the high sixth grade. I lasted there one week.

These boys, the friends of mine, were in the high seventh. I was with them for two weeks, and then the next thing I knew I was in the high eighth. A month later I graduated from grammar school.

In high school I changed my ways. I decided I would conform. I got a haircut, and bought kneepants and all, and I even wore socks for a change.

Rubens: In high school you still wore kneepants?

Ward: Oh, of course. Everybody did. I conformed, became a conformist.

In high school, in the Latin class, the teacher, Miss Webb, seated us alphabetically. The result was that the girl who sat in front of me was Jean Waste. She was blonde, and I thought she was very pretty. I learned somehow or other that she was the daughter of a local judge, a superior court judge.

It was somehow managed that we should meet, but it had to be very formal. Another girl whom I knew agreed to hold a party to which Miss Waste and Mr. Ward would be invited. By that time I was getting a little bit worldly in my ways. I went out nights. I think I sneaked out and ran around with the boys.

Rubens: Were you interested in politics? Stitt Wilson was mayor of Berkeley in 1912. Here you have a Socialist mayor.

Ward: Oh, yes. Stitt Wilson and my father could have been twin brothers, not only in looks but in hairdo and all that sort of thing. In fact, my father was sometimes mistaken for him.

Rubens: Did your father know him?

Ward: I don't think so, not personally. My father was so deeply engrossed in his business affairs. He came home from work and brought his briefcase full. He worked in the evenings, always in the evening. He was a very hard worker.

From the beginning, as soon as he reached the stage where he didn't have to get to the office at nine o'clock, every morning we went running. We walked up to at least as high as the "Big C." Do you know where that is?

Rubens: The "Big C" ("C" for California) on the hillside behind the campus?

Ward: Yes. The Greek Theater was just being built then. Every morning when my father could do it we went up at least as high as the "Big C" and ran down--walked up and ran down.

Oh, politics. Every polling booth was surrounded by suffragettes. My father wouldn't even tell anybody how he voted. I knew how he voted, but he wouldn't tell. You had to find out.

Rubens: How did you know?

Ward: You knew what he believed in.

Rubens: Was he for women's suffrage?

Ward: Yes. But would he give those women out there at the polling place a tumble? No, sir!

Rubens: What do you mean, "a tumble"?

Ward: He wouldn't say, "Yes, I'm for you," or anything. He'd refuse to take their literature.

Rubens: What happened to his Socialist politics?

Ward: He voted Socialist, but I knew it because I knew him, not because of anything he'd said or told me. And he wouldn't tell them, but he voted for them, I'm quite sure. Oh, no! The vote was <u>sacred</u>, because when he was a boy growing up in Rhode Island there was no such thing as a secret ballot. On voting day the politicians came to town and passed out free liquor, let everybody come, made

Ward: their speeches, and then they voted by a show of hands. The Australian secret ballot, my father was brought up to believe, was something wonderful.

Rubens: Well, it was an achievement. It was a progressive--

Ward: Yes!

Rubens: And so just the last question: was he particularly respectful of Wilson, or was he impressed with him, or do you know his opinoin about Stitt Wilson?

Ward: Well, I have no recollection of a particular--

Rubens: Or whether he voted for [Eugene] Debs?

Ward: I know that all his friends were Socialists. People came, as I say; one man died at our place. All his friends were old Socialists.

Rubens: He didn't talk about Debs particularly, who ran in 1912?

Ward: No. But Debs' "Appeal to Reason" was always on our living room table.

Anyway, in school I began to sneak out at night and run around with the boys. In San Francisco the Panama Pacific International Exposition came along.

Rubens: Nineteen fifteen.

Ward: Yes. If I could get five dollars somehow, I could go over there all day to take all the rides and do everything, and I'd still have a dime left to get home, because I learned how. There was a nickel streetcar, and then I learned that if you walked down to the south end of the Ferry Building to the trade entrance where the horse truckers came in, if you'd come just as a cart was coming in the door, you didn't have to pay.

I had my first beer there. I thought it must have spoiled; it tasted awful. I didn't understand why anybody--

Rubens: Was your father a teetotaler?

Ward: So far as I know, he never tasted alcohol.

Rubens: Was he a prohibitionist, do you know?

Ward: Well, he didn't believe in alcohol. He must have been a prohibitionist because, as I say, he never--well, never any meat or fish even.

Rubens: There was such a closeness between the Socialists and the prohibitionists at the turn of the century.

Ward: That's right, yes. I think that was probably the case.

Well, to get back to this party: as I was saying, this was on a Saturday afternoon, and I should think it was somewhere up towards Euclid Avenue, this house. It was to be a garden party. So as the day, Saturday, wore on, I ate lunch. This party was to be at three o'clock or something like that, and I sat down in my father's easy chair after lunch and fell asleep. I didn't get to the party on time. I had to be called by phone. [laughs] Oh, boy!

I went to the young lady's home, and Miss Waste invited me to a party that night. I went to that party and met some of her friends.

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Ward: We went out a few times. There was nothing exclusive about it; I knew she went out with other boys. She had quite a few enemies among the girls in high school because, I guess, they considered her a little bit snooty. So one of them told me that they had heard that Jean was going out with a boy named Johnny Muir on Saturday night. Johnny Muir had the reputation--we didn't have the term "womanizer," but he was the biggest girl chaser, the most notorious girl chaser in high school. The thought of my date going out with him was impossible!

So I went down to Oakland and got drunk. I came back on the streetcar and got off at the Waste's house. They lived at 2222 Durant Avenue, an old double house. I waited to see what would happen when this awful Johnny Muir brought her home. I wanted to see the homecoming. I sat across the street, but realized that I couldn't hear what they would be saying. So I went down the driveway alongside the house and sneaked up so I could hear any conversation that took place on the porch.

Lo and behold, her older brother drove in, and the headlights were right on me, and I ran. After I got tired running [chuckles], I came back and sat down on the lawn across the street and waited. She came home at a reasonable hour with some young man. He went up the stairs, told her goodnight, no monkey business at all, and he left. That was it.

I found out it wasn't Johnny Muir at all. It was Johnny Ewer, a man I had never heard of.

Ward: The Wastes were alarmed. What was I doing down there? So they called the police. I was arrested the next day. I told my story, and whether the police believed it or not, they told it to the Wastes. A day or so later I was home. The phone rang, and it was Mrs. Waste. She was upset that they had caused my arrest, and would I come down and see her?

Well, at that time, among my father's old Socialist friends was this old Hollander, Cornelius Van der Linden, who had come down from Santa Rosa and was living with us. Daddy Van der Linden told me that he thought my father was rich, and I said, "Well, how rich do you think my father is?" He said, "Oh, at least two million."

So I went down to see Mrs. Waste, and she was very kind and sorry about the whole thing. I told her that I'd learned what the young man's real name was, that it was someone I'd never heard of. In the course of it, she asked about my father and his business and so forth, and I told her that he was worth two million.

She knew that I had been brought up by my aunt, that I had no mother, and she elected herself to be my mother. This caused quite an unhappiness for the Waste family. Everybody got into an uproar about me. Jean told me to go fly a kite.

But my relationship with Mrs. Waste was very much that of a mother and son. She taught me how to drive, and she did this, and she did that. She was, no question about it, a very useful person to me and helped me to straighten out my own ways very quickly.

Travels in the Pacific and Far East

Ward: Then in 1916 my father was notified that he was to make a personal survey of the company's Far East offices because there were things going on there that they wanted him to investigate. To do that he would have to have a confidential secretary. He couldn't use the office help in the offices that he'd visit, you know, to dictate letters, cablegrams, and so forth. He had six months to prepare. So he told me that if I wanted to learn shorthand, typing, and the Bentley code, which was the regular cable code for business, I could have the job. So I did. I went.

I was in Manila when World War I broke out. Almost instantly La Luneta (The Spectacle Lens), a massive greensward

the size of six or eight football fields, came to life at six o'clock every morning: young Americans, flags flying, a military band playing, going "hup, two, three, four," on the vast stretch of green grass, training to go to Europe and fight that German, Kaiser Wilhelm, and all his "krauts." All of them, I suspected, hoping to become officers right away.

Whistles blew, and everyone, the bandsmen too, stacked arms and instruments and dashed for the bar of the Manila Hotel. Time was allowed for one quick drink. Then the whistle blew again and everybody dashed back to La Luneta for another go at Army drill.

I got on the boat with my father to go from Manila to Hong Kong, but the boat didn't sail on time. There was a girl, Dolores Lichauco, with whom I'd become friendly. Oh, yes, that's another story.

Years before, a Spanish-speaking Filipino boy who had not a word of English, nothing, no money, appeared in my father's office in San Francisco with a letter from the manager of the American Trading Company's Manila office, saying that this boy was from a good family and so forth, and could my father help him. So my father immediately gave him a job in the Spanish American department and brought him home to stay with us.

That was Fernando Grey, whose grandfather had been a Scotsman. He stayed with us until he got on his feet, and he taught me Spanish and I taught him English. Then he went his way, did a hitch in the American Navy, and went back home. He had been home a year or so when we arrived there, and he met us at the dock with his Renault machine and his chauffeur. [laughs] It was quite a change.

So I got a taste of Filipino society, which consisted mainly of wealthy mestizos (half-breeds). My father made a business call on Teodoro Yangco, who was the major buyer for the Philippine government (it was the American government at that time). And first thing we knew, we got a dinner invitation to the Yangco home. At the appointed hour the Yangco limousine, or at least one of them, arrived for us at the Manila Hotel. We were driven up into the hills behind Manila and eventually arrived at a _porte cochere_ complete with uniformed gate tender. Our chauffeur and the gateman exchanged greetings and we began a drive that seemed to be about two miles in length before the Yangco mansion came into view. You can imagine how huge that estate must have been.

The entrance of the house was opened by a butler in tails, exposing a glitter of ladies literally covered with jewels. As time permitted, I counted the number of ruby and diamond rings on

Ward: all the digits of the women's hands except thumbs and little fingers, to say nothing of more jewels and tiaras on their heads, rings in their ears, and more jewels around their necks. The men were in the usual tuxedos. I can't say for my father, but I felt embarrassed for us both, like hicks to come to such a scene in ordinary business attire.

I guess our host had been warned that their American guests were teetotalers, for there were no cocktails before dinner, and if I remember correctly, no wines at the table. The conversation switched easily from Spanish to English, depending on who was talking to whom. Mrs. Yangco, his wife, was English, "veddy" English; so was Yangco's mother-in-law. I must admit that although the food was good (for me), I felt rather dazzled and confused all that evening.

Then came a Sunday when Dading (Fernando Grey's nickname) plus touring car and driver came to take us for a sightseeing ride around Manila. But a rainstorm came up and the nearest place to find shelter was a downtown movie house. In those days (very probably even now) the "swells" sat only in the balcony, and the masses in the ground floor seats. So we went to the balcony. Immediately a chatter erupted between Dading and two young Filipina girls seated behind us. I could hear the girls saying excitedly to Dading, "Su pelo! Su pelo!" So I turned and took a look. One of the girls I thought was very beautiful, and the other was quite homely. I butted in. At that time I was well aware that my hair was extremely light blonde, so I said to the girls in Spanish, "What about my hair?" Much giggling.

Thus began my acquaintance with Dolores and Faustina Lichauco. From then on things in Manila became very interesting for me. I played tennis with Dolores on her family's tennis court. I was taken through her house, including Dolores' bedroom, where everything was lace and ruffles. Of course, this tour of home and bedroom was chaperoned by Dolores' mother, the sister, a brother, and another relative or two. I found myself spending as much time as possible with Dolores, and somehow she managed to impart to me that she had a dowry of 750,000 pesos (at that time two pesos equalled one American dollar).

Did you ever hear of Manuel Quezon? He became the first president of the Philippines when they left the umbrella of the United States. Well, Manuel Quezon must have felt that he had some rights where Dolores was concerned, with a rather dramatic result. On the Fourth of July I went with Dolores' brother and a couple of other boys to a dance at the opposite end of La Luneta. In between dances my hosts and I were standing in the foyer just off the dance floor, when a man came at me with a knife. But my hosts were watching: I found out later that they

Louis A. Ward and his secretary, Lillian Versalovich, later his second wife, in his office at 244 California Street, San Francisco. Manager, West Coast, The America's and Australian Division, American Trading Company.

Louis Artemas Ward with his "confidential private secretary," Estolv Ward (right) and Fernando "Dading" Grey, Manila, 1917.

Ward: had found out that Quezon had a killer out looking for me. They nabbed him, took his knife away, and kicked him out of there; he'd been sent back to his own hut.

Our time in Manila was all too short,, and one night we said our goodbyes and got on the boat to go to Hong Kong. But it didn't sail. When my father and I woke up the next morning, we were still docked at Manila. They told me that we'd have time enough to go ashore, so I went ashore again and went to see Dolores. When I got back at the time I figured the boat would still be there, it wasn't there, and I had nothing but the clothes I stood in. My father was on his way to Hong Kong.

But I stayed with the Greys for a couple of days. Of course, white linen suits on a tramp steamer [laughs]--I was a pretty dirty-looking boy by the time I got to Hong Kong!

I was warned in Hong Kong that I would be entertained by people who were important for business reasons but who were looked down upon by the British colony because they were half-breeds, part Chinese and part British or Scotch or whatever.

Rubens: Quadroons, they may have said, too.

Ward: That's Mexican. It's something like that.

Anyway, they took me out--the usual, the standard after-work swimming junket behind Stonecutter's Island. They had a yacht, and we would go out yachting. We were diving off the yacht, and one of the guys dived through a jellyfish. He was, oh, stung all over!

They were always very curious to find out when we were leaving Hong Kong, because our departure date would be a matter of some business importance. I was warned not to tell them, and I didn't tell them. They'd point to some ship and say, "Are you going on the ship with the shipment?"

We left Hong Kong, and then we began to hear reports. We knew, of course, the Czar had been arrested and taken to the prison at Ekaterinburg. We heard stories that he and the royal family had been executed, which was all right by everybody because the Russian revolutionaries were very popular in America at that time--the 1905ers, or the people who had fled Russia in the 1905 aborted revolution. That was fine. And we heard that a man named Kerenski was in charge and everything was lovely.

We went up the Yangtze River as far as Hankow. That's where I read Jack London, on a little British river steamer--books by Jack London that I never heard of in the United States. And then

Ward: I had a memorable experience walking around the Nanking city wall. This was planted with fruits and vegetables, because it wasn't used as a defense anymore. And people driving their pigs along with a stick in the streets.

I was going through a corn field on top of the city wall in Nanking with one of the men from the American Trading Company office, who was our interpreter. We heard a sound like somebody weeping, and there in the corn field was a woman on the ground sobbing, and a man bending over her looking very concerned, with two little children peeking out in terror from the next row of corn. Our guide told us that the woman was saying, "I don't love you anymore. I don't love you anymore. Please go away."

Rubens: A Chinese domestic quarrel.

Ward: Yes. It's a small world.

We got to Peking at the time that Henry Pu Yi was on the throne for four days. He was the boy emperor, and they put him on the throne because the warlords were--well, that was before Chiang Kai-shek had ever been heard of.

Rubens: Well, Sun Yat-sen's revolution had been in 1910.

Ward: Sun Yat-sen--he was the big boy then.

A young man named Fred Edmundsen, who had lived as a boy a block away from us in West Berkeley, and who was with the American Trading Company in the Far East, was in Peking just then. He had a roadster of a make that I can't recall now; it isn't made anymore, anyway. He knew a place in the Peking city wall where he could get that roadster up on the wall, and we drove up there. We got shot at and had a grand time. Of course, nobody ever got hit. [laughs]

We went by rail to the Great Wall, took a ride on a dromedary, and then couldn't get a passenger train back to Peking. But we rode back on a "gondola" freight train with a load of sheep.

In those days, prudent souls did not travel from Shanghai to Peking (or Pekin) by land. You went by a small sea and river vessel, stopping at coastal towns such as Chefoo and Wei-hei-wei. At the mouth of the river which led up to Tientsin, our little ship had to wait for high tide to get across the bar. And up the river a way we came to a turn so sharp that it could not be navigated with one turn of the elbow. At this turn the skipper rammed the bow of his boat up the steep mud bank, leaving its bow pointing skyward while the flowing current slowly swung

Ward: the stern around. Then the bow swung back into the river and we proceeded up, chugging along between high dirt levees, looking down on farmlands and huge piles of salt (only for the tables of the wealthy) until we arrived at Tientsin.

Then we took a train for the capital of China, and in due course the conductor came along, chanting in pidgin English, "Peching have got, Peching have got."

We went to the Russian embassy to get our passports stamped to go to Petrograd. I remember no problem getting the visas, but the clerk who waited on us looked at us very strangely. Oh, yes, everything seemed fine from where we were. Kerenski was fine. But there was this something Bolsheviki, a word we'd never heard before. We thought we knew all about the Russian revolution--how the Czar and his family had been seized, taken to Ekaterinburg and executed. And we liked the new leader, Kerenski, and the fact that he was trying to establish Western style democracy; also the fact that he was demanding that the exhausted and discredited Russian army continue to fight the German Kaiser. But now we were getting some strange and disturbing rumbles--the name of somebody named Lenin and some weird outfit called Bolsheviki.

We got by small ship, again, to the Manchurian port of Dairen, and started by train up that peninsula expecting to catch the Trans-Siberian for the ten-day journey to Petrograd. Surprise! Surprise! There were plenty of surprises in this part of the world. The fields alongside the train were filled with army camps--Japanese--long before the Japanese began their attempt to capture China; more than twenty years before Pearl Harbor.

Then, about eleven o'clock at night, our train arrived in Mudken. We got out, expecting to board the Trans-Siberian for the trip to Vladivostok and on to Petrograd. That train came in, covered with soot and people. Even the couplings of the cars were jammed with women loaded with jewelry, coats of mink and sable--and soot. Jewels and soot, all over everything, inside and outside the cars. The White Russians were getting out! Good! I thought, "Well, if those are the people who are leaving, there must be something good going on." But we were forty-eight hours too late. In other words, there were no trains going back. I missed the "Ten Days that Shook the World" by forty-eight hours.

Rubens: Where did you go after China?

Ward: Australia, two years later, with my father in the same capacity. I worked, too. I had a lot of things to do.

Ward: In Australia, for the first time in my life, I drove a car on the lefthand side of the road. I forget the name of the car, but you cranked it from the side, not from the front. We drove it in Sydney.

Rubens: Was this all one trip, or did you come back to the United States?

Ward: We came back.

II TRYING TO BE A CONSERVATIVE

Rubens: Had you completed high school?

Ward: No.

Rubens: Never finished high school?

Ward: No, between one thing or another, and then travelling, and just no interest in high school. Did you ever take advanced algebra? I tried four times to do the binomial theorem, but they all amounted to binomial zero. I never could do that! Oh! When I went to V.M.I. [Virginia Military Institute] I only went there one year because I found out that I was not a military man at heart.

Rubens: Why would you even go there?

Ward: Well, this was after I got back from Australia. I couldn't go to college very easily, and I wanted some more education. There had been a friend of my father's who had a son who had gone to Virginia Military Institute and who had liked it, and it had been good for him. I decided I wanted to go, and so I went.

Rubens: Your father was not a pacifist?

Ward: By that time, after all, remember, I was twenty years old. He didn't mind. I guess he thought a little discipline wouldn't hurt me. As a matter of fact, I left him in Australia and came home in order to get there in time for the opening of the fall term. So I lived through it and hated it.

By the time I got back, things had straightened out with Jean. I had another girlfriend, but Jean wrote me a letter and indicated that she was now interested in me. So I got rid of the other girlfriend and came back.

I was twenty-one that year at V.M.I., and my roommates were all seventeen and eighteen. In my class I was sixth in scholastic standing and would have done better than that except for the math, which was an awful problem.

Ward: So I got married.

Rubens: At twenty-one.

Ward: At twenty-one. December 18, 1920.

Rubens: How had you planned to support your wife?

Ward: Oh, I found out a lot of things during the course of that engagement. I found out that my father was in love, too, with his secretary, and had been for many years. She was quitting to come and marry him, and I could have the job as his secretary because I had done a lot of that before. So I had a job at a hundred dollars a month, and we got married.

Rubens: Was Jean interested in women's rights or anything like that at the time?

Ward: Not particularly.

Rubens: She planned to stay home, not work?

Ward: Jean? Well, there was no thought of her working! Oh! It wasn't even discussed.

It was a big wedding at St. John's Presbyterian on College Avenue, very fancy, and then back to the Waste's home. I was changing from full dress clothes to going-away clothes, and Mrs. Waste came in and let me know that I had lost a mother and gained a mother-in-law. [tape off briefly]

Rubens: Your mother was two years older than your father?

Ward: Yes. She had been living pretty much as she pleased for--well, as I said, this Yosemite and John Muir, and eastern colleges and all that. I think if there had been another school she could have attended, she'd have done that, too.

Military Academy and World War I

[Interview 2: 15 June 1987]##

Rubens: Let's talk about World War I.

Ward: I was very eager to go fight the Huns. I can't remember the name of the movie, but it had the two Gish sisters in it; it was a war

Ward: picture. It was very pro-allied and pro-war. My future wife, Jean, and I went to see that movie in Oakland. I remember we got so excited when we came out of that movie--of course, girls all wore hats then--that she couldn't find her gloves; they were on top of her hat on top of her head.

The next morning I got up early and went to the City to the Marine recruiting office. They were glad to see me and sent me right to the doctor. He poked around my groin and said, "Oh-oh". Hernia--ten feet of hernia in the left groin. So I went to the hospital and had the left groin repaired, took quite a while to recover, went back to the same Marine recruiting office, got the same doctor, and told him what I'd done. He said that was good, fine. Then he felt the right side and said, "Oh-oh." I went back to the hospital and got that side patched up [laughs]. We were in the war all during this period already.

Rubens: I think you had already been to Virginia Military Institute.

Ward: Oh, no. This experience is one of the reasons why I went to V.M.I. later; because I was a frustrated militarist at the time.

So I got patched up again, and it took some time to recover. It was September or October of 1918. By that time I was drafted. I went up against the examining physician for the Army, and I told him my sad story. He looked me over, and he says, "Well, you won't be called for a month or so, and by that time maybe--maybe--you could get by, we hope. If you want to go, I think maybe they'll let you."

Ward: It was the end of October, and we were called. We lined up in a vacant lot across from the Berkeley YMCA, on a lot that is now occupied by the seat of Berkeley's government, a big building. I remember there were two or three California football players in the group of young fellows. We were all very happy about it. Pesky Sprott--do you remember him? He was a famous fullback. He was one of the guys, and he said he if he was going to carry a suitcase, it would be nothing but liquor--that sort of thing. They said we would be called in a few days. Then the armistice was signed. I got a check for three dollars.

Rubens: Had many of your friends gone to war?

Ward: Some, I think, but I don't remember exactly. Oh, yes, a lot of people: Charlie Bowman had become a lieutenant, and other kids--Ernie Neilsen from Santa Rosa, friends of my father's.

Rubens: Were you aware of any debate over whether the U.S. should participate or not? You said you were a frustrated militarist; a lot of Socialists, of course, opposed the war.

Ward: Well, I don't think Socialism at that moment was very high on my mind. I hadn't done so well, as I think I think I told you earlier. I wasn't interested in getting educated, and I wasn't this and I wasn't that. He thought maybe it might be a good thing that I go to military school, but that came later. In the meantime I traveled with my father, a year later when I was twenty. Did I tell you about Max Valentine?

Rubens: No.

Ward: I left Australia before my father did so I could get to V.M.I. for the fall term, 1919. I had a cabin mate on the trip home named Max Valentine, an Australian boy who was within two or three days of being exactly my age. He was coming to this country with the very ambitious idea of learning how to grow tobacco and introducing the growing of tobacco to Australia, which was importing all smoking stuff at the time. We got here, and I introduced him around. Then we took the train back--in those days getting on a train, right after the war, and even a year after, was a problem. We had to share an upper birth to Chicago; we were lucky to get that much of an accommodation. I saw him again later, after I had married Jean Waste.

Rubens: The trains were crowded because of the troops coming home?

Ward: Well, there weren't many trains. In the first place, a good half of our transportation system had been moved to Europe during that war, I guess. I'm not sure exactly what it was, but what trains you could find were very crowded.

We kept in contact for years. He started to grow tobacco in Australia, and then came on two straight years of draught. Ruined him. When I last heard of him he was in the Fiji Islands representing some oil company. Nothing further. But it was a very pleasant relationship; we liked each other very much.

Marriage and Bourgeoise Family Life in Berkeley During the 1920s

Rubens: Why don't we pick up where we left off last week. You're a married man, you're living in Berkeley.

Ward: Ah, yes. Well, as I think I may have said, by that time I had a job. My father gave me a job. It developed that I found out on my wedding day that my father was also in love (I think I've said

Estolv Ward, a cadet at
Virgina Military Institute, 1919

Estolv Ward, ca. 1921

Ward: that before) with his secretary. So she quit her job and I took that job, but not with as much money as she had been getting. And I held it for six months. But in the meantime, a physical problem developed. I found out that in China I had caught an intestinal bug. My father did, too, but his erupted in Yokohama on the way home from that trip in '17; he was very sick and recovered, and that was it. I thought I didn't have any problems, and here along came a bowel disruption that got worse and worse and worse, till a doctor said I couldn't work. In fact, I'd get home from work and I'd be so tired--I'd eat two or three times as much as any normal young fellow, and slept right after dinner. I was just no good.

I've spoken before about my father's ranch. My wife and I went up to the ranch and spent a year there. We had an old Ford. She made a little money giving music lessons around Monte Rio, Guerneville, Duncan's Mills, and places like that. After medical treatment I gradually conquered the problem. What I had was amoebic dysentary.

We came back to Berkeley. Our first home was simply in the Waste residence. It was an old double house, what they called a duplex. One side of it was just used as a storage place. Judge Waste moved out of his bedroom and into that place. We had the front, fancy bedroom. That continued for a while. I went to work in a real estate firm, selling real estate. In those days, you didn't have to pass an examination or anything, you just said you wanted to sell real estate and if you could find anybody that would hire you, why--but there was no salary, just straight commission.

One of the things I did was to sell a property right across from where International House now is, on Piedmont Avenue, to a fraternity. There was a big to-do: the old widow had a prominent Oakland lawyer who felt that she was being gypped. I think the price for the property, probably about a fifty-foot lot--I think what we sold it for was ten thousand dollars, which was a lot of money in those days. Anyway, we had a battle, but it came out all right, and the sale went through, and a couple of other sales. But I wasn't getting rich, by any means. In selling I found, as in other endeavors, if people came into the store or office looking for something, I could be very useful. But to go out and find buyers, no good.

In this real estate office in September of 1923, I saw a cloud of smoke coming over the hills from the east. Just before that my father had taken his early Sunday morning walk in the Berkeley hills, and he had come upon a sale of lots in what is now the five hundred block of Spruce Street. He bought three of them, and gave them to me. During this time he put up the money for the house, and I hired an old German boss carpenter. He got

Ward: his crew together, and I went to work with them and built the house. They had finished the work, and the house was conditioned for occupancy to some extent. It was a cross between my father's idea of architecture and Bernard Maybeck's. The living room was 24x38, and the peak of the ceiling was eighteen feet high.

Rubens: Was this to be your and your wife's home?

Ward: Yes. I had not figured, in placing the house--it was over a ravine, rather steep, and I didn't realize the actual angle of the steepness. I wanted to start the foundation from the back and move out to the front; and I wanted a chimney in front to start from the ground, and have two fireplaces, one for a possible room down below and another for the higher living room. And I wanted the chimney to slope up its sides from the base to the top. But it was a longer journey from the ground to the top when we got it up there than I had figured, with the result that when we came to building the fireplace on the living room level there wasn't enough width for the smoke to pass from the fireplace below. So the upstairs fireplace had to be skewed up a little--made four feet wide in front and only two and a half feet in back.

Rubens: Did you know Maybeck well enough to consult with him on this?

Ward: I think that that relationship had cooled off by that time, but I was influenced a great deal by what I had seen of his work.

The living room was paneled in twenty-four inch-wide redwood throughout. And if I say so myself, it was beautiful. The roof was held up by triangular beamings, each eight by eight inches square, that went this way and that way, and so forth.

Rubens: Did you think of yourself as being a part of the crafts movement?

Ward: A craftsman? No, but I figured I could do quite a lot of the lugging and lifting and general work around there. But I couldn't work as fast as a carpenter. I remember a little competition in the laying of the front porch floor: I couldn't nail those planks down anywhere near as fast as a regular carpenter.

Rubens: So you were still selling real estate at the time?

Ward: No. Then the carpenters were gone, but there was still the floor to be laid. The floors in the living room, bedroom, and hallway were all just the open underplanking. I got cross-cut sawn oak--not like this [pointing to the random-width planking in present home]; it was the two inch-wide stuff--and I laid those

Ward: floors myself, on my hands and knees. It took a month. And it was many months before my knees forgave me. Then I think the finishing, polishing, and sanding were done professionally.

We moved in. By that time my first child had been born. I was in attendance at the birth of all my children. It was something that I felt very deeply involved in, and I was able to assure the doctors that I wouldn't faint; I didn't.

Rubens: Were they born in a hospital?

Ward: Alta Bates.

Rubens: Who was your first child?

Ward: She will be sixty-four. Her name is Eugenia Trorey.* She was born July 9, 1923. It was just after that--she was a month or so old--when the great Berkeley fire came on. I saw the smoke coming over the hill, and dashed up there. I saw that the way the wind was blowing, it was coming over the hill south of this house (where we now live). It was the furthest house out in the North Berkeley hills by quite a ways at that time, so far out that you couldn't get gas, and I had quite a fight to get water piped up there.

Ward: I saw that men were fighting desperately up on the ridge just right up here, so I figured that the best thing I could do was to help them. I went up there and fought the fire, more or less over on the other side, to keep it from going north. We seemed to have that licked, and I came over to the Bay side and looked down, and there was Berkeley burning. The Waste home was at 2222 Durant Avenue, and I had to go clear down to San Pablo to get around to it. The fire burned four hundred houses, and it got down to Delaware and Shattuck. It would have gone right to the waterfront, except the wind changed. And then it burned the houses that it had skipped on the way down.

Rubens: You were lucky.

Ward: We were lucky. We moved up there, and I had gotten a job in a stationary store, Harms and Morse, on Shattuck Avenue.

Rubens: You didn't like real estate any more?

Ward: I didn't think I was really too good at it.

Rubens: Did you have any social conscience? Were you aware of the Anita Whitney trial, for instance?

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*Died August 19, 1988, of cancer.

Ward: I was too occupied with my married life and my own problems. I can't honestly say that my social conscience was worth a damn at that time. That was something that was laid to one side during much of that period.

Rubens: You figure so much in waterfront politics later. There was the big waterfront strike in '21. Did that impinge on you, or did you have an opinion about it?

Ward: I have no recollection of it. I'm sure I had so many problems of my own; well, in '21 I was on the ranch. Also while we were on the ranch my mother died.

Did I tell you about visiting her when I was twenty-one, shortly before I was married? She had had two children, by whom I have no idea. She was living in Oakland, and she told my father that she wanted to see me. I didn't want to go, but he insisted, so I went.

Rubens: You weren't curious?

Ward: Not at all. Well, I had been telling people almost all my life that my mother was dead.

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Ward: We wouldn't have known each other if we had met on the street.

Rubens: But you did go to see her.

Ward: I did go to see her. She wanted to take right up and be all motherly and so forth. I wasn't having any of that. I used to peek at my father's correspondence, and I saw the letters she wrote him after that. She said some nice things about me, but she thought I was a little bit snooty--which I certainly was. That's the only time I saw her. She died a couple of years later. We were on the ranch, and my father insisted we come down to the funeral. But I didn't take a look in the casket. I didn't want to; I was there under duress.

Rubens: You went to work in a stationery store.

Ward: There again I discovered that if I got ahold of people who came into the store, they usually bought what they were thinking about when they came in. We were selling second-hand typewriters, among other things, for a man named Perkins--Perkins Typewriter Company--who had his workshop right upstairs. Within a day or so of my starting work there I had sold a typewriter. From then on, all the time I worked there, I sold an average of one typewriter

Ward: a day. This so impressed my bosses that they sent me out to get business at various firms. I was no good at all. I was all right in the store, but not otherwise.

An Oakland Tribune Reporter, 1925

Ward: However, I wasn't really happy there. I was making a little money, not a good living, but a living. But I didn't want to be a store clerk all my life. And my father-in-law, Judge Waste, knew that. I had the express desire--I wanted to be a writer. In fact, in questionnaires I had to make out for various employments, when asked what was my ambition, it was to be a writer. My father-in-law had worked his way through college years before as the campus reporter for the Examiner. He got to know people here and there, and he knew Roy Danforth, who was then the city editor of the Oakland Tribune. He told Roy about me. At the Berkeley office of the Tribune at that time was a woman named Rose Glavinovich (Yugoslav name), and she needed a campus assistant. So I got the job.

Ruben: Is this 1924?

Ward: Twenty-five. I went to work there, I think, in the first week in January, 1925. And I worked for the Tribune until the second week in November, 1934, just about ten years, the first two or three on the Berkeley campus.

Rubens: Do you remember what your starting salary was?

Ward: I don't remember, but it wasn't as much as I'd been making before. I know what it was at the end; my highest one was fifty-five a week, which was good money in those days. A local warehouseman in those days was happy if he could make thirty dollars a week.

On the campus I made some friends. I admired Professor Ira Cross greatly, and interviewed him several times.

Rubens: Did you know of him before your work?

Ward: I had attended one of his classes very briefly. The big problem there was that I was one of eleven hundred kids in Wheeler Hall. That was twice as many as the whole student body at V.M.I., and I couldn't take Cal. Although I had always thought that I would go there before. Too big, too big.

Ward: One of the people on the campus that I liked very much was Professor Herbert M. Evans. Did you ever hear of vitamin X? Now I believe it's known as vitamin E. At that time they hadn't discovered as many vitamins, and he discovered this vitamin which, for lack of an official name, he called vitamin X. The story was broken by the California Monthly alumni magazine. I had numerous interviews with Herbert Evans. We got along very nicely. He was enraged because he was offered a lifetime job, with his own laboratory, his own office, as many assistants as he wanted, plus an enormous salary, if only he would say for publication that Lipton's Tea contained vitamin X. Ha! Oh, that just offended his sense of propriety. He said, "Almost everything you eat in the vegetable world contains vitamin X."

Rubens: Was Ira Cross influential on your thinking?

Ward: No, not particularly.

Rubens: He was the great labor historian of the period.

Ward: Yes, I know. I liked him, and I think that was one of the reasons why I liked him, because of his decent approach to the labor problems of the day. But I can't remember specifically anything.

I was, of course, very much beholden to Judge Waste for all sorts of favors: getting the job, financial assistance. At one stage of the game--my father had bought the three lots and our house sat on two of them. One went back to Cragmont Avenue from Spruce. The lot next door, up the hill, was for sale and Judge Waste bought it and gave it to us; so we had four lots. You know where the little school is on Spruce Street up there? This was just two doors down below, right on the bend of Spruce Street there.

Rubens: Can you say something about your work at the Tribune?

Ward: After about two years on the campus--did you ever hear of the Dole flight? It was right after Lindbergh made the famous solo flight to Paris. The Dole Pineapple people in Honolulu conceived the idea of tremendous publicity value to be gained by offering prizes for a flight from the mainland to Honolulu. The only field capable of having a runway long enough for a plane loaded with enough gasoline to make that flight was what is now the Oakland Airport.

At that time it was nothing but a plowed field on Bay Farm Island. You went through Alameda, crossed the bridge, and another bridge, and you got to Bay Farm Island. There was a tiny little one-room shack for the so-called manager of the field. We

Ward: reporters just lived in our cars around there. These planes came in from all over--a triplane, yet; one biplane, the "Flying School Marm." The lady in this case didn't fly, but she had two friends, and their idea of publicity was to take a woman along. Here was this young school teacher who said sure, she was crazy to go, and these two friends of hers. They came in the only biplane. The triplane never got off the ground. There were previous flights with a half load, which they all made all right, but of course a half load's a lot different from a full load.

The estimate was, I think, that there were a hundred thousand people around the edges of that field that day; so it was a great crowd. One flyer, who had some relationship to a former mayor of Berkeley, was flying a monoplane. He got off the ground _just_ above the field, just cleared the fence. Everybody gasped. He got far enough away, but he never really got anywhere; he soon came back. The other fliers--there were seven, I think, who got off the ground, including the biplane--were so loaded that they couldn't get much altitude. They didn't fly _over_ the Golden Gate, or _over_ San Francisco; they flew through the Gate, just off the water.

Ruben: Did any plane make it to Honolulu?

Ward: Two out of the seven. One of them, the "Flying School Marm" biplane--there was a big to-do. Our _Tribune_ reporters kidnapped the flying school marm and her buddies as they arrived by short hops in California and kept her away from all the other reporters for a couple of days--all that jazz, you know. But anyway, the flying school marm plane came back. You could see one of the guys out on the fuselage trying to do something with the motor, and it coasted in to the airport. But they didn't quit. They thought they'd fixed whatever the motor's trouble was and took off again. They were never heard from, just disappeared. The other two got down.

Rubens: So you covered this kind of thing, not just campus events?

Ward: I was a reporter there, but I was more or less the leg man. I ran the errands, and took the film back to the office, and helped observe here and there. Oh, there were half a dozen of us reporters from the _Tribune_ there.

Rubens: Because this was such a big event.

Ward: Oh, yes.

Rubens: I wanted you to decribe a little about your work life. Did you work nine to five? Did you choose what you were going to copy? Did you have an editor?

Ward: Let me do it this way: The Dole flight meant that I became more and more familiar with the main office. It wasn't long after that before I was brought into the main office on a regular basis, and then I hit the ball at seven in the morning--seven to three-thirty, _if_ it was a normal working day. There were not many normal working days. I reached the point where I was assistant city editor, which meant that then I worked nine to five and did very little writing or reporting, mostly answering the telephone, telling other people what to do, and helping the city editor. When he got sick I was the acting city editor. I got so that I did a lot of things: if the drama editor was incapacitated or too busy, I covered the plays; if the political editor was sick, I wrote the political columns.

Rubens: Was the _Trib_ growing at that time? What was the circulation?

Ward: I don't remember the circulation; that was for those guys downstairs [laughs].

Rubens: Hierarchy.

Ward: You get the idea.

Rubens: About how many were in the city room?

Ward: About sixty, I guess. I was back in the city room a couple of years ago, and there was all the difference in the world--union shop!

Rubens: And a black owner. Did you know Delilah Beasley, a black woman reporter at the _Tribune_?

Ward: I don't believe there was a black person, male or female, in any part of the _Tribune_. The owner was Joseph R. Knowland, of whom you may have heard.

Rubens: Backbone of the Republican Party.

Ward: Oh, he was Mr. Republican of Alameda County. Oh, he had competition: Joseph R. Knowland represented the silk stocking Republican. A character named Mike Kelley represented the cotton sock Republican. Mike Kelley became director of the mint in San Francisco. I soon learned to look out for Mike Kelley. If he was seen visiting So-and-So--I caught him visiting a guy that I thought was a Knowland man, and buzz, buzz, all of this silly business about who was who and what was what.

There were the two sons. Russ was the oldest, and William F. was the younger, and he was the favorite of his father because Russ had made a terrible mistake; he had married the daughter of an Italian grocer. Well!

Rubens: Did you know Knowland at this time?

Ward: Of course I knew the old man; he walked through the office every day, looking like that [demonstrates] all around. I didn't almost bow, but-- The sons, Russ and Bill, I knew very well.

Rubens: Were they involved in the paper?

Ward: Russ was the assistant city editor for a time when I was just beginning to get around in there. He knew more about how the actual editorial department worked than either his father or his younger brother. Later Russ was put off in a front office by himself, and then Bill came on with another front office by himself. He was the political character. I knew both of them well enough to feel that--I was almost always short of money before the end of the week--I could go in and borrow a ten-spot from either one of them, and that sort of thing.

Rubens: The Anita Whitney trial was going on in Oakland, and the Tribune was excoriating her as one of these Communists.

Ward: The Whitney trial was before my time.

Rubens: She was pardoned in '27.

Ward: There's a story about that which might fit in here. My predecessor as a campus reporter was a man, can't think of his name--

Rubens: Oh, I know who you mean; he testified first at Whitney's trial, Ed Condon. He wasn't your immediate predecessor, though.

Ward: That was before my time.

Rubens: The Tribune really was a force for conservatism.

Ward: Oh, yes. Well, that went along with my family surroundings at the time.

Rubens: You were fitting in.

Ward: Yes, I was fitting in.

Rubens: Were you becoming a conservative?

Ward: Let's put it this way: in the presidential election of 1920, which was my first election for president, I didn't vote for anybody because I was so disgusted with both the Republican and Democratic candidates. I just didn't vote for president. I may have voted for Cal [Calvin] Coolidge, I'm not sure; I may have.

Rubens: You just would not have voted for Smith, a Democrat, a Catholic?

Ward: I know this: in '32 I voted for Norman Thomas. My marriage was getting pretty bad, and that sort of thing.

Rubens: Let's get to there. You were moving up in the Tribune, you could borrow money from the Knowlands, your mother described you as "snooty." Did you dress well and have affected ways?

Ward: Dress well? Nobody dressed well in the city room.

Rubens: Did you smoke and drink a lot?

Ward: I was told that I was one of the more respectable of the boys because I didn't get drunk very often.

Encounters with Berkeley Bohemianism

Ward: Oh yes, during the early part of that period, because I was a family man, I had Christmas day off, but I had to work New Year's day. It was the other way around for the guys who weren't family men; they had to work Christmas. On New Year's eve, Rose Glavinovich and I and a young photographer named McAllister--Mac, everybody called him--and his wife, who was a very beautiful young woman (they had what we now call an open marriage, which I thought was delightfully shocking), were having dinner at an Italian restaurant, Bertola's, on the gore of Telegraph and Shattuck. Along came and sat in with us a young man who's name I remember only as John. He knew the McAllisters, I think. All of a sudden he was eating with us, and he said that he knew of a party in the Berkeley hills that we could go to if we felt like it, and he thought it would be a lot of fun. So we went.

You know where Cragmont rock is? Well, this great big house behind Cragmont rock was the home of a man who became very well-known on the campus, Jaime D'Angulo (I think it was either Spanish or Portuguese). Jaime D'Angulo was a famous anthropologist.

Rubens: A professor on the campus?

Ward: No. He was a famous anthropologist who's personal reputation was so bad that he could not get a job at UC Berkeley; but money was apparently no problem.

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Ward: I guess we got there sometime around midnight. It was a costume party, and people were already pretty tight. I was half-way reclining on a couch--everything was crowded and people were close together. Rose Glavinovich was a very capable and pleasant woman, but very homely and cross-eyed. I couldn't help but overhear a man on the other side of her trying to get next to her, and then the phrase, "Let your body tremble with lust." It was that kind of an affair. Robert Lowie was there, and he did a naked belly dance, D'Angulo played the drums, and people did all sorts of things.

It was important not only because it was my first and only adventure in what I guess you would call "high" University society--I don't think there was such a thing as a student there--but I met there for the first time a man who became a very dear friend, Haakon Chevalier. He was in costume, and if I remember he was dressed as an ancient Grecian poet with a laurel wreath in his hair. He was a very handsome young man, and he had a very handsome reputation as the dashing professor of French, you know.

Well, anyway, I got to work somehow the next morning, and that was that; my wife forgave me for not being home--

Rubens: Oh, she didn't go with you?

Ward: She wasn't there, oh, no. She wasn't that kind of a girl; she wouldn't have set foot in such a thing. And then there were the children; they were growing up.

When I was a very small boy, after dinner in the evening when my father was home, I was allowed a half hour of freedom before I had to go to bed. I would take off my clothes and dance naked all around the room. Freedom from clothes was a joy to me. So we did the same thing with my children; they danced around our living room naked before they had to put on their nighties and go to bed, and I played "Polly Wolly Doodle" on the piano for them while they danced.

Rubens: Why don't you say who your next two children were.

Ward: Four years after Eugenia was born, David was born. I thought there were only going to be two children, and I had a lot of family names, so he was named David Perry Artemas Ward. Artemas is probably not spelled the way you've heard it, because the story there was that one of that branch of the Wards was a General Artemas Ward who almost won the battle of Bunker Hill. He later became chief justice of the Massachusetts supreme court, and that's where the Artemas came from. But a writer, a

Ward: humorist, came along, who liked the name, but misspelled it Artemus. This, at least was the story that had come down in my family.

Rubens: And after David?

Ward: After David, Roger Ewing Ward. He was a romantic mistake, one of those things that happened. He was born a year and two months after David.

Rubens: So your wife had her hands full. Was there help in the house?

Ward: Along about that time things began to go wrong. In the first place, she was under the weather a good deal of the time. I used to wonder whether it was legitimate or not, but it turned out later that she had to have her whole uterus and everything removed; that was after the divorce, though. We had help. Judge Waste paid for a gardener, and I think he paid for a housekeeper.

III THE DIVORCE, THE DEPRESSION, AND THE LEFT TURN

Rubens: So you were living in a style and a class--

Ward: I really didn't belong. I remember, when I was the assistant city editor, Judge Waste one time taking me to a Republican dinner party in Oakland. He introduced me as the assistant city editor of the Oakland Tribune and his son-in-law. The Republicans, many of whom I knew by name because of my work on the paper, were very polite and attentive and so forth. It turned out that our managing editor was at this affair, Leo Levy, and he almost bowed to me the next morning and said they hadn't planned on reporting it, but since I was there would I write a story about it. I said, "Mr. Levy, I haven't taken any notes; I wasn't there as a reporter." He said, "Well, do it anyway." So I wrote a story and was thanked by the front office and all that stuff.

Then Jean, among other things, became interested in the drama. A friend named Jean Scott and the wife of a San Francisco businessman (the name will come to me later)--the three of them thought they were going to go places, and they kidded Jean into thinking-- One of the reasons for her belief that she might become something in the movies was that her father, Judge Waste, was a friend of Louis B. Meyer of Metro Goldwyn Meyer. I went along with it to a certain extent; I got one of our photographers to come out to the house and take pictures of her for a show they put on at the Women's City Club of Berkeley for these three young women. But I knew, when I saw those pictures, that she would never get anywhere in the movies. Because although she was a nice-looking woman, her facial structure was such that pictures fattened her. While she didn't look bad, she didn't look pretty by any means in the pictures; pictures could not be made to do her justice. I knew enough about pictures, photographers, that that was something that no amount of makeup could overcome.

In the course of these adventures I found the house full of young drama students from Cal and other places, mostly young men. You never knew where she was night or day, and all that sort of thing. So I just walked out. Jeannie went down to Hollywood, and this is all hearsay from now on.

Rubens: What year was this?

Ward: We had agreed that we were through, and that I would leave after Christmas of '32. And sometime after New Year's I said goodbye and walked out.

Rubens: She would have the children?

Ward: At first I just assumed that she would have the children. But as I found out, I didn't miss her so much, but I sure missed those children. So in the divorce proceedings I got myself a lawyer and tried to get custody. But Judge Waste wrote a letter saying that while it was true that her adventures in Hollywood might or might not--whatever the case was, he would see that the children were well taken care of, so of course that was the end of that.

Rubens: She had moved to Los Angeles with the children?

Ward: She did eventually, yes. There was quite a time after she went to Los Angeles--even before she left; oh, yes, quite a time--where I would go to the house to see the children and find strange men playing with them in the bedrooms.

Rubens: Sounds reminiscent of your mother. This was 1932--did the Depression affect you, Judge Waste, the Tribune?

Ward: I got a salary of fifty dollars a week plus a five dollar automatic expense account, which practically meant that my salary was fifty-five.

Rubens: When was this?

Ward: Before the Depression, up until '30 or '31, somewhere in there. I remember Joseph R. Knowland's message on the bulletin board, stating (he had just become chairman of the East Bay charities thing) that he hoped we would all give because, he reminded us, nobody had received a pay cut. Everybody gave as generously as they could, and immediately thereafter we got a pay cut. And then another, so by the time I was fired I was getting $40.50.

Rubens: So the pay cuts didn't start until '32, the depths of the Depression?

Ward: About '31.

Rubens: In terms of your married life, did the Depression of '29, '30 affect you? Could the judge still afford the gardener?

Ward: No, it didn't affect him; oh, it squeezed, but--

Rubens: You weren't like a factory worker.

Ward: Oh, no. Even $40.50 in '32--whether you were a longshoreman or a warehouseman, you'd be damned happy to make thirty.

Rubens: So you would say the Depression did not significantly affect your family.

Ward: At that time. I wasn't a particularly good city editor.

Rubens: You voted for Thomas in '32; how did you get to that position?

Ward: I was leaving the influence of the Waste family and had pretty well decided that it was not for me. As I say, when the divorce came on--I got the final divorce papers and started to turn left almost immediately.

Rubens: Your marriage was dissolving, you were disillusioned with your marriage; the Depression had beset the country. What else was turning you to the left? Were you upset with the Tribune's coverage of the Depression?

Ward: I was just simply reverting to the lifestyle in which I had been brought up. I look back now upon the association with the right as more or less a momentary aberration, influenced by the fact that I was in love with this gal and married her. Although I had two problems: I missed the children terribly, but somehow or other I managed. I was very depressed about the children, but I had a feeling of freedom all of a sudden.

Rubens: Were you dissatisfied with your job, or was that the one stable factor in your life?

Ward: It was the one stable thing in my life. In '34--

Rubens: I'm trying to keep you at this period in '32, and discover why you voted for Thomas. Were you upset with the Tribune for their editorial policies?

Ward: I had come to the conclusion that Herbert Hoover was one of the worst presidents I had ever heard of.

Rubens: Why?

Ward: Well, the Depression, and his going along as though nothing had happened, and everything would be all right. I knew damned well he didn't know what he was talking about. And the other guy--

Rubens: Roosevelt didn't sound much different than Hoover in '28.

Ward: Right. In '32, at the Democratic convention (I think it was held in Detroit, and FDR was then governor of Massachusetts), FDR was the candidate supported by William Randolph Hearst. And I hated Hearst. So I couldn't have voted for Roosevelt.

Rubens: And Roosevelt's platform wasn't that different from Hoover's.

Ward: I don't remember about the platform, but the support, which I knew if he were elected would dictate his actions as president, didn't appeal to me. So I couldn't vote for either of them, and I found it very easy to vote for Norman Thomas. Although I could have voted for the Communist candidate.

In '34 I hadn't been demoted in money, because as assistant city editor I didn't get a cent more than I got as a reporter. But we changed signals there, and in '34-- Remember I was telling you about the nude dancing in the evening before the kids went to bed? Well, it was quite natural that I should read books about German nudist colonies. One day there was a little one-paragraph thing in the paper about how a nudist colony had started up in a suburb of Santa Cruz, in the hills. I had a week's vacation coming, and no wife, no family, and no money. So I went to Russ Knowland and said that I would go down and try to spend a week in that colony and write a series about it if they would pay for the cost of my staying down there. Russ fell for it, and I went.

I got down there to Soquel, I found the place, and I found myself talking to a young couple in their thirties and a reporter and photographer from the Santa Cruz paper who arrived almost simultaneously with me. They just wanted to come in and take pictures and interview people, and they got turned down. I said that I was a reporter for the Oakland Tribune, but I would like to join them and spend a week with them. That was a different story; I was taken in. The next thing I knew they had gotten another young couple, a man and a wife, and the two couples and I went to the swimming pool. All of a sudden here were nice--looking women taking off their clothes, and I was taking off my clothes, too. I was afraid I was going to be embarrassed, but I jumped quickly into that ice-cold water and solved that problem. From then on I was a nudist for a week, although I had to go home to see my girlfriend; I couldn't wait through the week. I took some friends down there, including a woman who worked in the library department of the Tribune's editorial department. I had a series of nine pieces on it and got a lot of praise for it, because although nobody--or almost nobody--wanted to be a nudist, they all thought it was very interesting material.

Rubens: Have you kept a scrapbook of your articles in the Tribune?

Ward: No, you'd have to go look them up.

Rubens: Can I ask you a little more about the Tribune? The Tribune supported Hoover. Did you find yourself coming to a juncture with how the Tribune was covering issues?

Ward: I was just about to get to that.

Rubens: Before '34.

Ward: I was becoming more and more unhappy about the Tribune's editorial policy before '34.

Rubens: Did they know you had voted for Thomas?

Ward: I wouldn't think so. However, they were very much aware that I campaigned for Upton Sinclair that year.

The 1934 San Francisco Maritime and General Strike

Rubens: Can you think of any other examples where your life as a conservative or the son of a big Republican judge caused you difficulty prior to your divorce? Were there other examples of your being uncomfortable?

Ward: I can't think of anything specific. It was a general feeling that grew little by little.

Rubens: And it was made more rapid when your wife took this different--

Ward: Oh, yes, very much so. And then, spring of '34: May of '34 I went to the nudist colony for a week. Then in July came Bloody Thursday. I'd heard about this man Harry Bridges a little, and I had heard about the strike of the longshoreman; it was already several months old.

Rubens: Yes, since March.

Ward: Came Bloody Thursday, and that evening I found myself the head of a seven-man crew for the Tribune going with Major General David Prescott Barrows and the National Guard on a ferry boat to San Francisco and interviewing General Barrows in the captain's cabin up in the pilot house. And I was thinking to myself, "This so-and-so," while I dutifully took down what he had to say, what he was trying to do and so forth. I was antagonistic right off, but not openly.

Rubens: Had you been sympathetic to the strikers prior to Bloody Thursday?

Ward: Yes, in a general way, but not specifically. We got to San Francisco and we holed up at the Pickwick Hotel, most of us. I was so happy because I had to have a car, and although everything was closed, being a reporter I could get gas at the police department. I got the police department gas for twelve cents a gallon; I remember that made me very happy.

I learned a great deal in a few days. The first time I saw Harry Bridges, he was on the witness stand at the federal building at Seventh and Market talking about the reasons for the strike, giving testimony before the presidential commission sent out by FDR. What he said--it was strange, his appearance: his clothes were neat and pressed, but they were obviously very old; there were patches on the elbows, and you could tell the suit had been worn a long, long time. His attitude and everything impressed me.

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Ward: He obviously was not a rich labor leader, and he obviously knew what he was talking about, and his cause made sense to me.

Remember, in those days there were four parallel street car lines running up Market Street, and two lines running across Market at Third to Kearny. I parked my car at ten o'clock in the morning in the middle, in the Geary Street line--where if there had been any cars there I would have stopped all car traffic, right in the middle of Market Street. I parked there and got out and looked around. I saw one other automobile.

Rubens: This was during the General Strike?

Ward: Yes. One other automobile, somewhere up the street, and I heard a noise--click, click, click, click. It was the high heels of women who were stenographers and so forth, crossing the Bay, trying to get to their offices and walking up the middle of Market street. Imagine being able to hear that.

I got a tip that something was going to happen regarding the Marine Workers Industrial Union (MWIU). I think it was the corner of Jackson and something, down close to the waterfront. The entrance to this hall of the MWIU people was on Jackson, and then there was an alley in back. I approached this intersection, and there was a young national guardsman on duty--he must have been all of eighteen years old--and nobody else. Around the corner from the alley dashed a man in civilian clothes carrying a rifle. The national guardsman came up with his gun. I thought, "Oh, boy." I don't think the running man ever saw that guard; he dashed around the corner. I knew instantly it was a cop in plain clothes.

Ward: There were no further signs of action, so I went around in back to the alley, and there was a whole string of five or six paddy wagons and about fifty cops lined up double length. They were driving these poor devils from the MWIU hall--I don't think any of them could speak English; they were all foreigners. Their ships were anchored in the bay; they were immobilized by the strike. And there they were huddled, about two hundred of them, in this hall. They were being driven out and being beaten over the head; they ran the gauntlet to the paddy wagons, being beaten over the head and shoulders, whacked as hard as the cops could whack. Doc Rogers, my cameraman, was with me, and he shot picture after picture after picture of all this, and sent it back to the Tribune for processing.

I was told afterwards what happened: nothing of the sort was ever published. And I was the only reporter there. The Examiner and the Chronicle weren't there. One reason I was peeved about that, just as a reporter, was that I had a scoop and they didn't make use of it. What happened was that when Doc Rogers' film was processed and the wet proof sheets were laid out on the counter for wet prints, the managing editor, Leo Levy, took one look at them and gathered them up. They were never seen again. Furthermore, Levy went into the darkroom, found the negatives, and they were never seen anymore.

Rubens: Why at this point in the struggle? They had published pictures of Bloody Thursday; I assume they covered the funeral. Did you cover the funeral?

Ward: Oh, yes.

Rubens: Why do you think this incident was--?

Ward: Police brutality? Huh! The Oakland Tribune never heard of such a thing. Here these men were utterly defenseless and innocent of anything; they weren't even strikers. Of course, they were all released in a day or so; there was nothing they could be charged with.

Those incidents made me feel more and more that way, to the left. Then I don't remember how the first feeler came, but I learned somehow from contacts I had made with San Francisco reporters during the General Strike that there was such a thing as the Newspaper Guild, and that one of my heroes, Heywood Broun, was the leader of it. I immediately became interested, and very shortly I had a small group--like the editorial librarian, a couple of guys from the copy desk, and several reporters--who were meeting to form a chapter of the Guild. I remember somebody from San Jose, where they had formed a chapter of the Guild, was the first speaker from outside who came to talk to us.

Ruben: Were there other people organizing in the Trib, or were you the only one?

Ward: I was the moving factor at that time. As I said, within a few days I had people who were doing some talking, too, and who were helpful. But I was the initiator. Of course, we formed a chapter of the Guild. Oh, there were guys there from the Post-Enquirer, too. That's right, probably the move came from there; one of the moves came from the Enquirer. Anyway, I became the head of the Tribune end of it.

Rubens: The Post-Enquirer was the other East Bay newspaper?

Ward: It was the Hearst paper in Oakland. There was another paper at that time. The Examiner had opened a morning East Bay paper called The Oakland Times; it was very short-lived.

So we met, and the night after our first meeting, what did I do but walk into Bill Knowland's office and start to tell him about the meeting. I can't imagine why. His face changed, and I never saw a man glare like he did. He looked daggers, and he said, "Now, you know, if you want to have a union here--" I said, "No! But everybody else is unionized--the printers, the pressmen, the engravers; why do you object?" He said, "If you want a union, remember that these guys that you're talking about who have their unions don't get paid vacations like you do. That's your advantage." He said, "A union, and no more paid vacations." We dropped the subject. I didn't go in to see Bill Knowland anymore.

Then the November election of '34 was coming on just about that time. There was a man named Jorgenson who was second in command on the copy desk. He was a rather noisy character around the office, and he mentioned that something was going to be done about the Guild after the election. I campaigned a little for and voted for Upton Sinclair. That was on a Tuesday. The following Saturday noon I was called in by the city editor, whom I felt was a good friend of mine, Stanley Norton. He called me into a little conference cubbyhole, and he pulled out a check, gave it to me, and said goodbye.

Ruben: Just like that.

Ward: Just like that. He told me that I was being discharged for overstaff.

Ruben: Did you understand why you were being fired?

Ward: Of course. And I was told immediately afterward that they hired two guys to take my place.

Rubens: No severance pay? You'd been there ten years.

Ward: Well, I think they gave me a few days extra, or something like that. Anyhow, I walked around that block of Thirteenth and Franklin, Broadway and Twelfth, for an hour or two in a daze. I was not paying alimony, but I was paying child support, so it was my duty to call my former father-in-law and tell him. He told me that the bailiff at the supreme court--he was an old man; it was a cush job, a political plum, a job of some old faithful follower--had just died and I could have the job if I wanted it. I said, oh, no, I wanted to be a newspaper man.

The next thing I knew Spike Kelley, head of the Oakland branch of the Examiner, called me up and said come to work. I did. I didn't work days, I worked nights. It was really something to go running around the street, running into the Tribune leg men, the young fellows. It was a very emotional time. I lasted two days. Of course, I knew how I had gotten that job; Stan Norton had told Spike Kelley. Norton had come originally from the Examiner, so he tried to fix me up on the side, you see. But Joe Knowland was seen going to every editorial office of every newspaper office in San Francisco and around the bay telling them not to hire that son of a bitch because he's a union guy. So I was fired.

Rubens: And blacklisted.

Ward: And blacklisted. So then I called up the judge and said, "I'll take it." The next day I went to work at the court.

Joining the Newspaper Guild

Rubens: Had you officially become a Guild member?

Ward: Oh, yes.

Rubens: How many of you from the Trib joined?

Ward: I would say we had about a dozen at that time out of sixty; not right away, but pretty early.

Rubens: I know that Joe Rosenthal with the San Francisco News was very instrumental in the Guild in San Francisco. Did you have any relationship with him?

Ward: He was a Chronicle photographer.*

Rubens: Before that, in '34, he was organizing the Guild.

Ward: That name rings no bell.

Rubens: Did you work with anyone in San Francisco?

Ward: Later.

Rubens: I'm talking about the early days of the Guild. Did you ever meet Heywood Broun?

Ward: I'll tell you about that in due course. It was the next week after the '34 election, mid-November, that I went to work for the California supreme court. For two or three weeks I just kind of sat back and did nothing. I guess I kind of panted and rested; it was quite a strain, the whole thing. One day I got a call from Betty Ballentine, the daughter of Henry Ballentine, who was a famous professor of law at Boalt Hall. Betty was on the San Francisco News, and we had met because I had gotten to know her slightly during the General Strike. She was also one of the prominent Guild members. The News was not as antagonistic to the Guild as the other papers.

Rubens: That's where Joe Rosenthal was.

Ward: That may be. I didn't know him, though; I knew Betty Ballentine. There are two or three guys I knew from the guild; I'll come to one name later, George Something. Betty says, "Estolv, what's the matter? You pooping out on us?" I said, "Well, I'm just kind of taking it easy for a while." She said, "You come down to the meeting next Sunday; we need you." It was nice to feel I was needed. I came down to the meeting, and so on.

They also fired a copy desk man and the head of the editorial library at the Tribune.

Ruben: All union people?

Ward: They were among my friends there. Wally Something, the librarian, I never heard of again. I think he went to one Guild meeting in San Francisco, but then he just disappeared; I'm not sure. And Ron Schofield of the copy desk went to the Sacramento

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*Later he joined Life Magazine. During 1934 he worked for the San Francisco News. Ed.

Ward: *Press Democrat* and later on to the main Santa Barbara paper. I saw him again sometimes over the years until he became editor emeritus of the paper.

Rubens: Of these twelve that were organized, about five of them were fired?

Ward: Three--myself and two others.

Rubens: Did the Guild hold on at the *Tribune* for the next few years, or did it disappear?

Ward: No, that washed it out. It was replaced by a company union which was headed by my original boss, Rose Glavinovich.

Rubens: I was going to ask you if she supported you.

Ward: As you can see, I was beginning to turn left at that time. The left turn began at the end of my marriage.

Rubens: Was you father still alive at this point?

Ward: Oh, yes.

Rubens: Did you feel closer to him?

Ward: Very much so. I wasn't on unfriendly terms with Judge Waste, just that the Wastes were distant, of course, but perfectly friendly. No, my father, I think, was quite proud of me.

Rubens: Did you find yourself discussing the '34 General Strike with your father?

Ward: Oh, at times. I'll come to that later--escorting my father around the waterfront.

Rubens: I meant right here in '34, were you talking more politically with him?

Ward: I don't remember specifically, but I'm sure-- I remember during the '34 strike I wasn't in the East Bay; I was working night and day in San Francisoo for quite a while. I probably talked to him on the phone, but I don't specifically recall.

Rubens: When Levy destroyed the prints and the negatives, did you ever ask him why directly?

Ward: No. I had enough trouble on my hands at that time without asking the obvious.

Rubens: Why didn't they pull you off of that story? Why did they send you to cover it?

Ward: Well, I had done nothing wrong; I'd been doing my job as a reporter in having my cameraman take those pictures.

Rubens: But afterwards, did they--

Ward: In the interim, between the '34 strike and my firing, I also got married. I married a girl whom I will identify only by her first name, Norma. She was the first girl that smiled at me.

Rubens: You were lonely.

Ward: And I was lonely. That was it. And she had a good job, which came in handy during the skimpy periods such as I had later on.

Rubens: So you life was very full.

Ward: Oh, there was something doing every minute.

Rubens: Your children were in Los Angeles?

Ward: By that time they were in Los Angeles, by '34, and grew up there, to my sorrow. Later on there's a scene I want to describe, when they were teenagers.

Rubens: Let me ask you a few fill-ins: do you want to tell me who Haakon Chevalier is, a friend of Oppenheimer?

Ward: He was a professor of French at Cal. He was very handsome. He and his wife--well, he had several wives. The one that we knew best was his second wife, Barbara (she came from an old Jewish family in San Francisco). They had a lovely home at Stinson Beach.

Rubens: What was his significance to you?

Ward: Left. I first met Haakon Chevalier at that party. I didn't see him again until several years later when I was a delegate to the Alameda County Central Labor Council; there was Haakon. I met Haakon and Oppie, but that was much later.

Rubens: I'm trying to ask you the significance of this party. I think it is that you were attracted to a certain Bohemianism that is not part of your married life and being the good conservative. Would you say that was true?

Ward: I can't say Chevalier was--people I met there, like Haakon, I was attracted to; some of the things I saw there I think were pretty shocking. After all, I was pretty much a straitlaced kid. Well, I can describe the dance that Lowie did, but I don't think you want to put that on the record; he didn't even have his underwear on, and he was painted--

Rubens: The anthropologist. But in general, in '28, '29, '30, you were not covering labor issues, is that right?

Ward: No. I think it was somewhere in '33 or '34 there was some kind of a Communist demonstration down near the estuary in Oakland, and I was sent to cover it. There was a woman who was attempting to speak from a balcony overlooking the street, and the cops were down below trying to shout her out, crowded around. The cops were cracking guys over the head now and then, and things like that. I remember feeling sympathetic to the woman: well, they at least ought to let her say her piece. Years later she brought her union committee to me for guidance in negotiations. She was a leader for the textile union.

[Interview 3: 22 June 1987]##

Rubens: I have two questions from last week: you described the incident of the attack on the Marine Workers Industrial Union. You told me you had a tip to cover that. That was a notorious assault on that union; do you know who informed you that this was going to happen?

Ward: I haven't the faintest idea. I got a tip, but I don't remember.

Rubens: One other question: Do you remember any articles that you wrote, during your ten years at the Tribune, that you were particularly proud of, that you particularly felt were exempletive of your craft?

Ward: There were two, particularly. One was the story of Ruth Julia Slenezynski (it's a Polish name). My then wife was a music teacher herself, but she took piano lessons from a woman named Alma Smith-Kennedy, who lived in a Maybeck house on the corner of Buena Vista and Euclid. To this teacher came a Polish man with his four-and-a-half-year-old daughter. He was a frustrated violinist; he was on his way to being a concert performer during World War I, and in war service he was shot through the left wrist with the result that his fingering became impossible. When his first child was born--and he married specifically a sturdy, stocky woman to give balance to this child who was going to be his prodigy--he tried to teach little Ruth Julia the violin. No go; she just wept. But she liked the piano, so he got her a

Ward: piano, learned the piano himself, and tried to teach her. He brought her to Mrs. Alma Smith-Kennedy, and she told my wife, my wife told me, and I had a story.

That story was built around the little girl's first performance at Mills College; she gave a concert at the age of four and a half. She couldn't reach the pedals. It was something by Beethoven, I'm sure. She played two or three things, a little Chopin and a little Beethoven, but simplified, of course, because she couldn't stretch an octave--her hands were too small--and her feet would not reach the pedals. But nevertheless, it was quite a performance. I've lost track of her now, but she performed for years. Then I think in her teens or twenties she sort of blew up over the whole pressure of her lost childhood and everything else. I don't know what became of her.

The other story was in the spring of '34, when, as I think I told you, I wrote a series about a nudist colony. That ran in the paper for nine days.

Rubens: When did the piece on the piano player run?

Ward: It must have been around 1929 or '30.

Rubens: I think it's important to include some of your articles, and these are the two top ones?

Ward: Those are the two that stick out; there were others, of course.

Rubens: How often did you have a by-line?

Ward: Things were different then; by-lines were precious and scarce. My by-line was usually E. Ward, when it ran. Then I got tired of being E. Ward and I became E. E. Ward. And that's as far as I got. In those days you wouldn't put a by-line with my real first name on it, anyway.

Rubens: Were you turning out a story a week?

Ward: I hit the ball at seven in the morning. I and a fellow named Carleton (Andy) Anderson were the two top rewrite men. They usually told me to write in general assignment. And usually the first edition rolled at 8:10, so there was an hour. During that hour--usually the front page was divided eight columns wide; the columns were narrower than they are now. Usually the page was four columns of local news, Bay region news, and four columns of wire stuff. Between the two of us, Andy and I turned out those

Ward: four columns in an hour. Part of it would simply be rewrite from the morning paper, and part of it would be new stories being

phoned in; and I'd take notes. That meant that as eight o'clock neared you were writing in takes of a paragraph or a sentence with a copy boy standing right there and rushing them over to the city desk.

Then everybody breathed a sigh of relief and went into the men's toilet, which was not as big as this room, and had a smoke. We were not permitted to smoke elsewhere, and that was because of an old German so-an-so who represented Mrs. Dargee, the widow of the original owner of the paper, who sold it to the Knowlands. On account of fire insurance he frowned heavily on smoking in the building.

Rubens: After your cigarette you'd come back?

Ward: It would begin slowly to pick up for the next edition. There was the first home, second home, third home, and then around four o'clock the final night.

Rubens: Six editions a day?

Ward: Oh, at least six.

Rubens: When would you leave the office?

Ward: If I got there at seven, my day ended at three-thirty. But frequently I didn't get out at three-thirty; and frequently I got out before three-thirty because the city editor lived right down here on Euclid, not too far from where I lived up on Spruce. He'd been there since five in the morning, and it saved him taxi fare if I'd take him home.

Rubens: That was another question I wanted to ask you. Did you drive to the Tribune? How did you get to work?

Ward: I had a Chevy with what they called a California top, which doesn't exist now. They built a top with sliding windows; instead of rolling up and down, they slid. That's what I had.

Rubens: Was it unusual to own a car?

Ward: I was one of the few. Well, it was unusual for a reporter to own a car, yes.

Rubens: Was that because of your father-in-law?

Ward: I don't know what it was because of. My wife had a car, too. Not always, but most of the time. Because wherever we lived, it was a mile from the nearest streetcar. It was virtually impossible without cars, and she with three small children and the shopping and whatnot. It was pretty necessary, and so I guess her father helped on that.

More on Working at the Tribune

Rubens: Now shall we pick up where we left off? You had assumed a position at the California Supreme Court.

Ward: I was the bailiff; I was one step above the janitor. And I had nothing to do nine days out of ten, except be there and meet people in the lobby of the court's chambers, and tell them that Judge So-and-So was willing to see them. Then on open court days I gave the "Hear ye, hear ye, hear ye" to get the hearing officially under way.

Rubens: What were you being paid?

Ward: Starting in you didn't get the full salary, but by the time I left I was making $300 a month, which was lots of money in those days, for having almost nothing to do. And boring as all get--out.

When Betty Ballentine called me I took my scolding and began attending Guild meetings again; they were usually held in San Francisco in one of the minor hotels. Perhaps I'd better go back a little bit. During this period, sometime after I got fired, being a newspaper man I wanted newspaper work. I would have liked it; I found it interesting, and I hoped to be famous someday. I conceived the idea of founding a newspaper of my own, and I went around inquiring about it. In the course of the inquiry I was led to a University professor, whose name I do not recall. I remember he lived on Summer Street, just about half a block from where Willa Baum lives now.

Rubens: Was he a professor of journalism?

Ward: I don't think so. I don't know what his specialty was. But he asked me, "Mr. Ward, what will this paper say about Russia?" I said, "Well, sir, I haven't thought about it yet, but I did originally get the idea when I was in China, when I saw the people fleeing from the Bolsheviki, that there must be something good about the Bolsheviki." He dismissed me very curtly; I didn't know anything about the Soviet Union, so the hell with me.

In the meantime I had begun to read a little bit, not only about nudism, but about Karl Marx and so on. I don't think I actually read Das Kapital, but I read quotes, and I certainly had heard the slogan "Arise ye workers, ye have nothing to lose but your chains."

At one of these Sunday meetings of the Guild--we had maybe two hundred to two hundred and fifty people.

Rubens: That many?

Ward: This was the Oakland Post-Enquirer, the Examiner, the Chronicle, and the two or three afternoon papers.

Rubens: But you said that from the Tribune there were twelve people at the most who had been organized.

Ward: Three of us got fired, as you know.

Rubens: But I'm surprised there were that many people in the Guild.

Ward: The active people were just about twelve, who met every Wednesday night to do whatever business we had to do. But a lot of people came to these meetings, and you got to know all the faces. Here one Sunday was a little group of five or six men sitting at one of the tables in our meeting hall, and they were all strangers. We knew instantly, without being told: Western Workers!

Rubens: That was the Communist Party's newspaper.

Ward: Yes. That was the predecessor to the Peoples' World. Redfern Mason, who had been the music critic, I think, for the Examiner, had been fired for Guild activity, and he was running for mayor. He was a right lively old boy who had written a musical comedy that had been performed at the Commonwealth Club. I was at that performance, years before, and at intermission the cry came up, "Author, author." He came out and took a bow, and everybody couldn't help but notice that he hadn't buttoned his fly. He was that kind of a guy [laughs].

Anyway, here was Redfern Mason running for mayor and asking for the support and endorsement of the Guild. He made his pitch and left. He had other meetings to attend; he was a very busy candidate.

Rubens: Was he a member of the Guild?

Ward: Oh, yes, sure. But he had to ask for the political endorsement; he couldn't just say so. And there was opposition to the motion to endorse him, because he had the support of the Communist Party. I felt inspired to get up and say that I thought Redfern Mason--I didn't think he stood much chance of getting elected, but I was happy to see him run; and I couldn't see anything wrong with accepting the endorsement of the Communist Party. He was entitled to get all the endorsements he could.

Well, the motion passed with a few no's, and I went home. And the phone began to ring. People were calling me up to

Ward: congratulate me on my speech--people I knew or knew of, not the guys over in the corner there. Among them a the man who invited me and my wife to dinner with him and his wife. I'll call him Rick, because although he is long since dead he has relatives that I see; that wasn't his real name, but it was something like that. He worked on one of the afternoon papers in San Francisco. We got so that we exchanged dinners--we became close friends, in other words.

Joining the Communist Party, 1936

Rubens: Are you protecting his name because he was a member of the Party?

Ward: Well, yes. There were frequently other people at his dinner table, because they were very hospitable souls. There was a Communist there. We talked, and the Communist fellow (whose name I cannot recall now) gave his little pitch, and that was that. Incidentally, this man was an FBI stool pidgeon all along, it turned out years later.

I was interested, and so forth, and finally Rick did tell me that he was himself a Communist and asked me if I would consider joining the CP USA. I said that the idea had some attraction, but I would like to know a little bit more about it first; I'd like to go to a Communist Party meeting. Well, that took a bit of doing, but it was finally arranged, and on a rainy February night in 1936, Rick and I had dinner downtown after work, boarded a Kearny Street car and rode out to North Beach to an apartment someplace out there, where there were five or six people sitting around to greet me. The only name that I'm sure of among those was Mike Quin, who was the writer of the CIO news on KYA for many years, and was also a columnist for the Peoples' World. His real name was Paul Ryan. Everybody wasn't there, because suppose I did go around blabbing all about it? There were certain people who weren't there that I didn't meet.

I told Rick on the way home that I thought I would join. I got to my home and told Norma that I was joining the Communist Party, and she nearly fainted. She was terrified.

Rubens: This is 1936; the Party had adopted the Popular Front.

Ward: This was the thirties, and all sorts of ideas existed simultaneously. There was much greater acceptance then and during the war, too. But afterwards, of course, the cold war began.

Rubens: I'm trying to juxtapose your wife's reaction of horror to your matter-of-fact reaction.

Ward: I would say the majority of the people were anti-Communist.

Rubens: Even though when you look at the statistics, this is the heyday of the Communist Party; the membership swelled in '36.

Ward: Yes, but even so. Well, put it this way: at the heyday of the Communist Party it had about a hundred thousand members.

Rubens: And in '39 it drops off.

Ward: Then it goes up again during the war. Out of a hundred and fifty million people, a hundred thousand is a drop in the bucket. Anyway, she planned to get along with me, and she tried to do a few things. But she was an apolitical person. I think that's one of the reasons that brought on our divorce, in due course.

I don't remember the actual details; I don't remember ever being given a party card, but I know I must have begun to pay dues to somebody and that sort of thing.

Rubens: Which chapter did you join?

Ward: Oh, damned if I know. It was just San Francisco. Well, it was the Bay region, and most of the big meetings were in San Francisco. Although Finnish Hall, down here in West Berkeley, was a big hangout, although I never was in that place. At the first Guild meeting, a man whose name I knew of and had never met, Morgan Hull, arose--we were joining everything and so forth--and nominated me for delegate to the Alameda County Central Labor Council. I promptly declined with thanks. I said I didn't have the time, and I appreciated it, but no thanks.

Rubens: You were still working in Sacramento?

Ward: I was still working at the Supreme Court in San Francisco. They met in Sacramento once in a while, and in Los Angeles, but their headquarters were right in the civic center in the state building.

Joining the Alameda Central Labor Council

So did I get bawled out--wow! I had duties to perform! So the next time I got nominated I accepted. The Central Labor Council met in Carpenters' Hall down on Twelfth Street, I think,

Ward: in West Oakland. For the second time I met Haakon Chevalier; he was the delegate from the teachers' union. And Paul Heide and his brother Ray, from ILWU [International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union]; and Bill Spooner, the secretary of the Council; and Charlie Real of the Teamsters' Union, a famous character who had been a leading Democrat in labor and political circles in Alameda County some years before. There was a taxicab driver strike, and the taxicab union was Teamsters, and there were scab cab drivers trying to break the strike. Two of those scab drivers wound up drowned in their cabs in Lake Merritt.

Rubens: Was this in '36?

Ward: No, I'm going back. The district attorney and the top police, all good Republicans, promptly made some arrests, including Charlie Real as an alleged accessory to murder. Charlie--no dumbell he--promptly changed his politics.

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Ward: Overnight, instead of being the leading labor Democrat, he became the leading labor Republican and the endictment was squashed.

Rubens: When was this?

Ward: In the twenties sometime; I don't know the exact year. So at least the strike was highly publicized.

With this background, and being a newspaperman, I knew a hell of a lot about Charlie Real. The progessives all got together, and we came so close to being the majority on the council that on a key vote it depended on who had gone out to get a beer at the time as to who won when the roll was called.

Rubens: Was it known that you were a member of the Party?

Ward: Of course not.

Rubens: Were you aware of any other Party members on the council?

Ward: Of course. Sure, we quickly found out who our comrades were.

Rubens: How many were there?

Ward: Well, not all the progressives were Communists, by any means, but I would say there were at least--in a meeting attended by fifty or sixty men, we had six or seven Communists.

In the meantime, Bill Green and John L. Lewis had tangled, and Lewis had formed the Committee for Industrial Organization [CIO]. In '37 the progressive unions, like the then-Guild and

Ward: the warehousemen, and so forth, were moving over from the AF of L into the--wait a minute. Our original determination was to stay in the AF of L, but the antagonism between Green and Lewis had become so sharp that Green ordered the labor councils to expel the CIO unions. So I and other CIO delegates were expelled from the Alameda County Labor Council. I remember banging on the door of the council, and Bill Spooner standing there looking very grave, saying, "I'm sorry, brother Ward, you cannot come in." And for the others, too.

So we set up our own council in Alameda, the Alameda County Industrial Union Council. I believe it was the first CIO council as such that was established in the West, and maybe in the whole country--only by a couple of weeks, but--

Rubens: This was in 1937?

Ward: Yes.

Rubens: How many unions did that represent?

Ward: I think it had between eight and ten thousand members, and probably a dozen unions.

Rubens: Was there an elected head?

Ward: That comes next.

Rubens: Before we go into this new phase, I want to ask you two questions: who was the head of the local Newspaper Guild at the time?

Ward: This would be the San Francisco-Oakland Newspaper Guild? The president was not the key person; he just presided at meetings.

Rubens: That was the next question: was he a leading figure--?

Ward: He was somebody who was popular, and who helped them to run a meeting. But the work was done and the leadership was provided by a man named Charles Irvine, who was known as Tad, who was not a reporter. He had worked in the business departments of various newspapers other than the local ones. He was a young man of independent means, and just came in and volunteered his services; and the first thing you know, he was running everything.

Rubens: Did you respect him?

Ward: Oh, yes; he was a Communist [laughs]. He and I are still very good friends. He lives over in Stinson Beach.

Rubens: Were there a few other people at this time in the Guild who are outstanding in your mind as people you respect and you looked to who were leaders?

Ward: Yes. The names are hard to recall. There was a guy from the Post-Enquirer, who became president. He was a very nice guy, but when he got drunk, he got good and drunk and got into trouble. I've taken him home more than once.

The people from the Chronicle were the most lively, because Paul C. Smith was then the managing editor. He was the man who had revitalized the Chronicle from a miserable Republican house organ, subscribed to by only the sacrosanct, to a competitor to the Hearst Examiner, which finally outran and outdid the Examiner and became the leading newspaper in this region. He doesn't get all the credit I think that's due him. He was not unfriendly; he didn't say, "Come on, boys, join," but he didn't want to make too much trouble. The other guys were getting fired right and left on the Examiner and the other papers.

Rubens: I had always had the impression that the San Francisco News--

Ward: Oh, the News was fairly liberal, too. As a matter of fact, it was a bit more liberal than the Chronicle. There were Betty Ballentine and George Wilson, who made no bones of the fact that they were active Guild members, and they didn't have any trouble with their employers.

Rubens: I have one more question: I think it's important that we get the most outstanding names of active people in the Guild at the time.

Ward: There were two or three guys from the Associated Press [AP], one of whom became the press agent for the organized winegrowers of California, later on. I think his name was White or something like that. He was not a Party member, but I remember later on when there was a convention of the Party being held in New York. I was walking down the street with him one day, and I forget who brought it up, but he said, "That Party meeting--are you going to it, by any chance?" I said yes, and he gave me ten dollars as a contribution--which I needed to go to this convention, because by that time I was awful broke.

There were people like that. Ron Schofield--oh, no, he went up to Sacramento.

Thoughts on the Communist Party

Rubens: You joined the Communist Party, having attended a meeting where Mike Quin was. Could you say something about what convinced you to join the Party at that time? After all, we're talking about a man who had been fairly apolitical, who becomes radicalized by the events in 1934, and his divorce, and then at the Guild meeting you were impressed. What specifically at that meeting convinced you to join?

Ward: That's a good question. I think it goes back to the fact that my father was a Socialist, and that I was brought up reading Eugene V. Debs; The Appeal to Reason. It was very easy to grasp the idea that capitalism was a passing phase in human existence that should soon be brought to an end.

Rubens: You had said, listening to Harry Bridges, how articulate and convincing he was. Was this true at this Party meeting: these people seemed intelligent, reasonable, they presented their ideas in a way, given your background, that you could accept?

Ward: I said that Bridges was convincing and intelligent on the witness stand in federal court, in 1934. At the time I joined the Party, that was the only time, or close to the only time, that I heard Harry talk; it's the one that stands out in my mind.

Rubens: I meant did you find the people at this Party meeting convincing and intelligent?

Ward: Oh, yes. And, as I say, I obviously had been prepared from my childhood upbringing to accept the idea that capitalism was just a phase in the broad sweep of human existence.

Rubens: Had you read The Western Worker? Did you read that regularly before you joined?

Ward: No. I had seen it, but I can't say that I had read it, except just to glance through it and see what they were talking about once in a while.

Rubens: Had you known other members of the Party that you respected prior to your joining?

Ward: It's true that I had known a couple, but I didn't know they were Party members at the time. I think it goes back to my childhood.

Rubens: Some people say everyone was doing it in the 1930s.

Ward: That wasn't the case, by any means. It's true that more of them were doing it then than now, by a great deal.

Rubens: We're back now at the formation of the Alameda County industrial unions.

Ward: I want to talk about the Heide brothers, Paul and Ray, and their exploits. Both of them were tall and skinny and could punch harder than any two other men. There are many stories about them.

I want to talk about the bartender at the Central Labor Council, who was known as Scotty. I don't know if he was a Party member, actually, or just a sympathizer. But he eventually, I understand, went to live in the Soviet Union. I lost track of him. But there were some marvelous little chats around that bar, right under the nose of the AF of L diehards.

Rubens: Say something more about this. Where was the bar?

Ward: The meetings were held in Carpenters' Hall, and you passed through the bar to get to the meeting room. So of course you buy a drink!

Rubens: It was a bar for street trade; anyone could go to the bar?

Ward: Yes. Well, I never heard of anybody trying to crash a meeting, except when the CIO got kicked out.

IV FORMING THE ALAMEDA COUNTY CIO, 1937

Ward: Now we get to the phase of the formation of the CIO council. There was a man, and all the background I knew was that his name was Miles Humphrey. He was a very ordinary-looking chap, a little shorter than I am and not much heavier (I was a skinny kid at that time). He had a deep depression in his right temple, as though at some time he had had a serious accident to his skull there. He was a Communist, and he had been very helpful in organizing the unorganized in Alameda County, particularly a group of miscellaneous workers from very small plants that he assembled in what became known as Local 96, which was what they called a federal local: it had no international; it was just directly chartered from CIO headquarters. That was his base, and he had been helpful on all the other organizing drives.

At this time, in mid-'37, he had recently been expelled from the Communist Party, I don't know for exactly what reasons. I remember that as this thing was brewing, I formed the habit of spending my Saturday afternoons at a meeting hall that was run by Miles Humphrey in West Oakland. It was in an old warehouse and it consisted of a great big barn of a room, and they got plenty of chairs from someplace, and there was a little office, and a busted toilet that didn't work. That was about it. I remember attending a meeting, and there were two thousand auto workers there. You know, people were really aching for something. That place was jammed, and Miles Humphrey made his speech. And I listened to him intently, because I'd heard of him; I knew that he'd been expelled, and I listened intently to his speech to see what kind of a guy he was. He spoke about the cave dwellers in Spain who never had had a home, and all sorts of things. In the course of his speech, and I can't remember exactly what it was, he indicated violence. I don't remember the words, but I said to myself, "That doesn't smell good to me."

He had the respect of the membership, and he was slated to become the leader of the Alameda County CIO council, so far as everybody knew. He bothered me, and I went to the two guys that ran the East Bay CP headquarters (one of them was George Martin,

Ward: I think) and asked them, "If you're not happy with Miles Humphrey as the leader of this organization that is in the process of formation, I could be persuaded to run for the job." Hmm! The first thing I knew, I was running.

There was this meeting of the delegates from the various unions to the council, and my fellow East Bay delegate to the Guild was a young boy ten or twelve years my junior from the Post-Enquirer, named Dick Dyer. He was a woman-chaser, and he came by with his girl of the moment, parked his car outside the hall, dashed in just long enough to cast his vote for me, and I beat Miles Humphrey by one vote. Well! That was a hell of a position to be in.

Rubens: How many votes were cast?

Ward: I think he got forty and I got forty one out of eighty-one votes.

Rubens: Two delegates from each union?

Ward: This is to become the leader, the secretary-treasurer, of the CIO council.

Rubens: But how do you account for the eighty-one votes? Two delegates from each union?

Ward: No, it depended on the number of dues you paid. There were only two from the Guild, Dick Dyer and I were the delegates. And if he hadn't gotten there at the right moment, it would have been a tie.

The next morning I went to work in the Supreme Court chambers. My former father-in-law was away on one of his Knights Templar trips, so I went to the acting CJ, who was Emmett Seawell, a gruff old district attorney and judge from Santa Rosa, and told him that I was resigning and why. He'd read in the papers that morning about the CIO election in Alameda County, for everything the CIO did was news in those days. He'd read it, and he said, "I thought that was just an honorary position." Everybody on the court knew that I was a labor "skate" (that's a slang word for a labor guy). So I told him I was resigning, and he said, "Well, Mr. Ward"--he obviously was not sorry to see me go--"I hope you will keep good thoughts about the Supreme Court." I said that of course I would: "I have no quarrel with the court; it's just something that I think I should be doing that is better for me than what this is." I didn't say it to him, but [to myself] I said, "Who knows, I might come up here on charges at any time."

Rubens: Was it a full time job, to be head of the council?

Ward: Oh, yes.

Rubens: What were you paid?

Ward: Theoretically I should have been paid top Guild union salary, which about that time had been recognized by the Chronicle and I think also the Examiner. It should have been $57.50 a week. But I started out at fifty dollars a week, plus expenses. The way they solved [the dilemma] was to make Humphrey the organizer and me the secretary-treasurer. So he got fifty dollars but without expense money.

Rubens: You were not an active newspaper man at the time, but if you paid your dues to the Guild you could remain a Guild member?

Ward: Oh, yes. I was what they called "a Guild martyr."

Rubens: Everyone knew that?

Ward: But as long as I paid my dues I was a member.

Rubens: To receive the forty-one votes, did you have to campaign?

Ward: Not at all.

Rubens: There was no campaigning?

Ward: None. I let the Party members do that. What they did was to simply tell the groups that a guy named Ward was running. I was fairly well-known; I wasn't so personally well-known, but I was known to the key persons, like the guys that I'd worked with in the old Central Labor Council before we were kicked out. So while I was not intimately known, I was known to the important people.

Rubens: So the Party campaigned within the various locals?

Ward: That's right. So there I was. I took two weeks vacation and went fishing up in Humboldt County. My poor wife, she just couldn't understand it. She tried hard, but she was scared.

Rubens: You were taking a pay cut--

Ward: I was taking a pay cut; I might get my head bashed in; I might get arrested; I might get this, that, and the other--oh, dear; oh, dear; oh, dear.

The first thing to do was to get out of that silly old barn and get a decent office. Humphrey turned over to me the little

Ward: dues that he had collected, and I think it amounted to less than three hundred dollars--somewhere between two and three hundred dollars.

Rubens: Did you have a good working relationship?

Ward: No, never. It was chilly. Well, I'd beat him, and he felt that that was his job.

Rubens: He knew you were in the Party, and he had been expelled.

Ward: Oh, of course, and I knew that he had been; there were no secrets about that. I found a place, sort of one room with a division, and Hump had a part of it. You passed through it and you got to my inner office. I found an office on the second floor on the southeast corner of Ninth and Broadway. And I found a meeting hall, Danish Hall (I don't know whether it's still there), down a few blocks over just east of Broadway a little bit (but not in West Oakland), along about Twelfth. So we were in business.

The first thing was Labor Day, because I took office in August, and almost immediately it was Labor Day, 1937. I had to get a parade permit. We wanted to parade with the AF of L, but no dice, no sir. The AF of L was set to parade, and they would start right up in front of our office and march up Broadway and around. They were due to start at ten o'clock in the morning. I went to the city council and demanded the right to march with them. The city council very wisely said, "Oh, no, that would be an awful fight." But I did a little organizing. I got a minister from one of the big churches to speak to the city council in our behalf.

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Ward: Charlie Real spoke in opposition. What he had to say was important, because he led a group of about two thousand Teamsters, who could do quite a lot of things if they felt like it. He said that if we marched he would not be responsible for whatever happened. But the city council granted the permit. At the gore of Telegraph and Broadway there used to be an open space where they built a reviewing stand. We had a public address system and so forth, and I had planned to take that and identify each unit and its leaders as they passed, and to tell something about them to whatever crowd we had in attendance. I was writing my last notes on that in the office at Ninth and Broadway on the second floor, when the AF of L started at ten o'clock in the morning. At the moment after they started there was a BOOM! BOOM! I said something like, "Oh, Jesus." There were a couple of boys that had somehow gotten on the roof right over my head

Ward: and got up on the parapet, which was about five or six feet above the roof, to watch the sight of the pararade, and then had jumped off right over my head. [laughs]

Rubens: What had you thought?

Ward: I thought that somebody had set off a couple of bombs. The building shook!

Two o'clock came, and I got up to the reviewing stand. The city manager was rather friendly and helpful. I should have invited him, but I didn't; that was a little polite thing that I forgot to do. So I was alone up there. I won't identify the person--it was one of the bigshots in the CIO, who had a new girlfriend that day. He sent her up to the reviewing stand, and she and I held down that whole reviewing stand. He had entertained her beforehand, and she had drunk too much and got sick all over. Anyway, the parade was held.

Rubens: This was a separate CIO march?

Ward: Yes. Nothing happened, eveything went off. They marched around Lake Merritt to the Oakland auditorium theater--not the big auditorium, but the theater.

Rubens: A good showing of people?

Ward: Oh, we had about eight thousand that were in the march. Harry Bridges was invited to make the speech. He had marched the previous morning in San Francisco. He came, and he asked me how long I wanted him to talk. I said forty or forty-five minutes would be fine. Well, he made his speech in about forty or forty-five minutes, and then he repeated it in another forty or forty-five minutes. When he got through, he said, "I hit it just right, didn't I?" He was a terrific speaker when he had a fight on, but for a thing like this he was absolutely mush, because there was no fight.

That was Labor Day. We got home, and that night the phone began to ring: various Guild members of mine, and I remember having to go out and rescue them from police stations. We had some pretty good drunks, and getting them home was a busy time.

Miles Humphrey's first big move was to organize an affair in the civic auditorium, a sort of a labor fair. He went around--he was very energetic--and got companies to set up booths advertising there; the companies, of course, with which our unions had contracts. We had a twenty-piece orchestra, and there was going to be dancing and speechmaking. Our principal speechmaker was going to be Wyndham Mortimer. He was the

Ward: left-wing leader of the United Automobile Workers. (He would have been president, but he was eased out by Walter Reuther). Mort made a nice speech, and the orchestra played and people danced. But the public did not attend very well, and we lost our shirt. In fact the question came, as the evening came to an end, whether there was enough money in the till taken in at the door to pay the orchestra. I remember dashing with a guy named Jim Smith--Turkey-Neck Smith, he was known as, of the Machinists' Union--down to his office in the middle of the night to get into his safe to get money enough to pay the orchestra.

Well, we were in very bad financial condition then. So I cut my salary and Humphrey's to twenty-five dollars a week. That still wasn't too bad in those days, but it was a little bit difficult. But we were in business.

I was the green pea; Harry Bridges always thought of me as such, I'm sure. And I was at that time; I had lots to learn. But I think I was a good learner. We set up regular Saturday afternoon meetings with Bridges in his office in San Francisco, with a select group, including Humphrey--including the leadership of the East Bay CIO unions--to discuss whatever problems were current and get his advice on what to do about this, that, and the other. As I say, Humphrey was there and participated. That was in '37. Two years later, in the Bridges trial on Angel Island, Miles Humphrey took the stand for the prosecution and testified that those were Communist meetings.

Rubens: When you said you had smelled something--was he an informer?

Ward: I keep getting ahead of myself. We had these meetings, and we were in business, more or less. I hired a young lady--Pat Somebody, a red-headed girl. But she wasn't the first; there were two or three other ones that the Party sent over that were pretty awful and just wouldn't work.

Rubens: As secretaries?

Ward: Yes. They got minimum pay, very little, but they were willing to work. I remember one girl who came when she felt like it. If she got there at three o'clock in the afternoon, it was just as good as nine o'clock in the morning, why not? So we go rid of her, and then another one, and another one, and finally this Pat, who stayed and was good.

Rubens: Could you say something about the issues that you thought confronted you as you took office?

Ward: The usual: how to organize; what about the strikes, and so forth.

Organizing Unions in the East Bay

Rubens: Was this a period of organizing?

Ward: Oh, yes, and there were all kinds of strikes; we always had a few strikes on our hands here and there. And we began to negotiate. For instance, if so-and-so was having a contract session with the employer, and he and his little outfit needed help, they'd come to the Council for a committee. I would usually head that committee. Consequently, I ran into people like, say, Paul St. Sure. He and I tangled immediately. He was very shrewd, very sharp. I conceived a seniority clause that I thought was a lulu, and he pounced upon it immediately. He was a very clever man, and very shrewd. We got into a strike there because of him. He was just impossible; he wanted to demote and cut down the wages, and all these sorts of things. The strike, I understand, was eventually lost, after I left there.

I remember another employer who was entirely different. He had a little plant down in Emeryville; I think it was an electrical plant. It was organized by the electrical workers. Their business agent, a young fellow, came to me one day and wanted to go before the Council to get strike sanction because they were getting nowhere with the boss on their contract. We had too many strikes on our hands at the moment. In fact, it was very difficult; times were rough. So I said, "Well, let's try first. Let's set up a committee and go down and talk to this man, if he'll see us." We set up a committee, and got one of the Heide brothers, and probably Chile Duarte from Warehouse, and Frank Slaby from the Automobile Workers, and so forth. We went to see this guy. By that time I had gotten into negotiating a bit, and I soon figured this boss out. He was very stubborn and very difficult, but he had a quick temper and he was quick to lose it. He'd rare up and curse and fume and shout and so forth. It was easy to provoke this explosion of his. Then he would say, "Oh, my God, I'm sorry; I apologize." And then he'd give you the point, or at least make a decent compromise. We went through one little scrap like that after another, and came out with a very nice contract and no strike.

Rubens: So it was a very heady time--a lot of organizing. Were you going after unorganized sectors of the East Bay?

Ward: Oh, yes.

Rubens: Can you think of what some of those were?

Ward: Humphrey had organized this big party, which was a financial disaster. The next thing that happened was that for some reason

Ward: or other I happened to go down to the office on a Sunday morning; there was some little thing I wanted to look up or do. There was a vacant room next to our office which we sometimes used; we put in a few chairs and used it for little meetings. I found that I had butted right into a meeting being conducted by Miles Humphrey. I recognized most of the faces, like Jack Montgomery of the Auto Workers; not the Heide brothers, but Bob Moore was there of the ILWU, and others. I could tell that I had butted into something that wasn't any of my affair, so I said I was sorry and butted out. A few days later Jack Montgomery came to me, and he was very worried. He said, "Brother Ward, what do you know about that meeting that you poked your head in the door at last Sunday." I said," Nothing."

Rubens: You did not make inquiries?

Ward: No, I didn't ask Humphrey. By that time we didn't talk any more than we had to. Well, Montgomery told me that Humphrey was saying that they should get a group together and go down to the National Guard armory at night and break in and steal guns and ammunition. I said what for? He said, "To start the revolution." I said, "Oh, my God." I said that would be the end of the CIO in the Bay region, right then and there.

That was one thing. I put a quietus on that very quickly. Then I happened to meet Carleton "Andy" Anderson on the street, my old buddy at the Tribune. He had by that time become a lawyer. I think he was with St. Sure's firm, or something like that--anyway, one of the big law firms in the East Bay. He said that Humphrey had come to them with a proposal that the owners sign a contract for the pinboys in the bowling alleys--in other words, what is known as a sweetheart contract. He said, "I thought that you guys didn't go for sweetheart contracts." I said, "You're right, we don't." So that was another one on Humphrey. The sweetheart contract was something the CIO frowned on very heavily.

Rubens: Did you ever confront Humphrey on this violence issue?

Ward: I brought charges against Miles Humphrey in the Council on these two major issues--the bowling alley guys and the National Guard armory. A trial was established, and the first hearing was set for all day the next Sunday.

I'm getting ahead of myself. It was in September of '38 that this first hearing was held. In August of '38 the first CIO convention was held. Paul Schlipf of the Auto Workers and I rode down together and roomed together.

The First California State CIO Convention

Rubens: The meeting was in Los Angeles?

Ward: Yes. It was the formation convention of the state CIO. We were there a couple of days early, because there were committees to be set up and preparations to be made before the formal convention opened. I was the chairman of the resolutions committee, and a delegate named Angela Gizzi was the secretary of the other main committee, the constitution committee. I knew her, and I knew she was a Party member. She didn't drive a car, and whenever I had previously met her she was being driven around by some swain of hers at that time.

At two o'clock in the morning I went down to the print shop to see how the printer was doing with my resolutions, and I met her on the same purpose for her committee. I was impressed that a girl would--

Rubens: I believe you were both giving up a party that the convention had sponsored.

Ward: I don't talk about that. The thing was that we became interested in each other then and there. She was helpful on the floor, and there was a caucus, of course, of the comrades. I was sent word that I was to run for secretary of the California CIO. So I told the proper guys who spread the word, and the next morning I come back and Bridges is in the chair. The nomination of Bridges, of course, was unanimous. And as secretary Lou Goldblatt was nominated, who was assistant to Bridges at that time. And I was nominated. I expected him to decline in my favor, and he expected me to decline in his favor. Because what they hadn't told me was that Goldblatt was to remain secretary for the life of the convention per se, and at the end I would be elected. But they didn't tell me that.

Rubens: Who were they?

Ward: Whoever it was that came out from the top left-wing caucus to tell me that I was to run for secretary. They simply said I was to run; they didn't say what the arrangement was. The arrangement was that Goldblatt would be secretary throughout the convention because he had organized it, and then I was to be elected at the end. He was to do something else--go to work for the ILWU, which he wanted to do. But they didn't tell me that very necessary bit of information. So I was waiting for him to decline, and he was waiting for me to decline. Bridges banged the gavel and called for the vote. I won. [laughs] Oh, boy!

Ward: It was a terrible blow to Goldblatt's prestige. By the end of the day, however, we were speaking again. So I was the secretary.

Rubens: Of the convention?

Ward: Of the convention only. The guys got together again and decided that bolstering up Goldblatt's prestige was more important than mine. I had to decline, and he was elected secretary of the California CIO, and spent two and a half years on a job he did not want.

Rubens: That was just accepted; the next day you resigned? How did the whole convention buy this? You had been elected. When you resigned, what reason did you give?

Ward: I was elected only for the convention. Then we're talking about the real job between conventions of running the outfit.

Rubens: Was there another election, or did you appoint--?

Ward: The convention opened with Bridges in the chair as director of the West Coast CIO. There were no officers until the election was held for the convention. At the conclusion of that convention, they nominated and elected officers of the Council, of the organization.

Rubens: So you resigned from the convention, and then Goldblatt was elected.

Ward: Lou and I were always friendly; Harry and I never were friendly. Paul Schlipf and I drove back in my car to the Bay region with a passenger--Angela Gizzi.

Reflections on Conferring with Harry Bridges and the Bay Area Labor Movement

Rubens: Can I fill in a few things here? In the first days of your assuming the head of the Alameda CIO Council, why were you meeting with Harry Bridges? What was the purpose of that?

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Ward: Humphrey was there. That brings up a story. Harry may or may not have known that Humphrey had been bounced by the Communist Party, but one of the things was that all of a sudden here was Joe Ring in my office, sitting around. Joe Ring was Harry

Ward: Bridges' bodyguard. He was the kind of a guy who could turn an entire barroom-full of fellows upside down and throw them out in the street very quickly. Anyway, he was there, and I looked at him: "Brother Ring, what's doing?" Well, he'd been sent over by Bridges to--there was a Local 1798 of the Steelworkers which was unhappy with the leadership in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; that's a continent away. Humphrey, in talking to them, had come over and introduced Brother Ring to his Local 96, where Humphrey was the big guy. I knew immediately that that would be a disaster, because Phil Murray, head of the Steelworkers, wouldn't stand for it. It would mean the end of all sorts of things. And I also knew that I alone could not--I had no time to waste with him, because I had my meeting that night.

So I took off for San Francisco, got to the office--not to Bridges' office, but to 121 Haight Street, the Party headquarters. I got hold of Walter Lambert and Bill Schneiderman and told them. They grasped immediately the error, and the three of us went down and got hold of Bridges in his office, and told him that he had made one hell of a mistake, that he was endangering his own job and the whole CIO setup out here if he allowed Humphrey to antagonize Phil Murray that way.

Bridges said, "Very well, we made a mistake." He called back Joe Ring, and that was the end of that. But there was another item against Humphrey in the whole thing.

Rubens: What happened when you brought up the charges against Humphrey?

Ward: Well, the trial began. In the meantime this relationship between the girl that I had brought back from Los Angeles and I had blossomed into the usual thing between a man and a woman. She had organized a bunch of stenographers from her little union in San Francisco, the Officeworkers, to come over and spell each other taking down the proceedings of this day-long conference. All these charges were brought out, but the thing was by no means finished. Humphrey, of course, even when he was ousted--he was ousted, he lost his job as organizer for the Council, but he immediately went over to his Local 96 and became their organizer.

Rubens: So there was this hearing and he was ousted? He was found to be doing things he shouldn't do?

Ward: Oh, these two or three things that I've mentioned were just dynamite if they'd gone through. Any one of them would have been bad. But the armory, and the raiding of Phil Murray's little empire--

Rubens: Let me do a few more fill-ins. This is a little thing: did you always refer to each other as "Brother" to fellow union people? I'm interested in the language of the time.

Ward: Pretty much so, but not absolutely always. With people you knew, you used first names, of course. Bridges was Brother Bridges on occasion, but he was mostly Harry. My first name was a little much for lots of people, so I was usually Brother Ward.

Rubens: Did this speak to the excitement of the times, of a movement, of creating something new, that you would use this term "Brother" to show affinity?

Ward: Oh, yes, very much so.

Rubens: Who were some of the workers you were trying to organize in Alameda County? Can you think of some of the industries where they did not have representation?

Ward: In Local 96 there were all sorts of things: there were candy workers--Mrs. See's Candy I remember--and bottle workers, rubber workers, all sorts of little outfits. There were the steel workers, the automobile workers, the warehouse workers.

Rubens: Steel and auto were very big at one time.

Ward: Auto was very big in Alameda County.

Rubens: What were the companies that were there?

Ward: Ford, General Motors. Steel was not very big. I think it was mostly the Judson Steel Works that was down in Emeryville that employed maybe a hundred to a hundred and fifty men. That's about it. There were some other little things around, but they weren't a big local.

Rubens: What was the biggest local?

Ward: Oh, Warehouse, of course.

Rubens: The Machinists were pretty big, weren't they?

Ward: Yes, the Machinists I would say were about the second biggest. I think the local number was 1304. Turkey-Neck Smith was the head of that.

Rubens: I was trying to see if in the meetings you had with Bridges or amongst yourselves you had identified certain industries that you really wanted to organize.

Ward: No, just anybody that had workers that were unorganized. Of course, Warehouse was pretty much a catch-all, too. If they could get them, why, they got them. That was the way it went. Woolworth's--that's where the ILWU had quite a time with Woolworth's; there was a big strike in Berkeley and all that.

Rubens: One other question: you were a member of the Newspaper Guild, you were a member of the Communist Party, you were the director of the Labor Council--

Ward: I was the executive secretary of the CIO Council.

Rubens: But basically you were the director.

Ward: I was it, yes.

Rubens: You must have been going to a lot of meetings. Were you still attending your Guild meetings?

Ward: Of course. When I had more than two meetings a night, I went to the movies, and explained that I had to go to so many meetings. That's the only way I could have a night off, or a Sunday. Oh, I was meeting Sunday mornings; and there were a couple of outfits that met on Saturday nights, of all things.

Rubens: I want a picture of that: how many Party meetings would you to to a week?

Ward: One. That was Thursday; Thursday night was sacred.

Rubens: Was this in San Francisco, where you went?

Ward: Not always, but usually. To some extent I obviously had an affiliation with the East Bay setup of the CP. There was a Portuguese woman (whose name I remember, but I don't think I will repeat it) who was very nice and was very fond of Miles Humphrey. She looked up to him, because he had organized her and preached to her and so forth. I was allocated to a Party meeting one Thursday night at her home, and Miles Humphrey was there. And he'd been expelled. I immediately raised a question, as politely as I could: if Brother Humphrey (I wouldn't call him Comrade) is here, I will move to declare this a public meeting. Otherwise he couldn't be there. And I reported it, but I don't know what they did with the lady. It was one of those things where he was passing himself off and trying to decide things. That woman finally came to the point where she said that she still thought a lot of Humphrey, but she could see that there were certain times when I was right.

Rubens: I wanted you to know that if there are names you want to mention for the historical record, or if there is some history that you want to tell but you don't want the public to read it, you can say so and it will be sealed.

Ward: No, I don't think so. I'll just not use exact names and let it go at that. For instance, the action of Schneiderman and Lambert

Ward: on that steward thing, I don't see any reason--Harry can't complain because he--

Rubens: My point is that there is a real history to be told. If you use different names, then you're not telling the history. I can understand your not wanting to use the names, because you're worried about family members, but in another twenty years it might be different.

Ward: It wouldn't mean that much. Very few of these things standing alone are really important; it's the mass of stuff.

Rubens: One last little question: you still had your car at this time?

Ward: Oh, I always had a car. Sometimes I lost the car. Sometimes the day would be so hectic that when I went out to get it after work, I'd forget where I had parked it. That happened in downtown Oakland in 1938 and '39.

Rubens: I think next week we'll finish up on--

Ward: I'm pretty close to through with the CIO Council. Next week we'll go into things like Labor's Non-Partisan League and Sacramento.

Rubens: How long did you serve as the secretary for the Alameda County CIO Council?

Ward: August '37 to about March of '39.

Rubens: We'll just finish up that little period next week. Sometime I'd like to talk to you about your relationship with Harry and Louis--how you said you and Louis always remained friends, and Harry didn't think much of you. Because obviously the enmity is developing right in this period; you say Harry thought you were green--

Ward: Lou and I, except for that one little mixup, have always been good friends. Harry and I were never good friends.

Rubens: He thought you were green?

Ward: Well, he didn't say so, of course, but I used the term "green pea." And I think he was right in his judgment in the beginning; but, as I say, I learned pretty quickly. I think I did, anyhow.

When I wrote that book about his Angel Island trial, he tried to get it stopped--whoa!

Rubens: Do you think he was initially prejudiced against you because you were not a "worker"?

Ward: I guess so; I would think so. I wasn't a blue-collar guy, I was a white-collar guy. That never was voiced in any way, but that could very well be.

Rubens: Was he friends with Humphrey?

Ward: Obviously, because he took Humphrey's word for something that would have been disastrous.

Rubens: That's why I think he didn't like you.

Ward: And I knew enough about Harry not to go alone to tell him; I got people I knew damned well he would listen to.

Rubens: Because he clearly had this relationship with Humphrey.

Ward: Yes.

More on the State CIO

[Interview 4: 6 July 1987]##

Rubens: Your election in 1938, as the secretary-treasurer of the CIO convention--you were saying that that was a mistake, that the word had not been passed that you were to withdraw. I have one more question about that: why was someone from the Newspaper Guild elected over someone from the Warehousemen? What accounted for your victory?

Ward: I can't say for sure that the theory at that time was a Communist theory, but it was certainly practiced by the Communist Party. It was that in California the two leading left-wing unions were the ILWU and the Newspaper Guild, and that therefore the president of the newly-formed California CIO Council should belong to one of the unions, and the secretary should belong to the other.

Rubens: So Harry was the president of the convention for the ILWU, and you were the vice-president, essentially--

Ward: Harry presided as the CIO director of the Pacific Coast. He was not a candidate for office; he presided at the convention. And the mistake was made and they failed to tell me--. Word came out of the inner room early on, the morning the convention opened, I think, that I was to run for secretary-treasurer. But they

Ward: didn't tell me that for the life of that convention, Lou Goldblatt was to remain as the acting secretary because he had drafted up the whole thing and worked it out.

When the nomination came on the floor on the opening morning of the convention, Slim Connelly of the Los Angeles Newspaper Guild--all three hundred pounds of him--was nominated and elected president. Then for secretary-treasurer I was nominated and so was Goldblatt. We were on opposite sides of the room, and before anybody could get his wits, Harry Bridges called for the vote, and I beat Goldblatt. So I was acting secretary for the convention.

But the boys in the backroom then decided that Lou's prestige was more important than mine, or something like that. In other words, it [mine] didn't matter so much, and Lou then, instead of going round to his job in the Warehouse union, should-- The convention functioned, and at the end we were both nominated and I declined.

Rubens: For the ongoing position.

Ward: Yes.

Rubens: And Slim Connelly stayed on?

Ward: Oh, Slim Connelly, there was no problem there. Sure.

Rubens: Was he in the Party?

Ward: Slim Connelly was the president of the California CIO Council, and Lou Goldblatt was the secretary-treasurer. Lou was secretary-treasurer for a little over two years, and then at that time, as I understand it, it was felt that it was too rigid--just these two unions running the whole thing. So they let in the steelworkers as president; I forget who became the secretary of the CIO council. Goldblatt went back to warehouse organizing in the East and Middle West.

At the closing day of that first state CIO convention, elections were held for vice-president. To give representation all around there were nine vice-presidential offices, and I got by far the highest vote.

Rubens: Why were you so popular?

Ward: Damned if I know. I haven't any particular reason for it, except that I guess it was felt that I had done a good job in a difficult situation in Alameda County, particularly with the Humphrey difficulty.

Ward: Did I tell you about the committee meeting? Humphrey was then a delegate to that convention from Local 96.

Rubens: You had already had the trial?

Ward: Oh, yes, he was out as organizer of the council, but he had gone back to miscellaneous unions--

Rubens: The federal union.

Ward: Yes, that's right.

So he was on a committee down there, I forget what the issue was. Saturday night everybody else was going to a dance, but this committee had to meet. Humphrey carried his position on the committee, which was a bad position from our Communist point of view, and I think from any practical point of view, also. Whatever the issue was, it was brought up on the floor Sunday morning, the second and last day of the convention. I was up on the platform as acting secretary, and I had Angela tip off Milt Davidson, her fellow delegate for the officerworkers' union, and a member of the committee where Hump had prevailed, that when he got in there he was to move to reverse the decision. She did, and of course Davidson's motion carried and Mr. Humphrey was defeated.

That was over, and Angela rode home from the convention with me. After I had kept her waiting all Monday morning--

Rubens: I read that in Angela's oral history.

Ward: I went to see my kids, that's what took me so long. They all wept and wanted to know why I wasn't with them.

Rubens: That must have been hard.

Ward: Yes. Well, anyway--So the CIO Council set up shop, with Goldblatt in office, running the thing at the San Francisco headquarters. Very shortly the new session of the legislature convened under our new governor, Culbert Olson. Didn't we decide that I don't need to talk now about my activities in the Mooney case?

Rubens: We'll go back to that. Your book talks about you having the preliminary meetings with him, with the governor and Goldblatt.

Ward: Actually getting the pardon.

Rubens: Why don't we finish up the Alameda CIO? When you came back, that was still your position.

Ward: I was still there, yes. Pretty soon Goldblatt called up. Governor Olson, the first Democratic governor in fifty years in California, had been elected, and the legislature was just about to convene. The CIO should have a representative up there, and would I like the job? I said, "Sure." So I quit in Alameda County, and my place was taken by my friend and fellow companion, an auto worker named Paul Schlipf. As a matter of fact he was my competitor; he was sweet on Angela. He, Angela, and I drove up from Los Angeles from that convention together.

Rubens: Did you appoint him your replacement, or was he elected?

Ward: He was the president of the Alameda County CIO Council at that time. It was a very simple matter for me to resign and for him to become secretary-treasurer instead. No sweat.

Organizing a Demonstration Against Franco

Ward: This was January '39, and the Spanish civil war was reaching its closing stages. A young woman by the name of Aileen O'Brien, said to be a San Franciscan and said to be a great beauty, had been to Spain on the Franco side (what she did there, I don't know). She was being sent back by Franco to promote his cause, to give pro-Franco lectures everywhere she could in the United States. A Catholic ladies' aid society in Oakland set her up for a Friday night meeting at the Oakland civic auditorium theater--not the big one. This little ladies' aid society was run by the wife of the Oakland police captain in charge of that particular district.

Well, we made a big noise: that couldn't happen in Oakland--Franco, phew! We mobilized our forces. The meeting was supposed to begin at eight o'clock that night, and I guess there was a crowd of about a thousand people down there from all over the East Bay, many from some distance away. I know guys came down from the factories in Martinez and Pittsburgh. We formed across the street from the theater and made some noise. The paddy wagon came up, and I was promptly installed therein, along with a couple of other guys, one a very loud-mouthed, rather crazy character (whose name I don't recall) and a young fellow who was there for no reason at all, except that he "should be there" and climbed in. His name was Nat Yanov. (He's still around. He mentioned in the Norm Leonard oral history that he was one of the people for whom Norm got citizenship later on.)

Rubens: Was that the first time you were arrested?

Ward: In my life? No. It was the first time I was arrested for a labor cause. I was arrested previously for sneaking down the side of my girlfriend's--

Rubens: Right. But this was your first labor arrest. When you say "we" organized this demonstration, are you referring to the Party?

Ward: Well, I assume. I can't say that I knew, particularly. At least I know that I was the functioning head of the demonstration, and I think it's safe to assume that the Communist Party had something to do with it.

Rubens: Did you take it on yourself to organize that demonstration?

Ward: The Alameda County CIO Council voted to oppose the appearance of this Franco person; it was very simple. So it was my duty to go down there and lead the demonstration. I was supposed to meet Angela in the City at ten o'clock that night, and by that time I was in jail. She didn't know where I was. She had a hell of a time. I had had no dinner, and they put the four or five of us in a cell. One guy yelled and howled; he was crazy. Nat and another guy made themselves a chessboard and played chess, and I argued with the jailor.

Rubens: Always organizing.

Ward: Early in the morning they dug us out. When that paddy wagon left [the night before], all hell broke loose. The police charged everybody and beat up people all over the place, including a law student from the University of California. I think he was the editor of the Daily Cal, who later went to work for Norm's firm for a short time (I can't think of his name). He was very severely injured, so much so that his life and/or sanity were in doubt for sometime.

[Upon our release] when we came down the elevator from the fourteenth floor of the Oakland city hall, there was a strange woman in the elevator who obviously had been arrested also, and I never saw her again. [whispers] She was a Trotskyite. [laughs]

Rubens: Had that been an issue at the labor council?

Ward: No, the issue there was Humphrey.

Rubens: And he was a "wildcat."

Ward: Just a wildcat, yes. I have no reason to believe that he had any Trotsky-esque connections. I had a lot to do with Trotskyites later.

Rubens: But not at this date.

Ward: No.

Rubens: How do you know she was a Trotskyite? Did she start espousing the line?

Ward: No. I asked. I don't know whether I asked her or someone else; anyway, I found out.

There were about eight hundred people waiting for us downstairs--at least the main hallway of that building was jammed with people, anyway. What had happened was that on the campus campus after the arrests, it was payday at UC Berkeley. They had raised enough money--I think it was something over eight hundred dollars in bail--to get everybody out. And there they were, people I had never seen before.

Rubens: These are professors and staff people, not students, who are bailing you out?

Ward: Yes. At that time, I think the only person I really knew at Cal was Bob [Robert Gordon] Sproul, and we did not get along. But he wasn't there.

I got home, and the next day a delegation came to see me in the morning, in my office, to buy me a drink. (First I went before the judge, I think--dismissed.) There was the delegation in my office--old, grey whiskers, who must have been the mothers of Joseph Stalin. I didn't know them; I think I knew <u>of</u> them. Anyway, they were some committee from the local CP, telling me that I must issue a statement condemning the police and Franco's Spain and Aileen O'Brien, and so forth. So I did it, and sent it out. Nobody printed it, and I later had to apologize to the city manager, with whom I had become friendly, in an odd sort of way.

The day went on, the drinks came and went. That night I had a date to pick up Angela at her home and take her to some party where I was to meet a young fellow who had just started work on the San Francisco Chronicle, named Herb Caen. Angela's father met me at the stairs with a good straight shot of whiskey.

Rubens: What were all the drinks about--to overcome your experience in jail?

Ward: Congratulations! Brave man, got in trouble in a good cause!

We started out from her place. At that time Grant Avenue was a two-way street. I felt like showing off a bit, and I did sixty going south on Grant Avenue [demonstrates]. I looked at

Ward: her face and saw that she was as white as a sheet; so I slowed down. Nothing happened, we got to the party. I met Herb Caen, took a drink from a martini, and had to run for the door to throw up.

Rubens: You were feeling pretty excited.

Ward: Oh, good Lord! All the drinks, all the excitement.

One more thing: the following Monday there was a conference in the city manager's office in Oakland with this very huffy police captain, the city manager, and two or three other people. And there was some woman outside demanding to get in; I knew her, slightly. She was a rather oddball Communist who thought it was her duty to defend me. The city manager asked me if I wanted her to come in, I said not at all, and that was that. I had to come down off my high-horse a little bit about the statement that I had gotten out.

Rubens: After all, apparently you were not charged with anything.

Ward: Oh, I was probably charged with disturbing the peace. I had to be charged with something to be arrested.

Rubens: But once you came before the judge it was dismissed, so they treated you relatively decently.

Ward: Yes, it was dismissed right away.

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Rubens: Was this one of the largest demonstrations against Franco in the area to date?

Ward: It's the largest one that I remember and know about. I don't think there were any others.

Rubens: I remember Anita Whitney demonstrated in San Francisco. There were some Communists demonstrating at the Spanish consulate.

Ward: Maybe so. But this was the only time that a Franco exponent had attempted to appear. The others were just more or less pro forma.

Rubens: Was it a debate within the CIO council to organize this demonstration, or did that happen readily?

Ward: As I told you, when I was elected I was elected by one vote. Eighty-one votes were cast, and I'll bet you that seventy-five of those votes were Communist and the others were pro-Communists.

Ward: No problem at that time. Oh, there were plenty of people in the unions who didn't want any part of the Communist Party. I remember sometime during my term a young Mexican woman coming to me, very tearful. She had just been elected secretary-treasurer of the cannery workers union, or something like that. Promptly upon becoming elected, she was told she had to join the Communist Party. She came to me and said she didn't want to join anything except the union (boo hoo). I just patted her on the shoulder and said that it was just some super zealot and to forget it and go her way rejoicing. I reported the incident and told whoever it was that bothered her to lay off.

More on Organizing in the East Bay

Rubens: When you were secretary-treasurer, were you involved in all those cannery strikes that were going on in the East Bay? At one point there were close to six hundred workers out, from Hayward all the way up to Richmond.

Ward: That reminds me of a night in Hayward.

Rubens: And the Teamsters were causing a lot of problems.

Ward: Yes, the Teamsters were causing a lot of problems, and the cannery workers. Actually they did go Teamster--

Rubens: In the forties.

Ward: I'm trying to think of the name of a black woman who helped me, who was going to work on the swing shift, I think. I told her I thought there was going to be trouble out there, and she let out a whoop and went back to her car, put a gun in her pocket, and went to work.

Rubens: That was pretty unusual, I imagine.

Ward: That was one thing that I noticed that night.

Rubens: There were some pretty bloody battles in those cannery strikes.

Ward: Oh, yes, it was a battle. I stayed half the night, and every few minutes the goons would drive by and look in the car.

Rubens: When the whole rim of the East Bay was on strike, maybe you were already out of the--

Ward: Some, yes. When I left the council, poor Schlipf had his hands full with as many strikes as he could handle; there were lots of strikes. Yes, they were lively times out in Hayward. I'd meet the Teamsters in the hallways of these outfits, and they were threatening and nasty and so forth. I guess they were a little bit afraid to rough me up. It would have been a bit much. Anyway, they didn't.

I think that pretty much does it for the CP in Alameda County.

Rubens: Let me ask you a couple of questions about that period. At the CIO Convention in Los Angeles, when you say "the back room," would you say that the convention was aware of the presence of the Party--of the Party acting as a separate caucus?

Ward: I'm quite sure that many of the delegates were not.

Rubens: I read in the oral history that you did with Lou [Goldblatt] that the garment workers were--

Ward: A damned nuisance. [laughter]

Rubens: Why were they even there? Were they considering going with the CIO?

Ward: Yes. David Dubinsky was one of the founders of the CIO.

Rubens: This is the ILGWU [International Ladies Garment Workers' Union].

Ward: Yes. The Amalgamated was the men's.

Rubens: The ILGWU never went over. [Angela hisses]

Ward: Morris Sussman was a nice fellow from the Amalgamated. The Amalgamated were in the CIO, of course. Did you ever hear of the labor advisor to FDR, who was the head of that union, who advised FDR to send in the soldiers in the North American strike? That came later.

Rubens: I think you told me you drove down to the convention with Louis, is that right?

Ward: No, Paul Schlipf.

Rubens: Were you friends with Louis at that point?

Ward: Except for a few hours. We were speaking again by the end of that day. We've always been friends.

Rubens: But before that you knew each other?

Ward: Oh, yes.

Rubens: I want to ask you one last thing about your days with the CIO Council. I think you told me there were about twelve unions that made up--

Ward: Something like that.

Rubens: The biggest ones were Auto and the ILWU. Were those the same ones that had the most influence in the council?

Ward: Of course.

Rubens: And yet you were a Newspaper Guild member. That election by one vote really had to do with the Party organizing the election. Is that what you said? Did the Party have a lot of influence in any other unions besides the Warehouse and the Auto Workers?

Ward: They had much more influence in the ILWU than they did in the Auto Workers. That's a difficult question; it would be hard to say. I think that in many unions there was no Party influence whatever. That's my guess. But it was the thing to do in those days. These were newly-organized people, they were grateful to the CIO.

Rubens: The Cannery Workers were just getting organized. Did you need to cater to them?

Ward: Oh, I was helpful wherever I could be, of course.

Rubens: But in your mind, was that a union that you--

Ward: We had so many strikes; it was just one strike after another.

Rubens: What did you do as secretary-treasurer that you are proud of, that you think of as being exemplary of your leadership?

Ward: I helped organize strikes, I helped settle strikes; I learned how to negotiate. As I think I've told you, at least in one instance I was able to fend off a strike and get a good settlement. That sort of thing.

Rubens: You talked about being "green"; that Harry Bridges called you "green." Can you be specific about that? What did it mean to be "green" as a leader?

Ward: The first few weeks I had many things that I was doing for the first time--for the first time in my life. That's why I was "green." As I said, I think I was a quick learner.

Rubens: When you met with Harry as the western regional director of the CIO, were you learning specific skills?

Ward: Oh, yes. I think Harry always looked on me as a green pea. But from week to week I was picking up experience very fast.

Rubens: Then why were you willing to step down from that position and become the political lobbyist for the State CIO?

Ward: Why was I willing? Because the natural leadership--I was an unnatural leader; I was injected into a position in which the natural leadership was very dangerous. I overcame that problem, and then my job was finished there. It's very simple. I could have stayed on, but it was time for me to go.

Rubens: You were now going to start a new job, in '39, and you also had a new relationship: you met Angela in January. Since you had mentioned that you had a brief marriage after your first marriage--

Ward: There was a Juarez divorce. As soon as that got straightened out, Angela and I bought a wedding ring for which I paid five bucks. We went to the office and Angela's friend and fellow delegate Milt Davidson saw the ring and immediately spread the news. We found ourselves being congratulated.

Rubens: And you found yourself a life-long companion.

Ward: As it turned out.

Rubens: A comrade in arms; the right choice.

Ward: But before actual marriage, we had another pleasant duty to perform. We went to Sacramento. I had to rent a tux, and she got a very fancy gown, and we went to the governor's inaugural ball. The next morning we attended the Mooney pardon ceremony. Everybody turned as the doors to the assembly chamber opened, and there came Bill Schneiderman leading the entire state CP committee down the aisle.

Rubens: Is that one of the only times that got a public--?

Ward: A big deal, which I describe in my book on Tom Mooney, <u>The Gentle Dynamiter</u>." Mooney and a small group had some kind of a luncheon, and then went to Folsom to see Warren Billings. We didn't bother with it; we headed for Carson City. We went into the first saloon and found out where to find the county clerk, and got married. The next morning we got back just a few minutes late to San Francisco to be in the head of the motor parade.

Ward: That thing got longer and longer and longer; people just came off the sidewalks. The Civic Center was jammed solid with happy people.

After the meeting in the Civic Center was over we went home [to Angela's family]. In their family home they had a little breakfast room with a round oak table. Angela put her hand out on the table and wiggled it [showing off her ring]. Nobody saw it; finally she had to tell them that we were married. The old man broke out a bottle of champagne. That's how we started off. The next day we went to the CIO office, and the news spread. The congratulations came flooding in--except from Brother Bridges!

Rubens: At this point had you left the Alameda CIO?

Ward: No, this was before. In fact, this was before the Aileen O'Brien incident. We had set up shop in a little furnished apartment in West Oakland, and imagine taking a Key Route train home from her almost nightly meetings in San Francisco, getting off in West Oakland at ten-thirty or eleven o'clock at night, and walking a couple of blocks to the apartment, totally unafraid. You, man or woman, wouldn't _dream_ of doing such a thing now.

Reflections on the Olson Administration

Ward: Paul Schlipf became secretary-treasurer, and I went to work in Sacramento. Angela visited me on weekends. It was a miserable situation in many ways. Governor Olson had been elected, and it was true that the assembly, with its members elected every two years, had pretty much followed the Olson line, which even these days would be quite radical, I think. Well, it was born out of Upton Sinclair's EPIC thoughts and campaign speeches in 1934.

Rubens: And pushed by the Communist Party.

Ward: I think so. But in the senate the best friend we had was Bob Kenney, senator from Los Angeles. The senate was not organized then the way it is now. It went by geographical district. For instance, at that time Los Angeles had only the one senator. Now it has at least four or five. The cow county senators and the other Southern California counties controlled the senate, without question. Kenney was frequently pretty much a lone voice there. Whatever got by the assembly promptly died in the senate, and nothing much could be done about it.

Ward: This is part of the Tom Mooney story. The Olson government was sent a warning. Governor Olson was supposed to go to some opening ceremony at a state park annual celebration on the afternoon after pardoning Tom Mooney, and while attempting to make his speech there he collapsed and was hospitalized for a long time, with his son, Dick, trying to be governor and making a damned fool of himself. Oh, everything just wound up in one hell of a mess.

The CP got into a bind with Dick and later with the governor. Because the state relief administration was very important in those days; it was the only hope the jobless people had for a few nickles. We wanted a young fellow (I think he must have been a Party member) to be state relief administration director. Dick wouldn't have any of it, and it turned out that Olson also wouldn't have anything of it later on, to the point where after Olson had recovered I, being duly authorized and instructed by the Party, attended a hearing on some phase of the state relief program in Sacramento. I got up and said it had gotten to the point where it was becoming difficult, if not impossible, to support the governor and his policies. Whoosh! My phones jingled. I got an editorial in the Chronicle, saying what a sassy young brat I was.

That brought on a meeting called by the governor in the apartment he was occupying in the Huntington Hotel in San Francisco at that particular moment. Harry Bridges and I were sent as a team, one of those few times when we worked as a team, to tell the governor that he just had misbehaved and we could not support him. It was left that way.

Rubens: How did he respond to you?

Ward: He showed unhappiness.

Rubens: Was he angry?

Ward: He was either too limp or too smart to show anger. He didn't blow off, anyhow. [tape off briefly]

Bob Kenney was a wonderful guy, a perfect politician. If he could make an honest buck, he didn't mind at all. There was a very prominent black man--not like Willie Brown, but in some obviously illegal way--up for some crime or crimes. His defense lawyers hired Bob Kenney to make a pitch on the guy's behalf, asking for leniency. Bob Kenney lived at the Sutter Club, and he took a nap after lunch every day. The hearing on this guy was, say, at three o'clock in the afternoon. I remember going to Kenney's room, getting him up, and helping him get dressed. We went together to the hearing, Kenney made his little speech, got voted down--which didn't disturb him at all. I hope he collected his money!

V THE HARRY BRIDGES DEFENSE COMMITTEE, 1939

Background Information: Bridges and Mooney

Ward: At that time an acquaintance that had begun to gel in Alameda County developed into a friendship with a man named J. Vernon Burke.

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Ward: J. Vernon Burke was a web pressman, one of the guys that's down in the bowels of the print shop with the whirring presses, who had come out of the pressroom to become executive secretary of Labor's Non-Partisan League [LNPL]. This was a grandchild of John L. Lewis, who had put money into the Olson campaign; I think he had allocated $25,000 to California for the election of Olson. And Burke said, scornfully, "Dick Olson could spend $25,000 in one morning." Of course, that was a lot of money in those days.

Anyway, he and I became buddies in pain. Neither of us were getting anywhere up there. That senate, with the exception of Bob Kenney, was just awful. And even the assembly felt kind of uncomfortable with people from new organizations like CIO and LNPL. We weren't very pleased with life, and things dragged and got worse and got worse.

In the meantime, Harry Bridges' first trial was coming on, but he was just going on about his regular business, doing his regular things and making no preparations whatever, apparently. And his lawyers were very much concerned. He had gone back East on some business, and somebody in the law firm contacted the CP--"see if you can do something about this." First thing I knew Walter Lambert called me up in Sacramento and said, "Estolv, How're you doing?" He said, "Would you like a good job?" Although Harry and I did not get along, it had gotten to the point where it was such a routine matter that it didn't seem to be too much of an obstacle. So I said, "Sure."

Rubens: What was such a routine matter?

Ward: My relations with Bridges--cool.

Rubens: Since the Alameda County CIO days? When did they start to cool?
Ward: They never were anything but cool! I admired him; he obviously did not admire me.

Rubens: Who was Walter Lambert?

Ward: There were three top figures in the Northern California CP: Bill Schneiderman, who was the main guy, and Walter and Rudy Lambert; they were brothers, and Walter was the younger. Rudy's job was to keep track of--did I mention how I had to go tell Rudy all about myself?

Rubens: No.

Ward: Well, all right. This goes back to my first few weeks in the Alameda County CIO office. A young fellow--I think he worked for the Peoples' World, or at least had worked for it; can't think of his name now--happened to fall in step with me as I came out of the office on a morning. Either he asked me or I mentioned that I was going to the bank. "Bank? What have you got to do with a bank?" I said I had some money to put in. He went right to 121 Haight Street and told Rudy. Rudy had me come over, and we talked. And I explained. When I went to work for the state Supreme Court, the job had started on the first of the month, and you didn't get paid until six weeks later. Then you got paid month to month thereafter. So there was six weeks' pay coming.

Well, I was met by Rudy Lambert and Elmer "Pop" Hanov, who was as Russian as Russian could be, and he sat in on it. I explained the money end of it very quickly, and while they had me there--Pop wanted to know about my marriages, and I told him that two of them had gone sour. He simply said, "You are like me; never had no luck."

Pop eventually got deported to the Soviet Union. But before he got deported he used to sit around in the parks and feed the pigeons and talk to the old ladies and have a nice time. He also smelled like a mouse or a rat. Ever hear of Arthur Scott? He sniffed Arthur Scott out and discovered that Arthur Scott was the guy who had something to do with the installation--I don't think he did the actual installation--of the hidden mike in Harry Bridges' hotel room in Portland, Oregon.

Rubens: At that Portland convention?

Ward: Yes. Arthur Scott had been the big wheel in Mooney's prison life. I had met Arthur in my days on the court. I was the official receptionist in chambers when the court wasn't in public session. (I had met Arthur Scott at parties; I knew he was a friend of Tom Mooney and a wheel in the Mooney defence, and obviously some kind of a big shot Communist.) He came in, looked around, was rather spooky, and said, "Estolv, we need to know what the decision will be in the Mooney case." That happened, by coincidence, just two or three days after I had been sitting in the room of a young law clerk, talking to him, when in came the Chief Justice with an armload of the Mooney case records, dumped it on the desk, and told the young fellow to write the decision on the Mooney case.

Rubens: This is on the habeus corpus hearing?

Ward: This followed the habeus corpus. The young man said, "Yes, sir. And what will be the position?" Res adjudicada--the thing has already been adjudged, forget it.

Rubens: No dice, is what it meant.

Ward: It meant no dice. That had just happened a few days before Arthur Scott stuck his head in the place.

Rubens: What did you tell him?

Ward: I don't think there was ever any question--I had to think very fast. I simply said, "What do you mean? I know it's been filed, but I don't even know who has it."

Rubens: Why did you make the decision that way? You were a Party member; you knew Arthur was a Party member. What allowed you to choose sides that way?

Ward: The main reason was that if I had told him, the use of it would have been--and I got it almost instantly--that they would publish in the Peoples' World, and that would lead right back to me and I would lose my job for no good to Tom Mooney. If it would have helped, that would have been my duty to have told him. But I knew that couldn't happen.

Rubens: Was he authorizing you? Was he a superior in Party structure at that point?

Ward: I didn't so consider him. I knew that he was a friend of Mooney's and some kind of an official in the Party, but I didn't have the relationship that I had with the Lamberts and Bill Schneiderman.

Rubens: There were times when you made independent decisions, then. Surely the Party asked you to do things sometimes, and you did them.

Ward: Of course. But his questions didn't smell right. I couldn't see any benefit to Tom; all that would happend would be that I would be disgraced and fired.

Rubens: I think it's important to show that people did make their own minds up. There's a history that says people just followed the line.

Ward: Shortly after that Arthur Scott was exposed.

Rubens: I want to take you back to when Walter Lambert asked you to run Harry Bridges' defense. Did you become head of the Harry Bridges defense committee at that point?

Ward: Yes.

Rubens: Did you also keep your position as the CIO lobbyist?

Ward: No. I think it was Richie Gladstein who called me and asked if I would take it, and I said, "Sure, why not? I'm not doing a damn thing up here." He said, "Could you be down here by two o'clock this afternoon?" I was down at two o'clock in the afternoon, and that night he took me to a meeting of Local 10. They set up a defense committee, I was the executive secretary of it, and I was in business and at work by the time Bridges got back. He nearly had a fit.

To get back to Arthur Scott: after this discovery was made in the Portland hotel room, that he had some connection with it, he quietly disappeared; he was no longer around. The next thing we knew he was arrested in Beverly Hills. He was a burglar, which he had been before; he had had a spell in San Quentin. He said, sure, he robbed the rich to help the poor--the Robin Hood burglar, he was known as. He went to jail, back in San Quentin, I guess. On the night before Governor Olson's inauguration--I told you about the meeting with the guys to arrange the Mooney pardon--as we left the meeting that night, started driving back to our homes here and there, we passed the corner office of the state capitol, the governor's office, and the lights were wide on quite late at night. We learned the next day that the outgoing governor, Frank Merriam, had been appointing judges and signing pardons--last minute things in office--and one of the last minute things was to sign a pardon, for "services to the state," for Arthur Scott.

As Publicity Director

Rubens: Let's fill in a little bit more on becoming head of the Harry Bridges defense. When was that, around September of '39?

Ward: Exactly.

Rubens: Did anyone replace you as the State CIO--

Ward: Not immediately. Later on Goldblatt took it upon himself to try. He wasn't too happy either, although by that time the powers that be up there had gotten kind of used to seeing CIO and LNPL people around. But Goldblatt was one shrewd cookie. He made friends with the boss of the assembly, Art Samish, who had offices at the corner of Columbus and Pacific, and he was "Mr. North Beach." He wasn't a legislator, he just ran the legislature. And that friendship continued for years. Lou tells in his oral history how after Samish lost his power in the legislature, Lou used to drop in and chat with him from time to time and talk about the good old days.

Rubens: So you were down in San Francisco, back with your wife, and Harry Bridges comes to town and is very upset by this?

Ward: That brings up the name of Jim O'Neill, an Irishman, a drunk, who at that time ran the CIO news program on KYA. He said that he had a plan on a defense program for Bridges, but here I was, and I was established, and there was nothing much he could do about it. So I made my plans, some of which were better than others, but anyhow we got it going and we raised money.

I had the good luck to have as secretary-treasurer of my longshore committee a man named Ed Reite. Somehow or other we had acquired early on three thousand dollars, which we at the moment did not need. He suggested that if I didn't mind he would bank it so we would have it handy, but he just wouldn't report that three thousand dollars in the weekly financial reports to the committee.

Rubens: Did you like that?

Ward: I could see the point. Of course we had our ups and downs, and the end result was that after the trial was over and the decision was in--I remember particularly one call from the CIO office in Los Angeles asking how much the deficit was. And there wasn't any.

Rubens: Probably one of the first times.

Ward: Oh, people were simply amazed. And that was due to Ed Reite.

Rubens: Did you organize the Los Angeles office?

Ward: What happened was this: we had office setups in San Francisco, San Pedro, Portland, and Seattle. I went down to Los Angeles and hired a fellow named Dolph Weinbrenner, a newspaper man, because I intended to put out a one-page newsletter every Friday night, sent gratis, to all the newspapers other than the main press in the country--several thousand. Dolph Weinbrenner's job was to cover the hearings and write this piece. He didn't come right away; I covered them for quite a while, and I covered it on key things myself even after he came.

On one of my fundraising visits, it turned out that I had to go to a meeting of Local 96 in Alameda County.

Rubens: Did you put your gun in your pocket? [laughter]

Ward: Oh, no problem; whatever my business was, there was no excitement. I was sitting there in the crowd in the darkened hall, and there was Humphrey up in front making a speech, saying that it was being rumored around that he was going to testify against Harry Bridges. That was a damned lie, Hump declared; he didn't know anything about Harry Bridges except the obvious things; he had no knowledge about Party affiliation, nothing, nothing. I heard that, went about my business, and in due course there on the witness stand appeared Miles Humphrey.

The Trial

Rubens: Saying that those meetings that you and Harry had were Party meetings, rather than CIO meetings?

Ward: Yes.

Rubens: Do you think Humphrey was being paid by someone to say this?

Ward: First let me finish my story. I was prompting Richie Gladstein in the questions about those Saturday afternoon meetings. "You say, Mr. Humphrey, that at these Saturday afternoon meetings everybody in attendance was a Party member?"

"Oh, yes."

"Everyone, Mr. Bridges included?"

Ward: "Yes, sir."

"And you yourself were in attendance?"

"Yes, Sir."

"Mr. Humphrey, isn't it a fact widely known in the left that you were expelled from the Communist Party? Is that a fact?"

Silence. Couldn't answer.

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Ward: Richie asked again: how could a man known to have been expelled by the CP attend a Communist-only meeting? Still silence. Pointing at the scar on Hump's forehead, Richie asked: "Did you ever get hit in the head?"

To answer your question, the only thing we ever heard on that, and it was pretty indirect, was that Humphrey was given a job managing some federally-owned apartment house somewhere in the Bay region. That's the last I know about that fellow.

Rubens: And did Scott ever show up again?

Ward: He was pardoned. I don't know, I think he probably robbed somebody else and went back to prison.

Rubens: When did you write the book?

Ward: First I want to tell you a little bit about the trial. Remember that we traveled back and forth on the launch to Angel Island. There was a telegraph room right next to the hearing room, and all these guys were buzzing back and forth as reporters were sending their stories all over the country. A new telegrapher came on duty and went berserk, jumping around on desks and shouting something awful about how the Reds were coming, and so on. He had to be corraled and calmed down and led away by the guards.

Rubens: The focus of his craziness was the Communists?

Ward: Who knows? Then there were the college professors, including David Prescott Barrows, former president of the University of California, the man for whom Barrows Hall is named. He and some guy from Stanford testified as experts on Communism; they didn't know Mr. Bridges. They said how awful it was and how dangerous to the best intersests of the United States for such a man to be around, and all that sort of thing.

Ward: Any big news event such as that was elicits the interest of the San Francisco Press Club. Their custom is to take the main figure or figures in such events to their Friday night off-the-record dinners and get him drunk, play poker, take his money, and take him home. That is exactly what happened to Harry. They got him drunk, played poker, got his money, and took him home. The next time they invited Dean Landis. They did their best, but they lost the money. A guy from the Chronicle, whose first name was Johnny--one of the older hands on the Chronicle--and the dean hit it off. They helped each other get up the Powell Street hill; at least he had intended to help the dean, but the dean helped him, according to the story. It ended up by the dean seeing that the reporter got home. That's another one of the yarns.

So we put out this news sheet, and not a word of it was ever mentioned by any of the recipients, except one in Astoria, Oregon. They said it was a God-damned bunch of lies, a misinterpretation of everything. But, nevertheless, it was having an influence. For instance, the first witness at the opening of the trial was a man of very imposing presence in military uniform, Major Milner of the Oregon National Guard. (I don't think he was a major general, just a major, but anyway he was big enough.) He told a story of representing himself as a Communist to Harry Bridges, and dragging Bridges to various locations in the Northwest in Portland and Seattle, and various meetings, knowing that Bridges was a Communist. Bridges was looking at Puget Sound and talking about what would happen when the Russian fleet sailed in, and things like that. The night after he appeared, oh, boy, did the papers have a lot of fun; big deal.

That night in the law office, I was around, and Carol King and the boys, and Aubrey Grossman and Richie Gladstein, got hold of a Portland, Oregon law firm with whom they had friendly connections. Because they were pretty sure that Milner had known Bridges, that there had been a connection of some kind; but just what it was--? In the early afternoon of the next day by special delivery they got a transcript of the Dirk DeJong trial years before. And there it was. In the Dirk DeJong trial Milner had testified the other way; in other words, he had contradicted himself completely in the two trials. Did they have fun with the major the next day, in that pompous uniform. [laughs]

Rubens: You were telling me this as an example where you felt the newsletter did have influence, even though people didn't print what you said.

Ward: It changed the tone of the headlines all over the country right away, particularly the exposure of Major Milner in that first edition.

Rubens: Was that the first edition?

Ward: Yes. The trial started on a Monday, and we got out the first sheet on Friday night, and Milner had already been exposed.

Rubens: Do you have any other example of how you think the newsletter did have influence?

Ward: No. I've seen press clippings a mile high, but I can't remember. But it kept the thing toned down; specific examples I couldn't possibly give.

Rubens: But you surmise that it did have an influence.

Ward: I thought it did, yes.

Rubens: What was your relationship with Harry? Would you ever see him or talk to him?

Ward: Oh, frequently. Not as often as you might think. Of course, if I went to Angel Island I saw him all the time. But that didn't mean that we talked. He was always jabbering away with others, or something.

Rubens: Had he reconciled himself that you were doing this work and that was it?

Ward: Well, he had no option. One time that Bridges had a kind word to say about what I had done was on the day the Landis decision came down. Of course, there was an immediate need to put out a press release. I hid myself in a vacant room with my typewriter and spent a precious hour composing my piece. The Chronicle ran all of it; the News ran all of it; and the other papers ran at least the first few paragraphs. I think it was New Year's eve, at a dance just a day or so later--the Warehouse Ball at the Dreamland Auditorium--and Harry said that was a good job I had done.

Rubens: On the press release, he meant?

Ward: On that statement, yes. The only time!

Rubens: That Landis decision was remarkable.

Ward: You know what that did? That cost him a membership on the United States Supreme Court. He became a drunk, a souse. He managed the affairs of Joseph Kennedy during his movie marauding days; Landis handled the legal end of it. He became more and more despondent, lost his wife and family, and finally killed himself.

Rubens: It was a remarkable decision. Did you expect it?

Ward: No. We hoped. What a cost it was to him to be honest. It's tragic.

Rubens: I have a holdover question: I don't think you ever told me where the name Estolv came from.

Ward: All I know is that in my salad days, when I was chasing girls--and to chase girls in those days the best place to go was church--at one of these affairs, some young peoples' dinner, the hostess had seen fit to scramble the spellings of the names, rearrange the letters. My placecard read Lovest Dawr. That's as close as I can get.

Angela: Your mother coined that name, Estolv.

Ward: Oh, sure. That was unusual, but Eilla was even more so.

Writing "Harry Bridges on Trial"##

Rubens: Who asked you to write the book?

Ward: The Party wanted me to write it, and so did the lawyers. I was warned--if Harry's attitude hadn't warned me enough already--not to let him see the copy until it had been accepted by a publisher. So after the hearings were over I went home and wrote the book. It took about two months. I showed a copy to Bill Schneiderman and to the lawyers. Okay. I sent it to New York with a thousand dollars, to make sure it would be published--because I wanted that particular outfit to do it. They wrote back and said that while they were happy to have the thousand, they would have published it anyhow.

Rubens: The copy I have says ILWU publishers. Was it the Party publishers? The Modern Age?

Ward: Yes.

Rubens: Did they send the thousand back?

Ward: Don't be silly; what a question! [laughter] Everybody was poor in those days; a thousand dollars was a lot of money. Then I put a copy on Harry's desk. In due course he called me in and said this wouldn't do, "This will not do!" And he read a few pages. "Well," I said, "I'm sorry, it's already in the works; it's been accepted by Modern Age." He took the first train back to New York to try to kill the book.

Rubens: Why was he so opposed to it?

Ward: I wrote it, what else? So he went back--and this, of course, is history--and told them how awful the book was. They said, "Mr. Bridges, we're sorry, but we are going to publish it." Finally he wanted one thing--one sentence in the first part of the book, where after a meeting he goes out to talk to some emissary of the employers in the middle of the night. There's something about at one stage of the discussions, either going there or coming back, where he had tears in his eyes. That sentence was eliminated, and that did it.

[Interview 5: 9 July 1987]##

Rubens: Do you want to continue with the end of the Harry Bridges trial and the writing of the book? I have two questions: how many books were printed and sold?

Ward: My memory says that the original lot was something like three thousand copies.

Rubens: Was it reprinted?

Ward: Thereby hangs a tale. Harry Bridges, as I think I told you, didn't like the book anyhow, but was convinced by Modern Age that it was okay. Time went by, and I was in Los Angeles. The government brought up the next trial of Harry Bridges. They (the defense lawyers) called up and asked me if I had a recommendation to replace me as head of the defense committee. I knew that Harry very much wanted George Wilson to be that person, so I said that was all right with me; I couldn't do it. George Wilson was then a reporter on the San Francisco News. He quit that job to go to work for the Bridges defense. They hired some bigshot writer from the East Coast to come back and do a book on that trial. I have no recollection of ever having seen a copy of that book.

Rubens: I haven't heard of that book.

Ward: I don't recall the title or the name of the guy, but he was the kind of fellow who wrote for The Nation, The Atlantic, and things like that. Still, another need for a fast book occurred, because another Bridges trial was pending. So in Hawaii the ILWU under its own format got out a copy of my book; the ILWU was the publisher.

Rubens: They reissued it.

Ward: It was a new edition.

Rubens: Was the book reviewed in the major press?

Ward: I don't remember any such thing. It didn't need to be, because if I remember rightly it sold out quickly.

Meeting Heywood Broun

Rubens: Another question: you mentioned early on that Heywood Broun was a real hero of yours. Did you ever meet him or literally work with him?

Ward: The founding convention of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (before that it was just called the Committee) occurred in '38. It is interesting that the Newspaper Guild, according to its membership, was entitled to four delegates. But there were eleven members there, seven of them such as myself. I didn't go to the convention as a Guild member; I went there as a representative of the Alameda County CIO Council. And so did all these other guys.

There I met Heywood Broun, who somebody said always looked like an unmade bed. We stayed at the same hotel, and I remember that after lunch we would go back and forth from the hotel to the convention hall by cab. I remember riding with Heywood and Connie, his then wife (the one who finally converted him to Catholicism). She had some chocolates, and I forget who was eating what, but she went to put part of the bag of chocolates in the breast pocket of his jacket. She looked at him and said, "Heywood, is this one of those afternoons when you get too hot for chocolates?"

I also remember sitting in the bar of the hotel before dinner and having drinks with Heywood and the other fans of his, and Connie trying to get into the bar, and Heywood's orders to keep her out of there. That sort of thing.

Rubens: Did you admire him as a leader?

Ward: He was more of a character than a leader. But he was a very lovable character, and as a leader he didn't make many mistakes that I know of--put it that way. He was a dynamic, dashing, go-getter. He wrote a daily column which was frequently published in the San Francisco News. The story goes that in one of his columns he said, "If you have a union and you don't have a Communist in it, you'd better get one. They're a good idea to have around." I never could find a copy of that, but that's the story, anyhow.

Rubens: Do you think he knew you were in the Party?

Ward: I don't see why I should have told him, or why he should have asked.

Rubens: But he knew you were a good lefty?

Ward: I think you could assume that those eleven guys there were all lefties of one sort or another.

More on the Bridges' Trial

Ward: Now let's move on to the next few months after the Landis decision. I technically was still the Bridges defense secretary, but nothing much was doing. Two young fellows came to me with a bright idea--Jim Burford and Dick Hartford. There was something we wanted FDR to do in the Bridges' case--to automatically declare Bridges an American citizen, or something like that. They had the idea of sending FDR a telegram, signed by all the signers we could get, at five cents a signature. I went for it, and they went to work. I don't remember how many signatures there were--it was a big long thing--but the bill for sending the telegram was six hundred dollars. They got enough signatures to take care of that and leave a nice little pocket for the kitty. People were coming from all over town on their lunch hours and putting down their nickels. It was a nice idea.

The telegram was delivered, with as much spice and dash as could be mustered, in Washington to the White House, and that was the last that was heard of it.

Did I tell you about the trouble I had on the Bridges defense committee during the Angel Island trial? The chairman of the longshore committee was a man by the name of Johnny Olson. He was the vice-president of Local 10. I had two office workers doing the necessary things, and they were told when they went to work that it would be a hell of a job because here would come the end of the day's hearing, the writing of the news bulletin that resulted from it, time to type out several copies in time to send them to Los Angeles, Portland, and Seattle that evening. Our broadcast went on that evening, but theirs went on the next evening. It was a very busy, hectic time.

One of these girls, who was married at the time, took up with Johnny Olson, and I understand they had quite a fling around the hot spots of San Francisco. When the trial was over, there was to be a little awards ceremony by the longshoremen to make

Ward: me--the original idea was to make me an honorary longshoreman. It didn't cost them anything; it didn't hurt any. Johnny Olson brought the defense office staff, the two girls, and me in to a Local 10 meeting; he had the longshoremen vote them honorary membership, and forgot all about me. That had to be straightened out.

In the committee sometimes this girl and Olson began bucking ideas or proposals that I had. So it got to be an uneasy relationship.

Rubens: What were specific conflicts?

Ward: Oh, for heaven's sakes, I couldn't--they were little daily tittle-tittle. The office was near to closing down; there was nothing left for me to do but go home and write the book. The ACA (American Communications Association) was having a strike in town, and Mervyn (Merv) Rathborne, the president of ACA at that time, came in to town to run the strike. Immediately he offered this gal a job, and she asked me if it was all right if she took it, and if she could leave at the end of the day. I said she could leave right now, and that was the end of her.

The other girl stayed on during the writing and handled the little things that came up, including the preparation of the manuscript and all that. As I think I told you, I had been advised to show nothing to Harry until I got accepted by a publisher.

Rubens: Since you were speaking about these women, I had one other question: the issue of the spy in Harry's office--was her name Norma Perry, the secretary?

Ward: That was on the waterfront, strictly. She was a spy for the ship owners. She was the half sister for someone who was very prominent in the San Francisco CP office.

Angela: Alex Noral.

Ward: Yes. He was a leading Communist in San Francisco.

Angela: Leader of the unemployed movement.

Rubens: I just wondered if there was any more to say than was in the book.

Ward: I have sat, later on, in a Communist meeting at 121 Haight Street and heard Alex Noral condemn his sister in a speech as a spy, a stool pigeon for the employers, and worst of all, a devotee of Harry Lundberg. [laughs]

Ward: The story is that Norma Perry's activities--she was Harry's secretary--were quietly brought to the attention of Bridges. He pulled a trick on her. He set up a situation in which he caught her flagrante delicto, and accused her of being "a goddamned spy for Harry Lundberg." He made a swipe at her, she ducked and bit him on the arm. The next day she went to work for Harry Lundberg.

VI DIRECTING CALIFORNIA'S LABORS' NONPARTISAN LEAGUE

Ward: My next move was then to some position of leadership in Labor's Nonpartisan League. This was an organization established by John L. Lewis, I suspect primarily to further his hopes of running for president at one time or another. Those hopes did not materialize. Anyhow, I became the wheel--I think mentioned J. Vernon Burke before.

Rubens: You met him in Sacramento when you were representing the CIO and he was with LNPL during Culbert Olson's beginnings as Governor of California.

Ward: Yes. Later, as LNPL began to lose ground politically, Burke was ousted and I was put in charge of the San Francisco office of LNPL.

Rubens: Who asked you to do that?

Ward: I'm quite sure it was arranged by the Party.

Rubens: The headquarters of LNPL was back East.

Ward: The national headquarters were under John L. Lewis's hat. My guess is that the LNPL in California was probably one of the strongest sections in the country.

Rubens: Why so?

Ward: I don't know; I just got that impression.

Rubens: So you took over Burke's position in San Francisco? How was that arranged?

Ward: My memory is unclear. [to Angela] Do you know?

Angela: I know Lou was involved in some aspects.

Ward: I told you about going to Sacramento.

Rubens: Right. But then you were representing the CIO specifically. The LNPL was separate.

Ward: That's where I met J. Vernon Burke, and we became friendly. I was called out of that Sacramento situation by Goldblatt--not by Goldblatt, although he wanted me to do it, of course.

Rubens: Gladstein and the lawyers wanted you to do the Bridges defense.

Angela: And the Party.

Ward: Walter Lambert called me up.

Rubens: I just wanted to get how you became the LNPL person in San Francisco.

Ward: It was unquestionably raised by the Party.

Rubens: Were you salaried, literally given a job where you were paid by the national LNPL?

Ward: Oh, of course. I was paid, I guess, out of local funds.

Jack Shelley was then the state senator from San Francisco, and he also was a big wheel in the AF of L. Labor's Nonpartisan League had a substantial membership among the AF of L unions, so Shelley had a good deal to say. All of a sudden the word came from Los Angeles that Ellis Patterson--he was from either Monterey County or one of the coastside counties, and had made a name for himself by becoming a candidate for the assembly on a write-in ticket and winning. Consequently, when Culbert Olson ran for governor, Ellis Patterson was his running mate for lieutenant governor.

During the period when we were having all these do-nothing troubles in Sacramento, one of my closest associates was Ellis Patterson. He also was doing nothing and getting nowhere, even when Olson was sick in the hospital after the Tom Mooney pardon. Then Dick Olson made it his business to run the show. Although Dick Olson was only the governor's son, he took over and effectively took Ellis Patterson out of any power action.

Anyway, all of a sudden a small hullabaloo starts in Los Angeles, and people are running around the CIO building chanting and parading, "Ellis Patterson for President." This is an idea Slim Connelly was highly in favor of, and he was head of that so-called delegation.

Rubens: Are we talking about 1940?

ABOVE: Los Angeles CIO Council Organizing Division, ca. 1940. Left to right: Ralph Dawson, Philip "Slim" Connelly, Estolv E. Ward (Public Relations).
BELOW: State Executive Board of the California CIO Council, CA 1938. Front row, left to right: Sonia Baltrun, Lou Goldblatt, Philip Connelly, unknown, Lew Mitchener. Back row, left to right: Maurice Travis, unknown, unknown, Paul Schlipf, unknown, unknown, Estolv Ward.

Ward: It must be.

Bucking the Communist Party

Ward: So the instructions were that that was it! The LNPL should support Ellis Patterson. But we had a meeting, I think it was in Paso Robles, to discuss this Patterson thing, among other matters. Jack Shelley took over and said this was nonsense. I must say that I agreed with him. And so did most of the other guys. Well, he was the big wheel, locally. The result was that this particular session voted to support the Democratic candidate.

Well, was I in trouble! All over California LNPL chapters were condemning the action and demanding its reversal, and I was in the doghouse.

Rubens: Had this been a meeting of all the LNPL chapters in Paso Robles?

Ward: A meeting of the top organization, at least of Northern California, at which Jack Shelley prevailed.

No, sir, LNPL had to support Ellis Patterson; that was it. A woman, of whom you may have heard, Ellinore Bogigian was a hotshot lefist in Los Angeles.

Rubens: In the Party?

Ward: In everything--a leftist down there. She was dispatched up here to take over and straighten out us crazy northern LNPL people. She even barged into my office and issued orders and hit the telephone. I just went out and sat in the park and fed the pigeons.

Rubens: Was your local branch of the Party upset with you also?

Ward: Well they all were! The membership of the LNPL must have consisted of ninety percent Party members, so whatever the Party said was it.

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Rubens: This is not the first time nor the last that you bucked the Party. Shelley wasn't in the Party, though, was he?

Ward: Oh, no. He was Irish Catholic Democrat, through and through. Jack Shelley later became a congressman. Did you ever hear of

Ward: Congressman Dick Welch? He lived in a very nice old mansion out on Mission Street. He was a Republican, and voted with the Democrats ninety-nine percent of the time. I remember asking him during those days how come he was a Republican, when he so often stood up and defied them in congress. He said that his heritage was Republican, and he was born and raised a Republican; there just wasn't enough incentive to change.

Anyway, he died. I got into trouble again, before he died. It was during my stretch as political officer of the San Francisco CIO Council. A CIO guy from Sacramento and later the Political Action Director in San Francisco, and all that, Dick Welch, the congressman, came to my office by himself and asked me to support a bill in which he was interested having to do with ownership of land around what is now known as Candlestick Park, somewhere down on the western coast of the bay. It was a private bill, in which I guess he had some financial interest. I couldn't see the point, and did he howl about that. My recommendation to the San Francisco CIO Council against it was overturned in favor of the congressman. I was a purist, in other words.

We seemed to be approaching the time when I was pretty quiet and more or less in the doghouse around here. We had a private-line phone at that home, Angela and I. We were living at 1075 Pacific, which was a place where you had to pass through all the odors of cooking from all the neighborhood before you got to our apartment. I think the rent was twenty-six dollars a month. I thought when we moved down to Los Angeles that we had a little more money in our account than I had expected, and months after we went down to Los Angeles I had a call from Party members who lived in that house:: the landlord had discovered one of my uncashed rent checks behind a bookcase or something, and would I please write him an up-to-date check. I did.

Fraternizing with the Elite

Ward: Did I tell you about Fred Thompson? Before we go to Los Angeles: Fred Thompson was the brother of the one-armed Joe Thompson, who at that time was the president of the Bohemian Club. I think they were the sons of one of the founders of the Bohemian Club. Anyway, Fred was a big wheel. But he was in the doghouse with his brother and the members of the Club because he was a leftist. He had a farm on the inland side of the highway, just beyond Stinson Beach on the way to Bolinas. He had been a Marin County supervisor, and he had a lot of Portuguese neighbors with whom he spoke Portuguese, and he told some fascinating

Ward: stories about these ranchers. He tells a story about a rancher who came down the hill onto his property and said, "Mr. Thompson, I lost a cow." Fred asked how long the cow had been lost, and the rancher said, "Yesterday, today, and tomorrow."

Anyway, Fred Thompson had this ranch house and barn and lots of room, and a French mistress. He'd left his wife in San Rafael, and he and this mistress held court at the ranch. Her name was Jean. It was a big deal to go out there--

Rubens: How did you meet him?

Ward: At some left-wing function. I remember he and the French lady braving the God-awful smells to have a meal with us in our apartment, Angela fussing about the dinner. He was pretty brave, but he did complain about the wine, as it was jug wine and probably cost six bits a gallon in those days. But Fred and I became good friends.

Rubens: Did you go out to his farm?

Ward: Oh, you'd meet everybody out there--Aubrey Grossman, Richie Gladstein--

Angela: Even Party members.

Ward: All the people that were in or near the Party. We had a wonderful time on a lovely Sunday afternoon, and you really thought you were in something when you got invited to Fred's place.

Fred's son, Dave Thompson, fought in the Spanish civil war and disappeared. Fred got word somehow that he'd been wounded, but nobody seemed to know where or how or why. Fred hightailed it right over to Madrid, got hold of the top Republican general, whom he knew personally, and in thirty minutes they had Dave located and all straightened out. Eventually he got better.

Rubens: This is no relation to the Frank Thompson of Hawaii?

Angela: No. If I'm not mistaken, Fred Thompson's sister was Kathleen Norris. I'm pretty sure they were related in some way.

Ward: Yes, we used to hear stories about dinner parties at Kathleen Norris' house, at which Fred Thompson and Charlie Lindberg got into arguments, because Charles Lindberg, you know, was very reactionary.

Rubens: How did Fred make money?

Ward: Of course it was old money. There was some kind of company of which Fred was the nominal president, either in upper San Mateo County or in South San Francisco.

Rubens: Did he give money to leftist causes?

Ward: Oh, yes.

On the Radio in Los Angeles, 1940

Rubens: Okay, we're trying to get you to LA.

Ward: We had a blind telephone--an unlisted telephone--but somehow Slim Connelly bellowed his way through and got us. Slim was that kind of a guy; he could scare a telephone operator over the phone. He only weighed three hundred pounds when he was in condition. Slim told me they needed a writer for their five-day-a-week radio program at the Los Angeles CIO Council. I said sure.

We packed up our few belongings and left 1075 Pacific and went down there. We spent the first few days at the home of Dorothy and Slim Connelly (this is not Dorothy Healy, whom he later married; Slim later married God knows how many women). I was still at his house when I took over on a certain Monday morning. I had read in the Los Angeles paper that morning that there was a trial going on involving some leftist personality and problem. I haven't the faintest remembrance of what the trial was about, except that I decided to make that the subject of my first broadcast. I went down there and spent two hours at the afternoon session, got back to the office on Avalon Boulevard a little after four in the afternoon. I had forty-five minutes to write my seven and a half pages of copy, and wrote it.

The announcer, whose air name was Johnny Johnson, took it and went on his way. But as he read it on the air he became so excited and impassioned that he finished a couple of minutes earlier than his fifteen minutes. I got bawled out for that, because we were not supposed to be excited or impassioned about anything; we were simply to get the daily organizing news of the CIO and who did what to whom. So I learned how to do that.

Rubens: Was it a commercial station?

Ward: Oh, sure.

Rubens: Did San Francisco have an equivalent?

Ward: Sure.

Rubens: Angela, you had been working for the office workers, is that right?

Angela: Yes.

Rubens: You weren't an officer in that union, were you?

Angela: I was an organizer, hired by the national union.

Rubens: But you were willing to go down to LA, just like that?

Angela: I think by that time I had been fired.

Ward: The office workers weren't getting anybody.

Angela: They could barely afford to pay me.

Rubens: So it was a good time for both of you to make a change: Estolv is in the dog house with LNPL, Angela isn't getting anywhere. So you both went down to LA.

Angela: Right.

VII ORGANIZING FOR MINE, MILL, AND SMELTER WORKERS

Ward: At that time the Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers--Bill Heywood's original union, the Western Federation of Miners, had a new wrinkle in Los Angeles. The die casting and associated industries were springing little plants up all over Southern California, and thus came into being a union called Western Mechanics Local 700, an affiliate of Mine-Mill. Angela was slipped right in as the office secretary of the union. Eddie Cheyfitz was the president of this national union, and he came out. Angela, you tell about Eddie Cheyfitz; I can't remember exactly--he married Ken Eckert's sister, Dorothy.

Angela: He was the president of the National Division of Die Casters, where was affiliated with the International Union of Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers.

Ward: Okay, that straightens that out. Thank you, ma'am. Then there was an outfit called Harvill Die Casting Company out there.

Rubens: What is die casting?

Ward: They make dies, molds, into which you pour molten metal to create certain mechanical parts. Die making and die casting were both highly technical processes.

They organized Harvill Die Casting, and a strike took place. This guy, Ken Eckert, was sent out (in fact, he wasn't even married to Dorothy at that time) to run the strike, and was immediately exposed in the press, I think by the Dies Committee, as having made a speech at a Labor Day celebration in some Illinois or Ohio town, glorifying Leninism and Marxism--in other words, making a rip-roaring Communist speech. And here he was at the head of this strike, with his butt literally in a sling.

I was the publicity director down there and was supposed to handle problems like that which came up. I think I talked to him only on the phone at that time, but I hid in an empty room with my typewriter in the CIO building, where there was no phone, and composed Mr. Eckert's statement for the press. The statement was of such a nature that the Los Angeles News carried it in its

Ward: entirety, and the other papers carried at least a lead. It changed the entire public attitude toward the strike. It was very helpful.

Rubens: LA News, or LA Times?

Ward: There were four papers: The Examiner, the Herald Express, the News, and the Times. So I immediately became close friends with Ken Eckert; he thought I was pretty good.

Rubens: How many people were on strike?

Ward: Oh, it was a big strike. The strike was holding solid, and we still weren't getting the kind of press we wanted. So I told Eckert to send up a bunch of strikers who would go and meet with me at the newspaper offices, and I intended to crash the offices. We went on a Saturday morning to the Examiner office. I had the inside dope (someone gave it to me) on how to get into the managing editor's office on every one of those papers except the LA Times; nobody knew how to get into that one.

We were in the Examiner managing editor's office before he knew what was up. The city desk called and asked if he wanted the cops and he said no. There were about thirty or forty workers, men and women, in this group, very quiet and very polite. We told the Examiner boss exactly what we thought they were doing, the pro-company slant in the Examiner's strike stories they were turning out. The phone rang. Should the cops be called? His reply was, "Oh, no!" We didn't get arrested.

Then we went to the News, and there we got quite a friendly reception. But the managing editor says, "Why are you doing this to me? I'm your friend." I said, "You haven't been friendly enough to suit us."

At the Herald Express, the boss wanted to argue with me, that guy. He took the day's lead and read it. I took it out of his hands and read it the way it should have been. There was quite a difference. I said his version was completely one-sided and deceptive, and he almost apologized.

Then there was the Times, down at First and Broadway--you know the building. The only thing I knew was that the Times had been very proudly in the habit of entertaining visiting delegations who wanted to see this marvelous newspaper and how it worked. So we walked in, and I said to the doorman that we wanted to see the building. We were shot right up to the twentieth story, and were in the publisher's office before the two young fellows that were there knew what was going on. They were sons of Harrison Gray Otis (the publisher). We left there

Ward: angry, confused, embattled, and started down the stairs, opening doors as we went down and down until, by golly, we walked into the city room. There we were, and cameramen came running, flash guns flashing. We told the managing editor what was wrong with him and his goddamn paper, and left. Nobody got pinched; a very successful day, and made another change for the better. The strike was won.

Rubens: Do you remember the issues of the strike?

Ward: Wages, hours, and working conditions.

The Strike at North American, Los Angeles, 1941

Rubens: What happened next in Los Angeles?

Angela: There was the strike at a stamping outfit.

Ward: There were plenty of strikes, but the one in which I was most active was at North American. This was in May or June, 1941. Pearl Harbor had not yet happened. FDR was helping the allies as much as he could, and particularly England. This North American factory,out in some God-forsaken place near Inglewood with ten thousand workers,was building airplanes. The workers went on strike--they were making fifty cents an hour. And you know what their strike demand was? Six bits--whew, a fifty percent increase!

The plant was surrounded by a moat, a concrete-lined ditch about ten or twelve feet deep, with steep sides. A very agile man, if he fell in, could get out by himself, but he had to be awfully good. There was also a fence that surrounded the plant, and drawbridges by which the workers came and went. On a Sunday of the strike, Dick Frankenstein was sent out from Detroit by the United Auto Workers president, Walter Reuther, to try to calm the strikers down. Dick Frankenstein had been the hero of a vicious gang attack on him on a cross bridge at one of the big Ford plants in Dearborn. He was quite a guy in the United Auto Workers.

A strikers' meeting was called in a bean field across from the plant, and he addressed it. I remember he was trying to tell them to go back to work and see if they couldn't settle the strike while the workers were at work. He was booed down by the crowd, shouted down.

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Rubens: So he was speaking in a bean field, and he was booed.

Ward: He was escorted, during the course of his attempts to speak, off the field by the strikers' safety committee.

Rubens: This was Dick Frankenstein?

Ward: He had an interview with Lou Goldblatt, who was then secretary of the state CIO, to try to be helpful. His pleas had fallen on pretty deaf ears. The bean field meeting was on a Sunday afternoon. The next morning, Monday, instead of just 10,000 strikers around that plant, there were 16,000 strikers and friends.

Angela: Of supporting unions.

Ward: The mayor of Los Angeles, Mayor Fletcher Bowron, was there, pleading with everybody and getting nowhere. All this was being listened to with great concern in the White House by FDR and Sidney Hillman of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, his advisor of labor affairs. And Sid said, "Send in the troops." They were in readiness--

Angela: The national guard.

Ward: --and they came in there.

Rubens: Why did Sid say that? To protect the strikers?

Angela: No! He said to send the troops in to get the strikers back to work.

Rubens: Why did he take this position?

Ward: To settle the dispute through negotiation and not through strikes.

Angela: Peaceful means.

Ward: Well, the troops moved in. Here was this crowd passing by the main entrance which was a sort of a drawbridge across this moat. Angela and I were in the line, moving back and forth, and on around where the main action was.

Angela: We were up in front to face the troops.

Ward: There was a fellow came and got in line with us with his lunch pack on his back. He worked his way around into the inside of the line, and zip! He almost got in. People rushed right after

Ward: him and caught him before the guards got him; the guards were not quite on the alert there. In no time at all that man had lost his lunch bag, his clothes, everything but his shoes, and was pushed out on the street, naked.

Angela: He was a strike breaker.

Ward: That took care of him!

Johnny Barilone was a steelworker, and he was about Angela's size or maybe a little smaller. He was in the line also, and he found himself walking along the edge of this moat with a great big, six-foot-four cop. They were moving along, and Johnny just edged and edged this cop over into the ditch. And he yelled, "I got my cop!" [laughs]

Then came the troops, these young fellows eighteen or nineteen years of age. In one case, one of them was the son of a worker in the plant! And scared to death, with their bayonets out, and so forth. There was a little mound right nearby, and Mayor Fletcher Bowron had been up there begging everybody to ease off and getting nowhere, and here were the guards. Slim Connelly wanted to make a speech. He walked right up to where these young soldiers were pointing those bayonets, grabbed the mike, and shouted, "Brothers and sisters, we will fall back, but slowly." A lot of the guys got pricked in the butt before that was over, but we fell back and there was no serious bloodshed.

Angela: They hurled tear gas at us.

Ward: Oh, there was tear gas all over the place. I got a good dose of it; we all did. But tear gas is not so terrible.

The reason Slim had to do that was because Lou Michener, who was the regional director of the Auto Workers, just fell apart. He just blew up completely.

Angela: He just collapsed.

Ward: We went back to the Auto Workers' hall, back to this little office nearby, and decided our side of the story should be told. I was given the job. There was a strike on at Walt Disney's, and some of their guys were out on the North American picket line. They did a four-column cartoon, and I got out that night a four-page newspaper, wrote and edited it. Before anybody knew
Ward: about it, it was shipped to the main Auto Worker points--Detroit, Chicago, New York, New Orleans--and let them know what had happened.

Ward: I got to bed about five o'clock in the morning and had a few hours sleep. Then I got up to the CIO hall to find Lou Goldblatt on a balcony leading to the street just west of Avalon Boulevard, which was jammed with strikers. He took over and was very helpful in getting things worked out, to the point that they went back to work and they got their raise. Oh boy!

Rubens: You were still doing your fifteen-minute show every night during this period, is that right?

Ward: Oh, yes. My fifteen-minute show went on that night at whatever the studio was.

Rubens: Did you read the script?

Ward: No. The funny part about radios and voices--my voice was not good in Los Angeles. In Las Vegas it was good, but in San Francisco it was not good. It would just depend on the type of mike, or something.

Rubens: Did you have live interviews on the show, or was it always a scripted show?

Ward: A great many of them were interviews--workers, strikers, everybody except managers and bosses.

Rubens: Ellinore Bogigian had come up from LA to condemn you over the LNPL endorsement when you were still in San Francisco. What was it like for you now to be in LA?

Ward: The whole nonsense of the Ellis Patterson slate disappeared. In fact we have run into Ellinore here and there, both in San Francisco and in Los Angeles, several times since then.

Rubens: So that didn't hang over you in Los Angeles?

Ward: No problem. That pushed away so fast that it didn't amount to anything.

Rubens: You had to reaffiliate in Los Angeles; did you have a new branch of the Party that you were affiliated with?

Ward: Of course. There was a branch down there to which Angela and I were assigned, a group meeting.

Rubens: Who assigned you?

Angela: Matt Pellman.

Ward: Eva Schafran was the major domo of our little group, and we became quite friendly. Apparently she thought my little pieces, lectures that I gave on Marxism and Leninism, were excellent. Of course they were copied almost--I tried to apply the ideas to different subjects.

Somewhere along the Los Angeles line Eva came to us and suggested that I could, if I wished, go to a Party leadership school in New York state someplace. I would spend six months there and then I would be assigned to duties as a Party functionary, wherever. Well, that would have been very unhappy-making for the two of us.

Rubens: Angela wasn't invited?

Ward: No.

Rubens: Not too many women went to these things?

Ward: Male chauvinism, I guess.

Angela: I went to state committees.

Ward: She was much more loyal than I turned out to be. Anyway, my reason was a very valid one: I was the financial support of three young children, and unless the Party cared to take that on--I knew that I would be paid virtually nothing, just eating and being taken care of. So that idea died.

To finish with Eva, we didn't stay forever in Los Angeles. Years later she was up here on some business and she came to see us. We at the time were living at Angela's parents' home in San Francisco, and there was a spare room. Somehow or other she visited us there and she learned there was a spare room. She thought immediately that we should let her use that. But we couldn't; it wasn't our say-so. She didn't like that. The last we heard was that, for reasons unknown to us, she killed herself; she threw herself in front of a streetcar.

Angela: She killed herself after the DuClos letter came out. The Party tried to say that it was an accident, but people who saw it said she walked right in the path of the streetcar.

Rubens: She was such a loyal Party person, the Party just couldn't accept that.

One more sidetrack: this was the first time in years that you were living near your children, is that right?

Ward: Yes, although I hadn't seen much of them. Eugenia came to our place very late the night before she was due to get married. That was--what was our address?

Angela: Two-thirty-two-and-a-half West Florence Avenue.

Rubens: Where was that?

Angela: It was near the CIO building.

Ward: I remember being called upon to make a speech before some school on workers' children and things like the necessities the longshoremen were getting, like dental care and all sorts of other things. A teacher asked if I had any children, and I said yes. I was living in Los Angeles, and she assumed correctly that they were in Los Angeles, and she wanted to know what school they went to. I didn't have the faintest idea. I was embarrassed.

You know Dave Jenkins? He used to be a pretty good-sized man. There was a New Year's eve party at Matt Pellman's in which Dave Jenkins and Slim Connelly got into a belly-bumping contest. I don't remember who won, but I can still hear them grunting.

Angela: Do you want to say any more about your children? We'd see Eugenia occasionally.

Ward: When we were there Eugenia was in the business of getting married to a young fellow by the name of Jack Lundigan, who was the older brother, I think, of Bill Lundigan, who was, I'd say, a Grade B movie star at that time--it paid him a lot.

Angela: And he did commercials for refrigeration.

Ward: Second-rate movies. He was a handsome boy.

Angela: You tried to dissuade Eugenia from getting married; she was only seventeen or eighteen.

Ward: I got word that she was euchring him into marriage by pretending that she was pregnant. I called up her mother, and said what about this? Her mother said she had heard the same thing, and it wasn't so; she had reason to know that as of just a few days before Eugenia was not pregnant. So I called this young Lundigan fellow and had him come down. I told him he didn't need to marry her, but I didn't go into details. He said he wanted to marry her anyway, and I said she would tell him all about it. Well, I made one mistake: I didn't tell Eugenia enough about it. The result was that after they married he kept after her and after her, and she thought he was trying to find out if she had ever had an affair with anybody else. She said yes. That wasn't what was intended, either.

Ward: Anyhow, the night before the wedding at two or three o'clock in the morning, there she was at our door, on West Florence and Broadway, and not in very good shape. We put her to bed and got her to sleep. We got up in the morning and got her going. I didn't see how she could possibly get married; she looked like she'd been through a knothole. But we went to the wedding that afternoon, and you'd never know that she hadn't slept. I don't know what happened, but she looked fine, very pretty. They got married. Bill Lundigan got into a mess with another girl at the wedding party, so I heard. That marriage lasted just long enough for Eugenia and Jack to have two daughters. Then they broke up.

Angela: After that Estolv's only real contact with his children was through Eugenia.

Ward: Things were going along, but not running very smoothly in Western Mechanics. In the first place, I had to admit that I was not the best organizer in the world. I was the kind of a guy who could be useful in negotiations and with people who were already organized, but I couldn't walk up to a strange worker easily and say, "Now look here, young fellow, I want you to join the union." I just wasn't any good at it. Anyway, I was put to work as an organizer.

I was awfully bored and tired of this two-bit radio job I had, as I think I told you at the start, but I couldn't let loose. I just had to do little fiddling interviews. With the exception of things like the Harvill strike and so forth, I got bored with the whole thing. So here comes Eddie Cheyfitz and the die-casting people and gave Angela a job--

Angela: No, I was already working for the Western Mechanics.

Ward: Oh, yes, you were already working for them, and then I went to work for them. Little by little friction developed between me and Ken Eckert and Cheyfitz, to the point where--I don't remember what the beef was, but Eckert was having us all hide under our desks as though the office were vacant when Cheyfitz came to the hall.

Angela: He didn't want his brother-in-law--

Rubens: Eddie Cheyfitz was Eckert's brother-in-law?

Angela: Yes.

Rubens: [to Angela] You had already been hired as an organizer?

Angela: No, I was working in the office. But actually my work was more than just an office worker. I was a delegate from the local to

Ward: the CIO Council, and to various committees representing the union. Then in the daytime I worked in the office, kept the books and did all that.

Rubens: And I read that they had you speaking to the women, so you were organizing also.

Angela: Yes, right.

Rubens: [to Estolv] You were hired as an organizer by Western Mechanics Local 700?

Angela: No, I don't think it was Western Mechanics.

Ward: I was hired by Mine-Mill, of which Western Mechanics was a local.

Rubens: Mine-Mill hired you to be an organizer?

Angela: Right.

Organizing Basic Magnesium, Las Vegas, 1942

Ward: Anyway, things reached a bad point, between Cheyfitz and Eckert and everything. Reid Robinson, I think it was, called me up and said they needed a publicity man for an organizing effort they were undertaking near Las Vegas, in a place which was still under construction by the government, for the production of magnesium--about halfway between Las Vegas and Boulder Dam. Mine-Mill was conducting a campaign, and the situation there was very complex and difficult. You know what a sweetheart contract is? Well, Pedro Pete, ex-San Pedro longshoreman and an enemy of Bridges and the rest of the ILWU, became A. H. Petersen, an AF of L organizer who wangled such a contract at this plant, known as Basic Magnesium, Inc.

Angela: He was a fink.

Ward: While the plant for magnesium was still under construction, Pedro Pete went up there. The operation of the plant was being taken over by Anaconda Copper Company. He negotiated a sweetheart contract with Anaconda, covering the production workers--not the construction workers.

Rubens: Who did he represent? They were AF of L craft unions?

Ward: For the whole group, but the crafts union was the construction workers and their unions, and the rest were just, I guess, a big miscellaneous production local, AF of L.

Rubens: So he represented this miscellaneous group?

Ward: Yes. A bunch of guys who had been active CIO members in some outfit, I think it was in Detroit or somewhere back there, were necessary for the establishment of production. Specialists in electrical machinery, they were hired only to find themself ipso facto members of an AF of L union. They went to the Mine, Mill, and Smelter workers--this plant was technically a part of the Mine-Mill field--and said, "How about it?" This was wartime, mind you. Mine-Mill said, "We'll see."

Mine-Mill established an office, sort of, in a hotel room in downtown Las Vegas, and the workers lived as best they could out near the plant, including first myself and then Angela and me. The company was recruiting workers, mostly from the deep South, mostly blacks. I was living in this little town of Henderson, a company town, where you couldn't use the phone, because the bosses could listen in.

Rubens: Henderson was the company town, and Pittman was right outside?

Angela: Pittman was right near there.

Ward: It was two miles away. Pittman amounted to an abandoned school house which had been moved from somewhere else, two bars, and a place where you could buy a sandwich. That was it.

Rubens: What did the company town amount to compared to Pittman?

Ward: Pittman was a tiny little town. Henderson was a sudden community of housing for ten thousand workers. It was just put up, along with the plant.

Rubens: Did it have schools and stores?

Ward: I don't remember a school and a store at that time. [to Angela] Do you?

Angela: Yes, I remember a school that one of the women from the South, a white woman--it was like a kindergarten.

Ward: At that time the guy in charge of the organizing effort for Mine--Mill was a fellow named Bob Hollowa. It was thought that I could establish a radio program and use it to aid in the organizing effort. As I say, we lived in Henderson.

This lawyer, A. J. Isserman--Abe Isserman--was out from New York getting a divorce. He was a leftist lawyer, and I used his hotel room in downtown Las Vegas as office headquarters. We traveled back and forth in the day between Henderson, Pittman, the plant, and Las Vegas, which had a dual purpose: one was to

Ward: simply get from where we were living to a place where we could get on the phone. We didn't dare use a phone in Henderson. In fact, if I remember right, at that time there was only one pay telephone open to the public in the town of Henderson, and that was hooked right through the company.

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Rubens: Next week we'll do the story of Basic Magnesium. I'm confused about something: how did you go to work for Mine-Mill? Did you ask for the job in Los Angeles?

Ward: That's a little yarn in itself. Ralph Dawson, an old friend of Lou Goldblatt who had been a warehouseman, had been transferred to Los Angeles, where he had become the CIO council organizer. For some reason or other Dawson was leaving the job, and I was getting awfully bored with the radio thing. Slim Connelly asked me if I'd like the job. I said I'd think it over. Then right away Eckert asked me to go to work for Mine-Mill, so I took that job.

Rubens: Why?

Ward: Oh, I don't know. In the first place, Angela was in that office, I knew the people, and it just appealed to me. So I took it. I think it paid a little more, too.

Rubens: So you weren't in Los Angeles very long with Mine-Mill before you were asked to go to Basic Magnesium.

Ward: Well, I think at least a year. I went to Las Vegas in the winter of '43, I think. I was a year on the radio, and pretty near a year with Mine-Mill in Los Angeles.

Angela: When you were organizing for Mine-Mill, you were organizing some plant out in the Valley. Across from the plant was a big turkey farm, and that's where you bought the turkey for our Thanksgiving dinner that we gave for all our friends in the CIO Council. That had a connection with the organizing job you were doing just then.

Ward: A big aluminum plant down near Torrence.

Angela: That was one of the jobs you did.

Ward: I won the election, too!

Rubens: The year you were with Mine-Mill, you did not do the radio?

Ward: No.

Rubens: You were a full-time organizer for Mine-Mill. This had to be the year 1942.

Ward: Most of the workers who were being imported were from the deep South.

Rubens: At Basic Magnesium?

Ward: In Los Angeles, too. All over. They were picking people right out of the cotton fields and bringing them out here.

Rubens: Just like at the shipyards.

Ward: Everything. Oh, yes. One of my memories is driving along the road picking up workers and going back and forth--black as the ace of spades. I told them that I was the CIO organizer: "My mammy done tol' me, if I ever should meet up with that CIO I should j'in it." That's the way it was.

Evaluating Unionization in Los Angeles

Rubens: Los Angeles has such a reputation for being an anti-union town, and yet these were the years of so much expansion in the aerospace industry. So were you encountering people, like this black man, who were willing to join the union? Were you having a lot of success in LA?

Ward: Mixed bag. Some I won, some I lost.

Angela: But overall, the CIO was doing a very fine job. The electrical workers were burgeoning into a big union; the warehouse was organizing all over the place. And then Mine-Mill was doing likewise in their particular area.

Rubens: It seems like Los Angeles in the '40s was like San Francisco was in the mid-'30s.

Ward: You couldn't compare them, because San Francisco was too small. San Francisco became _the_ great port of embarkation for the Pacific war. But Los Angeles became the great manufacturing center. One reason San Francisco wasn't that kind of a center was simply because there was no space here.

Rubens: I imagine in terms of its time for unionism, precisely because industry is expanding that the drive to unionism is more successful.

Ward: Oh, yes. That's one thing that Ronnie boy [Ronald Reagan] better look out for if he gets us into a big war. You send all the troops to the front, and you need workers. And the workers suddenly discover the unions are kind of handy.

[Interview 6: 13 July 1987]##

Rubens: Did you want to say just a little more about your work with the Mine-Mill as an organizer in Los Angeles?

Ward: I don't remember what I said before. I wasn't too successful. did I talk about negotiations with Alcoa?

Organizing Alcoa

Rubens: Angela, you mentioned some places; let's get them on the record.

Ward: She was secretary of Local 700 of the Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers--sometimes called the Mine, Mill, and Smelly Workers.

Alcoa was quite an experience. We won the election against the AF of L at this brand new plant, which had just been built by the government in wartime on the outskirts of Torrence.

Angela: Alcoa stands for Aluminum Company of America.

Ward: There was a turkey farm right across the street from the main gate of this newly-built plant, which of course had a high fence and all, and there was a guard at the gate. I was to establish an office in a little shed on this turkey farm.

Rubens: Did the owners know what you were doing?

Ward: Oh, yes, there was some arrangement with the turkey farm people---from whom, incidentally, we bought a thirty-pound turkey for the last Thanksgiving dinner during wartime that we had at our place in Los Angeles.

I don't remember the issue, but Alcoa made some kind of a ruling from the East that had a detrimental effect on the hours, wages, or working conditions of the guys there. All of a sudden there was a sit-down in this new plant.

Rubens: This is 1942?

Ward: Early '42. The government had foreseen a long time before Pearl Harbor that we were actually one of the Allies, allied with England and France against Germany. In fact, at that time Russia was also an ally.

Before this sit-down, the company would pay no attention to me. But this time they sent a man out to the gate to ask me to come in and talk to the guys.

Rubens: Had this plant already been organized by the AF of L?

Ward: No, this was a brand-new plant, with no organization at all. And we beat the AF of L, eventually, in the election that came about. But this sit-down happened during the time when things were still uncertain as to who was the bargaining agent.

They asked me to come in and talk to the guys, and I did. I listened to their complaint; I asked the management what it had to say. The manager said his piece, and I said that it struck me as being an unusual change and lessening of the wages, working conditions, and so forth. However, I said, this is wartime and my union and all other unions have given no-strike pledges for the duration of the war. Therefore, unless this matter is corrected according to the workers' demand, by next Tuesday I will wash my hands of the whole affair. I will not tell them what to do. If they sit down on you, that's just too bad.

Rubens: You were playing the level head, keeping a lid on things?

Ward: You can call it what you want.

Rubens: What was in your mind about the strategy?

Ward: I just said what I said at the moment. I don't think I knew what exactly my strategy was going to be when I walked in there. The result was that the matter was straightened out by the next Tuesday.

Rubens: So they had threatened to sit down, but had never actually sat down?

Ward: Well, they did for a short time until I said to go back to work. So that got straightened out right away. We won the election, and I set up a little meeting hall in Torrence. We used to meet before work. The best time to meet was not after work, when all the guys wanted to do was get home to mama. But in the mornings we had little meetings in our place down in Torrence, and eventually we had negotiations. I remember Maurice Travis came out and helped me in these negotiations.

Ward: They had just established a Regional War Labor Board in California. They established a committee to help in negotiations, consisting of a CIO person, an AF of L person, and somebody supposedly representing the public. We had these negotiations, and they were difficult. Our CIO guy was a fellow I knew well from Alameda County, who would frequently doze off during the course of the thing, which didn't help much.

Rubens: Did the governor appoint those people?

Ward: I don't know whether it was by an arm of the federal government or the state government. Anyhow, I remember all these months of effort ended up in a three-cent an hour wage increase, period.

Rubens: How did the workers respond?

Ward: Well, they couldn't strike. They lived. This was announced by the company. I don't remember the details, but I remember looking that guy in the face and wishing I could hit him.

Rubens: The workers had sat down, there was a militancy there. You had urged them to go back to work: were they angry at the union?

Ward: I think they accepted very well my suggestion at the time. The relationship with the workers remained good.

Rubens: Can you give some generalizations about the workers? Were they white, were they young, were they from the Oklahoma dust bowl?

Ward: They came from the deep South and the Middle West, mostly black except, of course, the technicians.

That dwindled along. Jim Robinson was sent out with me in the afternoons. He was Reid Robinson's father, and Reid Robinson was president of the Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers union. The first thing Jim wanted to do was go get a drink, which was the last thing I wanted at that time of day. I asked him why, and he said it was because if he drank later in the day, Margaret (his wife) would smell it on him when he got home for dinner and he'd catch hell.

Rubens: Since Jim came out with you, was this a big and important election?

Ward: No, it was just something for the poor old boy to do. He wasn't very helpful, but he did sit in the office at times when I had to go here and there.

Ward: That dwindled down to nothing, and my situation with Ken Eckert got worse. So when Reid Robinson called me up and asked me if I would do a radio broadcast up in Las Vegas, Nevada, I said, "sure." The AF of L had a sweetheart contract at a newly built government plant near there. The CIO was led by a group of engineers and technicians who had been active CIO members in other unions in plants in Detroit, Chicago, and elsewhere. They immediately got together and said they didn't want this kind of a contract, and they contacted Mine-Mill in Denver. So they began looking, and established what kind of sweetheart contract had been worked out and signed between Anaconda Copper, which was running the plant, and the AF of L, which was represented by Pedro Pete.

So I came out to Nevada and found myself working with Bob Hollowa. He was the Mine-Mill organizer.

More on Basic Magnesium

Rubens: Your designation was publicity--

Ward: He had the money to run a fifteen-minute news spot on the radio every night, seven nights a week. That's what my job was supposed to be. Angela remained in Los Angeles, because this was only to be a few weeks project, until some kind of a decision was made. I was established in the little company town of Henderson in the home of a man who had been an officer in the national guard, perhaps a major--he liked to be addressed as "Major," anyhow (I forget his other name)--who was a bit of a drunk. I was established in this home and started the nightly broadcast in Las Vegas out on the strip, about fifteen miles away. (In fact, Henderson was about two miles south of the little town of Pittman.)

I was in this house one day, typing my nightly script, when a car drove up with two young fellows, one a boy of about fifteen and the other a boy of sixteen or seventeen. The boy of fifteen who was being brought to me was obviously in a very bad way, mentally. He had been employed in the plant, and somehow in cleaning one of these seething chemical vats that were used in the process of making magnesium, he had fallen in.

Two man had tried to rescue him, and then <u>they</u> couldn't get out, either, so there were three of them in there. Finally a rig from the chemical squad of the fire department came and hauled them out. What happened to the two other guys, I don't know; apparently they weren't too seriously damaged. But this young

Ward: fellow was obviously mentally kaput. He had been burned, and the burns had been treated to some extent--to the point where he could wear clothes and get around. But he was partially looney. The company had just said goodbye and kicked him out. So they'd heard of me, and these two fellows came. Between the two of them they told the story.

At that time the president of Anaconda Copper, who was known as Con (I can't remember his last name), was in Las Vegas. Abe Isserman, a prominent left-wing lawyer in New York, had come out--he was getting a divorce, and having some difficulties about things. Meanwhile, Bob Hollawa was having legal difficulties of his own, and Abe was advising him. I had the use of his room and telephone in Las Vegas. (I didn't dare use a phone in Henderson; it was impossible, because the phone went right through the company.)

I got through to this guy from Anaconda Copper, and the minute I told him who I was he hung up the phone. So I wrote a public letter, addressed to this Mr. Con somebody, president: "This morning I telephoned you on a very urgent matter and you refused to talk with me." I just told the simple story of what had happened to this boy. It did the job. All I know is that I was informed that the boy was immediately put under psychiatric and medical care at the expense of the company, and was promised to be taken care of for the rest of his life or until well. End of story.

Rubens: Was this published in the Las Vegas newspapers?

Ward: It spread like wildfire in the plant. It was a very fine organizing thing; people that had been doubtful before just clamored to get into the CIO.

Rubens: This was an organizing letter, not a publicly published letter?

Ward: Strictly organizing. I didn't send it to the newspapers. It was very helpful to our campaign. Angela was still in Los Angeles, and I usually made my broadcast and then wrote the next day's bulletin to be distributed to the workers at the plant gates.

Rubens: What time was the broadcast?

Ward: Around seven or seven-fifteen in the evening. I usually got to bed about three or four in the morning and was up again by eight. The election came, a group of special people was sent out by Washington to conduct it. They were friendly but impartial.

Rubens: NLRB people?

Ward: Yes. The election was held, and that evening--I think it was after my regular broadcast--I came to the radio station and walked into the office just in time to hear the station manager answer a call from some lady who wanted to know how the election had come out. He said he would made an announcement in a few minutes, but the CIO won. End of conversation. That was it.

Rubens: Did this mean that that sweetheart contract was over? Or were you organizing the unorganized people?

Ward: This put Anaconda in a beautiful position: they had a valid contract with AF of L; we had won the election. They could tell either or both of us unions to go to hell. Which they did!

Rubens: Did the CIO election mean the whole plant, not just the people who hadn't gone into the AF of L?

Ward: The whole plant. The technical and professional workers--not the foremen and higher bosses of the plant. But parts of the plant were still under construction, and there was a large force of construction men there. They, of course, were AF of L members.

Rubens: How many workers are we talking about?

Ward: Ten thousand. So there we were. We established an office at the little town of Pittman. It was in a vacant and deserted schoolhouse that had been moved to this spot from somewhere else. It had a side little wing, which was a bar that was well patronized. We didn't have any phone, but at least we had a place where we could hold meetings and where we could have an office of sorts where people could come. We managed to function, get along, and got out leaflets almost daily, which meant we were out distributing leaflets by seven o'clock in the mornings and up until after eleven o'clock at night.

Rubens: Who was "we"?

Ward: A crew of active supporters, and Angela and I.

Rubens: Were they workers?

Ward: Some were workers, yes.

Rubens: They were people from the plant?

Ward: Yes. People who lived in Henderson. I think I told you I used to pick up people driving from Henderson to Abe Isserman's room in Las Vegas, where we did our telephoning from. One day I was driven off the road by a strange car; I could see the driver smiling at me. I could tell right away it was not an unfriendly

Ward: thing. His name was Joe Houseman, and he had been sent by the International to try to get a job in the vicinity and to be our helper. There was a new plant just opening across the road that also was to be organized by someone.

Rubens: A different company?

Ward: Yes. It was something to do with the mineral products of the region. Joe was assigned to get a job there and try to organize that place. He brought his wife up, and they had some children (wasn't her name Molly?). She was the most foul-mouthed woman I ever heard anywhere in my life--otherwise a very nice person, but just talked like a drunken high school teenager on the night of his graduation.

Anyway, we began to have meetings there for people who were interested not only in the current problems, but in the future of labor. Among the people with whom I had become friendly was a couple named Mr. and Mrs. Jack Higdon. He and a couple of other guys had been active in the Utility Workers' Organizing Committee in Oakland and knew me, and Angela, to a lesser extent). When Angela came up we stayed only a short time with the original couple where I was living.

Rubens: Why did Angela come up?

Ward: I remember when the election was over and I drove down to Los Angeles, and had been home two days doing nothing, I went to the weekly meeting of the CIO Council. People told me I looked like I had been dragged through a knothole.

##

Rubens: Angela was now going to be the secretary with Mine-Mill in Henderson, Nevada.

Ward: And Joe Houseman went to work in this other plant and began organizing it. We were getting along, but we were getting nowhere, too. At one point--I forget what the reason was that gave us encouragement--the manager let it be known through channels that he would be willing to receive a CIO committee. A date was set, we formed our committee. One of the guys who decided he was on that committee was this Jack Higdon. Men left their jobs to be on the committee, I guess to protest the foreman's cussedness.

We were met at the gate by a company jeep and driven a block or so to the managers' office. We were greeted cheerfully by the managers, sat down, and they promptly began to give us hell--told us what a bunch of bums and no-good fools and troublemakers we

Ward: were. Somehow or other in our group was a black man who had been sent out by the International, I think.

Rubens: Who was this Higdon?

Ward: Jack Higdon was a guy I had known in the Utility Workers, the PG&E employees, previously. He was one of three PG&E guys I had known and worked with in Oakland, and who had moved to better jobs at BMI when I was up there.

We were fairly insulted and bawled out, and left practically speechless. We didn't get a ride back, either; we had to go back on our own feet. Higdon was promptly fired, whereupon his wife went to work in the plant. There was plenty of work for women there, apparently. We moved in with the Higdons; they had a room to spare, and the common interest. They both were very kindly, well-meaning people.

Rubens: Was he in the Party?

Ward: Well, soon they joined, yes. With Joe Houseman we set up a little group, and we made one recruit, a black man well-known and liked in the plant and in the black community of Las Vegas.

Rubens: A black man who worked at the plant but lived in Las Vegas?

Ward: Oh, yes. Where else? There was no place else they could live.

Rubens: The company town had no blacks; it was segregated?

Ward: Oh, yes. In fact, when this guy came to see us and we were living in Henderson, he came to the back door. We told him to, because it wouldn't be a good idea for him or for anybody--

Rubens: So when you lived with the Higdons it was in the company town?

Ward: Very much so, yes.

Rubens: How many lived in the town?

Ward: A figure of eight hundred to a thousand seems to be about right, which meant that the vast majority of the workers lived elsewhere. Aside from the town there was a single men's camp run by the company.

Rubens: Was there no branch of the Party in Las Vegas that you plugged in to?

Ward: Not so far as I knew. Anyway, we invited this young black fellow to our meetings and recruited him. He conducted himself very helpfully and very well.

Ward: It became obvious that the CIO wasn't getting anywhere, and it was decided that I should go to Washington, D.C., to the War Labor Board, to see what I could accomplish there, while Angela and Joe Houseman ran the store in Nevada.

Rubens: It was the strategy of the company to just ignore this election?

Ward: Yes. Well, they were in a beautiful position: we won the election, but the AF of L had the contract.

Rubens: So they abided by the contract?

Ward: What they did, who knows? I'm in no position to say. But they obviously were in a beautiful position to do anything they pleased.

Rubens: What was the attitude or relationship with the AF of L? Was Pedro Pete there?

Ward: I don't think I personally ever met Pedro Pete. The only AF of L people we saw were when--that's another story. It reached a point one night, this conflict with the AF of L, where at the night shift change (usually around eleven), we were out there distributing leaflets, and the construction workers came out in their professional attire with the belts and the hammers and big long screwdrivers and things--

Angela: And axes.

Ward: --and charged us. I could see that they were after me, and I took to my heels. I heard in the distance a gun being fired and the sounds of crashing glass. The thing broke off. Angela was there; they didn't bother the women. There was nothing worse than a smashed windshield in a jeep and a few punches thrown here and there. No serious injuries. We had a gathering at somebody's house that night, afterwards, but couldn't reach any conclusion about what to do.

Confronting the War Labor Board

Ward: But the next morning we felt better and we decided that I should go to Washington to the War Labor Board. In the meantime Angela and Joe Houseman would run the store, and we would put only women out to distribute leaflets.

Ward: The only question was how I was to get to Washington. I think somehow or other we scraped up something like thirty dollars. The plane fare from Las Vegas to Salt Lake City was something like twenty-eight dollars; so I got to Salt Lake City. There was supposed to be a ticket there to take me to Washington, but no ticket, no money, no nothing. I tried to call the Mine-Mill office in Denver, but it was Saturday afternoon and nobody was there. Somehow some arrangement was made--there was a business about being bumped off a flight, and because of the wait on this plane and being small and slender built, I beat out a very bulky army major. But he had enough money and I didn't, so he got the flight.

Somehow I had enough money to get to Cheyenne, and I boarded a train at Salt Lake City. But the ticket agent who sold me the ticket had not given me a ticket to Cheyenne; he had sold me a ticket only to Ogden, just a short fifteen miles or so. So that was discovered when the conductor came through, after we had passed Ogden and were already in the Wasatch mountains of the Continental Divide. I was astonished, and he was going to stop the train and throw me off in the middle of the mountains. I was in a car in which ninety-nine percent of the occupants were soldiers in uniform being transported from here to there. I found a sergeant who thought I had a good case, who organized the rest of the guys, and they very calmly but politely threw the conductor out of the car. So I got to Cheyenne. My ticket apparently had been validated, and when I got to Cheyenne I went right to the ticket agent and told him my problem, he called Salt Lake City and got hold of the guy that sold me the ticket. He said, oh, yes, they had made a mistake. So I got to Denver.

It was Saturday afternoon and I had had no breakfast, no lunch, and I had something like two dollars. The Mine-Mill office was closed, Reid Robinson was at a football game. I hung around and hung around; I went over to the famous old Denver Hotel, where the lobby is paved with silver dollars, and sat around, hungry and a bit dispirited.

Finally I got Reid on the telephone, and he didn't get too excited; he was obviously very busy about something. He told me to go to such-and-such a hotel and he would call beforehand, and they would give me the key to one of their organizer's room, a guy who was in town for the weekend, and although he wouldn't be there at the time he would probably come to his room. It was a double bed room, so that I could have the other bed.

By that time I had about forty cents left, and I ate whatever forty cents would buy at that time. I went to this

Ward: hotel and got the key and went to bed. Along about three or four in the morning this guy comes in drunk, finds a strange man in his room. Well, we had a lively moment, but it all got straightened out.

The next morning I went to the Mine-Mill office with Reid, and I met the old so-and-so who was the treasurer of the Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers Union, who didn't like the Robinsons or the way the International was run, or anything else. He didn't like the leftwing trend of the union. But at Reid's insistance he opened the safe and found two hundred dollars in cash plus sufficient money for my airplane ticket to Washington. Arrangements were made for me to stay with the Fowlers--C. D. (Cedric) and Eleanor--who were friends and workers of the Left in our union.

I arrived in Washington, D.C., about eight or nine on a weekday morning, and C. D. Fowler was already somewhere between home and the office. What I needed right then was a place to sleep, and in those days that could be easily arranged in a hotel; you rented a bed on an eight-hour shift in Washington, and that's what I did. And I got eight hours' sleep. That evening I connected with the Fowlers and we got straightened out.

Rubens: Who were the Fowlers?

Ward: C. D. Fowler was the editor of the CIO News. I moved out to their home out close to the Arlington cemetery; I think it was just into Maryland. It was a big, lively house with lots of people. There were the Fowlers themselves, man and wife; another couple who were living with them; and a gal named Elizabeth Sasuly (who now lives right here in Berkeley) who had just moved there. She had a hell of a time: her husband was away in the Army; she had an automobile, but she had no gas to move it from one garage to another; the garage rent was killing her, and she couldn't use the car--oh, all sorts of problems.

I began the task, with some assistance from the Fowlers, of trying to chase down somebody who would pay any attention to our problems at Basic Magnesium. Meanwhile (Angela should take up the story here) the Anaconda Copper Company, in its wisdom, had decided to change the government-built toilet stations, which made no color distinction whatever, over to black only and white only. This enraged the blacks. The toilets had been built by the government without any thought of segregation, which was a government policy already. Anaconda was changing that policy in a very personal and dramatic way, which enraged the black militants at the plant. Six hundred of them sat down in the plant. Angela can tell the story of what happened, because all I know is what I heard over the phone.

Angela: It was mostly blacks, but maybe two whites sat in.

Rubens: I remember in Angela's oral history she said there were something like twelve showers for the whites and two for the blacks.

When you went to Washington, you hadn't called or written ahead?

Ward: Senator [Patrick] McCarran was our problem. He was holding up, by his own demand, certification by the War Labor Board of our election. One of the reasons that I went to Washington was to see McCarran and see what I could do about that. When we found out that McCarran was the main obstacle to certification, we got hold of leading people sympathetic to us, mainly at the plant--I remember particularly a guy who had been a pal of Jack Higdon, an engineer of some kind--to send a flood of telegrams to Senator McCarran, saying please, and demanding, and so on. And, by golly, McCarran did it. McCarran told the NLRB to go ahead and certify it, and they did.

Rubens: Before you went there?

Ward: Before I went back East. So that was done. That was when we had the meeting with the company in which we got laughed out of the place.

Now here I was in Washington, trying to see McCarran and trying to see anyone. I remember going one day to the Pentagon, and I had an interview with some rather portly young fellow; I think he was a major. He wasn't at all interested: "Only six hundred? Out of how many, ten thousand? Hunh." Not enough to raise a hair. It was when the walkout occurred that I went to see the major. If I'd said six thousand, it would have been different. I got nowhere at the Pentagon.

Finally I got to see McCarran. What I had to say was something about the things that were going on and being said in Las Vegas that were placing him in an awful position by the local AF of L labor officials in Las Vegas, and especially the central labor council guy. They had been going around saying that McCarran this and McCarran that, and I wanted to know if this was true. McCarran just blew up in a huff, ordered me out of his office, and took off on the next flight to Las Vegas to see what he could do about that. I never heard the outcome, except that McCarran was no help at all.

Then finally I got an interview with the head man of the War Labor Board, sometime in an early evening. They weren't turning on the lights until absolutely necessary, and this took place in an office gloom. He listened with some respect and kindliness, and said that the only thing he could suggest was to call for a

Ward: strike vote at the plant. I said, "Oh, we can't do that, sir; no strikes during the war." He said, "Well, you can make it plain that it's merely a no-strike vote; it doesn't imply any strike at all. It's just that technically it would give us a reason for moving in and doing something."

Rubens: You were asking him to deal with certifying the election and having the company recognize the election--not just the six hundred?

Ward: We wanted him to show up the AF of L, and that would have been the much desired result. But nothing like that took place. He said that was the only suggestion he could make--if I could get a good strike vote, he would be forced to look into the situation, and perhaps be helpful.

Rubens: Did he give you any other reason for not resolving this--that it was too small, he was too busy?

Ward: No, this was the only thing he could think of that could be done. So I went back to Denver.

Rubens: Meanwhile, you were having these phone calls back and forth with Angela.

Ward: Yes, and wondering how she and Joe Houseman did.

Rubens: Well, the black workers walked out and you felt you had to support them; you didn't tell them to walk out, but since they did you had to support them.

Angela: That's right. We had a meeting in a church, full of these black guys. Joe and I were the only two white people, and we had to make a speech and tell them it was wartime and they couldn't strike. But if they did, we were on their side. You know, it was a--

Rubens: You were caught.

Ward: Did I tell you about the machine guns on the rooftops? Oh, boy, that was hot as a pistol.

Angela: Joe and I went into town and there were all these--

Ward: Oh, there would have been a massacre here of the blacks if Angela and Joe Houseman hadn't turned the tide of that meeting.

Angela: --and they had machines guns all set up on corners, ready if there was any insurrection.

Rubens: Did you encourage them to go back to work?

Angela: As I recall, we told them what would happen if they didn't. But it was hard to face these guys and tell them to go back to work, in that cold-blooded manner. So we couldn't. What we told them was that they should go back to work, and what the union's policy was.

Ward: If I remember right, the program that you defeated in that meeting was to march in a body to Henderson and try to take back their jobs, which of course would have been--ugh.

Angela: We talked against that.

Rubens: Had they been replaced?

Angela: They were probably replaced to some extent. It was a very fast-moving situation.

Ward: I, of course, telephoned, and then I spent part of a day asking Angela if she understood what was coming; and also about Abe Isserman, I guess. Before I left Washington I spent several hours with Lenny DuCaux, international publicity director of the CIO. I told him what my recommendation was, and he endorsed it.

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Rubens: So you got back to Las Vegas, having met with the big boys in Denver. Abe Isserman doesn't let you get back to your house immediately, but eventually you are there.

Ward: We got back to our little abode--

The Failed Strike Vote

Rubens: Were you still living with the Higdons?

Ward: Yes, we were with the Higdons by that time. The struggle began to inform the workers in the plant--and other people, in a sense, too. Because by this time the whole affair of the sitdown had exercized the black community of Las Vegas and scared the white community, and things were a bit anxious around there.

I found a friend, the Mormon bishop of Las Vegas. I knew of him, and I may have even met him (I can't remember his name now). A nice young woman in the Western Union office, where I was sending a telegram, took it upon herself to tell me that the

Ward: Mormon bishop thought very highly of me and my efforts for the blacks. This seemed odd, too, because I don't think the blacks even yet have been admitted to full membership in the Mormon church.

That friendship took hold and was a great boon to us; very helpful and encouraging. People were nodding and smiling on the streets of Vegas.

Rubens: Was there a large Mormon community in Las Vegas?

Ward: Obviously. I have no means of knowing what the percentage was, but they represented the anti-gambling element that lived in Las Vegas. They were not the majority, I wouldn't think.

Rubens: Pro-union, pro-black, and anti-gambling.

Ward: Yes. Then just as things were warming up to a new election, our Hudson Super 6 conked out right in the middle of the busiest intersection of downtown Las Vegas, and just couldn't be moved. Finally it had to be towed away. They fixed it up somehow, and I think I drove it to Los Angeles--anyway, I got to Los Angeles and somehow or another managed the down payment on one of the last 1941 Ford Sedans (there were no cars manufactured during that war!).

Rubens: You went to Los Angeles specifically to buy a car?

Ward: Well, there were many reasons to go to LA, but this was probably the main reason this time. Again, leaving Angela on the job up there with Joe Houseman.

Rubens: Why else would you go to LA, connected with your work?

Ward: We were trying to get financial support from friendly Los Angeles unions--and did, to some extent; otherwise things would have been tougher than they were.

I remember starting out for Vegas in this Ford, and discovering about fifty miles out of town that in filling the gas tank I had forgotten to put on the cap. I had to turn around and go back to get that, but I got back to Las Vegas. We had a friend staying with us, Claire Harrison, and we had a big fling. We took her out to a resort on the shores of what is now Boulder Dam. We had a big night and went skinny dipping, stayed up most of the night and got home somehow; that was it.

Ward: The election came on--

Rubens: You mean a strike vote?

Ward: Yes.

Rubens: Do you remember organizing for that strike vote?

Ward: Oh, very much so. Meetings--one meeting was attended by a contingent of AF of L construction workers with their gadgets on, who were pretty hostile; they erupted a couple of times. I remember that one of the guys who was supposed to be on our side made a funny statement which indicated confusion in his mind. And I remember Angela making a speech in which she said that anybody who accused her of doing this for Communist motives could "meet me outside." There was a lot of talk about "dens of Communism."

Rubens: You just had a small Party, didn't you; you never became large?

Ward: Let's see, there was Joe and his wife; Angela and me; the Higdons--about seven, that was all.

Rubens: So where did the charge of Communism come from?

Ward: What do you need? That's what was said if you opposed anything!

Rubens: They weren't specifically attacking Mine-Mill?

Angela: Sure.

Ward: During the time when all this struggle was going on, it was Christmas. The Party held some kind of a convention in Southern California, and Ken Eckert introduced a resolution scolding us for taking a strike vote in wartime.

Rubens: The Party condemned you in Los Angeles? Later on everyone was condemning you!

Ward: Anyway, the strike vote was taken, and we lost. During the last days there was an attempt by the company to include the hospital nurses they had there. This smart young company attorney took me to lunch; it was the first really good meal I'd had in a long time. One of our best members had a girlfriend who was a nurse, and he was telling us all the time that the nurses would vote for us.

Rubens: How many nurses were there associated with the plant?

Ward: Oh, I think a couple hundred; it was a significant little number.

Ward: And I was inclined to go for it, but Joe Houseman said no, so we cut that down somehow. Nurses or not, we lost the election, not by an awful lot, but by a significant enough amount that we couldn't challenge it. We said goodbye to the bishop and our other friends in Las Vegas, packed up our books which we had lined up all around the wall in the Higdon bedroom (everywhere we went we had our books; some of them you still see on our shelves here), and drove back--

Rubens: There just was no reason to stay on?

Ward: We were through.

Angela: We were non-salary. We didn't have any money there; we weren't being paid.

Rubens: The Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers did not give you any money for this?

Ward: Not once we set up a local.

We didn't go through Los Angeles; we went over Tehachapi and over to Bakersfield. We got home some time at night--to Angela's family home in San Francisco.

Rubens: You made up your mind not to go back to Los Angeles?

Ward: I guess it was our own decision. I don't think there was any question: we wanted to get back to San Francisco, no question about it. We got back some time after everybody had gone to bed.

Rubens: Was this early 1944?

Ward: Yes, January of '44. Everybody was in bed--the Gizzi family went to bed early--and I remember Mama saying the next morning that she woke up in the night and opened the door and peeked in and saw two heads in a single bed, so all was well. We had less than five dollars, and a car on which we owed money.

Rubens: Had you made some good friends amongst the workers in Las Vegas?

Ward: Oh, yes.

Rubens: How do you characterize those workers? There were those six hundred blacks; who were the white workers?

Ward: Well, people like the Higdons.

Rubens: The Higdons are atypical; they chose to come there to organize.

Angela: Remember that family from the Midwest? They were sort of Okie types.

Ward: Oh, you mean the ladies' auxiliary? [laughs] We stayed for a while before we went to the Higdons, I think, with a family. He was a police-minded person, and in addition to working in the plant in something higher than just common labor capacity, he was a deputy sheriff in the Las Vegas territory. Angela tried to start a women's auxiliary, and this guy's wife was the hostess for the beginning meeting, as it was called. Quite a few ladies came, but as the hour approached for the meeting the lady of the house, dressed only in a nightgown and slippers, greeted the ladies by coming out on the lawn and standing on her head. End of auxiliary.

Rubens: Were there a lot of midwestern migrants who had come just for the jobs?

Ward: Oh, yes. One of the women there--she and her husband became very friendly and close--handed out leaflets upside down because she couldn't read. They were from Wyoming, sheepherders by trade.

Rubens: Were these people being paid relatively well?

Ward: A dollar and a half an hour was good money in those days. Remember that just a year or so before the auto workers had struck in Los Angeles for six bits an hour. Oh, a dollar and a half was big money.

Rubens: So it was tough conditions to organize. Was there ever any movement on the race issue--were the showers ever equalized or desegregated?

Ward: I never came to know the outcome of that one, but my suspicion is that the company just took that criticism in stride, because I certainly don't recall any exultation among the black workers.

Rubens: When you left did people take up a collection for you, or did they just say goodbye?

Ward: I would put it that we just slunk out of town. That was about it, no big farewells or hoorahs or tears.

Rubens: You said that on the way back from Washington you met with Reid Robinson. Was there agreement among the national Mine-Mill leadership to call for this strike vote?

Ward: Oh, yes.

Rubens: You made a comment about how later on you recognized what damn fools you were.

Ward: At least *I* recognized what a foolish thing we had done; I don't know what they thought.

Rubens: In retrospect, should you not have taken the vote?

Ward: Yes. The way to have worked that out would have been to ascertain, which could easily be done, the life of that sweetheart contract.

Rubens: You didn't know that at the time?

Ward: I partly knew; I think it was a year. We probably should have done nothing in the beginning except keep the contacts open. Then about four months before the end of that year we should have opened an office and an organizing campaign to vote against renewal of that contract.

Rubens: Yes, I wonder why you held that election?

Ward: Well, I didn't know what I know now!

Rubens: But you weren't the organizer. Who was making that decision, Robinson, or the Party?

Ward: I was offered this avenue by the head of the War Labor Board, and I agreed to it. Reid Robinson and the other officials agreed to it, and that was it.

Rubens: No voice ever said to wait.

Ward: No, there was no argument.

Rubens: Including that treasurer who you said was in conflict with you Reid and you?

Ward: I don't know of any. If he was opposed, I didn't hear of it.

Rubens: So was that it for your relationship with Mine-Mill?

Ward: No. Let me jump ahead to some years later. Things happened again in about '48 or '49.

Rubens: Then we'll talk about that later. For the record, there were some company names in Los Angeles that you went over very quickly: North American, Alcoa, Harvill--

Angela: And there was the Adams-Campbell Die Casting and Molding Company.

Ward: That little company right down the street from our CIO office, with which I had such a bad time: we won the election, but you

Ward: could tell the owner had a hell of a time about it. About that time I left to go to Las Vegas, and I don't know how it came out.

Angela: Oh, it was called Century Die Casting.

Ward: He had a sister or brother who was a wheel in the Democratic party.

Angela: At that time there were numerous die casting and molding factories making parts for the planes and for other munitions that this country needed in fighting the war; so there were just literally scores of these plants. There was the LA Die Casting Company.

VIII IN RETREAT IN SAN FRANCISCO, 1944

Ward: So we got back to San Francisco, and it seemed to me that within days people were after both of us, particularly Angela, to go to work for various organizing committees. She went to work with the UWOC (Utility Workers Organizing Committee).

Angela: I think that was before this time. Didn't I go to work for Gladstein's?

Ward: No, that was much later. You went right to work for UWOC--

Rubens: You wanted to write.

Ward: I was immediately offered a job. The ACA (American Communication Association) was trying to organized Western Union. I was offered a job, but I asked them to postpone it because as soon as we got home, I knew that we didn't want to live with the old folks, her parents, any longer than necessary. I found a house on Sanchez Street, right at the head of 20th, which is a steep hill up from Church on the J car line. We had no money. It was occupied by renters who couldn't pay their rent, and the owner, I found out, was willing to sell for our car; we traded our car for the down payment on that house.

Rubens: Was this the first house you bought together?

Angela: Yes.

Ward: The house had no foundation and was sinking; the living room floor had the most beautiful curve to it.

Angela: It was in rotten shape.

Ward: I bought this house and eased the people out as gently as possible.

Rubens: The car was enough for the down payment on the house?

Ward: Yes, it was the house for the car; what they got for the car--it paid in at a thousand dollars.

Angela: We only paid $2,800 or so for the house.

Ward: The total price for the house was $3,600; so we had $2,600 left to pay after we turned in our car.

So then we owned a house and no car, and the house wasn't fit to live in. Angela got this good-paying job right away with the Utility Workers' Organizing Committee. Between her salary to help make the payments and the cost of materials--I found a guy who was a Party member who had done war service in the merchant marines and had done the required amount of war service on the extremely dangerous Murmansk run. Allied ships had been torpedoed and all sorts of things. Johnny Clyde was his name. He was a skilled carpenter and his wife was a good designer. Between him and the people he got around him, we got the house straightened out. He put a foundation under it, began to smooth out the floor, kept underpinning it. Then we wanted a fireplace. This was a very old fashioned house; I believe it had been built in 1909. It had tiny little rooms. The living room was about the size of this one, and a dining room about the same size or bigger, a good-sized kitchen, and a couple of bedrooms.

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Rubens: Were you feeling tired of living out of a suitcase?

Ward: Very much so. We wanted a home of our own. We knew that with all the kindness of her parents, we shouldn't stay there forever. I think we paid a nominal little rent to them.

I worked for almost a year on that house. That was coming along pretty well. I remember George Curran, Angela's brother-in-law, used to come over with the little boys and help sometimes on a Sunday, particularly with the painting. George was a pretty good painter.

But we wanted a fireplace. The first question was when I went to the brickyard. The salesman said to "come here," and under a glass case he had one brick. Among other things, did you ever hear of the explosion at the Port Chicago brickyard? That had recently occurred, and there wasn't a brick to be had. All right.

Somehow or other I got tipped off that in the backyard of some kind of a little office down in the outer Mission, there was a pile of bricks. I got down there and I found the guy, and I offered him a good price for the brick. He took it, but he wouldn't move it. I remember I borrowed an old car from somebody--and in those days borrowing a car was a darned sight harder than it would be now--and loaded those bricks a little at

Ward: a time and got them up to the house. That house was on a hill there with fifty-four steps, and I carried all those bricks up those fifty-four steps.

Then we found in North Beach a retired bricklayer who was an anarchist, black shirt and all. So we got some fellow leftist who could talk his lingo (I don't think he had much English) to discuss with him and somehow prevail upon him to come up and build that chimney and fireplace. As it was being built he, being an anarchist, wanted to do the fireplace the conventional way, right in the middle. I didn't want that; I wanted the fireplace to be on one side. He couldn't see that. So work came to a halt in due time. We called all the comrades and anarchists into a discussion. First we got him to agree that a majority vote should carry.

Rubens: Who is voting--the work crew?

Ward: The whole work crew--all these comrades and one anarchist. And he did it the way we wanted it.

Organizing for American Communications Association

Rubens: You had enough money to work on the house because Angela was earning money.

Ward: Yes. Then we reached a point where I could go to work for this organizing campaign that the ACA was putting on. So that increased our income considerably.

There was an election coming up. It was the presidential election of 1944. The front window, which was to be our large living room/dining room, was a little bay affair with tiny little windows and out of keeping with the style of the place. We both wanted to change them, but we didn't have the money. The election was coming up. There were two betting parlors in San Francisco, both of them well known to the public, both of them patronized but ignored by the police, the district attorney, and so forth.

One of them was Tom Keynes. There was an election battle going on between Franck Havenner--who had been a former member of Congress and who had been defeated, but who was a good guy from the labor point of view--and Tom Rolph, a cousin I think of Mayor Jim Rolph. The election came, but it was indecisive because of the overseas vote, the soldiers and the sailors in the Pacific. I think we bet on Havenner to win, and somehow a chance came up

Ward: to put up another hundred at three to one that Havenner would win by so much. Whatever it was, it turned out that when the overseas armed services vote came in, Havenner won.

The result was that we had five hundred dollars, which bought us our fancy new windows. That's how we got those.

Angela: We called them our Republican windows.

Rubens: One last question before we get too far off: Is it important to say anything more about Eckert and his brother-in-law Cheyfitz? What was the problem with you and Eckert?

Angela: It was important because he turned out to be stupid.

Ward: Angela could tell you better than I could. We just did not get along.

Rubens: He hired you. Angela was already working there, and then he hired you.

Ward: Oh, yes.

Rubens: Eckert had you hide when Cheyfitz came into the room?

Angela: Cheyfitz was a phony guy, and he was anti-Communist. Eckert joined the Party and was part of the Party setup because it was convenient for him, it turned out later, to do so; but he was not a committed Party member. I think one of the things he didn't like about both of us was that we were more devoted.

Ward: One incident may give you a clue. There was a big celebration party given by Local 700. It was supposed to be a costume party, and I came in costume, dressed as the upper and lower classes. I had on a full dress jacket with tails, a white vest, stiff shirt, a white bow tie, and red underpants.

Ken Eckert came in rented costume as an American Indian, complete with tomahawk and headdress. Of course we were put up against each other; that may have been the beginning of it. Of course he won, but my costume got more comment.

Rubens: You didn't get along. Were there also policy issues that you disagreed on?

Ward: I don't remember anything, really, on policy. It was just little personal stuff. I remember we took a trip to San Francisco together for some reason.

Angela: We had personal relationships with him, but you didn't trust him as much after you got to know him better; there was just

Angela: something about him. I remember later when he testified against somebody from the Party before a committee.

When we came back from Las Vegas and came to San Francisco, we were subject to considerable criticism from the Party hierarchy on Eckert's instigation. At a state Party convention they really lit into both of us.

Ward: I didn't feel that criticism at all when we arrived in San Francisco, with Bill Schneiderman and the Lamberts, though.

Angela: But with the state committee as a whole. I think the Los Angeles comrades were very critical.

Rubens: Well, as we know, they had condemned you at a meeting.

Angela: I was very surprised that Lynn Haynes offered me this job with the Utility Workers' Organizing Committee, which is a very conservative outfit. And I've wondered how he got by with hiring me so shortly after this Las Vegas business. [tape turned off]

An Aside About When the Party Went Underground

Angela: We took all these documents and these books--we had a marvelous Marxist library--up to the ranch that belonged to Estolv's father. We thought that was a good place to put all that stuff. It turned out that it probably wasn't a good place, but anyhow that was our intention. We put it in the back of a car that we had bought from Dave Jenkins. It was a good car, but kind of old. It was a convertible, and we were driving up to Sonoma County to get to the ranch, and we were going to put all this stuff in a secret place until times got better and we could give it to the labor libraries that were beginning to come into being. On the way up there we were rear-ended so badly that only by some miracle the trunk didn't fly open, which would have strewn this stuff all over the highway. We got the car, with a broken and leaking gas tank, up to the ranch, and had to leave it at the bottom of the hill because it couldn't make it up. There were a bunch of comrades up there for the weekend, so they came down and jacked open the trunk. Here was all this stuff that came pouring out onto the field, because the car was parked sort of on a hill. It was the considered judgment of everybody that we should get rid of it right away, and it was burned.

Rubens: All the books and leaflets from Basic Magnesium?

Angela: Yes, sure. I remember there was a leaflet that was a directive against Estolv. There was talk that he should run for Senator against McCarran.

Rubens: When was this?

Angela: This was while we were still in Las Vegas. But it never came to anything, because with his reputation up there he never would have gotten to first base. But there was a leaflet that showed a cartoon of Estolv lying in a coffin, dead, and then all these remarks about how he's going to meet his maker because of his vile Red affiliations. There were a lot of leaflets that we put out and that the other side put out that certainly would be very handy now to refresh our memories.

Rubens: Was this in the fifties that you burned all these things?

Angela: Yes, when the underground movement in the Party was underway. In fact, it was right when things were really tough.

Rubens: You went underground?

Angela: Oh, we were not underground. We attempted to function; I was on the county committee. You couldn't go out our front door without running into an FBI agent. It was a miracle that I had--I just had wonderful bosses at that time. I was no longer with the Utility Workers because I had been fired for Taft Hartley. I'd be down on Market Street in front of Party headquarters, just bumping into a leader of one of our local Party units, and we'd be talking. I'd turn around, and there was the FBI taking a picture of us together. Everything that I did was--Estolv not so much, because he was not in the same position. That was one of the reasons we didn't want this material to get into the hands of anyone if we got arrested or whatever.

Lou Goldblatt was in a different position when he was doing his oral history, because all he had to do was go to the library and read the dispatches and all the stuff that the union put out. I think to myself how stupid we were.

[Interview 7: 16 July 1987]##

Rubens: Let's begin with you making a general statement about your state of mind and the state of the labor movement when you returned to San Francisco after what I suppose was a defeat at Basic Magnesium.

Ward: It certainly was a defeat.

Rubens: The war was still on, right?

Ward: We came back in January of '44 to San Francisco. It was more than a defeat at Basic Magnesium. Because at times down there we had indulged in dreams, that I think originated and that were certainly supported by the top leadership of that union, that if we could carry Basic Magnesium that would very shortly overshadow the AF of L setup in southern Nevada, and eventually possibly the whole state of Nevada. In which case we could get rid of Senator McCarran and the other senator, and elect our kind of senators. The dream went further than Nevada. It included possibilities in Utah, Idaho, and Wyoming. We got as far as the possibility that we might emulate those Auto Workers in Detroit, and send eight Senators to the Senate in those four states, and possibly more: Colorado, Montana--that would be ten. It was all smoke, of course, but it was a lot of fun to think about.

So those dreams were buried in Nevada, and we came home.

Rubens: You mentioned that you had been tired of traveling and living at the edge of a conflict. So you spent almost a year building your house, Angela went to work for the Utility Workers. What was your state of mind about what was going on in San Francisco and the labor movement, and where you were going to make your next move?

Ward: Angela will have to speak for herself, but it seemed to me that she fitted into her job with the office workers at PG&E right away.

Rubens: How did that you make you feel, having your wife back on the front lines again?

Ward: Why not? I don't know that I had any feelings except that it was a good thing somebody in the house was making some money. I was offered a job very quickly thereafter with the American Communications Association, the ACA, which was engaged in an effort to organize Western Union in San Francisco. In fact I was offered leadership of that effort in San Francisco, but I declined the whole thing at the time because we had just bought this house, and I was very busy.

Rubens: Why did they offer this to you? You weren't in disgrace because of what happened?

Ward: Anything that happened in Los Angeles didn't matter that much in San Francisco. You know, the old feeling was there--

Rubens: I want you to characterize that; I want you to make a judgment about your reputation here in San Francisco.

Ward: Oh, I had just had bad luck in Nevada, and a bad time down south, that's all. I don't think it affected our stature with Bill Schneiderman, the Lambert brothers, the other Party members I knew. They were just glad that we were home, that's all.

Angela: Weren't we offered a job to go to Hawaii by Lou Goldblatt?

Ward: Oh, yes. I forgot about that. We'd been away from home too much.

Rubens: Goldblatt wanted you to organize pineapple workers and sugar workers for the ILWU?

Ward: That was one of the things Lou was just beginning to cope with at that time. But we were so glad to be home that Hawaii--simply no.

More on Organizing ACA

Rubens: So you took an organizing job with ACA?

Ward: They wanted me to go to work on that. I said I was interested, but first of all we had just bought this house and I was in the middle of trying to make it livable. That went on until the Fall of that year before I finally reached the point where I went to work for the ACA.

Rubens: What was your position?

Ward: Organizer. The campaign was run in San Francisco by Paul Schnur, who was then the secretary-treasurer of the San Francisco CIO Council, and also an old long-time telegrapher and member of the ACA.

I spent my days in front of the U.S. Western Union offices handing out leaflets and talking to people, and doing what organizers do.

Rubens: About how many Western Union workers were there at this time?

Ward: Somewhere between 800 and a thousand, I think.

Rubens: It was a significant workforce?

Ward: Oh, yes. There was more than one Western Union office in town.

Rubens: People depended on the wire service much more.

Ward: This was wartime, in the middle forties. You could fly back East if you had the pull, the pass, and the money. You could make a long distance call which, if you were lucky, might get through.

Rubens: How large was the ACA up here? Who was the head of the union who offered you that position?

Ward: The head of the international was a man named Mervyn Rathborne.

Rubens: Who was the big wheel out here?

Ward: Paul Schnur.

Angela: Wasn't Eddie Barlow one of the--?

Ward: Eddie Barlow was one of the guys--

Angela: President, yes.

Rubens: Was it a leftist union?

Ward: It was one of the leftwing unions, yes.

Rubens: It was already in the CIO?

Ward: Oh, yes.

Rubens: Did you have a strategy for organizing these workers?

Ward: Well, if we had one it didn't work. We didn't win the election when it finally happened. There were many to-dos about it. I remember there was a connection with a rather attractive young woman working at ACA. Somehow or other I got hold of the wage list--what each worker was paid--and we published it. That was a big help to our organizing, because the wages were really rather pitiful. But it infuriated one lady worker, who was rather pretty and wore very nice clothes and told everybody that was because she had a much higher salary than she actually had. It made it appear that somebody was keeping her, which was probably the fact.

Rubens: You had said when you were in Los Angeles with Mine-Mill that you didn't much like organizing, that you weren't good at it.

Ward: I was much better helping the organized do their business with the companies.

Rubens: Yet you were willing to take this job?

Ward: Oh, yes. I don't feel like I was a good organizer.

Rubens: But you took the job anyway. Did the Party encourage you to take the job?

Ward: _If_ the Party was consulted about it, I'm sure they would have said yes, but I don't remember any consultation. It was simply that Paul Schnur asked me to take the job, and my saying to wait a while because I was awfully busy fixing up this old house, and then finally going to work for him.

Rubens: So you lost the election. How long had you been organizing?

Ward: Yes, we lost the election, although I had done everything that I was supposed to do; it was no fault of ours. The Western Union workers were almost all women, and we of course got to know a great many of them during the course of it all.

When we lost the election Paul Schnur immediately offered me the job of political action director of the San Francisco CIO council. We were one of the earliest active PACs in the CIO out West here. Which meant that I very shortly found myself with a regular seat, one that was occupied by the CIO PAC man alongside the AF of L character at the meetings of the San Francisco board of supervisors.

I remember one of the big fights we had was over the five-cent fare, which had been the case in the San Francisco trolleys (I don't think the buses had come in yet; it was all trolleys). By that time we had moved into our home at 680 Sanchez Street. The J line ran up Church Street and ran through the uphill side of Dolores Park. It was a handy thing, because standing at the top of that one-block hike from Church to Sanchez (our house was just off the corner) you could see if the other guy was going to get home, get off the streetcar at the right time that night. This became a matter of great importance a bit later.

Rubens: One of the issues was that the five-cent fare was going to be increased?

Ward: One of the issues was the retention of the five-cent fare that had been a part of the administration in San Francisco.

Rubens: Who was mayor at the time, 1944?

Ward: Roger Lapham.

Rubens: And Oleta O'Connor Yates was head of the San Francisco Party at this time. I think Lapham had appointed her to the war commission.

Ward: I doubt that.

Angela: I don't doubt it. I was on one of the commissions; I forget who appointed me.

Rubens: In Los Angeles?

Angela: Even up here--war manpower.

CIO Political Action in San Francisco, 1945

Rubens: How do you characterize the politics in San Francisco in late '44 and '45, vis-a-vis labor and the issues you were concerned with. Was it a hopeful period?

Ward: I can answer that in this way: if the AF of L and the CIO took similar positions on anything, we carried the board of supervisors without question. If the AF of L and the CIO disagreed, somebody else carried it.

Rubens: How often were you in agreement?

Ward: Not too often. But when we did, there was just no question; we had that board right in our hands.

Rubens: In terms of organizing, you weren't successful at Western Union. But was there a big drive to organize workers--the shipyards, the machinists--?

Ward: Well, the longshoremen, the warehousemen. I think the shipyard workers were a problem child, I can't remember exactly why.

Rubens: There were issues with the machinists, and blacks--

Ward: The machinists, both in the East Bay and in San Francisco, have either been in the CIO or were friendly to it. In the East Bay they were in it for as long as I've dealt with them. In San Francisco they were in the AF of L but very friendly to the CIO. There was a character, Ed something, the head of the machinists---that friendship remained until the late sixties, when there was a machinists' strike which we thought was not advisable but which the machinists bought, and which cost this character and his assistant--

Rubens: I wanted you to be setting the stage for your work as political action director. What were the concerns and hopes that the CIO had? The war was still on, so it was going to change very dramatically after the war.

Ward: The war wasn't on for much longer by the time I went to work for the ACA. I still remember the night when the final armistice was signed on the deck of the Missouri in Tokyo harbor. I was at a Party meeting at 942 Market Street. We broke up that meeting at about ten o'clock and tried to go home. The streets were utter chaos, utter bedlam. I suppose if anyone had recognized us as Communists, we would have been killed right there. Girls were getting screwed right on the sidewalk [laughter]. Oh, all sorts of things were going on, everything from fistfights to whatnot. Finally we walked up Market and the crowds got less and less noisy. We got a streetcar up around Van Ness and got home.

Rubens: Did you and Angela attend the same club meetings?

Ward: I think we were together most of the time.

Angela: Yes, at that time.

Ward: I remember one of the ladies who used to sit next to me, Louise Todd, was the widow of Rudy Lambert.

We fought the five-cent fare issue in the board of supervisors, and the mayor had vetoed the resolution which we supported, which was to retain the five-cent veto and the hell with cost to the City. At one point in the discussion we had the eight votes necessary to override the mayor's veto, but when that became obvious to the City opposition, our eighth vote began to get phone calls which took him out of the room. While I can't prove it, I was told that the head political boss on the Examiner got on the phone to this character, telling him he better not run for supervisor again if he didn't vote no on it. So we didn't carry.

That was the 31st of December, and that night I managed to get hold of this guy on the phone. Before that he had been very attentive to what we wanted and what we had to say. I bawled him out, and he bawled me out. Very shortly thereafter he got caught in a homosexual mess at the Olympic Club. Goodbye to him!

Rubens: These were days when the Party was running Archie Brown and Anita Whitney for supervisor or assembly.

Ward: They ran him for governor. I remember his campaign for governor, and in fact when we meet now I always call him "Governor."

Angela: Was that at the time of the Schnur campaign?

Ward: I think the Schnur campaign came later.

Rubens: What other issues did you deal with as political action director?

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Ward: For a long time when I called up certain members of the board of supervisors, believe me, they answered the phone to find out what I wanted and what they could do about it.

Rubens: How many unions were in the CIO? About how many unions and how many workers did the council represent?

Ward: At that time, wartime still, about 12,000 longshoremen, and 6,000 to 8,000 warehousemen.

Angela: And the utility workers, the ACA, and cannery workers, electrical workers.

Ward: We had a good slice of the working population around the bay.

Then we began to get at loggerheads with the old boy who had been the assemblyman for the twentieth assembly district for many, many years. Tom Maloney had been state senator at one time, and then they had shifted the senatorships around and he had been an assemblyman. I had to lead committees of workers up to Maloney's office. Sometimes he was helpful, sometimes he was not sympathetic. When he was non-sympathetic and the voices began to rise, he'd reach into his desk drawer for his best quart-bottle of scotch. He didn't drink himself, but he thought that was the way to settle arguments.

We finally came to the point where we decided to run Paul Schnur against Maloney. And we did.

Rubens: Was this after the war? How long were you political action director? You went to work there in '44, or was it '45?.

Ward: I think until late '46 or '47.

The Schnur Campaign

Rubens: When was the Schnur vs. Maloney campaign? It must have been in the Spring or Fall of '46.

Ward: Probably. Arranged by the Party at my request, I caught a certain longshoreman who I wanted to work in this campaign in the middle--I went to a meeting in some deserted building on the waterfront, and upstairs in a room there was a little meeting of

Ward: comrades who were quite surprised to see me. (The person who was presiding at that meeting is still a very dear and close friend of ours.) I carried the edict that this young fellow was to be pulled off the waterfront regular work and work at regular wages for the Schnur campaign. We did all those things, and the campaign was fought. We lost, but that campaign was different from any other campaign I've ever engaged in, such as the Bridges campaign where we had the assistance of this very smart money man, Ed Reite, longshore secretary-treasurer. On the contrary, the bookkeeper in Paul Schnur's office, who was supposed to be able to let me know at any time what we had and what we hadn't, just didn't know and wouldn't keep up; so I had no idea how our money stood. The result was that at the beginning of the Schnur campaign the council had set up seven thousand bucks in the kitty, and by the end of the campaign we had nothing, which was a sad discovery. It need not have been that bad, by any means, if the bookkeeper had been up to her job.

Rubens: Did Schnur lose badly?

Ward: He lost undoubtedly, but not badly.

Rubens: Did the Party put a big effort behind that one, too?

Ward: Oh, yes. Because the Party wanted him. I remember during the course of the campaign they even made a deal (which was quite common in those days) with the San Francisco Seals baseball team. On a Sunday afternoon we had a box with Paul Schnur, and at the seventh inning stretch the announcer introduced him to bow from the box and he made a little speech.

Rubens: Was he a good speaker, an attractive personality?

Ward: He was a pretty good speaker. Time didn't allow more than a hello and how are you, "I'm running against Tom Maloney."

Rubens: Were you excited about him?

Ward: Yes, I was in charge of it!

Rubens: But did you have faith in him?

Ward: I had hopes. Dick Lynden of the warehousemen had put in a lot of money. Everybody was a little tight. Dick Lynden told me what a wonderful job I had done. But the day after wasn't so very good--we found out we didn't have any money and we didn't win the election.

The Brewery Workers

Ward: About that time the Brewery Workers came to town with a problem. The Brewery Workers nationally were CIO, but in California their links were with the AF of L, particularly in San Francisco and Los Angeles. So they set up a campaign to straighten that out, and sent out a couple of characters from Detroit to run the campaign in California.

Rubens: The international sent them out?

Ward: Yes, the Brewery Workers International. They were a young man by the name of Harold Bondy and an older man named Charlie somebody. Money wasn't abundant. Since the CIO Council was kind of flat on its face financially, it was suggested that I help the Brewery Workers. I did, somewhat to my distaste, because I was not used to working with Detroit mobsters.

Rubens: How did you know they were mobsters?

Ward: From the way they wanted to organize; they brought goons unless you bought that, and so forth. And you might even put out a leaflet once in a while! Anyhow, we did what we could. Bondy had only recently recovered from being shot and seriously wounded in some kind of street fight in Detroit. That's the way they settled things there.

Rubens: These were not lefties?

Ward: Oh, no. Also there was an office worker in some connection with Schnur's office that he was glad to get rid of, so we got her. Thus there was friction in many ways. Incidentally, the Brewery Workers had to have legal counsel, so they got Gladstein, Grossman, and Margolis, who assigned Norman Leonard to the Brewery Workers. He and I had quite a time. We always found ourselves in agreement and got along somehow.

Rubens: Is that when you first met Leonard?

Ward: No, no. This was when he returned after the war. We're talking about '46 and '47 now. I knew him slightly before he went into the war, just a new young man in the law office. When he came back from the war he was, of course, older, the need for his services was bigger. This was still one of the less desirable assignments.

Rubens: How many breweries were there in San Francisco?

Ward: There were at least three. Budweiser was by the freeway, and one at Twentieth--

Ward: The AF of L character who was the secretary-treasurer of the local brewery union had a young assistant--

Angela: Del Moorehead.

Ward: Yes. We learned somehow that Del Moorehead was not quite so sure that he liked the Teamsters, which was the union that they wanted to go into. I picked up the word and got to him, and for quite a long time he remained as the assistant to the other guy but was telling us what they were doing, until it reached the point where he figured he was about caught. So he came over openly to our side.

I remember one night at the old labor council hall on 16th just below Mission the Brewery Workers were meeting upstairs. We sent Del Moorehead up there alone to tell what he had done and why he had done it, and suggesting that they drop the Teamsters. Outside they had their goons and we had about 200 guys, but we got out of there with nothing worse than three or four fistfights. Until eleven o'clock the whole labor movement on all sides of town held its breath.

Rubens: Was this an unusual confrontation?

Ward: Oh, very unusual. I must say that guy had a lot of guts to agree to do it. So Del went to work for us, the Brewery Workers. It was not an easy situation. One of the girls from the council office that Paul Schnur had wished off on the brewery workers, I simply could not get along with. She was a very difficult person and, oddly enough, found a sympathizer in Del Moorehead. I think that was the occasion where she had me brought up before the Party on some kind of charges.

Rubens: She was also in the Party?

Ward: Oh, sure; everybody was, except the Brewery Workers.

Angela: She brought you up on charges of male chauvinism. [laughs]

Rubens: So there was a hearing. Did you defend yourself?

Ward: I remember going down there. She had a witness, the wife of a prominent Party guy in Alameda County, and I had myself. The hearing officer was a guy who would have been here yesterday afternoon to visit us--

Angela: Leon Kaplan.

Ward: "Kappy."

Rubens: Who lives in L.A.?

Angela: Yes, they're in L.A. now.

Ward: At that time he was stationed in San Francisco. Kappy got the idea of suggesting that that one or the other of us quit that office. I said that was fine with me, and I quit and let them stumble along as best they could. By that time I had decided that I wanted to write about the labor movement rather than be active in it. Bondy called me up once or twice to ask my for advice, which was a funny thing for that guy to do, but he did. It didn't work, and they lost the election. Then the question was what to do with Del. He had a wife and a child. He was sent to Sacramento by the Warehouse workers; he went to work for the Warehouse people in Sacramento, organizing them. There he got into clashes with a guy who's rather famous in the ILWU, Frank Thompson. He was a brilliant organizer, and his personality was such that it was easy for some to clash, which included Moorehead, and they had a bad time.

Rubens: Moorehead came over to your side as a Brewery Worker, but when he left he went to work for the Warehousemen as an organizer.

Ward: Yes. That didn't last. Frank Thompson wound up in the organizing drive in Hawaii, and Del Moorehead, when I last heard of him, had gotten some kind of a state job.

Angela: The Department of Employment. He signed a statement saying he was not a Communist. His wife (her name might have been Eileen) was a very ardent Catholic. We went up to see them at Auburn.

Rubens: Had he come into the Party?

Ward: Oh, yes. I recruited him into the Party. She was aware of it and not very happy, but not unsympathetic either. At that time I was writing a book, or attempting to. I wanted to write a book about Catholicism, for some reason. I remember going up there and spending a weekend with them. She took me to church on Sunday morning and asked me what I thought about it. As a result, to the <u>great</u> excitement of Angela's sister, I went to a Catholic school at Old St. Mary's on California Street.

Angela: The Paulist fathers.

Ward: Yes. I listened to some young fellow show us all the vestments and gowns and robes that were worn on certain occasions.

Rubens: Why were you interested in this?

Ward: I was not interested in becoming a Catholic, but I had to pretend to be interested in order to find out something about it. I can't remember why I wanted to write on this subject, and it would be silly for me to try; it was silly of me anyway!

Rubens: You quit the brewery campaign and the CIO as political action director at the same time, is that right?

Ward: Yes, or shortly thereafter.

Angela: When the Schnur campaign ended with no money, then he went to work for the Brewery Workers.

Rubens: The CIO sent you there. Then you didn't want to come back as political action director, and they didn't have any money--

Ward: Paul Schnur had resigned, Eddie Barlow was running the CIO Council that was going on a shoestring; there was no money. All the poop had gone out of it.

Rubens: Why did it get to that state?

Ward: Partly because of what was going on in the CIO back East. The CIO was divesting itself of these left-wing unions. It was all involved with the ILWU and the Bay cities CIO councils.

Angela: All those selected unions.

Writing About the Labor Movement

Rubens: You were talking about your book on Catholicism.

Ward: I was working on a novel called The Piecard, which was about a very good guy who became an important labor official, and what caused him to go phoney and why. It was the result of conflict.

Rubens: Did you have someone in mind when you were writing it?

Ward: I had a half a dozen people in mind.

Rubens: Do you want to say who they were?

Ward: Of course not. It was a composite of several people. Here it is. It came out in Polish as Renegat.

Rubens: Was it published only in Poland?

Ward: That's the only place it was published.

Rubens: So writing this novel was the first thing you did.

Ward: Yes, and I was getting along with that. At the same time I thought I'd like to know something about the conflict between Catholicism and Communism, and I thought I'd write a book about that. So I went to church with Del's wife, and to the school on California Street where I asked questions. I forget what the questions were, but this middle-aged priest couldn't answer me, and I began to be a bit of a nuisance, I guess. He finally suggested that I go to the top guy at St. Paul's and see if he could answer me. So an appointment was made, and I went to see this man, who I remember was slender and obviously a very smart guy, middle-aged. He hadn't listened to me five minutes when he said, "Get out of here. You're a God-damned atheist."

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Rubens: We're setting the stage, the background of your work. Angela was still with the Utility Workers; she was supporting you, basically.

Ward: I think that would be correct.

Rubens: The labor movement was under attack. The CIO had been very prominent in San Francisco, and now was the beginning of the purge of the Left.

Ward: Yes.

IX REASSESSING MEMBERSHIP IN THE COMMUNIST PARTY

Rubens: What was your relationship to the Party at this time? Did you regularly attend meetings?

Ward: Oh, of course.

Rubens: You mentioned recruiting this one fellow, Del Moorehead. Had you done that very much? I know you had set up a small club in Nevada, but had you recruited people into the Party?

Ward: Wherever we could, I guess.

Rubens: But did _you_ spend much time recruiting people into the Party?

Ward: Well, as I told you, up in Nevada I recruited a person, in San Francisco I recruited Del Moorehead, and that sort of thing. But it was always in the line of work; I didn't go out and say, "Hey, join the Party."

Rubens: While you were writing these two books, what was your Party work? Were you very active in the Party, or did you take a back seat there during this period?

Ward: I think that my role lessened so far as active Party work was concerned. I was consulted on things from time to time.

Angela: [microphone interference]--There was big intra Party debate about its postwar role, and the DuClos letter came out. Moorehead and I both attended meetings where we heard all the different sides. That was the time that a lot of people, like Lou Goldblatt--he had not been active in the Party at that time, but he took an active part in the discussion. Estolv was discussing with people, and I think it was at that time that his adherence to the Party line began to falter.

Ward: It was a bit of a jolt, I admit. I felt sorry for Earl Browder, whom I had met and whom I had come to admire, not only politically. I wasn't in any way close to him, but I thought he was a pretty decent, intelligent, likeable person. I had seen

him as close as from here to there [pointing to distance between himself and Rubens, about three feet] and in private conversation with Bill Schneiderman in San Francisco. I had heard him talk in New York. There I had heard particularly one of the big underlings, who I had no use for whatever--some I liked, some I disliked; some I honored and respected and some I didn't.

There was a feeling that Joe Stalin had won the war, and his troops had enabled the United States to play a very significant role in the end of the Oriental end of the war. His troops had beat back the Japanese in Manchuria before anywhere near the end of the United States' war with Japan. I really don't think the doubt began to creep in, but little by little--I know that by the early fifties, little by little, I had reached the conclusion that the CP USA was not getting anywhere and was not likely to.

Angela: But in 1945 that's not vivid in your mind--your response to the DuClos letter and the debates that went on? Did you take a leadership role in debating within the Party?

Ward: I knew that I no longer wanted a leadership role in the Party, let's put it that way. I was not yet ready to give up my ideas; these things came slowly. But, as I said, by the 1950s I came to the conclusion that I could see no immediate future for the Party. I saw not the slightest evidence of a revolution in the United States or the advent of any form of socialism. But I had a wife who is a loyalist at heart. I know that I definitely waited and functioned in my own way for four or five years before she gradually reached my point of view.

Rubens: During this period, 1945-47, you were becoming more of an intellectual?

Ward: Instead of blind faith, I was looking around. I know I probably would have left the Party earlier than I did except that I knew that Angela wasn't ready for that sort of thing yet.

Rubens: I noticed in Angela's oral history that you taught a course on Mark Twain at the Labor School. Was that during your writing period, while you were writing these books?

Ward: Yes.

Rubens: Why Mark Twain?

Ward: He was one of my heroes from childhood. He was quite a radical for his day, and I thought very highly of him. I don't remember who suggested it, but I did teach such a class.

Rubens: Did you just teach it once?

Ward: I think just one time. I taught other courses at the Labor School, God knows, on socialism and stuff. I was very active in the Labor School in those years.

Rubens: 1946-47?

Ward: No, I was writing at home then. I had previously worked for the Brewery Workers.

Another Organizing Drive for Mine-Mill: Jurisdictional Dispute in Salt Lake City, 1947

Ward: Just at the time I had finished the first draft of this--by the way, The Piecard does not at all resemble my next book. It was nineteen years old when the Mooney book came out. I had gone through the Catholics, and just about that time Reid Robinson called me up.

Rubens: From Mine-Mill.

Ward: Yes. They were having the beginning of a big jurisdictional fight within the membership of some locals who wanted to join the Steelworkers. The Steelworkers--Phil Murray and so forth--were actively pursuing Mine-Mill. Reid asked me to go to Salt Lake City and conduct a publicity and possibly a radio campaign to preserve Mine Mill. I said I would go for a while. I was up there for five weeks or thereabouts.

I remember the first night I was active there, after I got settled in some little motel, I was invited to a left-wing party of some sort. Among those to whom I was introduced was a young fellow by the name of Hoxsie. I suddenly remembered that the Wards in Rhode Island had cousins named Hoxsie, and I knew that the Hoxsies had come out to Oregon with my grandparents and that family in the late 1880s and early 1890s.

And I knew that there was a Cousin Lizzie who was a Connecticut textile worker who married John Hoxsie, who became a cop in Portland, Oregon. (The story was that when he stood up and put his arm out straight, she could walk under it.)

He had gone to Alaska and disappeared, and Cousin Lizzie, as we called her, had raised her family. I had seen them up there, and there was quite a connection between the families. So I knew there were Hoxsies, and when I got to Salt Lake I knew that one of the Hoxsies had gone to Utah and become prominent there.

Ward: One time in my childhood, when we lived down here on Oxford Street, a Mrs. Hoxsie from Utah had come with her children to visit us. So my first night out in Salt Lake City I was taken to this affair, and here comes in a young man named Hoxsie. I asked him how he spelled his name, and he said Hoxsie. He looked at me and said, "Ward--do you know Cousin Art?" That's my father! I met the old lady, his mother, who had been one of thirty children by one father and the three sisters that he married. At the time I met her in Salt Lake City she had just come from a reunion of the family at a place called Spanish Forks someplace in Nevada and Utah. She was telling who was there: a general, a Mormon bishop, and a whole lot of other people, including herself and this young fellow.

Rubens: What were you doing for Mine Mill there?

Ward: I set up a radio program; I ran a nightly radio program and put people on it from our side.

Rubens: What industries? What were these workers?

Ward: Mines and smelters.

Rubens: It was a general campaign to keep them from going into--?

Ward: Keep them from breaking up the union and going into the Steelworkers.

Angela: The Steelworkers wanted to take care of us Reds.

Rubens: Mine-Mill had been purged from the CIO?

Ward: Yes, it was among those that were being purged. I forget what the final finale of that particular job was, but anyway it came to an end. There was an election that we lost and that somebody else won. I remember a couple of reporters always busting into the Salt Lake Mine-Mill office and trying to find out who was in the inner room. I had to stiff the reporters, which was a hard thing for me to do as a reporter. But I did it.

Rubens: What does "stiff" mean?

Ward: I'd refuse to give them information, like who was in the next room. I just said, "It's none of your business." It may have been Reid Robinson with some important personage that they would have very much liked to have known about, because they watched the railroad stations and the planes and everything. It was a big thing in Salt Lake City and Denver, what was happening to this union.

Rubens: So this was just a short job.

Ward: Yes, five or six weeks. I forget how it was, but I was able to return home feeling that I had done my best, and that was that. I think Angela was glad to see me, and I was glad to get home. Very shortly Reid Robinson was on the phone wanting me to come back and do something else. I said no soap, not then.

Rubens: These were tough times for Angela, 1947. Hadn't Taft-Hartley just come--?

Angela: I was being put to the test about Taft-Hartley. And this was a period where I was in trouble with the Utility Workers because of my role in the Taft-Hartley; I was also working for the Party, not for pay, but I was on the county committee and all that. Then Estolv was having this period with the Mine-Mill. I don't recall too specifically what he was doing. All I know is that he wasn't very active in the Party. I think he read Political Affairs and would go to his meetings.

Rubens: By now you had separate meetings?

Angela: Yes, because I was on the county committee, and I was in charge of the professional section of the Party. I don't know where he went for his meetings.

Ward: I remember coming home from someplace one night, and the house was full of people, a committee headed by Oleta. The good Republican Congressman had died and there was a question of electing a replacement to fill his term. The Party wanted to run Hugh Bryson, of the Marine Cooks and Stewards, for the job. By that time I was becoming more thoughtful, less one-sided, and I walked into this meeting, in our house, in which they had voted to go to Bryson that night and ask him to run. I told them they were nuts, crazy.

Angela: There were a lot of state committee members there.

Ward: I don't know that I put it that bluntly. I said that what they were proposing was utter nonsense.

Rubens: You then went to work for the Wallace campaign in 1948, didn't you?

Ward: Yes, I'm working up to that. So the committee took off for Hugh Bryson, and he had more sense than they did and turned them down. He also was getting a little more practical.

Rubens: Was Bryson in the Party?

Ward: Oh, yes. I think that was before he did time, wasn't it?

Angela: Sure.

Ward: Then they turned to a young lawyer, Charles Garry, and he ran. And Angela got named his campaign manager!

Angela: Estolv was really very opposed to this.

Ward: Oh, I thought the whole thing was crazy.

Rubens: This was for Congressman?

Ward: Yes. Angela was named campaign manager and I was writing a book. I just went up to the ranch and said to hell with the whole thing. Angela came up to see me when she could get away on weekends, and I stayed away for that whole campaign.

Rubens: When did your father die?

Ward: In 1956.

Rubens: So he was still alive, and the ranch was his?

Ward: Yes, it was his.

Rubens: Was he a force in your life during these years?

Ward: Oh, yes. He supported me morally. He was not too taken aback when I told him that I had joined the Party. After all, he had been a Socialist when that was pretty far left.

Rubens: So you spent time at the ranch writing.

Ward: Yes. I remember a family were in the big ranch house, and I stayed in my father's little cabin and went to the big house for meals. I must have been writing The Piecard.

Rubens: Did you have anything to do with the Wallace campaign?

Ward: Yes, I had a hell of a lot to do with that. I was back in San Francisco--

Rubens: Let's save that for next time and fill in some questions I have first.

Reflections on the State CIO

Rubens: I wonder if you had any relationship with the East Bay CIO? For almost two years you had been director; when you were working back in San Francisco, what was you relationship to the East Bay?

Ward: Very little, because my successor in office was Paul Schlipf. And I would say this: that if he had a problem where he thought I could be helpful, he came and asked me. There was that little personal relationship, but I don't remember attending any particular meetings, except those that I told you about in connection with Bridges' defense. No, I was perfectly happy.

Rubens: The CIOs operated separately?

Ward: Sure. The CIO Council did its work, and --

Rubens: Did you go to State CIO conventions during this period during the forties?

Ward: Oh, yes, I was at the State CIO conventions, and gradually I underwent a political change from--I was in the top election for vice-president the first time, then lower among vice-presidents in the second, because of less and less activity after Goldblatt took over the State CIO.

Rubens: This refers to the late thirties. I meant while you were working in San Francisco as the political action--did you have any relationship to the State CIO?

Ward: Oh, of course. Sure, Goldblatt and I were always conferring about this, that, or the other. We were not only politically interested, but we were close friends.

Angela: The other thing was that when you talk about relationships between councils, when there were State CIO conventions, for example, or political action meetings, then the San Francisco council and the Oakland Oouncil would confer. They were all part of the setup, so it wasn't that they never saw each other. Paul Schlipf--organizing drives and taking part to help out the situations in Oakland, for example, that might happen, or vice versa in San Francisco.

Rubens: Do you remember any specific things?

Ward: Oh, there were so many little things. I suppose we must have at least been on the telephone with the East Bay people several times a week.

Rubens: The other question I have, related to this, has to do with the Oakland general strike in 1947.

Ward: I was there, and I suspect I was with the Brewery Workers at that time. I was sitting in an office of some brewery over there and was having a very good discussion with the manager about whatever it was. My two Detroit friends were along. The phone rang and somebody told the manager that it looked like there was going to be a general strike as of midnight that night, and that he might want to know. It seems that his men at that time were loading trucks to deliver beer towards Los Angeles. He asked me, "Mr. Ward, could you find out for me if this is true that there might be a general strike tonight?" I said maybe I could, and I picked up the phone and called Schlipf. He said yep, that was it. I told him why I wanted to know, and he said, "Tell them to get the hell out of here." And they did.

Rubens: I think it began with the Retail Clerks in Oakland.

Ward: That may be. Now I want to go back to J. Paul St. Sure.

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Ward: I had no further contact with St. Sure until the fifties when I met him at the California Labor School. That was an entirely different situation.

Rubens: Was he in Oakland when you organized the council?

Ward: Oh, yes. That's when I had problems with--

Rubens: We never discussed that.

Ward: Yes, we did, how he and I crossed swords right away, almost the moment we met, in a contract negotiation at some plant in Oakland. About the last thing I did in Oakland was attend the meeting at which the workers voted to strike that plant, and Schlipf took over from then on.

Rubens: I wanted to talk a little more about your disaffection from the Party.

Ward: Well, I wouldn't call it a disaffection, but I was standing back and taking a clearer look, a more balanced look.

Angela: It was a period of inactivity [laughs].

Ward: Writing and thinking and not so much Party activity.

Rubens: Your thinking was that you wanted to be a writer, that you had things that you wanted to say?

Ward: That's right.

Rubens: And you sat down and wrote.

Ward: If you could read Polish you'd see it all told in here.

Rubens: You tried to get it published here?

Ward: Yes, but it fell into the hands of an agent who was also an old Pole, and a left-winger, obviously. I didn't know this at the time, but he was apparently getting into more and more hot water in New York as the McCarthy period began to develop, with the result that he finally went back to Poland. He got my book published there.

Dinner with John L. Lewis, 1947

[Interview 8: 30 July 1987]##

Rubens: We've come quite a long distance. We ended our last interview with you describing your writing of the two books and your beginning of a distancing from the political activities going on about you in San Francisco. I want to have you make a frame: this was 1947; can you say something about how you assessed the labor movement and your position in it at this point in history?

Ward: The most important thing to labor people on the left at that time was the goings on in the East between John L. Lewis and Phillip Murray. John L. Lewis was--I'm not sure of my timing here---becoming more interested, I think, in the presidential campaign of Wendall Willkie than strictly labor matters.

Did I tell you about my evening with John L.? I think at that time I was the active person in Labor's Nonpartisan League in Northern California. I had already written and published my book on Harry Bridges. One morning I picked up the paper and read that John L. Lewis had been recognized as a patron of one of the Geary Street theaters at a showing of "Pins and Needles," about the people in the seamstresses union (that was the one in which some famous movie actress made her beginning). No one had any idea that he was in town. I got down to the office, took out a copy of my book, phoned him up, told him who I was, and asked if I could come up and present him a copy of my book about Harrry Bridges. Whereupon, on second thought, I figured that better than seeing him alone, I'd better be careful; so I told Harry that I was going and asked him if he'd like to come along. Harry told Lou [Goldblatt], and he also would like to go along.

Ward: So the three of us presented ourselves in the late morning at a whole suite of rooms at the Mark Hopkins, and there was John L. We had a very pleasant conversation. It was so pleasant, in fact, all the way around that he invited us and any other person or two we thought important to dinner that night with him and Mrs. Lewis. Of course, everyone was delighted. We came to dinner that night--myself, Harry Bridges, Lou Goldblatt, and Harry Bridges' good friend, George Wilson. Wilson had been Bridges' defense secretary in the years after '39, and was on some public thing called the Federal Housing Authority in San Francisco. The four of us had dinner with John L. and his wife. She was a pleasant, quiet lady who said almost nothing and got up from the table and disappeared right after dinner. We had an interesting conversation and a drink, and we gradually got the impression that there was some secret political goings on which had brought John L. to San Francisco.

The evening came to its normal close, and just as we were at the door being ushered out, John L. told us what it was about. He was for Wendall Willkie for President. That was the start, so far as we had known, of the Wendall Willkie campaign, which was a _very_ difficult thing to put over in any imaginable union. We did what we could, more or less half-heartedly. I'm quite sure I did not vote for Willkie. I didn't vote for FDR, either. I never voted for FDR, except the last time, when I thought he was--

Angela: But this was in '44. Roosevelt died in '45.

Ward: No, this was '40. Roosevelt ran against a guy from New York in '44.

Angela: Dewey.

Rubens: You were telling me this because I wanted you to set the stage for your attitude towards labor. You had been in the front lines for so long, and now you were taking a step back out. You were saying that in 1947 there was this conflict going on between Lewis and Murray. What were your impressions as an observer? This was not a hopeful time; the left was being kicked out of the CIO, Taft-Hartley. Did you have anything to do with the Oakland general strike? Some of your old colleagues from the council--

Ward: I have a very clear memory of the Oakland general strike. I've told you about the Paul Schnur campaign. I had been required to take over, assist as much as I could, the Brewery Workers campaign to prevent them from going over to the Teamsters.

Rubens: You didn't play any negotiating or supporting role?

Ward: No. After all, I had nothing except memories so far as Alameda County was concerned at that time, no real connection.

Rubens: In 1947, then, you were distancing yourself from Angela's meetings regarding supervisorial elections in San Francisco, and you thought the Party had made wrong choices; you were going up to your ranch to write. Can you remember what your attitude was towards the Communist Party at that point? You had been a very loyal member.

Ward: The book on Catholicism never got written. I found that the closer I came to the practicalities of Catholicism, the less interesting they were. And that to write anything sensible about Catholicism I would really have to immerse myself in Catholicism and its problems, as against Protestantism and its problems, neither of which I really gave a damn about.

Rubens: Was this a point in your life when you were trying to come to terms with ideology--how does Marxism or religion or philosophy deal with political and social problems? I'm asking you why you are distancing yourself from the Communist Party. Do you feel they made choices you felt you could not agree with? What was your relation to the Party in '47 and '48?

Ward: I go back to the incident of Labor's Nonpartisan League, which was the creation of John L. Lewis, primarily for the furtherence of his own political ambition, but also for the furtherence of many good causes in which progressive unions were interested or became interested.

The Effect of Taft-Hartley

Rubens: Tell me what you did after you wrote your books.

Angela: She wants you to talk about 1947-48 when the Taft-Hartley bill was causing all the unions to break away. And it caused problems with Communists who were in the unions and had to take the Taft--Hartley--it affected me; I lost my job eventually. It affected Estolv, too.

Rubens: How did Taft-Hartley affect you?

Ward: It was dismaying. I was already becoming less interested in the day-to-day problems of the trade unions.

Rubens: What did you do when Angela lost her job? Did you get another job? For a few years you did not bring money into the household while you were writing your book.

Ward: I was drawing unemployment checks, and they were coming to the end of the line. I remember distinctly two interviews, outside of just simply appearing at the window and so forth. You had to be interviewed once in a while, and one of the interviews was at the request of a woman I knew in the state employment setup. She had somebody call me aside and bring me into the inner office (I won't name her, and you'll see why). She said, "You belong in this kind of a job; all you have to do is apply and I'll see that you get it." I said it was impossible, that I would not take--I think it was called the Levering Oath. I said I didn't think it was a good risk for me. I knew that she had taken that oath. I said that I just didn't dare. Later, some person that I knew only slightly in that office called me inside and said, "Mr. Ward, we need people like you; I can help you get a job here, a good job." I said no, that I wouldn't take the oath.

Rubens: Did Louie want you to go to work for the ILWU?

Angela: Yes. There was an offer made for us to go to work.

Rubens: That was earlier, but were there other job offers later?

Ward: I can't recall any other offers to me.

Working at Electrical Manufacturing, San Francisco

Ward: Out of this same business with the unemployment people--I wanted a job! So I began actively looking for a job, and I found one in a place called the Electrical Manufacturing Company. It was a little bit of a joint on Ninth Street in San Francisco and employed probably seventy-five or eighty people all told.

Rubens: What was your job?

Ward: In the first place I went into the office and said I understood they wanted somebody to do simple work. They said yes they did. I took five years off my age; I was then in my late fifties and I told them I was in my early fifties. In die casting--they were actually taking resinous materials and stamping them into, for instance, typewriter keys and things like that.

Rubens: Was it a union shop?

Ward: Oh, yes--IBEW (International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers), although there wasn't an electrical worker in the joint [laughs]. My job was the most unpleasant in the plant. The die crystals were in their natural state quite oily, and that oil had to be dried out before they could be put into the machines and

processed into these various objects. The drying out was done in quite a small room heated to about 130 degrees, with these great big shallow pans of this plastic material steaming away and oozing off this very fragrant smell of the oil escaping from the plastic. Then as the machine operators called for plastic, I brought out a hot pan (I wore gloves, of course) and poured it into the hoppers of their machines.

Rubens: You had never done labor like this?

Ward: Oh, no.

Rubens: Did you join the union?

Ward: Of course I joined the union. That was an interesting experience in many ways. The salary was minimal, but it grew to the point where it was very helpful to us as a young couple financially. First I worked an eight-hour day; then I began to work a ten-hour day, which meant I had to be there on the job at six in the morning. Thus I got acquainted with some of the people who were on the graveyard shift. Little by little I came to discover that this was a home for Communists who couldn't find other jobs. One of the gals in the office, one of the gals who worked on the day shift, and one of the gals who worked on the graveyard. The ways in which these discoveries were made--for instance, one gal was just one of the people that I saw between six and eight a.m. as they were finishing the graveyard shift. I go to a public meeting at one of the bigger halls off the civic auditorium--

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Ward: And although it was a public meeting, it was very definitely a left-wing meeting. Who was taking tickets at the door? This same gal. We recognized each other and said hello, and the next morning I said, "Let's talk about it," and so on.

Forming a Party Unit; Assuming Union Leadership

Rubens: Was the employer sympathetic?

Ward: Ohhh, anything but. We got together and formed our little Party unit and held meetings. We found a time and a place where we could get together. There wasn't really much that we could do, just the four of us. We knew that we would get nowhere. The union had a steward (it was almost always a woman, because most of these machine workers were women)--

Rubens: Why was that?

Ward: Well, it was a low-paid, miserable, lousy job in which the union was as close to a cipher as you can get. Also, it was a place where they didn't ask any questions. If you looked able to work you got a job; they didn't poke around or try to find out anything about you. I never had any reason to suspect there was even anything they <u>should</u> find out. They were a couple of odd dumbbells who owned the joint.

Anyway, the day came when the shop steward either resigned or got fired. The women approached me and asked if I were willing to be nominated for the job. I gathered that if I said yes it would be tantamount to election right then and there. I don't know why, particularly, because I was, I felt, very careful and discreet. But, again, they would bring me into prominence in a very distressing situation where I tried to give representation, but I could see that I would have no support. I couldn't call a strike either from those above me, the officers of the union, or the rank and file. And I turned down the offer. I said I just didn't think I could handle it. By that time I had become more realistic. In a certain sense I should have taken it, but in a practical sense I couldn't see any possible chance of success. I decided not to attempt it.

Rubens: This was period of collapse, of conservatism in the union, very different from how you started out in '34. This was a more cautious period.

Ward: I don't see how that question fits exactly, because the IBEW was the exact opposite of any other type of union that I had encountered. What little I came to know about it, the less I thought of it.

Rubens: They were AF of L.

Ward: Of course. As a member, I remember there were probably forty or fifty people at one meeting. It was at annual contract time, and of these forty or fifty people all but two or three were women. The union leadership had numerous plants under its control in San Francisco and in South San Francisco and nearby. The contract renewal--should we make demands that might lead to a strike. They told us that in the other plants, which had already had similar meetings, it was decided to just renew the contract as it was, and they advised that we do the same. Otherwise we'd probably have to go on strike.

Here I was, a guy who during the war in Federated in Los Angeles told management if they attempted a certain thing that they put over in a sister plant in San Francisco, and which had been accepted by no less than Sam Kagel as a war necessity--. The management in Los Angeles said, "Mr. Kagel--you know who Mr. Kagel is." I said, "I don't give a fourteenth of a damn what anybody else did, but I say this stinks, this is anti-union, this

Ward: is a regression in conditions. And while I cannot as an officer of the International recommend that they go on strike, I certainly would not oppose a strike." The change was not put through in Los Angeles, but it was in San Francisco.

So here I was in a situation where I knew where I would land immediately in an outfit like the IBEW, because I would come to blows with the leadership of the union and the management of the company immediately.

Rubens: How long did you stay on at Electrical Manufacturing?

Ward: I was there for a couple of years. We were coming along in the world. Angela, after several jobs here and there with the lawyers and so forth, had become associated with a firm which eventually became Western Benefit Plan Consultants, and she had a steady job. This was an outfit started by Paul Pinsky and later he took on Ben Berkov as partner. Angela was their office worker, first alone and then, as the thing grew, she was the office manager.

For a couple of years after we bought this house we had no car at all. Then we bought a car from Dave Jenkins. It was a good buy, but it was a mess. That's when we had all our literature strewn on the highway.

The Communist Party Under Attack

Rubens: Why did you move all of your papers out of your house up to Sonoma?

Ward: We were afraid of a raid.

Rubens: What was going on that there would be a raid?

Ward: This was a period during which, fearing all kinds of attacks and imprisonment and God knows what, much of the leadership of the Party, nationally and locally, went underground, as they called it--just disappeared.

Rubens: This was 1951, '52, the time of Smith Act indictments?

Ward: Along in there, yes. After working in the plastic factory all day I would come home and take a shower and eat dinner, get in the car and drive to help transport these underground people to attend to their needs--a guy needs a dentist, has a hell of a

Ward: toothache, and he's underground, I'm the guy who knows the kind of a dentist who will pack up a kit of tools and come out at night to his hiding place.

Rubens: Had you been opposed to the Party going underground?

Ward: No, I was not opposed to it. My feelings were in regard to things that I considered to be hopeless adventures, like the election campaign in Los Angeles. No, I agreed that this was probably a good idea to go underground. And it worked along pretty well, with little adventures here and there with people you had not known before, very pleasant.

Rubens: It was a scary time, but there are some very funny stories, about some people in the mountains who kept asking for bagels and lox.

Ward: I personally had no knowledge of the people up in the Sierra; that was a little above my status, I guess. When that broke, it caused a general folding and greater caution. I know there were many times because of that--the J car would stop at 20th Street, and it was a steep block up 20th Street. Our house was just on Sanchez, just off the corner, so if you wanted to see who was getting off the streetcar, you had to come out of the house and down the steps. Whoever got home first waited to see if the other was coming home that night or not.

Rubens: Rather than having been arrested?

Ward: Oh, yes. Angela was accosted on the street by FBI guys, and all that sort of thing. She had more trouble than I did by a good deal.

Indicted by a Federal Grand Jury

Ward: My only thing was that I opened the door one day to an FBI agent who handed me a subpoena to go to El Paso, Texas, to a hearing about the union to which I then belonged, Mine-Mill (I still kept up that association).

Rubens: Who was holding the hearing?

Ward: A federal grand jury. I couldn't figure out what in the hell---it's a very complicated story. It seems there was a wealthy Communist woman, married, who had some kind of a place like a fancy mountain resort somewhere in the southern end of the Rocky Mountain chain, to which were invited all sorts of CP members who could help to influence various political happenings around the

Ward: country. I can't say whether or not I was aware of it until this Harvey Matuso was arrested. He had been there and had something to do with it, and I think had told federal officials things that may or may not have been true about this resort.

Rubens: Was Matuso in the Mine-Mill?

Ward: I don't know. Here in San Francisco some months prior to the issuance of this subpoena I had attended a little Party meeting at the home of a Mine-Mill activist a few blocks away from us. The guy who owned the house I had known slightly, but he was not there. His wife was an activist with whom I had had correspondence in the East over the Bridges case years before, and she was there with several other people. We had our little meeting, and as we were breaking up the husband came home with--[tape off briefly]

[discussion about whether to mention Travis by name]

Ward: --Maurice Travis had been secretary of the Contra Costa CIO Council at the same time that I held a similar position in Alameda County. He advanced to the point where he became secretary-treasurer of International Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers. He's a man about my age (I don't know if he's alive or dead; I haven't heard from him for years).

At our little meeting at this house in San Francisco, not too far away from our own, here comes the man of the house with Trav and a third guy. Travis sees me and says, "We got Matuso, he's on our side now." I said, "Gee, that's good; I hope it works out all right," or something like that, and went on my way. The third guy was a spy, it turns out.

So I am ordered by this subpoena to go before a federal grand jury in El Paso, Texas, to tell what I knew about Harvey Matuso.

Rubens: What did you know about him? Who was he? Why did he matter?

Ward: You [addressing Angela] tell me what Harvey Matuso was, because I forget. He was the kind of a guy who seemed to be mixed up in things to some extent and who had become a government witness, and then had turned turtle about events about which he never knew much.

Rubens: You said he also ratted about this resort run by a Communist woman. Was she a benefactress of Mine-Mill?

Angela: I think she was a benefractress of the Communist Party.

Rubens: Did you go to the grand jury hearing?

Ward: The man who owned the house where this meeting had occurred was an official organizer for Mine-Mill for years, and he had married a woman from Washington who I think had been active in the left-wing. I think they were quite prominent in Washington.

Angela: Was it Jessica Rhine?

Ward: Right. But that wasn't her husband's name.

Rubens: Who is Maurice Travis?

Angela: He was the secretary-treasurer of the International Union of Mine-Mill.

Ward: He later became president, too.

Angela: And he was hounded by the FBI. He was brought up on charges by the government of being a Communist. All the offices of the Mine-Mill eventually--for violating the Taft-Hartley Act, and signing the non-Communist affidavit.

Rubens: What did they want to know from you? Did you go to El Paso?

Ward: I immediately called Norman Leonard, my lawyer, and we went down before some federal official in the Post Office building in San Francisco and arrangements were made for the time and place when I should be in El Paso, and my transportation and all that, and I went.

Rubens: What year is this? Was this before the new car?

Ward: Yes, so it must have been 1951 or '52. I came in at night and was to appear before the federal grand jury the next morning. That night I met Harvey Matuso.

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Ward: He struck me as being a very average kind of individual. Even though I had this feeling, I thought for a man to change sides so quickly there must be something strange I couldn't figure out.

Anyway, we had dinner, and all the people at the table were Mine-Mill people except Matuso and me. As I got up I saw Matuso talking to the waiter about the bill, and it was explained to me that because of some odd reason Matuso could not be the guest of the union; he had to pay his own way. It was a little legal problem. I also found that Jessica Rhine's husband had been subpoened along with me, because he was one of those

Ward: three guys that came in the door at Jessica's house. So he and I were there in El Paso.

I was called first. The federal d.a. has been all buttercups and kisses with me in all the preliminaries and so forth. There were twenty-odd other men, none of them seemed to be any older than I, and I gathered very quickly that they were mostly cattle ranchers from the Southwest--Arizona, Utah, Nevada, Colorado, and so on--all sitting there in white shirts (it was warm) listening to me. This guy questioned me, beginning at the beginning: where I had come from, my various positions in the labor movement, what I had been, what I was doing, and so forth, all very sweet and cozy. Oh, yes, and what connection did I have with Harry Bridges and the Angel Island trial? I said I was his defense secretary. "Well, why did you become his defense secretary?" Well, because I thought he was wrongfully accused, and was accused only because he had become an important and successful trade union leader. "How did you know he was not a Communist?" I said I really felt that any political association was a matter of no genuine importance, really. "All right, Mr. Ward, are you now or have you ever been--" I took the Fifth.

I was asked to explain which part of the Fifth I took. Technically I had a lawyer, but there was another part of the whole business going on in another courtroom about two blocks away, and the only lawyer representing the Mine-Mill was at the other courtroom. So I couldn't step outside the door and ask for my lawyer. So I took the whole Goddamned Fifth, and the hell with it.

Rubens: Did you say that?

Ward: [laughs] Something like that.

Rubens: Did they ask you specifically whether you knew people in the Mine-Mill were in the Party?

Ward: I forget. Whatever they asked me, the questions all revolved around the point of whether I was a Communist or not. They soon gave up and excused me, very dour-faced: after being so nice and kind to Mr. Ward, it's too bad he wouldn't cooperate, and so forth--phew! So I was through, and the other fellow went in. I sat and waited, and he came out and we went back to our hotel together. It was the same thing for him: they weren't so much interested in Matusso as such as in whether or not we were Communists in leadership of Mine-Mill. I came home, and that was that.

Rubens: You were not called before the Tenney Committee in California?

Ward: Did I tell you about being waked up in the middle of the night by Jack Tenney playing the piano? But, no, I wasn't called before his committee or the Yorty committee.

Helping the C. P. Underground

Rubens: Was there anything more about that period in the underground that you wanted to talk about?

Ward: Oh, yes. In the underground I had certain escape routes. For instance, when I went out in the evening it wouldn't matter where I was going, but I figured I might be followed leaving the house. I had two or three ways to deal with this. If I were a block ahead of a following motorist, there were turns I could take that unless he were within a block of me he couldn't tell whether I went this way or that way. So I would use those different spots, and then go on my way to wherever.

Rubens: You were driving Dave Jenkins' old car at this time?

Ward: Yes. Then I ran into some very amusing situations. People whom I would never have suspected were doing the same thing that I was doing. My dentist was giving dental help to people in the underground with toothaches. The underground folks were trying to hold political meetings, too.

Rubens: What kind of political meetings?

Ward: Well, these characters who were in hiding were thought to be the cream of the Communist Party, so they had to lecture us on the latest developments in the Communist world.

Rubens: So you would meet with them?

Ward: Of course. Although I must admit that in one or two instances I began to think that this was just a waste of time; they didn't know any more than anybody else.

Then there was the Sierra Nevada group--

Rubens: Can you just tell me something about that? Many people have talked about it.

Ward: I really was so far away from it, both physically and knowledgeably--in fact, I didn't know such a thing existed until it was exposed by the FBI.

Angela: What are you talking about?

Ward: This little group of top leaders--

Rubens: Three men and a--

Ward: --in the national CP. I think they were living out in a cabin up there.

Rubens: And they kept coming to the nearest store to ask for lox and bagels.

Angela: Yes. The woman who was sort of the housekeeper would go down to the village and she'd ask if they had sour cream, lox, bagels.

Ward: This New York stuff that nobody else ever heard of.

Rubens: So these were New York people, not California people?

Angela: Yes. The people in this cabin--I think Norm Leonard talks about them [in his oral history], because he was one of the attorneys (he and Richie Gladstein) who defended the guys or one of the women--

Ward: I think Norm Leonard defended one of the women who was running errands for them.

Angela: She wasn't exactly underground, because she had to go to the village. But anyhow, she was arrested and accused of being a co-conspirator. When the case broke it was really funny. All the left really got--[tape turned off]

Rubens: I asked if you had originally opposed the underground, and you said no. Angela said you were both basically disciplined.

Angela: No, I said we were philosophically beginning to have doubts, certainly about the underground. When that broke we were critical of it. When we were first told that the Smith Act necessitated the people going underground, we figured yes, that's all you can do. Otherwise the whole Party leadership will be decimated.

Rubens: You figured Fascism was really just around the corner.

Angela: Right. And we accepted that position. Even Estolv did, too, although he had doubts later.

Ward: Oh, of course.

Angela: We accepted the position that Fascism was practically here, and that the concentration camps were being readied to receive us. But then when these things--the Sierra business broke, and then there were other little things that indicated that this was crazy. We were functioning and had our jobs. I was working for Paul Pinsky in Western Benefit Plan Consultants.

Ward: It was embarrassing for you.

Angela: Yes, it was very embarrassing for me, because Paul Pinsky was a Party member (I don't know if I should say that).

Ward: He was sympathetic to you.

Angela: More than that, he was in the organization.

Ward: Sure, and sympathetic to your ideas.

Angela: The thing was that people from the security division of the Party would come up to my office and walk in unannounced, and they would signal me to go out in the hall. Oh, Lee Kutnick was the guiltiest of this; I used to get so mad at her, because after all, she should have known better. I began to think that these people were just exposing everybody. And the Pinsky firm was very good and very progressive.

Ward: Not only that, but you as the secretary knew that Pinsky, particularly, was getting calls from business associates--

Angela: No, this was at the Un-American hearings.

Ward: Yes, his business associates would ask him, "What is this? What kind of people do you have in your employ?"

Angela: At that time I began to think that these Party people were really stupid. In fact, I complained to Oleta, "For God's sake, it's important for me to have this job here, and I'm working with people who are Party members in different--"(it was all in the CIO building)--"why are we exposing this all in this stupid fashion?" She agreed with me. Then I began to think that there were these diehard people in the Party who were so completely taken over by this theory that we were living in a Fascist world that they kept making things very difficult, and jeopardizing not only me but the whole apparatus. Then it became sharper in the later period.

Rubens: Were you called in San Francisco? Was that the next major event before the Un-American Activities Committees?

Ward: The Un-American Activities was in 1957, and we're still in 1953.

Rubens: By 1954, once the underground broke and the Smith Act trials were well under way, there was a big debate in the Party about the leadership. So many people think it was because of the revelations of the Kruschev letters that everyone went out of the Party after that, but there really were precedents to that with this debate over the leadership. Were you involved in that? Did you have positions that you were arguing for or against Foster?

Ward: I don't remember any problem there at all, particularly. I think the only problems with the Party that I had I've already told you about, and they evolved around what I considered to be political campaigns that were utterly ridiculous.

Becoming a Photographer

Rubens: What did you do after you left Electrical Manufacturing?

Ward: I didn't leave exactly. In the first place, in '53 we had a little money and we wanted to do something. I bought this car in Detroit (buying it here and picking it up in Detroit), and we took a trip through New England. We went to see the old family home in Rhode Island, found my father's birthplace. I was very interested in that. Then we drove on home by way of New Orleans.

Angela: Then didn't you become interested in photography and go to the San Francisco Art Institute?

Ward: Oh, in there somewhere, yes.

Angela: And then you worked for Gabriel Moulin at night.

Ward: I became interested in photography, and under the stairs of our house I built a darkroom. I put it under the stairs because it was easy to block off the light, and it had a toilet which could be arranged as a sink. I went to the San Francisco Art Institute on Chestnut Street to learn the ins and outs of fancy photography.

Rubens: Was this after the end of the underground period, and you didn't have so many Party obligations?

Ward: It had nothing to do with Party obligations. We still kept our Party obligations until January 30, 1957. I was not very active, I admit, in any Party activities.

Angela: That's right, you weren't. But you went to meetings.

Ward: I worked at the Moulin studio.

Rubens: He was a well-known San Francisco studio photographer.

Angela: A famous photographer.

Rubens: Was it easy to get that job?

Ward: Oh, yes. The beginning phases of lab work were very simple. They didn't pay much, either. Sometimes I worked with an old boy, an old German photographer who made murals. He would take a scene on a four-by-five film, and he could make a picture out of that that would be, say, thirty feet wide and twelve feet high or more. But doing that would require a sort of reproduction on paper, and that can't be done in a minute. It meant we had to wait until the main studio, which was a great big room with a high ceiling, could be cleared completely. We would start shooting the film at about five or six in the afternoon, and start pulling down a couple of sheets of paper--because there are no sheets of paper that big; they had to be put in with thumbtacks on the wall. We'd take them out and roll them up and go down to the darkroom. We would start developing around four o'clock the next morning, and I'd get home around six or seven o'clock. We'd be back at work at ten or eleven that day.

Rubens: Did you keep your job at Electrical?

Ward: That was long since past.

Rubens: Was there any job in between Electrical and Moulin?

Ward: I'm trying to think. I worked for the California Labor School. I think that was an actual paid job. I taught classes there.

Rubens: Did you enjoy that?

Ward: Yes.

Rubens: We mentioned your Mark Twain course there, but that was in '47.

Ward: I had relations with the Labor School from its foundation until its demise, on and off.

Rubens: It was closed in 1952 or 1953 by the Treasury Department.

Ward: That could be. Why do I confuse that with '57, when my father died? I know that on the day of his death I had been helping to arrange for the transfer of certain photographs from the Labor School, which had just been closed, to the PW [Peoples' World]. I went home for lunch and I got the phone call that my father was

Ward: dead. That was on May 10, 1957. So the Labor School couldn't have closed in '52 or '53.

Rubens: Maybe it lost its accreditation in '52.

Angela: Yes. That may have been it. They had to struggle--

Rubens: That's interesting to hear about you transferring things to the PW, because the story I have heard is that the Treasury Department had come in and locked up--

Ward: These were things they had not yet found or locked up.

Rubens: So you had a long relationship with the Labor School?

Ward: Yes. Not always necessarily close, but I was always--

Angela: You worked closely with Holland Roberts.

Ward: Oh, yes. If he wanted me to do something, I'd do it; or anything they thought I knew something about, I would give a lecture or whatever.

Rubens: Were you involved in any of Harry Bridges' other trials?

Ward: No, only the one.

Rubens: You said Harry never liked you very much. Did you have any other relationship with him?

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Ward: In one of the later trials Norm, Elly (Elinor Kahn), and Merle Richmond were the behind-the-scenes team. Once in a while they would call me up to ask what I knew or thought about some aspect or other. But it was nothing of any importance. To say I had absolutely no contact at all is not exactly true, but I had very little.

Friendship with Louis Goldblatt

Rubens: How about Louis Goldblatt? Did you maintain a social relationship ship with Louis?

Ward: Oh, yes. We were close friends. There were periods when we just didn't seem to have much to--we were always friendly, but particularly as the association between Goldblatt and Bridges began to turn sour, Louie and I became closer.

Rubens: Would he talk to you about his dispiritedness or his unhappiness?

Ward: I did get Louie to talk about--this came years later, of course, after the whole thing ended, when the leadership of the ILWU had been turned over to new hands, and Bridges and Goldblatt were both retired. That's a jump of twenty years, so I better tell you about it later.

Rubens: I want to make sure we get that story. But at this time he didn't talk to you about the rift that was occurring between Bridges and himself.

Ward: Oh, no, not at all.

Rubens: But you knew relations were strained and he was becoming closer to you.

Angela: Everybody was talking about it, except Lou.

Ward: Lou was very--

Angela: Discreet.

Ward: In spite of the fact that he had come to lots of disagreements with Harry, he still respected the man, and he had a respect for their past together. He didn't really want to talk about it.

Thoughts on the Henry Wallace Campaign

Rubens: I have one other left-over question: did you have anything to do with the Wallace campaign? I know Angela did.

Ward: Yes. Angela had a great deal to do, not with the Wallace campaign but with that silly thing that started down in Los Angeles.

Angela: The Progressive party.

Ward: No, the guy who was lieutenant-governor under Olson, Ellis Patterson--the Patterson slate.

Angela: I didn't have much to do with that.

Ward: You had a hell of a lot to do with that, and I got so mad about the whole thing I went up to the ranch.

Angela: No, that was over the Garry and Bryson campaign.

Rubens: Then Angela went from that to the Wallace campaign.

Angela: The Wallace campaign was conducted by the Progressive party, and I was to get the City and County of San Francisco secretaryship (or director, or chairman--whatever it was called) of the Progressive party. I was working with Dave Jenkins.

Rubens: The Party had made a decision that they should put a lot of effort into this, because it was a test case. If it got on the ballot here and did well here in California, it would do well in the rest of the country.

Angela: There was a luncheon given for Garry, and the Party people were there. I remember Leon Kaplan getting up and warning us all---warning the few Progressive trade unionists who were there and the Progressive party people who were working--that if we did not go whole hog into this campaign, we were going to end up behind the concentration camp gates. Those were the words of Kappy. We laugh about it now. When I see him we talk about it, and he says, "My God, did I say that?" I tell him yes, he did. I don't think Estolv was involved.

Ward: I was on the ranch.

Angela: But when I'd tell you these things, you'd get more and more disgusted. You'd say it was completely haywire.

Rubens: Did you have any role in the Wallace campaign?

Ward: I took no part in the Garry campaign, and I can't remember anything specific about Wallace. I was for Wallace, I know that.

Angela: I think you did little things, but--

Rubens: I'm asking because in retrospect a lot of people comment that the Party's insistance on the whole hog effort for Wallace was a mistake, and it was the beginning of many mistakes they made from '48 into '57. I was trying to get you to talk about that period.

Ward: I think I recall that we were surprised at the vote Wallace got in San Francisco because we figured that he would get at least as much as Oleta O'Connor had gotten in her campaign for something in the same political area just a couple of years before. In fact I think I made a bet on it at Keynes betting parlor that Wallace would get so many thousand votes in San Francisco, which was about what Oleta had gotten. He didn't get anywhere near that, and it was a surprise to me that he did so poorly in the eyes of the electorate.

Angela: We did precinct work.

Ward: Oh, yes, but nothing outstanding.

X LEAVING THE PARTY, 1957

Rubens: Next time we'll talk about the HUAC hearings. Did you leave the Party before or after that?

Ward: We left the Party together on January 30, 1957.

Angela: And the hearings were in May of 1957. That was what the irony was: we had left the Party, and we were already--

Ward: There were five people at that meeting at our house when we left the Party: Angela, myself, Oleta, and two other persons, one of whom was and is today a famous entertainer. The other was a writer of children's stories.

Angela: She's dead now, Iris Noble.

Ward: I remember the meeting very clearly because, after all, when you have given twenty-one years of your life to a cause, it's something to bid it goodbye. But we did. I had been convinced for several years that the Party was not going to get anywhere in this country during our lifetimes. But I had to wait for Angela, who was more of a loyalist than I was.

Rubens: Would you and Angela argue about it?

Ward: No, I don't think we argued particularly, but she knew that I was cooler toward the Party than she was. Or to put it the other way, I knew that she was still more enchanted with the Party than I was.

Rubens: What led to your disenchantment? The political campaigns? The underground?

Angela: Hungary.

Ward: In '56 and '57 there were events in various countries around the Baltic that made me feel, and I think Angela, too, that the Joseph Stalin setup wasn't as sweet and smiling, as correct and thoughtful, as we had previously believed it to be. In other

Ward: words, the disillusionment became stronger, to the point where we agreed that we would quit the Party.

Rubens: Who called the meeting?

Angela: I think we asked for it.

Rubens: The two of you had made up your minds that you were going to leave.

Ward: These two other people I mentioned had been members of Angela's Party group for which she had been a leader or officer for quite a long time.

Rubens: Was Oleta still the head of the San Francisco Party?

Angela: No, I think by that time she was in the state setup.

Ward: The other two people said they were also determined to quit. Oleta asked us particularly (maybe she also asked the others) if we would continue on an informal basis to meet with the Party. I remember that I answered, and Angela agreed, that we would meet with anybody on any subject of common interest, but not otherwise.

Angela: Oh, Peggy Sarasohn was there. After all, it was the professional people.

Ward: I guess that's true.

Rubens: Well, this was a big step in your lives.

Angela: It was very sad.

Ward: I remember the date because it was FDR's birthday. For some reason or other I connect the two things. On May 10 of the same year Angela was called up before the House Un-American Activities Committee in San Francisco, and was asked about that meeting that we had on January 30. Now, you try to figure that out. The way I figure it is that we have no feeling that anyone who was at that meeting was directly responsible. But Oleta had responsibilities to report to a state committee, and there, we suspect, was where it got out.

Angela: And we found out later, talking to Al Richmond and others, that the state committee at that time was riddled--there were more spies than there were actual God-fearing Communists!

Rubens: Oleta left the next year?

Angela: Yes, and I think Al and Dorothy (Healey) left shortly thereafter.

Ward: Kappy left about the same time Oleta did. I remember Kappy coming up from Los Angeles and trying to tell us what damned fools we were to leave the Party. A year later he left himself.

Rubens: When did Jenkins leave?

Angela: I think he was having a lot of problems. He was always being brought up on charges of one kind or another.

[Interview 9: 20 August 1987]##

Ward: Do you want to begin with the five people?

Rubens: That's where we had ended.

Ward: Angela and I have had a little discussion about the five people, and the question arose as to whether there had been a sixth person there. The conclusion I came to was that the sixth person would have been there except that she was ill (and is now dead).

Rubens: So you don't want to identify that person?

Ward: No. We talked about the other five people.

Rubens: You chose not to use the name of the entertainer. There were Oleta, Estolv, Angela, Iris Noble, and an entertainer. You want to leave it at that?

Ward: Yes, I think so.

Rubens: This was January 30, 1957, which you remember because it is the anniversary of Roosevelt's death. We talked some about how five months later Angela was called before the hearings. Do you want to spend a little more time on the record talking about what it meant to leave the Party and then, I assume, to hold Angela's hand through this ordeal?

Trouble Publishing The Piecard

Ward: We have to go back a little bit, because that date of '57 comes about four years after I began to try to sell my first book, my novel, called The Piecard. Angela reminds me of something that had slipped my mind entirely: that my first nibble was from a black man by the name of Bucklin Moon, who at that time was on the editorial staff of, she thinks, Simon and Schuster. He thought the book should be published.

Rubens: Had you had an agent, or were you sending it out to publishers?

Ward: I don't think I had an agent at that time. Bucklin Moon put up a fight on the editorial board of this outfit for the publication of the book, but was outvoted.

Angela: Very close vote.

Ward: I don't know what the details were. I then turned to an agent in New York, named Maxim Lieber. He was a man of Polish birth, and evidently a leftist, who had come to New York and made a name for himself as an agent for leftist writers. He sent the book back to me and said it needed more work, was not ready for publication, he thought. I did it over again (that may account for the length of time).

This was during the early fifties, the McCarthy period, and the word was that all of a sudden Maxim Lieber had disappeared. His wife answered his letters, and so forth. I got word somehow or other that he feared arrest in New York, as not only a Communist but a foreigner--a Pole. The next thing I knew, Mr. Lieber and his wife turned up in Poland. I got a letter from a Polish publishing company saying that they were publishing my book. About two or three days after I got the letter, I got a check for $398, which vastly surprised me. Two or three days after that I got six copies of the book.

Rubens: It all happened so quickly.

Angela: It didn't happen that fast. Some time elapsed between the time you got a letter from Lieber saying the book was going to be published and the time you got the check.

Ward: Don't spoil my story! That's the way I remember it. [laughs] Anyway, I had a copy of the book, which you've seen.

Rubens: Yes, I saw a copy of it.

Ward: I think I translated the first sentence for you. What I wrote was, "The meeting ended as the chairman's gavel fell." The translation was, "The meeting ended as the chairman banged his hammer."

Rubens: So this was published in early '57?

Ward: It must have been published in '53, because ten years later, in '63, Angela and I arrived in Warsaw in our Volkswagen camper. We began looking for this publishing house, which we knew as Czytelnik. But the nearest we could find to Czytelnick on the

Ward: streets was Czytelnia, which we found out means "library." Eventually, after finding people who could speak a little English, we found Czytelnik, and the offices.

We were almost immediately ushered into the office of the editor, who spoke not a word of English. He sent somebody scurrying, and in came a woman who I would say was in her late thirties, who spoke perfect English. Not only that, she had been a Fulbright exchange scholar and had spend six months in the United States, and had even been to San Francisco. Her name was Krystyna Jurasz-Damska. Krystyna immediately brought the meeting to life. I was particularly interested in meeting the translator of my book.

Rubens: Was Lieber around anymore?

Ward: I'll come to Lieber in just a minute. I don't remember if the translator had died or disappeared, but he was not available. But this Krystyna was a very pleasant person and we had a nice time chatting with her. We told her how we had arrived in Warsaw in our Volkswagen camper and that we were living in a camper park on the outskirts of town. In a day or so contact was made again, and what had happened in the meantime was that Krystyna and her father had gone to that trailer camp. They had arrived when we were someplace else, had seen the trailer, had talked to the manager who said we were who we said we were and that was our trailer. And we got an invitation from Krystyna to come to her home--she lived with her parents--for tea.

We drove up to 11 Humanska Street, and that may well have been the only private home in Warsaw. At least if there were any other private homes we didn't know of them; everybody lived in great big apartments. Lo and behold, not only did Krystyna speak English, but her father spoke American; he knew all the latest slang. He had been educated to be an engineer. He had fought in the Polish army here and there at different times; he had fought in the German army at various times, out of necessity; he had the "Heidelberg" German education; and he spoke Polish, German, French, Spanish, English, and I think one or two others. He was a linguist for fair. He had spent years in Colorado in the development of various mines and other industries there, and had spent a lot of time in South America. Meanwhile his wife had stayed in Warsaw raising their two daughters.

The war came along and the Nazis invaded Poland. One of the daughters was killed on the streets of Warsaw by the Nazis as a suspected Communist. The father was arrested several times on suspicion of underground activity for the resistance, but they could never quite pin it on him. When he was under arrest, Mama would go to the church and pray--she was very religious; the old man was not--and every time she prayed she got him out.

Angela: I'm having quite an attack of _deja vu_.

Visiting the Polish Translator

Rubens: We haven't discussed Poland before, although we did mention earlier that the book had been published in Poland.

Ward: We were in Poland in either '63 or '64; we were two years in the camper.

Angela: It was '64.

Ward: Anyway, to finish the story, we met the old man, who was a charming guy. He was seventy-five then. His wife had a little English--not a lot, but she knew what we were talking about, all right.

Rubens: What did you talk about?

Ward: One story stays in my mind, out of the many, many things we talked about--what he'd done, where he'd been, and what we'd done and where we'd been, and so forth. After the war was over, the Germans had been defeated, and the Poles were again in possession of Warsaw. The whole place was in ruins. There was virtually nothing standing. And worst of all, the railroads had all been torn up because the Germans changed everything as they advanced to their gauge, which was different from the Polish gauge, and in retreating they had torn up the railroads.

They asked this man to see what he could do about getting their railroads put together again. And he did it! He got the main lines running again. They asked him what they could do for him, as he had really performed a marvelous service. Well, it seems that for generations his family had owned a vacant lot at 11 Humanska Street. So he thought a minute and then said he would like to build a home there. There was no such thing as timber, but he said there were a lot of old railroad rails that were so twisted up that they could not be used again for rails, and maybe he could have them. They said certainly, so he took those rails and straightened them out, and he made the frame of the house from the rails. How he got the rest of it together, I don't know.

So here they were in this two-story house with a lovely little garden in the backyard.

Rubens: Did you discuss the Soviet Union, or the Iron Curtain, or any politics?

Ward: Some of this will come out in my story. We had tea and discussed things, and it became late afternoon. We went back into the house from the garden, and down the steps to our car with them following us. All of a sudden they almost burst out crying, saying, "Won't you get out of the car and stay to dinner? We're not through talking." I must admit we were having a marvelous time, so we went back in and stayed for dinner.

We talked about the ghetto and what had happened to the Jews (these people were not Jewish) and that sort of thing. Oh, one of the things was that he was a member of the British Royal Geographic Society, one of the many things he had joined and been active in. We asked him if he would like a subscription to our National Geographic Society. He looked pensive for a moment, and then said, "Don't do it." Why? He said I could send it, but he would never get it. That told you volumes right there. I said, "Oh."

Krystyna had been married and had a ten-year-old son who was away at school somewhere. We never did find out what happened to her husband; he just wasn't there and wasn't discussed. When we got home, we sent the boy for Christmas a collection of rare types of rocks from here. They got it! We wrote back and forth, although our correspondence has somehow lapsed for a long time since.

During all this we found out the address in Warsaw of Maxim Lieber, and went there. It was a big apartment house, and there was no answer at the door.

Rubens: You had not been in correspondence with him since the book had been published?

Ward: No, that had lapsed. I don't think there was any correspondence with the Liebers in Poland; the only correspondence I had was with the publisher.

We found somebody at the apartment building who could talk a little English, and we learned that the Liebers were in Rumania or Bulgaria, or someplace like that, doing what they did--looking for books, writers. Nobody knew very much about it except that he had gone in search of or to meet authors in some of the satellite countries. So we didn't see him.

Rubens: Let's get a little perspective, because you've jumped from '53 to '63 here. Were you still trying to do something with the book in the United states after it got published in Poland in '53?

Ward: No, that was the end of that.

Rubens: Were you still working for Moulin when you left the Party in '57? You had quit your electrical job. I want you to tell me what it really meant to finally leave the Party. In Angela's oral history you do not deal with going before the House Un-American Activities Committee, and I think you have been loath for some reason to sum up your thoughts about that. Did you accompany Angela to the hearings? Your feeling was that there had been spies in the central committee of the California Party, because how else would they have known that Angela was at that meeting?

Angela: He was sick at that time, recuperating from an operation at the time of the hearings. In fact, we rented a television, because we didn't have one, when they told us ahead of time that this was the first time in the history of the hearings that they were going to be televised. He sat at home and watched me at the hearings on TV.

House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC)

Rubens: When were you called up, Angela?

Ward: In May of '57.

Angela: Yes, I was subpoenaed.

Ward: About four months after we left the Party.

Rubens: This was not the hearing where the students were washed down the steps?

Angela: No, that came later.

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Ward: One of the people who was called before that meeting of the House Un-American Activities Committee committed suicide rather than testify.

Angela: A Stanford professor, or a teaching assistant.

Rubens: How much did the hearings disrupt your household?

Ward: It was interesting, because Angela dressed up for the occasion. I think she bought herself some new duds and a new hat. When she

Ward: was excused from the stand her lawyer, who was Norman Leonard, said, "Now get the hell out of here; get lost." So she disappeared and went back to work. She rode home on the J streetcar that night, and people were reading the afternoon paper with her picture on the front page. They began to stare at her [laughs].

Rubens: Were you worried about her?

Ward: Well, I was concerned, but I don't think I was particularly worried.

Rubens: What were the House un-American persons asking her?

Ward: All sorts of questions. Was she the head of this little group, was she this, was she that?

Angela: Oh, they asked me to name other Communists in the professional section.

Rubens: They knew you were the head of the professional section?

Angela: Yes, they asserted that I was, and of course I'd never admit it. I only gave them my name and my address. That's what the instructions were.

Ward: She took the Fifth on everything.

Angela: I took the Fifth forty-eight times. It made the national papers; it was even in the New York Times.

Rubens: Why didn't they call up Estolv?

Ward: By that time she was much more active than I was. To go on with that day, nobody actually accosted her on the streetcar, but she could see the eyes following her as she got up and got off at 20th Street and walked up the hill. Immediately the people were looking from their windows as she walked up the street, so they knew where she lived. The next door neighbors, with whom we were quite friendly, came right over and wanted to know all about it.

Angela: They handed me a martini over the back fence [laughs].

Ward: They congratulated her and all that sort of thing.

Rubens: And you had seen her on the stand on television.

Ward: Oh, yes. And as an aftermath, a man that we did not know even by sight on our square block--around the other corner from us, on the Noe Street side--got up a petition demanding that we leave

Ward: the neighborhood. He started circulating it among the people on the block and could not get any signature except his own.

Rubens: Here you've left the Party. A lot of other people have left the Party at this time as well, and yet you're going through one of the most difficult encounters I would think that you had had. What kind of support group did you have? Did you have strategy meetings? Was Estolv involved with that?

Angela: He was in the hospital part of the time.

Rubens: That must have been very difficult for you, Angela.

Ward: It is a fact that your employer got quite a few calls: what was he doing having that kind of a woman working for him?

Rubens: You were still working for Pinsky?

Angela: Yes.

Rubens: So Estolv wasn't really involved with the hearings.

Angela: Well, we used to talk about it all the time.

Rubens: Can you sketch out what you did between '57 and '63? Was the trip in '63 your first big trip?

Angela: No, the first one was in '59.

Rubens: Is there anything significent in terms of your professional and political life between '57 and '59? Did you work? Did you start the Mooney book?

Ward: I didn't start the Mooney book until '64. Part of that time I worked for the Moulin studio. Then I worked for the California Labor School. I think part of that time I was just plain unemployed. I was usually busy with something or other, but--

Rubens: It's an interesting period in your life: you don't have the Party, you're not involved in labor per se--I think your experience with the Electrical Manufacturing Company was your last labor-organizing period. How were you evaluating your life? You were recuperating from an operation, you were seeing your wife on trial, you were now in your fifties. How were you evaluating your life; where did you think you wanted to go? Had your father just died?

Ward: My father died May 10, 1957.

Disillusionment

Rubens: I see this as a very transitional time for you. Do you look back thirty years and see it that way?

Ward: You ask me about my political feelings. I became progressively disillusioned, not so much with the Party ideals but at the prospects of getting anywhere, accomplishing anything of any moment in this country. I began to suspect that there wasn't much future in it, quite a long while before Angela did. I think if I had been alone I would have left the Party earlier, but I could see that Angela had not reached that point in her own thinking, and I waited until she did. Then we had the session in which we resigned.

Rubens: Did your father's death affect you in a dramatic way?

Ward: Well, remember that my father had been dying for ten years. He had Parkinson's, and at that time the doctors didn't know what to do about it. I don't think they know a hell of a lot more now. He finally came to his death in '57, and that made some changes economically. He had given me the ranch already, and I had sold on his behalf some timber from the back of the ranch for $10,000. I had been holding that to see him through whatever might transpire, but he died just about two months before I would have had to use some or all of that $10,000.

He had a hundred-foot frontage just below Euclid. The house sat on one lot and there was a great big garden on the other. While my stepmother was still alive she retained the right to live in or use the house in any way she needed to, but I had immediate control of that lot. And I sold it. This didn't happen instantly, but by 1958 we had a little money for the first time. We began to talk about what we'd like to do. We started in on our hikes on Tamalpais on Sundays. Angela was still working for Pinsky, and I was in and out of things like the Labor School and this, that, and the other.

Rubens: What is "this, that, and the other"?

Angela: Estolv spent some time on the ranch.

Ward: I spent time on the ranch, sure, at times when there was nobody up there and I'd have to take care of things--

Rubens: Was it a working ranch? Did you have cattle?

Ward: Oh, we had cattle, but to call it a working ranch--forget it. My father used to call it "the pretty place," and that's what it was.

Ward: I told you about going up to the ranch in disgust during the Charlie Garry campaign when he ran against Jack Shelley and Angela was Garry's manager. I was writing a book there, and I showed it to the wife of the people who were running the ranch at that time. I had written everything but the last chapter, and she'd been after me to see what I was up to. So I let her have the script except the last chapter, which had not then been written. She said very sadly, "Oh, my, is this as good as it's going to be?" The last chapter was not very long, and I had a twist to it that had not occurred to this lady, where it came out very happily instead of sadly. She was very surprised and delighted.

Although the Communists lost the election in this union, the Communist hero would have won it hand-over-fist except for the Taft-Hartley Act. The support was so obviously for him that although his one-time friend and later enemy won the election, there was nothing he could do to harm--in other words, let's say that out of four thousand votes the bad guy got a majority of only eighty-one votes, which meant that there was nothing he could do about the Communists. Absolutely nothing. Because his margin of victory was so small. And it would obviously have been the other way had it not been for Taft-Hartley.

Rubens: What was the effect of the Taft-Hartley Act?

Ward: Under the Taft-Hartley Act, if you elected Communists to leadership in your union they were immediately arrested. So you had no leadership.

Rubens: We're now half-way into '57.

Ward: Yes, June. Then she was up before the Committee.

Rubens: Did you ever take another job working as an organizer, a writer, a publicist?

Angela: He did some freelancing; people asked you to write pamphlets.

Ward: My biggest desire was to make the New Yorker, and one of my pieces that I submitted was sent back by the reader with a notation on the right-hand side: "Good try." That's as close as I ever got.

XI DOCUMENTING HISTORY

Rubens: So you had kept on writing; your ambition really was to write.

Ward: Oh, yes.

Angela: Was that the time you wrote the article on employment which was published in the American Academy of--?

Rubens: Maybe you could get a little collection together of your writings and photography.

Photography

Rubens: Did you keep doing photography during this period, too?

Ward: Yes, I was very much interested in photography.

Rubens: What kind of pictures did you take?

Ward: Well, you can see them on the walls around here. That one up there was in a little town in the mountains of Algeria, and it's remarkable. The mother has her veil off, and a nurse is helping her with her child. The story there is that if that picture had been shown in Algeria she would have been immediately killed, because her veil is off. Her veil is off because she was in the house and with the nurse, and the nurse told her not to worry. Oh, we had quite a time. At that time I was taking pictures for the Quakers.

Rubens: How did that come about?

Ward: Do you know anything about the Quakers in San Francisco? They had a great big house in the 3100 block of Lake Street. Some friend of ours did something--some woman who was along in years and was no longer working wanted something to do, and she found

Ward: some little thing to do for the Quakers. She got to know them and found out that they were looking for a photographer. Here I was, and she knew me. She introduced me, and I took pictures here and yonder in California.

Angela: He went to an Indian reservation.

Ward: I went to the Tule Lake reservation twice, I think. I would go with some young fellow from San Jose, a Quaker. He and his wife were childless, so they had adopted four or five children of all colors and races. We went down there and shot pictures all over the place.

Rubens: You were freelancing, then. And were you writing articles?

Angela: Yes, he wrote this article, "How Organized Labor Views the Problems of Transition." It was published in The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, "Winning Both the War and the Peace," Vol. 222, July, 1942

Rubens: Did you become involved in any political party campaigns? Or did you do publicity for labor unions?

Ward: I wrote a lot of pieces about labor and leftist problems that were published in The Peoples' World, until I left the Party. After that, of course I was persona non grata to some extent.

Rubens: Did you remain friends with people who had been in the Party?

Ward: Oh, yes, some. Most of our friends were Party members at one time or another.

Rubens: And dropped at the same time you did?

Ward: Some dropped out later, some dropped out a little earlier. It didn't seem to make much difference.

Angela: We were close friends with people like Kappy [Leon Kaplan] and Celeste Strack. In fact, we had Oleta and her husband, Allen Yates, over to dinner after we dropped out of the Party. I was very close to Oleta, and I liked her very much. We kept up contacts with all these people.

Rubens: Didn't she leave in '59?

Angela: She left the Party a year after we did, in '58.

Ward: Kappy came up from Los Angeles to try to talk us back into the Party, and a year later he was out.

Rubens: Because your wife worked, because you had an inheritance, you didn't need to have a regular job?

Angela: That's right.

Ward: When I wasn't working I was drawing unemployment insurance, so although mostly the the mainstay was her salary, still I always added a little something. And then my father's death--the fact that I was able to sell the lot next door to his house. We began to talk travel, and she got a six-months leave from her job, which we later expanded to eight months before we left. We started to plan at least six or eight months ahead of time.

Traveling

Rubens: You had never travelled abroad?

Ward: Of course, we had passport trouble. Jack Shelley was then in Congress, and we got him to go to bat for us.

Rubens: You told of another time he helped you out. He had been friendly to the left--he had appointed Oleta to the War Unity Board.

Ward: There are many stories about Jack Shelley, some I knew about and some I didn't. He was the guy who introduced me to the Monsigneur at the church who said I could have a half-hour alone with the lady from Franco's Spain. And if Harry Bridges wanted to communicate with Jack Shelley, he had to go through me because Jack Shelley wouldn't talk to him.

Rubens: Why?

Ward: Communist! Whew! I'm sure Shelley thought I was a Communist, but it wasn't as open a deal as Harry's was.

Rubens: Were you friends at this point with Louis Goldblatt? Would you see him occasionally?

Ward: We were always friends.

Angela: Lou gave us the name of his brother in Paris to visit, and we discussed our trip with him.

Rubens: You had never thought of going to work for the Dispatcher?

Ward: No. One time earlier Lou had asked us to go to Hawaii, but we had just had it up to there; we didn't want to go anywhere. The winter we spent in Marrakech--

Angela: This is getting ahead. That was in '64.

Ward: We decided we wanted to travel, and we enlarged our plans until we finally went around the world in '59.

Angela: This is important: on the passport issue, Norman Leonard got in touch with Louis Boudin, who had gotten the passport for either Paul Robeson or Rockwell Kent; they were the first ones who were given passports. Boudin went--

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Rubens: You had just said that Jack Shelley helped with the passports, and Boudin had had to go to the office as well.

Ward: Yes. It took a bit of doing, but we got passports. How did we get to Europe the first time? We left in February of '59.

Angela: Yes, and we went to New York.

Ward: Is that the time we stopped and saw Roger and Lou in Omaha?

Angela: No, I think we flew to New York and we stayed there three days. We saw Dick Sasuly, and we met the ILWU research director, Bruce Wayburn. Then we went on a ship, the Cristoforo Colombo, and Bruce Wayburn and his wife and little daughter were on the trip. Our first stop was Italy.

Rubens: Did you have a goal in terms of how you shaped the trip?

Angela: We had an itinerary, more or less.

Rubens: Were you planning to go to the Soviet Union?

Angela: Yes, I think we were.

Ward: We were in third class.

Angela: We were in tourist class. They didn't have such a thing as third class [laughs].

Ward: Then it was second class, and that's where the Wayburns were. Then there was somebody we knew in first class.

Rubens: I'm interested in how the trip reflected on your life at that point. I see it as trying to make some resolution of what your life had been, and picking new directions.

Visiting Italian Communists

Ward: There are things about those trips that I would like to talk about. We landed in Naples. Angela had written the relatives before; of course Italy was just lousy with relatives of hers. Our plan was to land at Naples, first go to Rome and spend a few days by ourselves, and then start seeing relatives. But Angela had written to the old man from Ceccano telling him we were coming and on what ship, but not where we were going to get off. So he had sent relatives to Genoa, the various ports of Rome--all the ports that the Cristoforo stopped at.

We got off at Naples, and all of a sudden a man began yelling, "Angela Gizzi, Angela Gizzi." It was one of her cousins, Sancte de Sanctes (Saint of the Saints) and his wife from Ceccano. They took us there via Monte Casino, the famous Catholic monastery.

Angela: With a Polish-Italian cemetery.

Ward: I got some wonderful pictures at Monte Casino. And the family, the old home, with the doorway that had been imported by ox cart from Naples six hundred years before.

Angela: The doorway is a national monument.

Ward: We had quite a time there, then we went around for a while. We really wanted to go to Russia.

Angela: What about my Communist cousin? You used to have discussions with Sancte de Sanctes, through me. We used to discuss the Party and the United States.

Rubens: He was still a Communist?

Angela: Oh, yes. He was comparable to a county supervisor in America.

Ward: He would be comparable to the chairman of the board of supervisors of a big county.

Rubens: Was his wife active, too?

Angela: No, his wife was not at all.

Ward: At the table would be the old man, Sancte's father, Ugo, who was a Fascist; the son was a Communist; his mother was a Christian Democrat and so was his wife; and they had a ten-year-old daughter who wasn't anything yet. And they all got along. This also took place with other people. There were no yelling matches

Ward: between family members who were Communists and Christian Democrats, but get a Socialist and a Communist together--they might be brothers, but they fight like hell [laughs].

Rubens: Did this uncle ever come to the United States?

Angela: No. He was a prisoner of war.

Ward: Yes, he got himself captured early in the war, World War I.

Angela: No, World War II. Sancte is younger than I am!

Rubens: Had you ever met him before you went to Italy?

Angela: No.

Ward: We knew about him not only through the family, but Angela's younger sister, Maria, went to Italy long before we did and she met Sancte. They had a little fitful romance that didn't amount to much; she came back home and it quickly evaporated. So through Maria he knew a lot more about us.

Rubens: Angela, in your oral history you talk about the role of women in Italy, and how he was a Communist and believed the wife should be at home.

Angela: And these things that happened when we got off the ship and he took us to the--

Rubens: He let you carry the suitcase?

Angela: Even though he was a very strong Communist, both in his position and in his beliefs, he'd call the servant girls (they had servant girls in those days), "Rafaela, Michelangela, come and get the suitcases"--all this in Italian. I was wanting to carry them, but I thought it was awful to have these kids--

Ward: It's a good thing they carried the suitcases, because this house was built up the side of a cliff. It was one room deep, and the staircase was in back, up the face of the cliff. It was five stories high, and those stairs, the first time we were there, I think were the original marble stairs. They had been worn down so you could slide down them very easily, but it was quite a feat to walk up them; you had to work around to the sides, because it was just a trough!
[Estolv leaves the room]

Rubens: Was Sancte holding you to account about why you left the Party?

Angela: Yes, we had many discussions about that. Estolv couldn't speak Italian, but he carried this little dictionary around with him. Sancte would say, "Ask him this," and I'd ask him, and he'd answer and I'd translate. It was very wearing, you know.

Sancte would pat us on the shoulder and say to us, "Well, you know, the American Party was never a working-class Party." And it was too attached to the Soviet Union. The Italians were always very independent. They were loyal to the concept of Communism in the Soviet Union, but they were very independent when it came to strategy and line and all that. They didn't go along with the Soviet Union. Sancte thought the American Party was too slavish to the Soviet Union. And Estolv would agree with him. That really opened my eyes when I saw that situation.

Then we'd have these discussions at the table, and Sancte would talk about his campaign. He was running for office, and he got the highest vote on the Communist ticket. Well, Estolv would tease his mother and his wife. He'd say to him, "Aren't you going to vote for Sancte on election day?" The mother would say, "Oh, he's a devil," but she would never say no, she wasn't going to vote for him. It turned out that she did vote for him. See, that's the difference between--

Rubens: She was voting for her son, not the Party.

Angela: And also the Italian Communist Party is very broad. We even discussed the religious aspects of the Communists being so powerful. Estolv would say, "How can you reconcile--?" Because we were in Rome, virtually, and here was the Vatican and the Pope. Sancte would say, "We let the Church take care of our souls, our spirits, but the Party takes care of our bellies." [laughs] That's how he'd answer that question. We had a lot of interesting discussions.

More on Angela and HUAC

Rubens: While we have a moment here, let me ask you some more about your testimony at the HUAC hearings. Did you just testify one afternoon?

Angela: One morning, yes.

Rubens: Who else was called up at that time?

Angela: The second witness was Peggy Sarasohn.

Rubens: You were the first?

Angela: I was the first woman. There was a man before me, who I think was a social worker.

Rubens: Was Oleta called?

Angela: No, she wasn't called.

Rubens: Do you recall how they selected people?

Angela: They were trying to get the professional people. They got me because they figured I was the head of the professional section. Then they subpoenaed dentists and doctors.

Rubens: Really, a dragnet, a fishing expedition.

Angela: Yes, and they didn't subpoena any of the lawyers, which was very interesting.

Rubens: Why not?

Angela: I guess because they figured the lawyers were--

Rubens: Too sharp. Were they just a couple of days of hearings?

Angela: Oh, no, the hearings lasted I think three or four days--almost a whole week.

Rubens: The next hearings (when the kids were washed down the steps) were not until 1960, I think.

Angela: I don't think we were even here then; we were on another trip or something.

Visiting the USSR, 1959

[Estolv returns to the room]

Angela: I was telling Lisa about our discussions with Sancte, and how he took us around the whole Ceccano area, discussing not only the Communist Party but all the antiquities. He was very knowledgeable about the "Latium," as he called it.

Rubens: The Latin background.

Angela: Yes. He was like an archeology buff, and he could tell you all the names of things. And he'd tell Estolv all about the Cyclops.

Ward: Some of the old cities he took us into were fascinating. And there were towns that he couldn't go into because he was a Communist! There were other cities where he was the fair-haired boy because they were Communists. They were an interesting bunch.

Rubens: Is this the trip where you go to the Soviet Union?

Angela: Yes.

Ward: It began in San Francisco in '45, really, because of the United Nations. There were delegates there from all over the world, including the Italian delegation. One of the major participants was Guiseppe di Vittorio, who came with his wife. Angela was assigned by the Party to entertain her, show her around town, and translate for her. There was a party that began after the meetings were over, on a week night, at a home on Russian Hill which was owned by a then-leftist lawyer--

Angela: Herb.

Ward: --where the prominent Communists of San Francisco were assembled to chat with di Vittorio and his wife.

Angela: It was a meeting that was called by the trade union fraction of the Party. Archie Brown and people like that invited Dick Lynden, who may or may not have been in the Party at that time, and all these trade unionists to come and meet di Vittorio, who was the general secretary of the CGIL (Confederazione Italiana del Lavoro).

Rubens: Was di Vittorio a Communist?

Angela: Oh, yes. Archie wanted these trade unionists to know how the Party functioned in Italy--to tell the trade unionists that in the Italian Party the legislative deputies from the Communists were paid the same as any deputy, and they gave the difference, what they earned as deputies, to the Party, to--you know, to show how working-class the Party was.

We were seated at this meeting at Herb Resner's house. His wife was very social, and she didn't recognize that this was a political meeting. So she had a big sterling silver punch bowl in the middle of the dining room table stuffed with a lot of ice and a lot of Coca-Cola bottles stuck in it, and then little snacks. She came sailing down the stairs in a long white gown, and they had a curved staircase [laughs]. The Party people were so embarrassed to have the Italian Communist Party see this display.

Rubens: How did the idea of going to the Soviet Union come about from this?

Ward: Because Angela knew Anita di Vittorio and helped her during her stay in San Francisco in '45; we looked her up when we got to Rome. Her husband had died, but she was quite somebody in the Communist Party of Italy, and they soon put us in touch with her. The minute she saw Angela she remembered that meeting and what a surprise it was.

We told her that we wanted to go to the Soviet Union and what, if anything, could she or would she do about it? She said she was going, too. We tried to arrange things so that we could meet in Moscow. That did not work out, but I don't remember why. Anyway, she was not there at the time we were, but she did arrange for a meeting with an official who spoke Italian.

Angela: He was the secretary of the Moscow consulate.

Ward: We couldn't say exactly when we could enter Russia, and you had to have down exactly when you were going to enter and where you were going to go, who you were going to see, when you were going to leave, and so on. So we couldn't get our visa until we got to Stockholm. There we went to the Russian embassy, and if I was ever in a civilized fortress, that was it: the window open just a slit, and all that. It took eleven days to get our visas.

Rubens: Did it ever come up that you had been members of the Party?

Ward: That wouldn't have helped at the embassy, to say that we were <u>former</u> members. No, we were just tourists. We boarded a ship in Stockholm and headed for Leningrad. From Leningrad the ship ran to some port in England, then France, Holland, Denmark, Stockholm, Helsinki, Leningrad. We were in the company of twenty-eight British and three other Americans. We got along very well with people generally. We stopped in Helsinki, which to this day I remember as one of the most beautiful cities I ever saw anywhere. Then we went on to Leningrad. We were awakened at five o'clock in the morning by the customs inspector knocking on our door. They turned everybody out, went through all our luggage.

By that time we had become quite friendly with one of the English people, a woman editor of some publication in London who had prepared for this trip by going for three years to a night class in Russian in London, taught by a Russian woman who had armed our friend with a letter to people she knew in Moscow that she wanted this lady to meet. She had written to these people, but she couldn't say exactly when this gal would arrive, but for them to expect her. Using a telephone for any purpose in Moscow

Ward: in those days, particularly if your Russian wasn't perfect, just didn't work. So there was no way our friend could advise them beforehand when she would come. But she had the address, and she asked us to go with her, which we did.

We had a charming evening at their home. The man was a retired mechanic of some kind, apparently well-thought of in Communist circles, because he had been allowed to go on delegations to Paris and London. By means of translation offered by our English friend, we had quite a conversation.

Rubens: You had no one you knew to look up?

Angela: We did have this Russian head of the Moscow city central labor council.

Ward: He came to visit us at our hotel.

Rubens: What about Pop Hanov?

Ward: No. Lord knows what became of him when he got back there.

##

Rubens: More than twenty years of your life had been tied up in the Party, and you had studied much of Soviet life. What did it mean to you to be going to the Soviet Union? Could you say why it was that you went?

Ward: It was interesting in Leningrad, first of all. The warmth of the people--for instance, we got tickets to the ballet. The only way we had to get there was by streetcar, and at the hotel they told us what streetcar to board. We boarded it, but we didn't know where to get off. And nobody, of course, on that streetcar could speak a word of English. But we showed our tickets, and <u>everybody</u>--they practically ushered us in the door of the theater. They were just so friendly.

The difference between the Leningrad underground and the Moscow underground--Leningrad was built on a marsh, virtually at sea level. The result was that there was no solid ground up top and you had to go down and down and down by elevator to get to their subway.

Rubens: In terms of the Soviet Union being a model--

Angela: We still believed in Socialism, to put it in a nutshell. And we wanted to see how this Socialist state was working out. And especially after talking to the Italian Communists, we wanted to figure out why the Italian Communists didn't always go along with

Angela: the Soviet Union and were very critical of it at certain stages. The main reason was that we wanted to see this great experiment---because we believed that it was the future. In fact, I still do.

Ward: There are other ways of putting it, but fundamentally she said it.

Rubens: You knew a lot about Soviet life.

Ward: We had read a lot about it. But reading about it and seeing it is not always the same.

We found the people very warm and friendly, even though we couldn't speak Russian. One of the things that fascinated us was those people who had lived through the nine hundred days--the siege of Leningrad by the Germans. You could tell immediately; their faces had an ineradicable look of pain and sorrow.

Angela: They had starved!

Ward: They literally almost starved to death, and many of them did. If I can believe what I've read, there was even a black market in human carcasses for food.

We took the Red Arrow train, a night train, from Leningrad to Moscow. In the first place it never got really dark; this was summer and it just got a shady look. The sleeping compartments were usually three bunks to a side, and we found ourselves with some English ladies who didn't like the idea of sleeping with strange men. So we stayed up most of the night, looking out on the scene. I'll never forget, going along some 60 miles an hour, a little opening in some trees in a forest, and in this tiny little dell there were what appeared to be a man and woman on the ground engaging in what men and women frequently do in all parts of the world, particularly at that time of night. Marching towards them were about twenty or thirty people from the nearby village, just about to break into that little dell. I'll never know what it was all about!

In Moscow we were assigned to Room 99 on such-and-such a floor at one of the better hotels, right around the corner from Red Square. Each floor had its lady that you met at her desk when you got off the elevator, and she kept your keys. This lady told us very quickly to ask for "patch patch"--ninety-nine.

The streets were washed, and the downstairs windows of the big buildings were washed at night by middle-aged women. We also noticed on Red Square that you lined up early in the morning to go to the tomb. In those times Stalin was still highly honored, so we saw both Lenin and Stalin.

Rubens: Despite the Kruschev letters Stalin was still--?

Ward: This was just a few weeks before the kitchen conference between Richard Nixon and Nikita Kruschev in Moscow.

Angela: You're talking about the DuClos letter. Well, Stalin was still there!

Ward: For the common Russian, their line was stretched way, way around out of sight of Red Square, around the Kremlin wall, waiting to enter the tomb. But we just walked right in. I thought that was a little odd. There was Lenin. Angela said, "Doesn't he look lifelike?" He looked like he was made of wax; I would have sworn he was. To some, he looked like he might wake up any minute.

We were walking along the sidewalk outside of GUM, the famous department store, with our guide (our guides were always women), and here comes a guy from one of the outlying provinces with his little Tartar hat. The girl guide whispered, "We don't like them," which shocked me. I was surprised that there hadn't been that much assimilation. It was pretty obvious that the greater Russians always felt that they were "it." The other people were just lucky to be taken in.

Then the English lady we had become friendly with on the ship approached us. She had to go and see these people in compliance with the letter that she had been given by her teacher in London, and would we go along?

Rubens: Let's get an overview now. How long were you in the Soviet Union?

Angela: Three weeks.

Rubens: What was your impression? Did you feel people lived well?

Ward: I saw that apparently there was no poverty. The splendor we saw--

Angela: The Hermitage.

Ward: Talk about splendor! You approach it via esplanades and fountains and steps. It's hard to make a comparison, but I would say that it makes our buildings look a little "new fashioned," crummy.

I felt almost instantly that it was very interesting to visit, but not to live. I hoped that when we got Socialism, it would be our type of Socialism and not the Russian type.

Rubens: What did that mean?

Ward: It's hard to define. I guess the language barrier had something to do with it.

Rubens: What is "our type" of Socialism? You had thought about this a lot.

Ward: I can best define it by comparing Eastern United States Communists with Western United States Communists that I knew. The Western type Communists that I knew, if you were a comrade, you were a comrade, period. And with some exceptions for personal likes and dislikes, if you were single and your office secretary were single, there wasn't any reason why you couldn't go out together. You know what I mean? But in the Eastern United States, among Communists that I met--in Washington, particularly--that wasn't so at all. There were class distinctions. There were people who did such and such, and they were beneath you; there were people who did such and such, and they were really above you. All in the same Party. I never could understand that. I felt there as a big difference between the great Russian and the poor bastard who lived out in the sticks.

Angela: Another thing that you talked about was the atmosphere in the Soviet Union, where you did feel shut in. You couldn't buy a Western paper, for instance. All you could read was occasionally a Daily Worker. There was a rigidity about it, and a lack of freedom that you found oppressive. I think everybody else in the group felt the same way.

Ward: There were five Americans on this trip.

Rubens: Was this an organized tour?

Ward: Oh, yes. You did certain things on certain days, and certain times you had off to look around by yourself. Of the five Americans, two were a young New Yorker who had just finished his tour of duty as a lieutenant in the American forces stationed in England, and his mother. Mama was a New York Jewish lady, well along in middle age, who had been born and raised in Odessa, and who wanted to go and see her uncle who was still living there. She also remembered her early girlhood days in Moscow and wanted to see those things. So they had made arrangements that he was going to buy a fancy car, and they were going to tour Europe and then leave the car somewhere temporarily while they went, at Mama's insistance, to see Moscow and the uncle in Odessa. They had no sooner gotten to Moscow than Freddie decided he couldn't stand the place or the people, and he was after his mother to hurry up and get it over with so he could get back to someplace decent again.

Ward: So she had tried to change their itinerary. Oh! The last we saw of them was in one of the small semi-public rooms, a meeting room on the ground floor of this hotel, with about half a dozen dour looking Russians, and Freddie and the mother expostulating--Freddie demanding, the mother explaining all this to these guys, and their faces were all sour as hell. We passed by and the mother came out and said, "Oh, Freddie, he's going to get Lubianka." I never found out what happened to them.

You couldn't change anything. If you said you'd be going to such and such a place at such and such a time, you'd better go there at that time and no other time. That's what their travel amounted to. That I heartily disliked. However, although I felt sorry for Mama, I didn't feel sorry for Freddie. And so we left.

Rubens: Did you take a lot of photographs?

Ward: On the whole trip I took 4,000 photographs, 1,400 in color and the rest in black and white. I think I took about 300 in the Soviet Union.

One of our adventures was when we were taken to see a still--functioning monastery about forty miles outside of Moscow. This was our only sense of actually passing throught the countryside. It was scattered forest, heavy at times, and the houses in the villages were all log huts. The water supply was always a simple pump--no running water in the houses at all. You'd see the women coming, two or four together, gathering around the pump and chatting. The women did the hard work always, we thought. In the monastery, here I was with my camera. Along came a priest--he must have been more than an ordinary priest, because he looked pretty fancy and had a heavy silver cane and all that--and he charged me with his cane. But I was a lot younger than he was; no problem.

So that was the Soviet Union.

Rubens: Was North Africa on this trip also?

Angela: No, that was in '64.

Rubens: Did you ever try to publish any of your photographs from the Soviet Union?

Ward: No. My picture of the old boy with the silver-headed cane came out very well.

Then we went on--the usual thing, Greece, some of the Greek islands, Egypt, and then we flew to India via Pakistan. I remember that for some reason we had to stay overnight in Pakistan at the airport hotel; we were on the outskirts of

Ward: Karachi but didn't go to town. Lying there at night we watched the insects crawling across the ceiling over our heads, wondering if they would drop. But none of them did.

Rubens: So you really did go around the globe. Where did you go from India?

Ward: We had some adventures in India in Darjeeling. You had to take a plane from Calcutta to the foothills of the Himalayas, about four hundred miles, and from there you took a jeep. We took the plane, about five o'clock in the morning, to the town of Bogdobra. On the plane we met a couple from Miami, Florida, who were obviously American and friendly enough. They were going to Darjeeling also, and we quickly agreed that we would take a jeep together. But they had another idea. They had read or heard somewhere that a town a couple of hours drive away, up in the mountains, was having its annual fair that weekend. They thought it would be nice to see what that would be like, and then we could take another jeep and go on to Darjeeling.

So we went to this other town. The main street was not quite as wide as this room, with shops and restaurants and whatnot on every side of everything. Everything was for sale. I remember passing a steaming bin of what looked like rice with raisins in it. But when we got up close we saw those weren't raisins, they were flies. But we were awfully hungry, and this couple said there were places to eat there. They decided they were going to eat and asked us if we wouldn't join them. We watched, but that was all. Nothing doing; we'd go hungry.

After seeing what we wanted of the town, we got a jeep and driver and started off for Darjeeling. En route those two poor people got deathly sick. I really suffered for them. At Darjeeling they were put under a doctor's care in the same hotel where we stayed, but we never saw them again. They were still in bed under a doctor's care when we left Darjeeling three or four days later.

There's a photograph I took in Darjeeling in the other room, showing what looks like the wash out on the line, and the big mountain in the distance is Kanchenjunga, the second highest mountain on earth. Everest was just out of sight around the corner. Kanchenjunga hadn't been seen for several weeks because of fog, but they thought it might clear, so I got up at 4:30 in the morning before dawn. Here we were up at 7,500 feet in altitude, and there was a little Buddhist temple where I went, about a quarter of a mile from the hotel, on a little peak. These prayer flags were fluttering around the ceiling of the temple, and they look like the wash out on the line in the photograph. Way down in the valley I heard a bugle blow, and

Ward: then the dogs began to bark. Then the clouds rolled by and you saw a snow-clad mountain--that was it. But no, that wasn't it. A half hour later another, higher mountain emerged--and so on, until eight o'clock, when I got my picture.

The couple who owned the hotel were Tibetans. They were in their sixties, I guess, and they could drink more gin! I actually saw them put down a fifth of gin between them before dinner--perfectly sober. One of their daughters was an internist at Cedars of Lebanon in Los Angeles, another was someplace else in the world doing something. They were well educated, spoke perfect English, and you met people there from all over, doing all sorts of things. A fascinating place. Don't go to Calcutta.

##

Rubens: Let's finish your trip.

Ward: We went back to Calcutta and took an English ship there--

Angela: Cunard.

Ward: --which had accommodations for twenty-one first-class passengers, twenty-one second-class passengers, and fifteen hundred steerage--class. The most interesting were the steerage class. There were seven different religions among those steerage passengers, and each one had its practitioner or priest. Some of them did it this way, and some of them did it that way.

Angela: And different foods.

Ward: We left port at Calcutta at midnight, and we had to go through a series of locks before we got to the river, which was one of the branches of the Ganges. We were about forty or fifty miles from the ocean. We got out onto the river before we went to bed. We woke up the next morning and we were way down, with houses and trees on banks forty or fifty feet above us. We were down in the mud, stuck, until the tide changed. You see, they have fifty-foot tides.

We got out into the Indian ocean, and we met another ship, I suppose by arrangement. There was a transfer of a couple from the other ship to our ship, exactly why I don't know. There was a little launch from the other ship, and here was our stairway being let down, rising and falling, rising and falling. When it was just right, you jumped for the rail. The wife made it all right, but when her husband came to jump he slipped. He got one hand on the rail, and everybody watched him. He made it. We became friendly. They had been going to Australia from wherever they came from, to start life all over again.

Rubens: Where did you end up?

Angela: We went to Penang, Burma; then Singapore, stopped at all these places, and landed in Hong Kong.

Ward: It took twenty days. Angela won the ping pong championship.

Angela: Then we went to Japan for three weeks.

Rubens: Had you ever had this much leisure in your lives?

Angela: No. [laughs]

Rubens: This was an eight months trip. You came back in October of 1959?

Ward: We left in February and got back in October. Angela's boss wanted her to come right to work the next day.

Rubens: You left again in 1963 for a two year trip. When did you start your work with the oral histories at the Regional Oral History Office at UC Berkeley?

Ward: That was much later. It's been about ten years.

Rubens: For next time, think about the political or philosophical meaning of your next trip, and what you have been doing with your time between 1959 and over the next twenty years--your writing and so forth.

Ward: I went back to work in the plastics factory. I know that I left the plastics factory in '61.

[Interview 10: 24 August 1987]##

Rubens: I'm still trying to get a characterization of that '57, '58, '59 era. I also want to look ahead a little bit. I want to make sure we have your work employment. The way I see it, you worked at the plastic factory, you then worked for Moulin, and then you said you did go back to the plastic factory.

Ward: In '53 we bought a new car to be delivered to us in Detroit, and I got time off from the plastic company at that time to fly to Detroit, pick up the car, and tour Canada and the New England states. That was when we looked up the old home on the Boston Post road.

Rubens: Did you then come back and work at the plastic factory?

Ward: Yes, I went right back to work at the plastic factory.

Rubens: You started working for Moulin at night while you were working for the plastic factory during the day?

Ward: I quit working in the plastic factory a year or so later.

Rubens: Did you go back to that factory later?

Ward: Only after the trip to Detroit.

Rubens: Never after Moulin?

Ward: No.

Rubens: Then in 1957 you had an operation; in '59 you went to Europe. Did you ever again work in the industrial sector? Did you have a factory job?

Ward: It seems to me that when we got back from Europe I worked for Moulin.

Rubens: You went back to Moulin?

Ward: I never went back to it; I either worked there or I didn't.

Angela: When did you go to the San Francisco Art Institute to study photography?

Ward: There was quite a while there where I--I was always doing some writing about something or other, and I had picked up photography. I went to the San Francisco Art Institute, and had one day of training by Ansel [Adams] himself. I never was able to understand the man, really--the zone system.

Rubens: I don't understand it, either. It's too complicated.

Ward: Very.

Rubens: How long were you at the Institute?

Ward: I think it was a full semester, or something like that. I was by far the oldest student there. I remember a couple of social affairs. In the classroom it didn't matter, but socially I just didn't belong. Here I was in my late fifties--I usually took a drink and left quickly. It just wasn't my generation; it didn't work.

Rubens: I get the feeling (correct me if I'm wrong) that a lot of the work that you took earlier had two impulses: you were committed to the labor movement, but you also were a member of the Communist Party. And the Party had an emphasis on working in

Rubens: factories, downplaying intellectualism, and that a whole other side of you always had been an artist, an intellectual, a kind of Bohemian. Leading up to your leaving the Party, that part of you was emerging. After all, you said you would have left the Party earlier, but you waited for Angela. Is that a fair assessment?

Ward: I think there's some truth to that. I wouldn't put it quite as sharply as you have phrased your question, but I guess the more immediate practical side of leftism was being somewhat submerged in my writing and photography and things like that.

Rubens: What do you mean by the practical side of leftism?

Ward: Of course, the many meetings that I no longer attended. And I had more time to study photography and try to take better pictures. I was interested in the annual photographic exhibit in the art festival in San Francisco. The ferryboat picture even got a mention in the press once. Yes, I would say that writing and photography became my primary interests at that time.

The CIO Purge of Left Unions

Rubens: One more question before we get back to the travels: Is there anything we should have said about the expulsion of the ILWU and the Mine-Mill in 1950?

Ward: The union I then belonged to was the Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers. My original union was the Newspaper Guild, and that had turned so conservative that it wouldn't have been expelled from anything--except the Communist Party.

Rubens: When did the Guild become conservative?

Ward: The American Newspaper Guild (as it used to be called; now they've dropped the "American") consisted only of editorial department employees, although it was predominantly leftist because newspaper editorial people are usually (not always, but the majority of them) a little bit skeptical about everything that is routine and normal and polite and gets elected. So it was quite natural--for instance, when I went to the founding meeting of the Congress of Industrial Organizations, of the nine Guild members who were there, only four of them were real Guild delegates. The rest of them were like me; I went as the delegate from the Alameda County CIO Council.

Rubens: I thought it was reporters as well as editors.

Ward: [adamantly] Editorial employees; editors, my foot! They were reporters, librarians, copy boys, copy desk men. If an editor had joined, he would have been frowned upon. In fact, it would have cost him his job right then and there.

Rubens: I understand now. So when did it turn to the right?

Ward: When the theory of industrial unionism caused the Guild to open its doors to all newspaper employees who were not already unionized. Of course, the pressmen were unionized, the stereotypers were unionized, and this and that were unionized. But not the business office employees, so when they came in they were much more numerous, in the first place, than the reporters. In the second place they were much more under the influence of management, and they thought in terms of management. And they still do.

Rubens: When did that happen?

Ward: Shortly after the Congress--the Guild began as a member of the AF of L, and we fought expulsion as long as possible. I remember standing at the door of the old Alameda County Central Labor Council, facing Bill Spooner, who was the secretary-treasurer of the AF of L there, and saying, "We demand entrance." He said, "I'm sorry, my friend, but you're out." That's when we began to form what became the Alameda County CIO Council. Almost the identical thing happened in San Francisco, with different personnel--you see, Bill Green ordered it. Bill Spooner didn't want to fire us, get us out of there. But it was a case of either these councils lose their charters or they kick out the CIO membership. That was in '37 or '38.

Rubens: You were in the Mine-Mill because of your organizing? Carol Schwartz said you were president of the Mine-Mill here in San Francisco, and her husband, Monroe, was secretary-treasurer; and a black guy, Percy Edmonds, was vice president. George Broadhead was the business agent, and I guess he really ran things.

Ward: I can see you shouldn't have talked to Carol. I was president of the little local Mine-Mill at one time.

Rubens: She said it was remarkable because you hadn't been a Mine-Mill worker, but that it spoke to the regard people had for you.

Ward: That's a long story, and not very important.

Rubens: I think it bears on the reason why you were called back.

Ward: This little local of Mine-Mill had about three hundred members in San Francisco. It was during the CIO council days.

Rubens: Was it before or after the Brewery Workers business?

Angela: He wore so many hats--I think it was in later forties or early fifties.

Rubens: Do you have any memory of what it was like to be president of that local?

Ward: George Broadhead had been the business agent for years. He and I kind of cozied up. The controlling outfit was the employees of Federated Metal. This must have happened before we went to Los Angeles, because I had been president of the local for one term and one term only, prior to the time I represented the Federated Metals bunch in Los Angeles.

Angela: No, it's just the other way around. When you transferred into Local 50, I think it was, of the Mine-Mill in San Francisco. You transferred into it because you were a member of Mine-Mill, and you went into the Local 50. Because of all your experience you started helping blundering George Broadhead, who didn't know from anything. You were all delegates, I was a delegate to the San Francisco CIO Council from the Utility Workers. So that was the late forties. You were a delegate to the CIO Council from Local 50 of the Mine-Mill.

Rubens: I think that's what led to your being head of the CIO Council for a while.

Ward: Anyway, George Broadhead and I became friendly. The members from Federated Metals weren't the majority of the total membership, but they were the cohesive part. To simplify matters, there was the Federated Metals bunch, and then there was the rest of the membership. The rest of the membership had more members than Federated Metal, but Federated Metal controlled. And George had a tiff of some kind with them. There was a delegated convention--not a Mine-Mill, but a state convention. The two main boys who were wheels from Federated Metals were elected to this convention, and didn't even bother to be present at our own annual officers' election. They were down at this convention. While they were away and expecting to be reelected, I ran for office and got elected. After I was elected I went down in one of my several capacities--I think I was a delegate for the CIO Council--to this convention in Santa Cruz or Paso Robles, or wherever it was, and told the other two boys to go home; I was it now.

Rubens: How did they respond to that?

Ward: They looked pretty glum, but they went home. I think I was elected a time or two. George Broadhead wanted a raise in salary every year, and as long as I supported George I won reelection.

Ward: But it came to the point, knowing by that time intimately what our bank account was, how much dues we collected each month, and how much George made each month, that I felt it was my duty to tell him that the union simply couldn't afford to give him the next raise he demanded. Whereupon he switched over to his old friends from Federated Metals, and I was defeated. He ran for the California Assembly or something. I remember he bought himself a tuxedo to do his campaigning. He got nowhere, and died shortly thereafter.

Rubens: Were these people leftists? Was George a lefty?
Ward: No.

Angela: Percy Edmonds was.

Ward: Yes, he was the only leftist, and he worked for Federated Metals, and whom I recruited into the Party. He was a good friend.

Angela: You recruited him through Mine-Mill?

Ward: Well, I met him in Mine-Mill, and he became a Communist.

Rubens: I think Percy went on to the Steelworkers.

Ward: The whole International Mine-Mill union was eventually absorbed by the Steelworkers.

Rubens: Just before your European trip, were you involved with the 1958 right-to-work law campaign here in California.

Angela: Yes, we were.

Ward: I'm sure I was, but I don't remember anything specific.

Angela: He was always being asked to write leaflets or little press releases about this and that, and he may very well have written some stuff.

Rubens: You found this article from 1942 on how organized labor views the problems of transition--about what's going to happen after the war. You said virtually all your papers from '52 and before were burned up at the ranch.

Ward: Not papers, our literature.

Angela: And also the leaflets--

Ward: --and booklets.

Rubens: Do you have writings from after that period stored somewhere?

Ward: We have a lot of left-wing books in there.

##

Rubens: Who was your agent in New York?

Angela: This was later on, not in this period.

Angela: Here's another leftover I have to ask you: did you ever publish anything in New Masses or the Political Organizer?

Ward: I don't think that I ever wrote for the New Masses.

Angela: Didn't you write something for Political Affairs once?

Ward: I may have. I know I wrote for the PW, People's World.

Rubens: Regularly or intermittently?

Ward: Oh, intermittently.

Rubens: In this period, '58, '59, '60?

Ward: Not in the sixties, no. I was out of the Party by that time.

Rubens: When we get to the sixties I want to ask you some questions about [San Francisco Mayor Joseph L.] Alioto.

Ward: I don't think I gave one tenth of a damn whether Alioto was elected.

Rubens: From the position of the ILWU, it tore apart the left community in San Francisco.

Angela: Yes.

Ward: Alioto's closeness to Harry Bridges and so forth came at a time when I took no part in local elections--on broad questions, yes, but on local elections I took no part. I was out of that sort of thing.

Meeting the Exiled Left in Paris

Rubens: Let's wrap up your trip in '59. We want the focus to be your politics on this trip, and Angela wants you to add a little bit more about how the visit in Italy shaped how you looked at the Soviet Union.

Ward: Our first night in Paris, first night ever, in '59, we came up by train from Le Havre. We went to a hotel recommended to us by this woman artist we had come to know, and we got a room there. First thing, I looked in the phone book and found "H. Chevalier, Homme de Letre." I hadn't talked to him for years. He had been virtually run out of the United States--not exactly expelled, but he had felt it advisable to go and live in Paris.

Angela: Because of the Rosenberg atmosphere.

Ward: So I called the number, and a male voice answered. I said, "Haakon?" He said, "Oui." I said, "This is Estolv Ward; I don't know if you remember me." He said, "Estolv! I've been waiting for you to call me." [laughs] Nothing would do but that we go right over to dinner and meet his wife, Carol, and his little girl.

Rubens: Angela, had you met him before?

Angela: Yes.

Ward: Remember, this was the first time in Paris. While we were at dinner at Haakon's, the phone rang and it was Tom Van Dycke. Haakon told Tom that I was there. We had known him very slightly in Los Angeles; we had met him several times at social affairs.

Rubens: Who was he?

Ward: Tom Van Dycke was a New York Jew, very Jewish. He had had some kind of a relationship in Los Angeles with the ILGWU (International Ladies Garment Workers Union). He couldn't have held this position if it had been known that he was a Communist. There was some mixup about that.

Angela: He wrote for the Peoples' World under his pen name, Tom Farrell, or something like that.

Ward: He did all sorts of things under his pen name. I think I was his successor on the CIO radio down there, writing for them; there was another person doing the actual announcing.

Angela: Johnny Johnson.

Ward: Van Dycke had been the writer, and I followed him. I wrote for the radio program for a little over a year. I told you about that.

Well, we had to rush right out to see Tom the next Sunday---Haakon and Carol had a car. It wasn't much of a car, but Tom said nothing would do but that we should drive out in this car

Ward: with Haakon and company to Montfermeil, a suburb of northern Paris, to the Van Dyckes. We met his wife, whom he had met in New York where she had been--

Angela: --the research editor for Time, Life, for the Luce company.

Ward: Yes, she was a big wheel in magazine circles in New York. They got married by Mayor La Guardia. In 1948 the war in Palestine took place, which brought about the establishment of the Israeli government as a very tenuous fact. Van Dycke had done some work for the Paris edition of the Herald-Tribune in Palestine at that time. I don't think he was a regular reporter, but a stringer or something like that.

They had a dog, and they came back by way of Paris. There was no room; it was jammed, no hotel rooms available anywhere. So he went to the American embassy and said he was a reporter returning from Palestine with his wife and his dog. He said he knew they had rooms reserved for such people, and would like one of their spare rooms in a nearby hotel. That was a fact, and they gave him a room. The dog had been trained to eat at the table, and the staff fed him on a silver plate. The Van Dyckes said, "Well, if they treat dogs and us like this, let's stay in France!" [laughter]

Rubens: Was he still in the Party at that point?

Ward: Oh, yes.

Rubens: The Party would tolerate such treatment of a dog?

Angela: That's the French custom; dogs have first place.

Ward: Haven't you ever eaten at a table with a dog? We have! Even though we didn't know the mistress or the dog. That wasn't unusual in France.

Mrs. Van Dycke had money and also a lot of friends, many more than Tom had. So they bought this little old place in this suburb of Montfermeil. We found them there and they immediately adopted us as bosom friends. The relationship continued, and in later years we were in and out of Paris frequently.

Rubens: They had been out of the United States for ten years?

Angela: They lived in Palestine and then--

Rubens: I'm asking because I would think that your discussions with Chevalier and Van Dycke would have been about what had happened in the Party. After all, you had left the Party. Were they still members?

Ward: I couldn't say what Van Dycke's exact status in the Party was at that time, but we were all old lefties, that was obvious. In fact, Tom and his wife met because they were leftists in New York.

Angela: Tom Van Dycke had been very successful in Paris, from the time he had come from Israel. He had worked with Marcel Pagnol, the great French writer who wrote _Marius_ and _Fanny_--you know, the great trilogy. Tom, I think, did some translation for Pagnol. Anyhow, that was a very lucrative job that he had. He was like Pagnol's press agent. He also met a lot of the writers, and so forth.

Ward: Didn't Tom and Liz have to go to the south of France to do some press agentry for Pablo Picasso?

Angela: Yes, he was a press agent for Picasso. He had real fancy jobs and did very well economically.

Ward: Besides which, Liz had money of her own. By the time we took up with them--as I say, we instantly became bosom, old-time exiles from Los Angeles and San Francisco. Well, we could go back if we wanted to, and so could Tom, and so eventually could Haakon, because he did come back.

Angela: Much later. During this period, the first time we were there with Haakon and Tom, there was a lot of talk about how Haakon had literally had to flee the United States because of the Rosenberg thing. He was afraid they were going to tie him up with their spy cases and all. Oppenheimer and--

Ward: I don't know where you get the Rosenberg thing; it was the Oppie thing that got--

Angela: But at that time everybody was talking about the Rosenbergs and how serious it was. That was one of the things that everybody talked about. Andre Malraux was a close friend of Haakon Chevalier, and Haakon had translated _many_ of Malraux's books, like _Man's Hope_, _Man's Fate_, and so on. That's how he lived in France, as a translator of all these books.

Ward: Yes, Haakon was very busy and very happy, and that's where he married Carol.

Rubens: Did you ever have any particular involvement with the defense of the Rosenbergs?

Angela: We contributed money, that's all.

Ward: We knew a couple who had been close friends with the Rosenbergs before they got into trouble.

Angela: Sylvia and Harry Steingart. And we went to meetings that were held for the Rosenbergs during the height of the attention. You ask what were we doing in the period from, say, the late fifties and early sixties--that's what we were doing, things like that. We were not in an organized party any more, but we were very active in all these activities that the Party was promoting, and which we favored.

Rubens: Before your next trip, in late '62, '63, '64, let's look at those years when you returned from your first trip. I guess you missed the second HUAC hearings.

Angela: Yes, I think we got back shortly after that.

Rubens: There was the Caryl Chessman affair--

Angela: We didn't have anything to do with that.

Rubens: Kennedy was elected--

Angela: Yes, we worked in political campaigns.

Rubens: What year were the Rosenbergs killed?

Angela: 1954.

Rubens: You were still in the Party then.

Angela: Yes.

Rubens: I'm wondering if there was anything domestically that shaped your lives in the years between the trips. Or could you just not wait to get back to Europe? Did something happen to you in Europe?

Angela: Yes, we wanted to travel some more.

Ward: We talked about this gap between the trips. We both thought that, while we were active, there was nothing special.

Rubens: You weren't writing anything?

Ward: I was very interested in photography.

Rubens: Did Angela go back to Pinsky?

Angela: Oh, sure.

Rubens: Were you active in your own union?

Angela: Not very much.

XII TWO YEARS ABROAD, 1962-1964

Ward: We approached our second trip with a very different plan, a very different outline of what we wanted to do. We knew we wanted to be gone two years. This meant that Angela had to quit her job, and we had to have some money saved up, all of which we got arranged. We took a Norwegian freighter from the Port of Oakland. It was one of these pick-up freighters that pick up a little cargo here, a little cargo there. There was some to-do about when we could board this ship, or where. We finally boarded her at the Port of Oakland on a Sunday afternoon in late October of '62. We had had time to notify our friends, and we got to the ship in time to notify the steward's department that we were going to have a party. That was fine with them. They put on the champagne. Everybody came; I think there must have been thirty or forty people there, in and around the cabin and the ship. Everybody got there except Paul Schlipf, who got lost, which is one of his best traits. When he phoned earlier in the day the ship was up the estuary, but in the meantime it had moved to the Port of Oakland, so it wasn't really his fault. Anyway, he came with a bottle of champagne, which he had to drink himself because he couldn't find us.

The longshoremen were still loading. The party came, everybody had a big time. People came from San Francisco, Alameda County, Marin County, and we all had a good time. They left, and the longshoremen were still loading. We were exhausted and went to bed. We woke up to find the ship still there, the longshoremen just covering the hatches, finishing their job about eleven o'clock at night. Just at the right moment the fog rolled in, so dense that the ship stayed there; they didn't try to go out. So when we woke the next day we were still there, still fogged in. Eventually, about three o'clock in the afternoon, we got going and got out the Gate. The fog lifted just enough that we could look up and see the Gate bridge as we went under it.

We got to Los Angeles and were there three days loading. Our son, David, came down with one or two of the kids and took us up town. It was a good thing we were there three days, because on the way down the coast I developed a toothache, and it was

Estolv and Angela Ward
Thanksgiving on Sanchez Street
1964

Ward: very bad. David took me to his Hollywood dentist and I got fixed up after two or three visits in two or three days.

Angela: This was the beginning of the Cuban Bay of Pigs.

Ward: We were escorted here and there by destroyers down the Pacific Coast.

Angela: But we had a lot of political discussions while we were in L.A. for three days, because we met our friends there.

Ward: People didn't know what was going to happen, whether we were going to go to war with Castro or what.

Angela: Or with the Soviet Union.

Ward: We were accosted by this American destroyer on the way down the coast, and after we got through the Panama Canal, we had some political discussions on the ship that were pretty heated, too.

Angela: The American planes buzzed the ship.

Ward: Some of our fellow passengers were of the opposite persuasion than we were. Most of them got off in Panama--people going to visit Colonel So-and-So, and all that sort of stuff.

Then we went all the way through the Caribbean. Of course, we couldn't go near Cuba; we had to go way around the other side of Puerto Rico. It was pretty stormy, but eventually we got across the Atlantic. We were supposed to get off at Le Havre, but our first port of call was Dunkirk. The captain gave a dinner almost every night, which meant the champagne was on the house.

Everything was pretty quiet, and at Dunkirk we were in port all day.

Rubens: Give me a little overview--having been with your friends in Paris, did that awaken in you some sense that you'd like to spend a lot of time abroad?

Ward: Yes, we intended to spend two years, and we intended to get some kind of a vehicle.

Rubens: Did you have something you wanted to resolve in your mind, or was it just to see and broaden yourself?

Ward: We wanted to do whatever we felt like doing, whenever we felt like doing it, and stay as long as we wanted.

Ward: At Dunkirk the ship was unloaded all day. All the longshoremen were young, very active, very agile, and worked as hard as could be, really hard. And the captain told us they were all Communists. It was so different from, say, San Francisco or San Pedro. The longshoremen of San Francisco at that time--out of ten thousand in the local there might have been a dozen Communists in the whole bunch, all of whom we knew. Whereas here they were all Communists and they worked four times as hard as any San Francisco longshoreman would think of working. That struck us as being very different, very odd.

Eventually we got to Le Havre.

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Ward: I remember we had quite a to-do with customs. We had a shotgun.

Angela: I don't know why.

Ward: What I wanted that shotgun for, I don't know. The customs people wanted to know what it was for, and then they wanted to see the shells. I couldn't find the shells, and I caused quite a confusion. But we got by customs and we got to Paris. When we got there we immediately called the Chevaliers and the Van Dyckes. We arrived just the day before the Van Dyckes gave their annual big party out at their place in Montfermeil.

More on the Exiled Left

Ward: We had a reunion with Haakon and Carol and their daughter, Karen. We had a letter of introduction from Alvah Bessie, a black-listed Hollywood screen writer, one of the Hollywood Ten. He was at that time a rather good friend of ours. In fact, he had been in Angela's group in the Party at that time, up to just a few years before.

Rubens: Did he leave the country when he was blacklisted?

Angela: No. He had a hell of a time getting work.

Ward: He had worked for Bridges at one time, for the ILWU. And then he had worked for the Hungry i. Through a letter from Alvah Bessie we came to call up Lee and Tammy Gold, who were blacklisted Hollywood screenwriters living in Paris. We met them and were invited to a party where we met a number of people: Edita Morris, author of <u>Flowers of Hiroshima</u>, and her husband, Ira; Sylvia Jerico, wife of Paul Jerico, and their son, William;

Ward: Vladimir Pozner, who was then recovering from wounds he had suffered during the recent Paris OAS terror.

Angela: The Algerian war period.

Ward: William Marshall, a very handsome Negro actor; and a couple named Peritosh Sen from Calcutta.

Angela: These were all exiles from Hollywood.

Ward: Adrian Scott, a movie director; and also quite a few people we'd known before. Then we met a gal from Berkeley, Barbara Shuey. Did you ever hear of the Shuey Creamery? When I was a little boy in Berkeley the Shuey Creamery delivered our milk to our house; you left the previous day's empty bottle out and you got your bottle of milk in it's place. This was done in the night hours, and so when I got to be a bigger boy I and other rascals would go around stealing milk whenever we felt the need.

On our previous trip we had met an English woman named Ella Moody, who took us with her to visit some Russian people. Well, we went to see her, and she gave us a Christmas party at her home. We also met Kay and Lester Cole at their home in Hampstead.

Rubens: Had you known them before?

Ward: I don't think so.

Rubens: When you said you were close with Alvah Bessie, did you mean as social friends?

Ward: Yes.

Angela: We had them over for dinner, and that sort of thing.

Ward: After Christmas we returned to Paris, and a little later Kay Cole and her daughter came to visit us in Paris.

We went to our old hotel, where we had stayed the first time we were in Paris, and got a room there. We looked around and found all the places that catered to American tourists had nothing for rent for less than six months.

Angela: We were looking for an apartment.

Ward: Yes. Of course, we couldn't afford to stay in a hotel all the time, and we didn't want to. It was simply impossible. The rents were high for Americans, and this six months or more business was not to our liking. We had prepared for this by going to French school in San Francisco.

Angela: I took French lessons for a long time.

Ward: Angela's French was pretty good, so she tried the French papers. This put us in touch with a French businessman who had recently split up with his mistress. I guess he owned the apartment that she had occupied, and he had it up for rent for a reasonable sum. He had his secretary take us out to look at the place, and it would do. It was just down the street, at 68 Rue Butot, from the Institute Pasteur in a very nice part of Montmartre. So we took it, cleaned it up, and moved in. Our first big affair there we had the Van Dyckes and the Chevaliers to dinner. Angela had oysters on watercress, soup and so forth--they thought it was wonderful.

Rubens: I heard you are both cooks.

Angela: No, he's no cook. I'm a good cook, if I do say so myself.

Ward: On February 6 we went with Tom and Liz to a Beethoven concert which was the first concert for Piet Veenstra, a Dutch pianist and student of Rudolf Serkin. He played exactly like Rudolf. Later that night we went to La Coupola with Tom and Liz and met Piet and his date, a luscious Portuguese <u>fada</u> singer. <u>Fada</u> is the saddest thing, a mourning for the days of glory of Portugal.

I failed in my French class; I couldn't understand the French very well.

Angela: We went to school in Paris.

Rubens: Why were you drawn to France? The rich community of friends who were political as well?

Ward: It was a good starting point.

Angela: We loved France.

Ward: Yes. Fundamentally, you might call it the base of our operations for that two years. We were in and out of Paris several times.

Rubens: Give me a very simple, quick overview of where you went in two years.

Ward: There are two or three details that I think you'll want. In the first place, it took time to get a camper. We wanted a camper; we wanted to travel that way. By the time we got a camper it was Spring and we'd been studying French all this time.

Angela: We had planned this. For three months I went to the Alliance Francaise, I don't know about you. You went part time and then you lost interest. And you were writing all the time.

Rubens: What were you writing?

Ward: Damned if I know.

Angela: Short stories.

Rubens: Why don't you remember what you were writing? Why is your writing less important to you than other things?

Ward: Something about the Puritan in Italy.

Rubens: About your earlier travels?

Angela: Yes, your first contact in Italy where you met all my relatives.

Rubens: What happened to that story?

Ward: I sent it to my agent in New York and didn't get anywhere.

Rubens: Who was your agent?

Ward: A woman named Toni Strassman.

Rubens: How did you get that agent?

Angela: Referred by someone, probably the Van Dyckes.

Rubens: So it was another goal of yours to write, and you did keep writing.

Ward: I was writing all the time, one way or another.

Rubens: Were these fictional pieces, life stories, political assessments? Did you write about the exile community in Paris?

Ward: I can only remember the one about a Puritan in Italy.

Angela: Actually, you worked on that for a long time. You had revised it time and again at her suggestion. It was something that you really worked hard on, and when we got to Marrakesh, after we'd been there a while, you got a letter from Toni Strassman saying that she was so sorry that she couldn't do anything with the short story (which was actually a novella). It just missed being--it was sad.

Ward: At the Van Dyckes we met a man named Elliot Sullivan, a Hollywood actor. He was very witty.

Rubens: What did you think of this exile community? Did they seem like heroes?

Ward: I felt very warm towards them. I thought they were victims of rotten politics. I felt sympathetic. But I must say that they all seemed to be very comfortable, very happy. At these parties we went to occasionally here and there, the surroundings were magnificent, the apartments were large. They were very prosperous and very pleasant.

Rubens: Did you find yourselves talking about what politics in the thirties and forties had meant?

Ward: Oh, yes, of course.

Rubens: Were these people bitter about their Party experience? Were they the type of people who would have written in The God that Failed?

Ward: I don't think bitterness is quite the right word. Regretful, understanding, hopeful--not so much of returning. Well, there were people there who were still writing for Hollywood under pen names. There was one man, Wilson, who was selling stuff to Hollywood all the time.

Finally we got a loan camper because ours wasn't ready, and when we went back to get our real camper, it was the day before the Van Dyckes were giving their big party. There was a mob of people there, theatrical people, painters, writers, and even a few musicians. A very lively affair, a couple of scandals and whatnot.

Then we met Elinor Kahn, one of the wheels in the Bridges trial, for the defense. She was the gal who made the trip to Scotland to find the Marine Firemen's official who had retired from San Francisco--somebody named Ferguson. She got an affadafit from him denying that he had ever seen Bridges' Communist membership card.

Angela: She was Elinor Kamath in her own right.

Ward: She had married a man named Mahdav Kamath, a Hindu. Elinor had been some kind of a representative at the United Nations in New York, and there she had met Mahdav Kamath, who was a journalist for the Times of India.

Angela: The important thing about Elinor is that she was writing for the World Medical News, and she was one of the first people who spotted thalidamide, the terrible drug that they gave pregnant women to induce them to sleep at night. She was the one who alerted the U.S. Drug Administration. In fact, she has a letter from them, lauding her efforts. She was very prominent in exposing the use of that drug.

Ward: At a dinner party at the Kamath's we met Julio Alvarez del Vayo, who was the exiled Republican foreign minister of Spain. There was much talk about Franco and what he was doing, and how soon the people were going to throw him out.

Angela: He also said something interesting. We had come back from Spain--

Rubens: You didn't avoid it because of Franco?

Angela: No. Some people thought we shouldn't go, and others felt we should. Del Vayo said, "Yes, you should go!"

Ward: I remember his parting words that night: "See you in Madrid."

Rubens: Did you experience Fascism in Spain?

Angela: No, because it had loosened up somewhat. But we observed police all over the place.

Ward: We had our camper, vacated our Paris apartment.

On John XXIII, The Liberal Pontiff

Rubens: What major countries did you visit in a two-year period?

Ward: We headed for Italy, among other places. One of the reasons we were particularly anxious to get to Rome was because John XXIII had just died. Everybody was saddened, and we were, too, because in our previous visit we had seen John XXIII about as far as from here to the hallway, on his throne.

Rubens: Was he the one under whom Vatican II took place? He was the first liberal pope.

Ward: Yes. We went to a Good Friday thing in Rome, where by priestly error we got tickets right up there in front and saw Papa real close--and watched him taking a snooze in between acts.

He died, and we hurried to Rome to see who was going to be the next pope. I have found in reading my diary that my description of the day when the pope was chosen is good enough to quote directly [reads from journal]: "We were in camp in a suburb of Rome. We made it to San Pietro's by 10:50 a.m. The traffic jam going to San Pietro's was terrific. We walked the last quarter mile. When we got into Piazza San Pietro we hugged the shady side of the street, the sun being that hot. At

Ward: 11:20 a.m. there was a puff of white smoke. False alarm, thought many, including many young seminarians. Another puff of white smoke, and another. The crowds, excited now, and--

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Ward: "--beginning to believe a new pope had indeed been chosen, surged out from the shade of the colonnades into the blistering heat of the piazza. Now the smoke was coming in puffs, white, white, white. Men could be seen running along a flat roof near the papal apartments, high above the crowd. The rattle of hand-clapping came, and cheers and shouts. Many seminarians felt the early decision meant Montini, the progressive cardinal from Milan who had pledged to carry out Pope John's program, had been chosen.

"Half an hour passed. An army band marched into the square, past the battery of photographers, and into the inner square directly in front of the basilica. This square had been fenced off to the public. Then two platoons of soldiers marched out of the basilica. They were in uniforms of dark blue with red-tassled cockades in their hats, and scads of gold braid laid on. The band tootled neatly. The soldiers marched and counter-marched and saluted in a glorified version of guard mount. Finally the soldiers lined up across the front of the basilica and did an about-face, looking straight at the center balcony over the main entrance to the church. The bells tolled softly, and all eyes were fixed on that balcony. People were pouring through the colonnades and into the square, a thousand a minute or more.

"The white drapes were snatched aside from the huge glass doors which gave access to the balcony. The doors swung open to the tune of a mass groan of exultation from the thousands in the square. At first nothing could be seen except the glitter of a golden crucifix. Then the cross was brought out onto the balcony, held aloft by one of three cardinals in purple robes. Cardinal Ottoviani spoke into a microphone, his voice booming over the hushed square: 'Habemus Papem,' plus the additional words for which the crowd had waited a full hour in the merciless noontime sun. It was Montini, and he had taken the name of Paul VI. Seminarians and others noted immediately that the name Paul V appears in huge letters on the church front, right above the balcony where Paul VI would soon appear.

"The balcony was vacated. Men in mufti placed the papal flag, draping it from the side balcony filled with cardinals. At a distance they looked like purple toys with pink faces. The crucifix came forward again, and out onto the balcony a protective screen of cardinals parted, and there stood Paul VI.

Ward: "He raised his arms to bless the crowd. Many dropped to their knees, others genuflected. But a full half of the audience stood erect, looking straight at the pope. He raised his voice into a chant of Latin prayer: 'Urbi et orbi' (which means 'city and world.'), singing a line and then receiving a response, sung loud and clear by many voices in the audience. As the last 'amen' of the chant died away, the pope spoke a brief message of greeting in Italian, blessing those before him, those listening on the radio and television, and all people everywhere. Then he was gone.

"The bells burst forth in joy and the crowd slowly streamed away, faces filled with happiness as mass emotion drained away and each person slowly returned to normal."

Rubens: Did you just write this out like this, or did you rewrite it?

Ward: It's just a diary. But it was quite a moment. He didn't turn out to be a very good pope, either.

Rubens: Does your diary record what other writings you were working on?

Angela: Yes. He wrote a book, Money on the Floor, a real long novella--type thing.

Ward: I'll tell you what Money on the Floor was all about. We had driven our camper up to as near the petrol station as possible.

I think we'd gone on to the Van Dyckes, and when we came back found that the window had been broken. For some reason or other I had spilled some small change out of my pocket on the floor, and that was the only thing that was stolen. That's the "money on the floor." It was really a story of our adventures in the camper.

Rubens: Do you have a copy of that?

Ward: I don't think so.

Angela: I spent a lot of yesterday looking for this stuff. It's odd which things he kept and which things he didn't keep.

Rubens: This was a very important two years for you, wasn't it?

Ward: Oh, yes.

Rubens: Tell me where else you went.

Ward: The furthest north we went was Warsaw, Poland; our furthest south was an outpost at the northwestern edge of the Sahara desert. We

Ward: went as far east as Tlemcen in the mountains of Algeria, where there is a Quaker establishment where we stayed. We had credentials from Quakers--I think I told you had taken pictures for the Quakers.

Angela: We went to Greece--you went to Athos while I lived in the camper.

Rubens: How did you determine when to come home?

Angela: There were some interesting interludes. We were in Marrakesh when [John F.] Kennedy was assassinated.

Ward: We saw things there that most people don't see when they go to Marrakesh because we had a letter of introduction from our brother-in-law, George Curran, who was then one of the four foreign vice-presidents of Bank of America. We had a letter to the bank manager in Paris. From the bank manager in Paris we got a letter of introduction to the head of the Bank of Morocco in Casablanca. In Casablanca the head of the bank there called in all his subheads to say that here was this nice couple from the United States, and he wondered where they thought we ought to spend the winter in Morocco. They unanimously said we had to go to Marrakesh. They didn't have a bank branch of their own in Marrakesh, but they had a representative who was the head of the Marrakesh branch of the Le Credit Lyonnaise. So this banker called Marrakesh and told him that we were coming, and to please take care of us. That was done; we drove to Marrakesh. Mr. Petrucci (he was from Marseilles, I think) and his wife showed us the ropes, got us an apartment right across the street from the estate where Winston Churchill used to go when he was feeling poorly during the war.

Angela: He still went there, painting and so forth.

Ward: I was writing something there--I think it was Money on the Floor--and finished the first draft and part of the second. Marrakesh in the wintertime was a favorite jumping-off spot for the mountains.

Angela: For the High Atlas--the Haute Atlas mountains.

Ward: They were a little behind and to the east of us, up thirteen or fourteen thousand feet, and we were full of ski enthusiasts going there. In January sometime we decided we'd see some of the back country, which we'd heard a lot about. So we went up over the ridge--I think we climbed up to about seven or eight thousand feet (about like Donner Summit). At the peak there we were stoned by children because we had French license plates. We were stoned a couple of times because of that. But we made it to a small town which was a good stopping place. Somewhere along the

Ward: line we had picked up some kids from the Peace Corps, and we were pleasantly entertained by these people. We went from that town up into the Haute Atlas, and we came to a town where we wanted to spend the night. It was the sort of town that had three or four hotels.

We stayed at a place that was a combined bar, restaurarnt, and hotel. The bartender-owner and general factotem was a Greek who had been in the French foreign legion. He had a friend who stayed there who as a child had been a page boy to Emperor Franz Josef of Austria. He himself had been a priest, and he had shed his priestly talk and priestly robes. These two old boys were raconteurs and buddies and heavy drinkers. We left our stuff there and took off to someplace further up the line that we wanted to visit, and said we'd be back that night for dinner. At the bar we met a French woman--

Rubens: I love this story, but I don't think it belongs in your oral history.

Angela: Some of these stories are very illuminative, but we have to be selective. The Algerian trip was very important because we were doing work with and for the Quakers, and we stopped at these work camps. This was really significant, much more so than the pope, for instance.

Working with Quakers in Algeria

Rubens: What were you doing for the Quakers?

Angela: He was taking photographs of their work camps. In fact, they used that picture [pointing to the wall] of the woman lifting her veil for a Christmas card nationally. They blew it out so the faces wouldn't show, because she would have been killed if they found out she had allowed somebody to photograph her face.

Rubens: It would be good to have a copy of this photograph for the oral history. We need to have some of your photographs. How many work camps did you go to?

Angela: We went to three: Tlemcen was the first one, the second was Skidka, and the third one was at Phillipsville--but it has another name now. That's the one where Camus was born.

Rubens: Did you write about the work camps?

Angela: You wrote in your diary, but you weren't writing for any papers. You didn't have any assignment.

Rubens: Do you have some descriptions of the work camps?

Angela: I think we have some somewhere.

Rubens: When did you come home?

Ward: We were gone, almost to the day, two years.

Angela: October, 1964.

Ward: We have more diaries than you can shake a stick at.

Angela: We have about five.

Rubens: When you came back did you start on the Mooney book?

Ward: Not quite that fast.

Angela: We went to Turkey, too. And Bulgaria.

Ward: We got as far east as Istanbul. Rumania.

Angela: Czechoslovakia, Poland.

Ward: Warsaw, yes. And Krakow. We met a man from San Francisco on the second highest peak in Poland. We were hiking right near one of the famous concentration camps. We went to Dachau and Auschwitz. So we got around. One winter we spent in Paris trying to learn French, and one winter in Marrakesh. We really should talk about some of the things we learned about the customs there.

Angela: The Algerian trip was important, politically and otherwise. We can pull out some of that material.

Rubens: Were you ready to come home?

Ward: We'd had enough of it for a little while.

Rubens: Did you come home with some vision of what you wanted to do?

Ward: Yes. Because before we came home, very close to our last stop, again in Paris, a beautiful Sunday afternoon in Tom Van Dycke's garden, I began telling stories about Tom Mooney. Tom says, "Estolv, that's it; you've got to write that book." That started

Ward: it. So when I came home I knew exactly what I was going to do. Then I spent three and a half years in The Bancroft Library and other places in order to write it.

That was our most rewarding trip, I think.

[Interview 11: 7 September 1987]##

Ward: We marched in several Labor Day parades, in the days when labor did that sort of thing, and which I think is a mistake to have dropped.

Rubens: Last time we were talking about your European trip, and how unusual it was.

Ward: I have three volumes of diaries for that trip.

Rubens: We should make a note of that if people want to read them.

Ward: No, they're not available. I don't want people bothering me with such things, and I can't imagine why anyone would want to read them.

Angela: Let's get right into Marrakesh and the Kennedy assassination and and all the political implications.

Ward: We had established these contacts through the letters of introduction from our brother-in-law, and we got an apartment in Marrakesh, and had some interesting neighbors. This was in what was considered the French quarters. Every morning I used to start the day by walking a few blocks up and around down the main street and back home. One morning as I passed a newsstand, I glanced idly at the headline, which was in French: "J. F. K. Assassineé." I read it with shock and surprise, and got home and told Angela. People who knew where we lived even came to the door to gasp and weep about Kennedy. And on the street people would come up to us, recognizing us as those two Americans: "Kennedy, Kennedy," crying and so forth.

We headed for the United States Information Service just in time to see them hauling down the flag to half-staff. We had previously met the manager, who was a Greek American, very pleasant and very helpful. While we wre there, the <u>caid</u>, what would be the mayor of Marrakesh, came in formal attire--all his robes and fancy fare--to offer his sympathy. That established us as regular visitors at the United States Information Service.

Angela: Which in Marrakesh was very good!

Ward: The manager's time in Marrakesh was coming to an end, and Washington had sent out his replacement, a man whom I remember as Mr. Rhodes, who was just fresh from Washington. The three of us sat together in the office, and Mr. Rhodes told us the scoop, as he knew it, of that assassination. On the night that Oswald returned from a trip he had taken to Mexico, which was common knowledge by that time, he spent his first night back in the United States in a motel in Brownsville Texas, which is right at the border. In the room next to him was Jack Ruby, the guy who then killed Oswald. They said that everybody who was in the know would like to find out whether it was just sheer coincidence, or whether it was what it appeared to be.

Much later, when we got home, I called Herb Caen and told him about it. He said he would try to get hold of this man Rhodes. I never heard anything further. So that ended that.

Rubens: What was your reaction to the assassination? Kennedy must not have been a hero to you.

Ward: It was a shock. I suppose I couldn't help but admire the guy. I didn't think much of the Bay of Pigs adventure, but in many ways-- Anyway, the assassination of a president is an unsettling thing. With all these people coming up and crying at us and expressing as best they could their sympathy, it wasn't a pleasant experience, to say the least.

Angela: Yes, but be honest. We were very upset over the assassination of Kennedy, and we could feel why the people felt that way. It was entirely new to us, coming from a country where we were very critical of him, his brothers, and everything. It was a surprise to us to find that the population of Marrakesh, and subsequently in other places, that Kennedy was a real hero and represented a great deal to the people of Africa and Europe. The further we traveled, the more we came upon this.

Ward: The banker who helped us when we got to Marrakesh was Mr. Petrucci. He took us to the soukh to a rug merchant there with whom he had done business. We bought some rugs, including this one right here [pointing to the floor]. When it came to closing the deal, I didn't try to bargain, and he didn't. When the deal was closed, the merchant told me, "Because Mr. Petrucci is here, I cannot cheat you."

Mr. Petrucci had a client, a man who used the bank to borrow money when he needed it, who was a very wealthy Arab landowner a few miles out into the country from Marrakesh. This guy invited Petrucci to come out one Sunday and to bring any guest he would like. So he invited us. It was quite unusual for a woman to go, but Petrucci thought it would be all right.

Angela: And his wife, too.

Ward: It was a nice home, and there was this pleasant middle-aged man, and his sons; no women. We had roast lamb.

Angela: They cooked a whole lamb.

Ward: Oh, it was a very elaborate feast. The lamb was brought to the table whole. It had been buried underground and cooked in an underground fire. They didn't drink, but they gave us a Scotch before dinner and wine with dinner. There was no sign of women. I think he had three wives, or something like that. After dinner he took us out to show us a new planting. He had just planted 16,000 acres in almonds. As we walked around looking at these trees coming up, the tillers of the soil came running in their robes to kneel and kiss his hand.

Angela: But we women were not allowed to go. We had to stay in the house.

Ward: To go back to the rug merchant: Petrucci arranged it so that we were entertained at his home by this guy. This was the only place where we saw a native woman of any class whatever without her veil. The woman was pretty, but for my taste a little on the plump side. Among other things, he told us he was about to take a trip to New York, where he had not been before. He had been to Paris and London and so forth. I asked if his wife was going with him: oh, no, it was no concern of hers.

Rubens: Tell me about the work camps.

Ward: I had taken pictures for the Quakers in Northern California. My friend was the man who used to live right up the street here. I think we later on rented the house he had owned. He gave us a letter to Quaker establishments in Algeria, and we went to two or three of them. The one that was most interesting was in the little mountain town of Tlemcen. There was an old chateau, quite a large building on spacious grounds, which had been taken over by the Quakers. With this letter we met the people there and were made very welcome. Incidentally, our friend here who gave us that letter had gotten into trouble with Philadelphia Quaker headquarters for giving me that letter.

Rubens: Because of your past politics?

Ward: No, because that letter should have come from Philadelphia and not San Francisco.

We lived in our camper, but we had our meals with the Quakers. We made particular friends with an American doctor who took us around the villages and showed us native life.

Rubens: Had you been assigned to take photographs of these work camps?

Ward: I hadn't been assigned to anything. I just did it. It was assumed that I would take pictures, and I did. The doctor took us into native huts with dirt floors. I remember meeting a couple that the doctor had helped, and they described for us how women gave birth standing up, held and helped by a couple of other women doctors. He had seen a birth or two, but it was very rare for a man to have anything to do with childbirth. One thing I never figured out was that if a child was born while the mother was standing up, what happened to his poor little head?

Rubens: In Mitla, Oaxaca, in Mexico, there are carvings of the Zapotec women giving birth standing up and catching the baby. I always thought there was a link between the design of North Africa and Mexico. Why were the Quakers there in Algeria?

Ward: They had been on the fringes of the African countries. For instance, they weren't permitted into Algeria during the French--Algerian war. They had to operate on the fringes of the country and do what help they could at a distance. With this same doctor, walking around on the little winding dirt roads and the hills, we came upon a little boy, between eight and ten years old, who had been leading his father's donkey. The donkey got ideas of its own and somehow got away from the boy. Here we found this boy screaming at the donkey and crying. I wouldn't have known what it was all about, but the doctor understood. The boy was afraid his father would beat him for losing hold of the donkey. We were able to pass the donkey because he didn't know us, so between the three of us we corralled the donkey and saved the boy from a beating.

Rubens: Why were the Quakers there?

Ward: I don't know.

Angela: Of course you know.

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Angela: They had camps in Mexico--they still do; our niece was there a whole summer working at the Quaker camp. Sandy Saxton's daughters worked at the Quaker camp. They have Quaker camps all over the world, where they're permitted. I think they even have some in Russia. During the Algerian war against France, the war of liberation, they couldn't get in. But when that was over, they permitted them to come back. The same way with the Peace Corps.

Rubens: Did you encounter the Peace Corps?

Angela: Oh, yes. We encountered Peace Corps people quite a few times.

Ward: At Tlemcen they had a well-baby clinic, and we took a number of pictures there. Because these women had babies on the average of about once a year, and the new baby was breast-fed, when the next baby came along the previous baby had to subsist on the native food. Most of them died; only the sturdiest survived. There was a baby that was literally starving to death, and they came to this clinic and patched him up. [points to photo] There's one of them there with a nice healthy baby, and I took a number of pictures, of which this is the most graphic, and sent them airmail to Philadelphia to be processed. They warned me not to send pictures of native women with their veils off, or they would be killed. Months later when we got to Philadelphia, it was late September, we went to the photography person there, and they were just planning to send that picture out worldwide on their Christmas card. They had quite a to-do, but it was stopped in time.

I remember one woman, an English nurse, and the American doctor--

Angela: And a whole corps of young people who were teaching the Algerian peasants how to till the soil and how to irrigate. They were Quaker agriculturally trained workers, who taught them how to build irrigation canals and a whole system to water that land so they could raise vegetables and improve their nutrition.

Rubens: So after two years you came home.

Ward: We landed in New York with our camper, and they unloaded it on the dock. Then here came customs, and a young black man was assigned to see if we had any taxable items or contraband in the camper. He took one look--the thing was stuffed with luggage, edibles, and God knows what-all--and just sighed and said it was okay. I guess he went back and said he had inspected everything.

One incident I remember going cross-country was going though the Amish country and seeing these people in their horse-and--buggies, their beards and so forth. They were very pleasant people, very odd to me; very out of step with modern times.

We got home and took over our house again.

Return to San Francisco to Write about Tom Mooney: The Gentle Dynamiter

Rubens: Were you still living in San Francisco?

Ward: Yes. We had rented the house during our absence, but it had been vacated in time and we took right over. Within a few days I began going to The Bancroft Library, to which Mooney had willed his possessions. There were many things that I did there. The first thing I found was that I was one of several people proposing to write a book about Tom Mooney. All of them gave up except one other man to whom I talked a little. He said he was quite far along in his studies of the Mooney case and was writing a book.

Rubens: Did he ever?

Ward: Oh, yes. He wrote the book and it was published.

Rubens: Who was that? I can't remember any other books besides yours.

Ward: Well, you wouldn't remember for good reason. It was not only, if I may say so, a lousy book, but one important labor strike in his version took place two years out of time, out of context, and out of sense. And the name of Eddie Cunha, the prosecuting attorney who got the conviction of Mooney, was misspelled every time it was mentioned throughout the book. I didn't even try to count the number of times. In all, I listed eighty-seven other obvious errors.

Rubens: Did his book come out well before yours?

Angela: Oh, yes.

Ward: I sent a copy of my list of eighty-seven errors to him, to his publisher, and to other interested parties. I never heard what he thought of my efforts.

Angela: Then there was another book written that was very scholarly--the guy from Stanford.

Ward: Oh, yes, very dry and scholarly. Somebody connected with the chamber of commerce.

Angela: It was pretty accurate.

Rubens: Why was there such an interest in Mooney in 1964?

Ward: As I found out to my sorrow, there was <u>not</u> such an interest in Mooney by that time, because he had already been dead for twenty--two years.

Rubens: But why were people writing books? Why were the scholars interested?

Ward: You'd have to ask them; I don't know.

Rubens: I think part of the explanation is that it was the Kennedy era, the aftermath; the end of McCarthyism. People were looking back at the early labor days and the left.

Ward: Most of my research was done in The Bancroft Library, and in the newspaper room on the fourth floor in the main library, and in other libraries--in the ILWU library and all sorts of places.

Rubens: Is that why you moved to Berkeley--so you wouldn't have to commute?

Ward: No, I commuted most of this time.

Rubens: Were you working, Angela?

Ward: Yes, I was working with him.

Rubens: You never went back to Pinsky?

Angela: Yes, I did, on and off; whenever I was needed they called me up. But most of the time I was working with Estolv at The Bancroft Library.

Rubens: So this was a real collaboration.

Ward: Oh, yes, she was very helpful. My main job was reading thirteen thousand single-spaced typewritten pages of transcripts of testimony in the Mooney trial, to which I had been sort of an onlooker in the court years before. I read all of that, taking notes. Then the job was to write it. My first attempt I got absolutely nowhere. I can't even remember how I started it or much about it. But I got enough criticism to make me realize I hadn't found the right approach yet. It's a difficult story, there's so much to it.

I took a second breather and wrote some other stuff, and then in '68, I think it was, when we went to--I wanted to go to Crete; I had planned to go to Crete to write the next version. But I went to the Greek consulate in San Francisco to get a visa, which was necessary at that time. This was during the Greek junta regime there, and when the consul found out what my purpose was in going to Crete, he practically ran me out of the office. The Greek junta was <u>very</u> fascist. So that ended Crete.

Angela: You also made very complimentary remarks about Melina Mercouri, which kicked them off the wall. Don't you remember? They were so angry at you.

Ward: I got a thank you note from Melina afterwards.

Ward: So we went to the Balearic Islands, to the island of Ibiza, Spanish, about an overnight trip by ship from Valencia or Barcelona.

Rubens: Wouldn't it have troubled you to have been in a fascist place like Crete anyway? Of course, Spain wasn't much better.

Ward: Well, after all, when I had been in Spain, Franco--and I hadn't been to Crete. But in Ibiza we found several friends, the British consul particularly. We were a little bit out of town, maybe a mile, in what I would call the suburbs. In the mornings I used to take a stroll before I went to work, and I found a little corner store setting, sort of, where there was a barber shop. I needed a haircut, so I went in and got one. The barber was Spanish, but he also spoke French, and I had just enough French that I could just figure out what he was talking about. I took Angela over there, because her French was pretty good. We learned that at the age of fourteen or fifteen he had joined the Spanish republican army. I think he was a Communist.

Angela: He was a Communist; he showed you his Party card.

Ward: Oh, yes. He told stories about the Spanish republicans coming, and then the anarchists. The Spanish republicans had imprisoned all the leading fascist activists on the island of Ibiza, and had jailed them in an old fortress on top of the town mountain peak. Then the anarchists came and took charge, and they promptly executed all the imprisoned fascists. That's the difference between the anarchists and the republicans.

The barber was captured and spent several years in prisons. But somehow during that time he got married and became a parent. He and a couple of other guys escaped and rowed in a local boat 130 miles to Algeria, the nearest point you could get to. And there he was a barber for a number of years. Some kind of an amnesty was worked out, and he was under some kind of a pledge--that he could return provided he was not at all active in any way against the Franco government. So he rejoined to his wife and family.

Rubens: At this point in your life, you weren't hiding your politics when you applied for the Greek visa; did you talk to him about your roll in organizing anti-fascist--

Ward: Yes, I guess we both did.

Angela: Oh, there's no question. We admitted that we were ex-Communists.

Ward: Well, we were buddies. We invited him to dinner, and the earliest you could think of having dinner was eleven o'clock at

Ward: night. He came with his son--men only at first. Then we got invited to his home and met his wife. He looked much younger than she, because she had had all these lonely years with the kids, and all that. It had been very tough on her. We all became close friends.

Angela: We still write to each other.

Rubens: Were you writing every day?

Ward: I wrote two other versions of the Mooney book there, and came back to Paris eventually. We didn't have a camper this time; we had a regular Volkswagen. I talked to Van Dycke again.

Rubens: Did he read it?

Ward: He read it, and he thought it was greatly improved. We tried to peddle it but, again, nothing.

Did you ever hear of Al Richmond, the editor of The Peoples' World? We knew him quite well. I showed the manuscript to him, and he sat down and wrote me a nine-page, single-spaced critique telling me how he thought I could make a better story out of it. I let it soak mentally for two years, and all of a sudden it came to me that it was always in my mind how I could do what he suggested. So I wrote it.

This time I had a lively agent, but he couldn't sell it, although he liked it.

Rubens: The version that was printed, then, was written basically in 1970?

Ward: The final version was written in the late seventies, I would say.

Rubens: So Al Richmond was the catalyst?

Ward: He was the man who really did it for me.

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Ward: It didn't take very long. Then we began to try to sell it, and efforts were made by people who liked it. But, again, no dice.

Alvah Bessie had some dealings with an outfit up in Marin County, a publisher, and I went to see them. They were two men in a tiny little setup, struggling harder than we were, you might say, trying to make a living in publishing. They said they could do it, they liked the book, but for "$12,000, please," to get started. That gave me pause.

Ward: I'd heard of Ramparts Press in Palo Alto, and I showed it to Larry Moore there, and in due course I went down to pick it up. He said, "Wait a minute, I'd like to talk to you about it." And he said he wanted to publish it. I put up some money, but not any $12,000. He could do it that way because he had his own printing press, and his wife was the printer. They were middle-aged people, their children (I know they had one child at least) were grown, and that's what they did.

Several months were taken up because there were some changes that he wanted in my script, principally in the preface. Also, the book had originally ended when Tom's lady friend picked up the phone and called Herb Resner and said, "Herb, Tom just died." But he wanted to go on with an epitaph. So I wrote that.

Rubens: I like that ending.

Ward: The way Ramparts did it, this gal (the wife) had to find the time to sit down at the machine and set the type. Eventually it got done and it got published.

Rubens: How was it reviewed, and how did it sell?

Ward: It hasn't sold much yet. I don't know what the situation is. The _Chronicle_ gave me a nice review.

Angela: And you got a good review in _Publisher's Weekly_ and in legal publications.

Rubens: This was about 1983?

Ward: Yes.

Rubens: Did you make your money back on it?

Ward: No. Some, but not by any means all.

The Oral History Decade, 1980s.

Louis Goldblatt receives his oral history, April 4, 1981. House of Estolv and Angela Ward, Berkeley.

Louis Goldblatt, Angela Ward, Estolv Ward, Andrea Nakagawa, Willa Baum.

Interviewing session at the Ward home, 1986.
Norman and Marjorie Leonard, Estolv and Angela Ward.

XIII RECENT ACTIVITIES AND SOME BACKWARD GLANCES

Conducting an Oral History Interview with Louis Goldblatt*

Ward: Meanwhile, a friend of Angela's was doing some work in the Regional Oral History Office of The Bancroft Library. Angela had quit her job and didn't have enough to do, so this friend suggested she go down there and see if she could do a little volunteer typing. So she did, and they gave her to finish typing the Henry Schmidt oral history manuscript.** She said it was kind of interesting, but all jumbled up and mixed up.

In the meantime, this had attracted my interest, and I thought of Lou Goldblatt. Of course, both he and Harry Bridges were retired by that time. I happened to know that after having been boon companions and fellow workers for many years, they had become bitter enemies. And I knew that people had been after Goldblatt to do his oral history, but he said he would be damned if he would--asking friends to put up money so he could blow his own horn. I thought, well, we'll see.

I think it was at a Christmas eve party at Bill and Eva Mass's, where most of the guests were old friends of ours. Lou and Terry Goldblatt were there, so I spoke to Terry first about it. She loved the idea, and thought he ought to tell his story. Then I spoke to Lou. Of course he and I have been good friends all along.

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*Louis Goldblatt, Working Class Leader in the ILWU, 1935-1977, an oral history interview conducted 1978-1979, Regional Oral History Office, The Bancroft Library, University of California Berkeley, 1980.

**Henry Schmidt, Secondary Leadership in the ILWU, 1933-1966, an oral history interview conducted 1974, 1975, 1981, Regional Oral History Office, The Bancroft Library, University of California Berkeley, 1983.

Rubens: You have always been friends. It went back to the early days of the CIO. He had offered you a job, which you didn't accept, but you stayed friends.

Ward: Yes. Lou didn't say yes, but he didn't say no.

Rubens: What was he doing when he retired?

Angela: If you read the oral history, as Estolv described, he was like a beached whale. He was so unhappy. He was in a terrible psychological state.

Ward: Oh, yes. See, he had plenty of working life left in him if he'd had an opportunity. Knowing quite a bit about him and his affairs and activities, I sat down and wrote an outline and sent it to him.

Rubens: What year was this?

Ward: In the seventies, before the Mooney book came out. I've been active with the oral history outfit for at least ten years.

Rubens: It was right after he retired.

Angela: Yes, and the convention--they both retired--

Ward: Lou called me and said he would go for it, with two exceptions: he would not talk about Harry Bridges and he would not talk about the Communists. Well, the Communist part was easy; I quickly showed him that since it was well known that he had been a Communist, there was no secret, he could talk about himself. He didn't necessarily have to name anybody but himself. So we began, and met for fourteen months, once a week over at his place. He didn't come here; I always went there.

Rubens: To Mill Valley. And by this time you had moved to Berkeley?

Angela: Yes.

Ward: We've lived in Berkeley nearly fourteen years now. Again, I had to do considerable research, and this time most of it was at the ILWU library. The librarian there, Carol Schwartz, I had known since--I had met her at six o'clock in the morning in the plastics factory. One day I was digging away in the files of The Dispatcher, and she said, "Estolv, I have something here that might help you." It was a copy of an oral history given by

Ward: J. Paul St. Sure* in the late fifties. She told me that when Harry and Lou resigned and left their offices, in cleaning up Harry's office they had found a copy of this oral history, which nobody in the ILWU knew existed except Harry.

I read it, and parts of it were very pertinent to what I was doing with Lou, because it gave an analysis from the employer point of view.

Rubens: For the historical record, who was St. Sure?

Ward: He was a management attorney specializing in labor contracts.

Rubens: In fact, he had been working with some of the cannery operators---when you were directing the CIO he was just coming out.

Ward: I had met J. Paul St. Sure in negotiations, and he was one difficult and dangerous and smart cookie. He saw through my little ploys and maneuvers before they were fully uttered, sometimes. He was a difficult combattant to deal with.

In the meantime, I had seen the different J. Paul St. Sure as a lecturer at the California Labor School. He and I collaborated, more or less, in a rather distant way, in teaching classes there at one time or another. That was after he became the attorney for the Pacific Coast Maritime Association, the PMA.

Rubens: Why would someone like St. Sure lecture at the labor school?

Angela: This was a period when the waterfront and the longshore union became buddies. There was a name for it--the "new look." When the M and M agreement was worked out there came this period of harmony.

Ward: Now they call it glasnost. [laughter]

Angela: That's why Paul St. Sure was teaching at the labor school.

Ward: Harry always thought the M and M was a wonderful agreement, or said he did. You know St. Francis Square (the ILWU housing project for workers)? St. Sure helped Lou raise the money for

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*Joseph Paul St. Sure, Some Comments On Employer Organizations and Collective Bargaining in Northern California Since 1934, an interview conducted by Corinne Gilb for the Institute of Industrial Relations Oral History Project on March 7, 21, 29; April 4, 11; June 13, 21, 1957. University of California Berkeley, 1957.

Ward: that. And all sorts of things like that. On the other hand, in the final analysis, Goldblatt came to the conclusion that St. Sure had rooked the longshoremen again. They didn't get by any means as much as they should have gotten of the M and M agreement.

So weekly, every Tuesday, for fourteen months Lou and I met for a couple of hours getting him to talk. Then when I got hold of St. Sure's piece and read what St. Sure had to say about these two men, Bridges and Goldblatt, and his relationship with them and their relationship with each other, it was very interesting. Frequently the three of them would get into battles, each against the other. Goldblatt and Bridges would disagree; both of them would of course disagree with St. Sure. The next morning they had to break it off because they were all so upset and angry they couldn't go on. Then they'd meet again the next day, and Bridges and Goldblatt had unified their position and faced the employer as a unit. And usually, according to St. Sure, it was the way Goldblatt had wanted it in the first place. In other words, whatever went on between those two after a meeting with St. Sure, Goldblatt apparently almost always won.

Rubens: What was your conclusion from that? Why did it go that way?

Ward: I think St. Sure said it himself pretty succinctly: Bridges fundamentally was an old-fashioned labor guy. He was interested only in hours, wages, and working conditions. Goldblatt was of course interested in those things, but he was also interested in housing, dental care for children, health plans, and so forth.

Angela: I think St. Sure said Goldblatt had more of an overall vision, rather than just meat and potatoes.

Ward: I told Lou that this document existed. Up to then he wouldn't talk about Bridges. He ran, not walked, to the ILWU library and got that thing and studied it. From then on he talked about Bridges.

Rubens: Lou is dead now. When you look back on doing that oral history, do you feel he still held back on what he could have said about Harry and his relationship with him?

Ward: Lou may have pruned the sharpest edges of his sharpest thoughts, but he was frank enough to do that I thought should have been done, say what I hoped he would say.

Beginning with the Mooney book, I had come to know, first very slightly, Andrea Peszewski at The Bancroft Library, who became Jim Hart's secretary. I began the oral history with Lou, and Angela began typing and keeping up with me to a considerable extent. Our dining room table became full of the rough copy, an

Ward: enormous pile of paper. I called Andrea and said that I had something that she might like to see. I suggested she and her husband, Lech (a Pole), come by on their way home and have a drink. So they came by, and I showed her this pile of manuscript. She took it home and read it, and said, "Oh, yes." Of course, The Bancroft never has money for ROHO [the Regional Oral History Office].

Rubens: You were doing this as a volunteer.

Ward: Oh, sure. Almost all our work for ROHO has been volunteer. Andrea found $3,000 someplace, and that helped.

Angela: She arranged a meeting with Hart and Lou Goldblatt and Estolv and me. Because Hart wasn't too enthusiastic.

Rubens: Here is your opportunity to flesh out history. People ransack that interview looking for an explanation, and I'm wondering what your own conclusion is about the discord between Harry and Lou.

Ward: That is a very difficult question. I repeat again that the difference began with Harry being an old-fashioned labor guy and Lou being a new-fashioned labor guy.

Rubens: So you agree with St. Sure. But from your own experience--you lived through that period, you knew them both. Do you have something further that you think should be added to the record?

Ward: Harry grew up as a sailor, sailing out of Melbourne, Australia. His father was a wealthy man; he was a big shot. Harry's mother's brother--his uncle--was a very pleasant, dashing, bit of a ne'er-do-well seaman. He would come around and tell Harry stories, and Harry ran away and went to sea very early, in his late teens. And he did a little gun-running, particularly regarding some one of the South American revolutions of those days. That sort of thing. Harry didn't have much of an education. He was brought up in a Catholic school; he was an altar boy as a small child. Where other kids would be going to high school or college, he was running around the world as a seaman, listening to the forecastle tales.

Goldblatt, on the other hand, went to City College in New York. He grew up in The Bronx. His parents were Russian immigrants, 1905ers, who were childhood sweethearts in Russia. The father was conscripted into the Czarist army and found himself in charge of prisoners somewhere on the Black Sea. He found a companion prisoner, and the two of them just walked off together. He got to this country, where he re-met his childhood sweetheart, who had come to New York also, and they got married.

Ward: Goldblatt, early in school, was classified as a gifted child.

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Ward: He was interested in two things in City College: political debates and playing the piano. He could play the piano quite well. He temporarily thought of becoming a great pianist.

Rubens: You're basically saying that their backgrounds are very different. Do you think there was any anti-Semiticism on Harry's part? Maybe unconscious?

Ward: Lou spoke about that. I don't think so. There's not the slightest evidence in anything either of them has said, or that other people have said about them, that would indicate that.

Rubens: Harry was much older. And there was a real contention for power; they represented different industries.

Ward: I don't think it was a question of power. Both of them were men who wished to be active and useful. That was certainly true of Goldblatt, whom I knew much better than I knew Bridges. I think there was disagreement about where goes the union, and what the union should be doing. As I think you know, it reached the point where for years whatever the one said, the other opposed.

Rubens: They literally did not speak to each other.

Ward: That's true.

Angela: Let me remind you what you said so many times when you were arguing with people like Norm Leonard about Lou and Harry: that the conclusions you reached were that after Lou did all this great work in Hawaii, for example, and organized the whole thing there--and then his union, the warehouse union was a powerful union, much larger--that was when Harry got real scared. He wanted to hang on to the leadership. That's what you always said.

Ward: You see, the longshoremen were Harry's baby. The warehousemen were Lou's baby, to a considerable extent on the mainland, and to a ninety-nine percent in Hawaii. When Harry went over there and tried to stick in his oar, in contravention of Lou, people didn't pay much attention to him. So I think that must have annoyed the old boy a good deal, too.

Angela: That's one of the reasons that Jack Hall and Harry were at such loggerheads. Because Jack Hall sided with Lou in this whole struggle.

Ward: Lou found Jack Hall. I'll tell you about it. Angela and I were offered that job.

Rubens: When you came back from Basic Magnesium.

Ward: I came to know Jack Hall when he spent his last years in San Francisco. But, of course, it was merely a social relationship, and I really can't say what he would have been like. He apparently was a very successful organizer.

Rubens: Did you ever propose doing Harry's oral history?

Ward: I would know better. That would be the most foolish thing I could do. When I got myself elected as the director of the Alameda County CIO council, my first labor job, I was a green pea. I was not stupid, but I was ignorant. If I do say so myself, I was a quick learner. But in the beginning Harry must have thought, "What the hell is this guy doing here?"

Rubens: You never had a relationship with Harry.

Ward: Not a good one, no. Never.

Rubens: He didn't like the book.

Ward: He made no bones about it at the first Landes trial: he wanted Jim O'Neill to do his defense work. But he hadn't done anything about it, and I was called upon to do the job, and I did it--over Harry's dead body.

Rubens: So at no other point was there a relationship with him?

Ward: If we walked together down the street a block, I don't think ten words were exchanged between us. We were not friends. And the more I came to know of him, I admired him--there's such a thing as admiring but not liking him.

Rubens: Would you apply that same analysis to Goldblatt? Was the relationship something that ate him up, or did he just seem to come to terms with it?

Ward: I don't see how I could apply the same analysis to two entirely different relationships, two entirely different persons.

Rubens: But in terms of how Goldblatt responded. By the time you were interviewing Goldblatt, what was his emotional state regarding his relationship with Harry?

Ward: He had been robbed of his occupation. He was left without a job.

Rubens: Because he had agreed to step down at the same time?

Ward: It was the obvious thing--if one stayed, both stayed. And if they both stayed, the union was being torn apart. It was not good for the union, not good for either of the individuals.

Angela: What ate Lou was the fact that he had ten more years to give to that union and to the labor movement, and he was not permitted to do it because Harry insisted that he wouldn't get out unless Lou got out. In fact, he introduced a resolution at an ILWU convention to get him out.

The thing that ate Lou--and Terry said this many times--was that Lou was left stranded, and he was still so concerned about the union. He wanted to be part of it and he wanted to continue to make his contribution, and he couldn't do it in an official way. It was tough even to do it unofficially. That was the big thing that ate Lou up.

Ward: Harry did his best to get rid of Lou, but he couldn't do it without a vote of the entire membership. Because the warehouse was by far the biggest unit at one time in the ILWU. I don't know, of course, but I bet there were many times when Harry regretted the ideas that caused him to bring in the warehouse people, which I'm pretty sure must have had some origins at 121 Haight Street (the local CP headquarters). It was the cooperation between the inland workers and the dock workers. The maritime federation didn't attempt unity between the seafaring and dockside workers. The leftwing Communist-sponsored organization, MWIU [Marine Workers Industrial Union]--since Harry listened to what the Communists had to say very attentively, it must have had some effect upon his thinking.

Rubens: Did Lou every talk about the Party and evaluate it?

Ward: He talked about it. I was talking to Bill Schneiderman at his home after he retired, years ago. We were talking about Lou, and he claimed that Lou really never did leave the Party. That because of the type of work he did, the job he held, it would be advisable for him and them to say he left the Party. Lou doesn't agree with that. Well, I don't know that Lou knows that Schneiderman made that claim, because this was after Lou died.

Rubens: Do you know why Lou did not want to talk about the Party?

Ward: He talked about people--Schneiderman, and Oleta.

Angela: Did Lou approve of the general role of the Party?

Ward: One point of disagreement he had was on super-seniority for blacks, which was a Party position for quite a while. He said that just wouldn't do. It just meant that the white unions

Ward: wouldn't take in blacks. The Party advanced the theory that since blacks had been put upon for centuries that they should have a better chance than the whites.

Rubens: When was this?

Angela: It was post-war.

Ward: In the late forties, I think.

Angela: Even in the fifties.

Ward: When I was still working at 150 Golden Gate, Lou and I once went together to Party headquarters down Market Street. We talked with Oleta about super-seniority for blacks. That would have been before 1950.

Rubens: Lou doesn't talk about the Party pre-World War II. In your evaluation, why didn't he want to discuss what influence the Party had on the shaping of the union?

Ward: That's very simple: you don't rat on your friends.

Rubens: Couldn't he do it without names?

Ward: That's what I told him. Then it was no problem.

Rubens: But he doesn't discuss the Party as an influence in the early years.

Ward: I think the Communist Party had been a very useful and helpful organization. He was a very happy and active part of it for a long time. He didn't become a paid functionary of the ILWU until 1942. However, he would have been Harry Bridges' assistant director of the West Coast CIO, except for the story I told you.

Rubens: Which is not in Lou's oral history.

Ward: No, it is not talked about there.

Rubens: Were there any other political activities you and Angela were involved in that we should talk about next time?

Ward: Well, we never went to Livermore; we have not participated actively in any of the more lively struggles in recent years. But we have gone on marches in San Francisco.

Rubens: For next time, why don't you think about the current meaning of politics of the last ten or fifteen years--how you see that period and your evaluation of it.

Ward: I have thought about that, and I'm pretty well prepared to discuss events, in a very general way, of the last few years, and my feelings about the immediate future.

Rubens: And there are some threads that should be tied up.

Fear of a Revived Right Wing in America, and the Prospects for Communism

[Interview 12: 17 September 1987]##

Ward: I understand I am supposed to express my opinion on the past few years and the prospects I see for the immediate future. Going back eight or ten years, I have a feeling of growing concern for the right-wing tendencies of the American public. They seem to be increasing, although if we elect a Democratic president next year that will indicate a slight turn to the left. However, unless a Democratic administration is able to produce very dramatic results in the improvement of the economy and the standing of our country in regards to the rest of the world, that moment of bliss will pass within four years.

I think it is possible that Americans will dip into a strictly American form of fascism. It won't be called by that name except by the leadership of some of the other countries, particularly the Soviet Union. If such a tragedy should occur, I think it will be very short-lived. In order for the tragedy to occur, the right would be very strong in the presidency and in the Supreme Court, and there would be a momentary willingness to go along by the Congress. Commenting upon the briefness, I would hope not more than two years, because Congress is re-elected every two years. I'm sure that the fascist mood would be quickly resented by the common people when they saw the rich oligarchy taking over utterly and running everything to suit itself without going through any democratic process.

I think the revolt--I hope the revolt, if there has to be one, will be purely political, and that the nature and intent of both the Senate and the House will become open and grasping for new ideas, new ways of getting out of the mess. If that hope cannot be realized, then there would have to be a struggle. I don't think that will happen. I think the American people have enough latent good sense to settle their problems in a democratic and peaceful way.

Rubens: You basically rest your hopes on the democratic process and free dialogue?

Ward: Well, I think we're damn well accustomed to the democratic process, and to this moment we are still the most democratic important power in the world.

Rubens: If you look back over your political life, moving from a conservative, apolitical--

Ward: No! Moving from a left-wing start.

Rubens: Not a left-wing start.

Ward: Oh, my father was a socialist.

Rubens: Yes, but you talked about your early maturation as a conservative and free spirit who converted to a left perspective.

Ward: Those formative years were the most important ones in my life. The temporary few years of trying to adjust to a reverse set of ideas did not work.

Rubens: Looking at those twenty years of being in the Communist Party, how would you assess that organizational form as being successful or not successful in terms of transforming the country?

Ward: The chances of anything bearing the name "Communist" getting very far in the United States are nil, as far as I can see it. Nil.

Rubens: If you were to critique the Party strategy, what would it rest on? On it's being undemocratic?

Ward: I can't answer that question directly, because I have no idea. I would say this: that no American Communist that I know or knew or know of could adjust--because obviously, if America ever does step into the socialist world, it will be under other names, other forms, and decidedly of an American vintage.

Rubens: Do you look to any organization or sector of leadership that gives you hope? Dorothy Healy left the Party and joined DSOC---Harrington's organization, the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee.

Ward: Well, in the recent past I haven't been able to read enough to have any thought on that subject. My attention span and my feelings about what I just told you would not lead me to form any pinpoint of hope. I think it must be there somewhere, but I do not know of it.

Rubens: Do you recall a time in your own history of feeling as pessimistic as you feel now?

Ward: Of course, as a youngster there was no such thing as pessimistic thought. Pessimism began to become noticeable in the years immediately following the end of World War II, and have become stronger, as I have indicated, in the past few years.

An Oral History Interview with Norman Leonard

Rubens: I want to ask you a question outside this topic. We didn't talk about the other oral histories that you did. Is there one that you enjoyed doing more than all the others, or that you learned something more from?

Ward: I think it's unwise to answer that question.

Rubens: Do you have any observations to add about the oral history you did with Norman Leonard?

Ward: I think that a great number of young legal scholars of the future will want to read that book because, I would assume, up until now legal scholars entered law with the hopes of making money. And up until now the left has not been the easiest way in the law to make money, by a good deal. So if the situation of right and left were to be considerably reversed, there would be a rush of young law students to the left. That would be easily understandable.

Rubens: We certainly saw a lot of that in the sixties and seventies, with young lawyers doing neighborhood legal work or becoming district attorneys rather than corporate lawyers, more women entering the field. I think there was a real push in that way.

Ward: Let me ask you: do you think young women lawyers will be more inclined to go left than young men?

Rubens: No. But I think we have seen a real explosion of community consciousness in the sixties and seventies.

Ward: In some phases of our society, but I have seen a real explosion of the so-called "yuppie" consciousness.

Angela: But Lisa's talking about the sixties and seventies, when Norm Leonard's son and all these young people were working down in the farm groups and so forth.

Ward: I'm not quite sure I understand you, but remember that Norman Leonard didn't start in the sixties and seventies; he started in the twenties and thirties.

Angela: But Lisa is asking about the later generations of young lawyers.

Rubens: We never talked about your observations on the civil rights movement or the environmental movement.

Ward: Of course I think there's hope. I am full of hope. I am simply pointing out that it is possible--not necessarily probable, but quite possible--that we will go through a pretty dim period in this country.

Rubens: It seems to happen every twenty years or so, doesn't it? The 1920s was a very bleak period. That was one of your periods of conservatism.

Cycles of History

Ward: I've lived through four cycles, I would say. My childhood, my first marriage, my entrance into the Communist Party, and what's happened after that.

Rubens: I'm just wondering if you'd like to look back over it all and draw any conclusions or observations.

Ward: You must realize that in looking back, my memory of what I look back at is colored by my thoughts of today. So whether it would come out honest down to the final degree, I don't know. I don't vouch for it, but I do say that my thoughts today, I think, are based primarily on my parenthood and youth, as amended and altered by all the experiences.

Rubens: I'm hoping you can find some of your photographs that could be included. I thought particularly the one of the woman who lifted her veil in the Quaker clinic.

Ward: I have to think of the warning. I doubt if my oral history would ever reach Algeria, so I guess it would be safe.

Rubens: It would be nice to pick another photograph, too, that you think is representative.

When did you stop being a vegetarian? Was that when you went up to Santa Rosa?

Ward: It was when I went up to the ranch. That's when I got the forty--two boils.

Rubens: From that time on you never went back to being a vegetarian?

Ward: Not completely. In the last two or three years I have come very close to it. No red meat, to my wife's great distress.

Rubens: Was your father a vegetarian all his life?

Ward: From the age of nineteen on. I guess he wouldn't have lived that long if he hadn't been. There's no question that heavy meat-eating shortens the life, in my mind.

[tape off briefly]

Rubens: Your book on living in a camper for two years abroad sounded like a good story. Did anything ever come of it?

Ward: My agent said it was rejected because our average daily expense for the entire trip, outside the original cost of travel tickets and so on, was about $14 a day. The publisher that took the greatest interest in my book said that there were European travel books out which listed expenses as low as $9.95 a day.

Rubens: I have a note here that says that during those years when you were revising the Tom Mooney book, you wrote some other things.

Ward: It was mostly stuff in the Peoples' World.

Rubens: Angela, do you feel there's anything else that we should talk about now?

Angela: The main writing he has done in the last period has been around the Mooney book and the oral histories.

Never Truly a Conservative

Angela: There's one thing that disturbs me about your reference to his conservative period. Having known his father and his relationship to his father, who was anything but a conservative--even though his marriage was surrounded by conservative people, basically he recognized the disparity. I don't see how he could have been truly conservative for twenty years; it seems an awful long time.

Rubens: I just meant in the twenties. Estolv has labeled that section "the making of a conservative."

Angela: But even so, that's probably one of the reasons why the marriage couldn't work out. He was close to his father all the time, and his father had very little use for--

Ward: What is this all for?

Angela: Honey, I'm trying to say that you were never truly a conservative.

Ward: Oh, no. Even when I was under that influence--I think I told you that in at least one presidential election I didn't vote at all, for anybody. Gradually, gradually, it began to swing further and further left. For instance, I never voted for Herbert Hoover, nor Calvin Coolidge. I don't remember who I voted for, but probably the losing Democrat. Then it went further left; in '32 it went to Norman Thomas.

Rubens: We want to make clear that in summarizing your political path we don't label you as a conservative, but rather someone who had attempted to appear as one for a brief while. Then your true self came out.

Ward: I often think of when we were trying to organize Basic Magnesium in Nevada, how I used to pick up workers from the plant along the highway and take them either into town, where I could use the telephone without knowing that the company would hear every word that I said; or on the way back from town to our office, out in the middle of nowhere. The Negro cotton-picker (I picked up quite a few of those; they scoured the South for them)--when I told him I was CIO organizer--

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Ward: --he grinned and looked at me with shining eyes, and he says, "Mister, my mammy done told me if I ever meets the CIO, j'in it!"

Continued Support for Liberal Causes

Rubens: Is there anything else we should add about the last ten or fifteen years, any observations?

Angela: All I know is that in the period that he was writing the Mooney book, and later the oral histories, our participation in politics was mostly in demonstrations, going to meetings, and that sort of thing. We were not affiliated to any organization as such, but we supported all the causes.

Rubens: Anti-war--

Angela: We continue to do that, too.

Rubens: Anti-nuclear activity?

Angela: I had some of it when we first came here, but when he started to work on the oral histories I transferred my activities to doing the transcribing and some of the editing and research.

Transcribers: Marilyn White and Judy Smith
Final Typist: Judy Smith

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The Annals of The American Academy of Political & Social Science

How Organized Labor Views the Problems of Transition

By Estolv E. Ward

UNIONS in southern California affiliated with the Congress of Industrial Organizations view the problems of transition from war to peace through a heavy screen of the pressing emergencies which they face as participants in the war itself. There is good reason to believe that this attitude extends to the other branches of the organized labor movement in this area, and, in fact, to all responsible labor bodies throughout the United States.

Labor is reminded of a saying prevalent among American soldiers during the last World War, which philosophized away the physical dangers of military combat to its final climax: ". . . if you're killed, you have nothing to worry about." Labor is keenly conscious of the fact that if Hitler and his Axis allies win this war, there will be "nothing to worry about." Democratic America and its principal bulwark, democratic American unions, will be killed. Labor greatly fears the possibility of such victory for fascism, and is straining every muscle and nerve to forestall this tragedy.

We also fear the possibility of a negotiated peace with Hitler. This would mean only a partial postponement of the Axis program of world enslavement. Since this is a global war, with the political, economic, and military forces of the entire world acting in close interrelation, a stalemate, amounting to a half-victory for Hitler, would strengthen the hand of reaction in all countries, including the United States. Further social progress, further reform, further development of civilization, humanism, and culture, would be effectively checked. In fact, the onslaught of native fascism would gain such power that Americans would be in grave danger of losing all the gains they have made thus far.

Labor's attitude, therefore, is predicated upon the fact that the Axis must be crushed militarily and politically, and that the ruler-slave ideology upon which fascism is based must be eradicated from the face of the earth.

With the hope that these aims can be accomplished, and with a united determination to accomplish them, at whatever cost, labor then looks forward to postwar problems.

Fundamentals of a Program

Leading executives, economists, and publicists, in our national administration and in the labor movement, wish to avoid economic and political dislocations which commonly follow the war. We hear general expressions of fear that a national collapse, more severe than any heretofore, will occur in this country when peace returns.

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt commented, only the other day, that unless American standards are maintained during the war, our soldiers, should they return to a wasteland which offers them no hope of life and decency in return for their sacrifices, may become a "dangerous group."

If this be true, and the CIO firmly believes it is, then part of our postwar planning—perhaps the most important part—must involve a definite program *geared to the present,* to preserve America especially in wartime. The CIO has such a program and is doing its part to secure its full adoption and enforcement. The major fundamentals of this program are:

1. Co-operation of government, labor, and management in total war production;

2. Taxation on the basis of ability to pay in order to meet both war and civilian expenditures;

3. Extension of full democracy and equal economic opportunity to racial minorities, particularly Negroes and Mexicans;

4. Maintenance of wage scales and working conditions, the mainstay of our economic standards of living, and the improvement of these scales and conditions in depressed areas;

5. Preservation of existing social and labor legislation and stout resistance to all who would endanger it.

We lay down these fundamentals as an essential prerequisite to postwar planning, believing that if the CIO program can be realized, transition from war to peace economy will have been greatly simplified.

PRIVATE EMPLOYMENT

The immediate shock of peace will be the cessation of war industry and the demobilization of millions of men in our armed forces. These two operations will create a glut in the labor market. In other words, we shall have with us again the unemployed. CIO economists estimated that at the depths of the last depression there were 17,000,000 unemployed in the United States. Circulation of money was diminished, and mass buying power, particularly for consumer goods, was seriously crippled.

Not knowing how long the war will last, how many men will be inducted into the armed services, how many women will be drafted into war industry, how complete will be the change from a butter to a gun economy, no one can accurately estimate the number of Americans likely to join the postwar army of the unemployed. The prospects, however, stagger the imagination.

The Los Angeles Basin and San Diego are important centers of war industry and war activities. An estimate of 400,000 engaged in war work in these areas within the next year would probably be conservative. Add to these figures the men who will have joined or been inducted into the armed services during the war from these areas, and the new recruits to the labor supply from among women, youth, and rural inhabitants, and we can arrive at a tentative estimate of something over a million persons who must be reabsorbed into a peacetime economy in southern California.

To fail to make this readjustment in southern California and the rest of the Nation would be immediately to raise problems of the most pressing nature—first economic, and then political.

Part of our hope that these problems can be solved before they become disastrously acute arises from our conviction that mass buying power can be maintained. This means that public and private employment must be provided, at wages that will permit circulation among the people generally.

In the field of private employment, we look first to the questions of transition in the aircraft industry, the largest southern California war employer. Air-borne transport should improve in quality and quantity as a result of developments made in wartime. Provided the general state of the Nation permits, we can look for continuation of the aircraft industry, even though on a reduced basis, in peacetime. Thus, we have some feeling of stability in this industry.

In shipbuilding, the second largest employer in this area, we face prospects of rapidly dwindling employment, beginning six months after the end of the war and running down to a comparative zero in about eighteen months.

Most other forms of war employment will end virtually immediately with the peace. Some slack will be taken up gradually by resumption of peacetime

consumption; how much we cannot tell until we know what the wages of the people will permit them to consume.

So, although by a considerable degree of optimism in the field of private employment we have reduced our problem, we have by no means annihilated it.

Social Security Provisions

Before surveying the possibilities of public employment, let us estimate the assistance to be given by social legislation now on the books. Unemployment insurance and social security will serve somewhat to cushion the shock. The reserves now being built up should not be dissipated, but should be driven higher to take up the slack when the crucial need arises. Attempts by some employers to reduce their contributions to these Federal-state unemployment and old-age insurance agencies should be stanchly resisted. These social benefits should be increased, and the laws under which they operate should be liberalized to include seamen and all classifications of American workers.

Because of the sacrifices they will have made, we must first consider demobilized servicemen in taking up the needs of the great residue of postwar unemployed. The CIO has always insisted that complete protection must be provided for the re-employment of those who leave jobs to enlist or be drafted, and is providing such protection in the contracts it signs with employers.

Adequate guarantees must also be made for protection of job rights of those workers who temporarily take the place of the workers who go to war. Strides toward the provision of protection for men transferred from civilian to war production have been taken by the CIO, notably in the arrangement worked out between the United Automobile Workers, the Office of Production Management, and General Motors Corporation, whereby these workers may transfer back to their old jobs after the emergency without loss of seniority.

There should be provisions for the granting of either social security benefits or guaranteed work on public projects for all men discharged from the armed forces who are unable to procure work.

Again taking time by the forelock, the CIO also advocates that during the war, full protection should be afforded the families and dependents of our soldiers and sailors. Such protection should be provided by agencies vested with a public responsibility, rather than by private organizations. The Soldiers' and Sailors' Relief Act should be greatly liberalized to protect the men and their families, during the period of military service and for a reasonable period thereafter, from foreclosures or eviction from homes, the lapsing of life insurance policies, and the seizure of chattels such as cars, furniture, or household goods.

Housing

These steps in themselves will greatly ease transition problems. During the last depression, labor economists were stating that the housing shortage in the United States was so acute that, even under a planned economy, it would take ten years of producing and construction to provide decent living quarters for all our population. Nothing was done about this shortage until the war. The influx of war workers in southern California has created a housing crisis which, if not solved, may seriously endanger production and morale.

Federal housing agencies, stimulated by labor, have begun action to relieve the local housing shortage. The CIO favors housing projects under the Mutual Ownership type, commonly referred to as the Camden Plan. Such work as is being accomplished toward the construction and occupancy of such projects meets the bitter opposition of some

private real estate interests, which are using political and economic pressure to prevent or emasculate all public housing projects. These private interests, in their most recent maneuvers, seek substitution of temporary defense housing or barracks for single men for the genuine, permanent, public housing projects the government contemplates and the workers desire. The CIO is fighting temporary housing and barracks because they encourage instability and impermanence, destroy the principle of personal home ownership, and provide the breeding ground for a new type of slum where vice and poverty may fester during the postwar period.

If labor's fight for proper public housing is successful during the war, the way will be paved for much more of this sorely needed construction work after the war is over. The building and democratic operation of home projects along the lines of the Camden Plan will provide the great mass of southern Californians with work and with homes in which they can take pride. Such projects, with social centers, recreational facilities, and educational and cultural opportunities, on a group basis, will preserve morale, maintain health, and stimulate responsibility during the transition period.

Transportation and Other Public Projects

The major curse of the Los Angeles Basin has always been lack of proper transportation. This great, sprawling, decentralized community can never realize its full opportunities until transportational lacks have been corrected. A great program of road and rail building should be launched under the auspices of government agencies at the conclusion of the war. High-speed arterial highways and fast rail lines should lace the basin from end to end. The working out of such a program will require an understanding on the part of local business that its immediate interests must be set aside for the future prosperity of Los Angeles and all its residents. Once this is done and a comprehensive transportation plan is adopted, a virtual army of technicians, skilled, semiskilled, and unskilled labor, can be put to work for a period of several years.

Other public projects must be considered and developed to the point where actual work can be commenced within a short time after peace is declared. The CIO suggests that the construction of more public hospitals and sanatoria, and improved operation of those existing, might constitute one highly desirable project. Industrial health and hygiene have been neglected to a serious degree, and if Los Angeles is to maintain itself as a great industrial center after the war, we should be preparing now to do the construction and hire the technicians who can correct this situation. Under this general heading we should properly include preservation of the beaches, improvements in sewage and garbage disposal, flood control, and fire prevention.

Except for the privileged few, southern California is not the garden of the Hesperides. The possibilities of the land and the sea and the climate have not yet been given to the great working mass of people in this area.

The Alternatives for Southern California

If America wins the war, southern California will have a choice. Conservatism, refusal to plan, failure to absorb the unemployed, will condemn this smiling section of the earth, these great factories, to the degeneration of despair and give the people over to the first demagogue who comes along. On the other hand, a sturdy, realistic, progressive spirit which insists on the con-

tinued and improved function of democracy, which inspires co-operation rather than individualism, can make of southern California a genuine land of milk and honey more glorious than that depicted in any Chamber of Commerce tourist ad in a travel magazine.

To accomplish these things, there must be more than the will of southern Californians alone. Throughout the Nation, there must be an atmosphere of optimism, a determination to progress. This atmosphere must permeate the legislative halls, the administrative offices, the judicial sanctums of our Federal and state governments.

We must abolish the poll tax. We must eradicate oppressive labor practices by some employers. We must preserve and expand the civil liberties of the people. Social security must become a fact and not a token. A reasonable system of health insurance must be established. The incomes of the common people must provide good living standards. There must be more democracy—not less.

To such a program, for an indivisible Nation of which southern California could well be the most favored part, the CIO dedicates itself and urges the support of all Americans.

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Lewis Goldblatt speaking at the San Francisco Civic Center during the 1936 warehouse strike. The warehousemen had been ignored by organizers until Goldblatt and the "Young Turks" went to work. But eventually, their numbers made them a force to be reckoned with in the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union.
All photos courtesy the ILWU and the Goldblatt family.

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Looking Back on the Labor Wars: Lewis Goldblatt Remembers

By Estolv Ethan Ward

Recently-deceased labor leader Lewis Goldblatt left a legacy that Dr. Clark Kerr (UC president emeritus) has described as "a most valuable . . contribution to the history of half a century of great social change."

That legacy — Goldblatt's two-volume oral history —vividly recreates the struggles, triumphs and failures of Goldblatt's 42 years of active membership in the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU). As the union's secretary-treasurer for 34 years, Goldblatt was right power to Harry Bridges.

Kerr first encountered Goldblatt in the early '30s when both were graduate students, the former at Stanford University, the latter at U. C. While visiting a friend on the Berkeley campus, Kerr saw Goldblatt leading a group known as the Social Problems Club — members, mostly, of the Young Communist League — calling on all listeners to join them in opposing some position the Board of Regents had taken. Later, during his years as an arbitrator of union-employer conflicts, Kerr frequently met Goldblatt and observed him in action, often in situations of great tension. (Some of these situations involved students versus the university, during Kerr's regime as president.) And in the introduction to Goldblatt's oral history, Kerr praised the labor leader's accomplishments and commented on four specific points:

"The goodwill and respect of the employer representatives with whom he dealt.

"His sadness over the break with Harry Bridges. I once asked Harry in the '70s about Lou, and his only reply was 'That Maoist!'

"The tremendous change from class war-

fare on the waterfront in the '30s and '40s to the climate of peaceful co-existence today; and from the violent enmity between the ILWU and the Teamsters to cooperation with Jimmy Hoffa.

"The development of stable labor-management relations in Hawaii out of the most nearly semi-feudal conditions that ever existed on U. S. territory — a transformation of historic proportions."

Early in his long love affair with the ILWU, Goldblatt's total immersion in union affairs left him no time for radical theorizing. Although he maintained contact with Communists wherever common interests or personal friendship existed, and although there was no resignation, no expulsion, no formal break of any kind, Goldblatt's official connection with the Communist Party simply dwindled to nothing. However, many disagreements cropped up between Goldblatt and the Communists, largely stemming from the difference between armchair-radical theorizing and the stern realities of the everyday workers' world.

Those differences leapt into sharp relief in 1942, soon after Pearl Harbor, when Goldblatt was head of the California State CIO Council. The times were difficult along the Pacific Coast for anyone of Japanese origin or ancestry. The Communist Party kept silent on this touchy subject, but not Goldblatt: he came forward on his own to testify before the Tolan Committee in opposition to the wartime internment of Japanese-Americans. No one in the labor movement either objected to or supported his action. He and Al Wirin, an attorney for the American Civil Liberties Union, were among the few persons of any prominence who took the Japanese part. Looking back on his difficult hour in the Congressional committee's witness chair, Goldblatt said in his oral history:

"It was just a gut feeling that you don't kick people around. . . . I said it would be a dark chapter in American history, the Hearst Press screaming about the Yellow Peril, this attitude we were taking against the Japanese. Actually, the only people who showed any class in the situation were the Japanese. Many of them said, 'The quicker we can get into the army and defeat the Emperor, the better.' " After the war, this act of Goldblatt's stood him and the ILWU in good stead with Japanese workers in the Hawaiian Islands during the organizing campaigns there. Much later, returning from a reunion of sorts at Manzanar, Goldblatt discussed why he had given such unpopular testimony during wartime:

"My folks (Jewish Socialists and atheists) felt that when a group of people like the Jews were in struggle against what they called the 'disabilities,' — various forms of discrimination, pogroms and what-have-you — somehow the Jews did not have the same right to be sons-of-bitches that other people have. It is something I have carried most of my life. I feel the same way about the black movement. It's gotten me into some hot water, but it also made me some very warm friends."

During the war the Communist Party conceived the idea that because blacks had for years been "the last to be hired and the first to be fired," it would be only fair for progressive unions like the ILWU to correct that discriminatory situation by discriminating the other way, in other words, giving blacks super-seniority. But Goldblatt disagreed sharply: "I felt, for one, that this was a terribly mistaken policy. Eventually the whole thing was dropped; somebody sits down and works these things out on the typewriter before they think them through."

Goldblatt disagreed with Communists and unionists who would pull out large numbers of workers to support a small number of strikers: "You don't ask somebody else to put his job on the line."

And just after WWII, when Lodge 68 of the Machinists Union in San Francisco struck, those 4,000-5,000 strikers demanded and received the support of 45,000 other workers in factories and warehouses. The result was 50,000 workers on the streets observing the picket lines, including thousands upon thousands of ILWU members. (The leadership of Lodge 68 had previously been friendly with the ILWU leadership, often serving as a "bridge" between the AFL and the CIO in the Bay area.) Goldblatt was not happy: "You had the anomalous situation of five machinists in a place like Best Foods shutting down a place with 500 workers; at Hills Brothers a half dozen machinists shutting down a house with a couple of hundred workers. I got into some long discussions with Harry Hook and Ed Dillon (Machinist leaders), and then the Communist Party got into the act, too. I thought they were terribly mistaken.

"At some points the argument got pretty violent. There were a couple of Party guys in the Machinists Union who felt that this was the greatest thing since the wheel — the ability to pull out that many workers. I said, 'It doesn't work that way. When you go into battle the first thing you do is carry the fight yourself. You don't ask somebody else to put his job on the line unless, for example, they [employers] try to run strikebreakers. Then calling on the rest of the labor movement to put their paychecks on the line is perfectly sensible, and you'll get that support.' "

During a hectic meeting at ILWU Warehouse Local 6 (Goldblatt's home local), Goldblatt was asked if he was saying that his union members should go through the Machinists' picket line. When he replied, "Absolutely no!", the retort was "They're putting our members on the bricks, aren't they?"

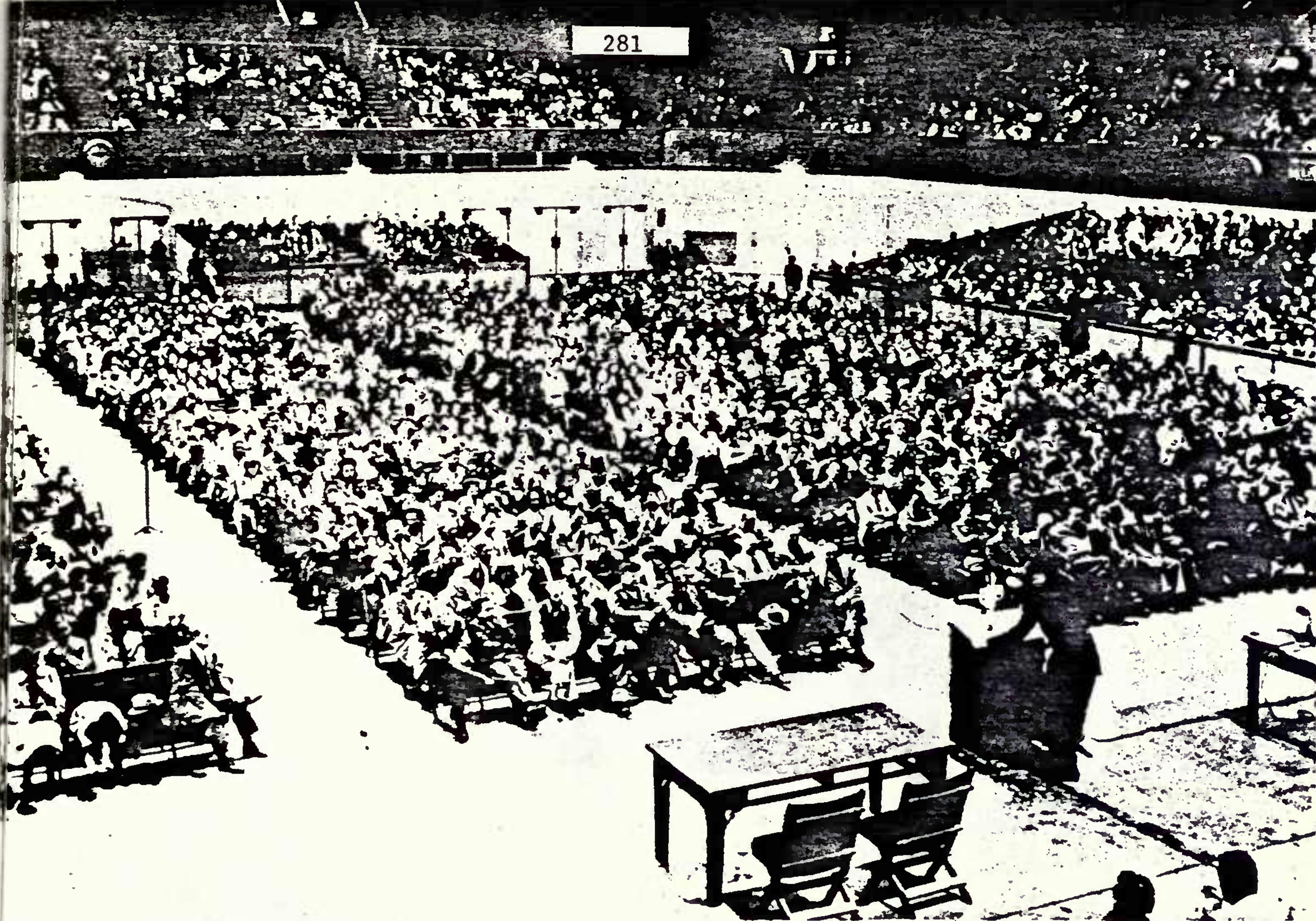
Goldblatt argued, "There are several things they could do. One, just let those machinists stay in those jobs if you have a commitment from the employers that they will meet whatever the new [wage] scale is. [Or] let them withhold their labor, but don't picket the place — with the commitment from us that none of us would do any of their work, nor would we allow any foreman or anybody else to do their work."

In retrospect, Goldblatt observed that "Although most of our members understood what I was talking about, some of them didn't. A picket line is a picket line! Here was one of the real weaknesses of craft unionism, unless it is handled intelligently. Of course you're going to be a good union man and respect the picket line, but that's not going to happen throughout every establishment that is on strike, and sooner or later a crisis occurs.

"This was the old craft idea that the Wobblies had argued against years before. Take one big industrial establishment and carved them up into crafts, at most comprising only a few members; you'd have everything from the Janitors' Union to the waitresses in the cafeteria, a moldmaker, a plumber, an electrician, a carpenter. This goes on endlessly; it is the fundamental weakness of craft unions.

"Incidentally, that lesson is one we learned pretty damn well when we were organizing in Hawaii. . . . [Unquestionably] the pecking order in American society and the craft consciousness of some workers, even when they belong to industrial unions, is something you can't ignore."

Problems between the ILWU and the Communist Party became particularly rancorous in Hawaii. According to Goldblatt, the Party leaders tried to pre-empt union



Goldblatt, Secretary-Treasurer of the ILWU, addressing the 1948 meeting of Local 6. The Pacific Auditorium was the only hall in San Francisco big enough to accommodate the members.

thinking on various matters. Essentially, the Party people kept suggesting that although the ILWU people might be pretty good trade unionists they didn't, after all, know the political scene the way the Communists did. Discussing problems that arose when ILWU and Communist leadership conflicted, Goldblatt philosophized a bit:

"The job of leadership means that you reflect as best you can the reservations, the reluctances, priorities of the people you represent. . . . This did not mean in any way compromising what I thought, or the right of a Red to retain his opinion when he became a union man. As a union we were not trying to change anyone's religious opinion; we were not trying to change their political registration. Neither was it anybody else's damn business how you as a leader felt about issues or political opinions. [But a] sort of balance had to be achieved . . . any relations with something like the Communist Party you would weigh constantly. . . . The issue was how could a person in leadership exercise judgment so as to move the membership along with him; not to sit blandly and flow with the tide, not to duck all issues."

After stints as a student, a teacher and a "Young Turk" in the warehouse branch of San Francisco's Longshore Union, Goldblatt got his first paid union job as Northern California's CIO director.

Goldblatt was born in 1910 in the New York Bronx, eldest son of Lithuanian emigres who imbued their offspring with their socialist and atheist beliefs. Classified as a gifted child, higher education took Lewis first to the City College of New York, where he learned to break away from "Toity-Toid Street" New Yorkese and began learning to become what some of his associates have called an "electrifying" public speaker. Also at CCNY, the political line he was to follow all his life, which was born listening to his parents' discussions, hardened and developed as he listened to and participated in the debates — "screaming matches" he called them — between left-wingers of different slants in the famous alcoves of New York's "streetcar college".

A family move took him to Los Angeles, where he graduated in economics at UCLA at age 21. Next he did graduate work in law, economics and education at UC-Berkeley, but dropped his law studies (although he easily passed his examinations) when he decided that he could see little or no connection "between law and justice."

During those early Depression years, Goldblatt studied accounting and worked part-time — as an accountant, a "grip" in Hollywood's movie studios, and a door-to-door magazine salesman. At Berkeley he and his friends worked weekends rustling crates of farm produce at the Oakland Farmers' Market. He put in strenuous stints body building in the university gym and also spent many nights practicing the piano to advance his ambitions of becoming a concert pianist.

Goldblatt and Nikita Khruschev in the Kremlin in 1959. The U-2 incident was developing but had not yet been made public, and Khruschev alluded to uncertainties about the future of US-USSR relations. Goldblatt, who never formally left the Communist Party, frequently found that his position as union organizer as well as much that was part of his personal philosophy placed a gulf between himself and the Party.

For a time, Goldblatt flirted with the idea of become a teacher, and tried practice teaching at a high school in Oakland. But, he later recalled, "The courses in education given by the university were absolutely the most deadly things under the sun — so much drivel. You just went through a group of textbooks that meant absolutely nothing. I could never figure out how the so-called School of Education warranted its existence. I don't think it meant much to the professors, either."

Doing practice teaching, Goldblatt lost patience with a group of difficult high school seniors not much younger than he was. "I finally turned to them and said, 'If you don't feel like sticking around for the course, just go ahead and leave. I'm not going to report you as playing hookey, or anything. Take off and let those who want to do some studying stick around.' None of them did leave; they quieted down.

"In the course of events, I got my hands on a group of posters put out by the Soviet Union promoting things like sanitation, public health. I saw nothing wrong with giving examples of how a government that thought differently went about the issue of public education. In those days the illiteracy rate in Russia must have been pretty heavy, and a lot of these issues were being told by pictures.

"This went quite well, and the supervising teacher didn't look particularly askance, but [at] one session the whole back row was taken up by administrators, the principal, some guys from the Board of Education — everything but students. I suppose they had a bit of the jumps and jitters about the whole thing." Not one of these school officials said anything to Goldblatt, but he nonetheless noted that "all of us get a bit gun-shy in these things."

Lack of money, a common complaint during the Great Depression, ended Goldblatt's student life. Leaning on a shovel in the Works Progress Administration did not hold him for long, and by 1935 he had found regular employment in a San Francisco bottling plant.

New Deal legislation favoring union organization prompted Goldblatt to join the warehouse branch of the famous San Francisco Longshore Union, and got him fired from the bottling plant. Then began a rip-roaring period of organizing — while he continued to work full time on or near the waterfront — known in labor history as the "March Inland". Within months, the Warehouse local membership jumped from 400-500 to several thousand, due to the efforts of Goldblatt and a group of fiery young men known as the Young Turks.

In the San F[illegible] ay region at that time there were hundreds of warehouses and processing plants of one kind or another, almost all tied into the shipping industry through either the import or export of products useful to humankind in various parts of the world. Ships were the best and cheapest means of transportation, in most cases. Longshoremen loaded and unloaded those ships. Warehousemen and allied workers stored goods received or awaiting shipment, or bottled them, or packed, canned, refrigerated, roasted or otherwise processed them for use by the eventual consumer.

Although the workaday linkage between warehousemen and longshoremen seemed obvious to the Young Turks, most unions had traditionally ignored the warehousemen — so they were 99% unorganized. Rarely does such a golden opportunity offer itself to the union organizer, and as the years went by it brought great changes to the ILWU. Beginning as a mere adjunct to Longshore, Warehouse, in terms of the membership vote, became a force to be reckoned with. Finally, when put together with the organization Goldblatt initiated and developed in Hawaii, Warehouse became the tail that wagged the dog.

Goldblatt's first paid union job was as Northern California CIO Director — right-hand man to Harry Bridges. Here and there were grumbles that Goldblatt was "a smart-ass College boy sent in by the Communist Party." This was correct only in that he had a keen mind, always seeking to learn more about people and events and ways and means of getting things done, who became known throughout the West as an intellectual labor leader of more than ordinary ability. Nobody told Goldblatt to join a union; he followed his own nose. Furthermore, he was a natural born workaholic.

> To hold together and build the California CIO Council, Goldblatt needed tact, diplomacy and the ability to be on chummy terms with people he had little in common with.

In 1938 he was elected executive secretary of the California CIO Council. Thus on a meager salary and expense account, he was expected to travel all over California from

adding to San Diego, helping the ILWU and all the other CIO unions solve their problems — all of which, in those days, were difficult, some even hazardous to the health. As Goldblatt remarked, "Those weren't the days when a guy ran for office so he could get rich."

As far as the West Coast was concerned, the CIO was an assortment of all sorts of unions, some with lengthy backgrounds in the East and Midwest, others with no backgrounds at all. In general the greater the background, the more ideologically conservative the union. But in common, they shared a preference for the industrial type of organization over the old-fashioned craft union system. Some, like the Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers, stemmed from Wobbly traditions. Other, like the International Ladies Garment Workers, got their ideas from the Socialist-versus-Communist complex.

The ILWU, which dominated the CIO on the West Coast, pulled itself free of the conservative — and also racket-ridden — matrix of the International Longshoremen's Association, still to be reckoned with in the east and gulf ports of the United States. Therefore, it had the advantagous mix of long experience and the influx of new ideas — a combination that worked.

To hold together and build the California CIO Council, Goldblatt needed tact, diplomacy and an ability to be on chummy terms with people with whom, deep down, he had little in common. And for nearly four years Goldblatt managed the job, leaving only when he was satisfied that the Council had become a going concern.

Of this experience he commented, "You were dealing with such divergent characters; everybody from a Sherman Dalrymple (a crusty old Steelworker who had come out of the United Mine Workers) or the Coulter brothers (of the Oil Workers, whom the 'progressives' felt were too company-minded), and some just plain old-line trade unionists, some stick-in-the-muds; a crazy melange."

Virtually his final act as head of the California CIO Council was his appearance before the Tolan Committee on behalf of the Japanese-Americans. Then, under his own steam, Goldblatt resigned to return as an organizer to his first and only love, the ILWU. He and others tried to expand their union to the Midwest, South and East, with some initial success in Chicago, Minneapolis, St. Louis, New Orleans and New York. But conditions imposed by World War II and rising opposition from other unions — mainly the Teamsters — made eastward expansion extremely difficult, and in 1943 Goldblatt returned to the West Coast to become secretary-treasurer of the International, where he stayed until he retired in 1977.

During the Eastern foray, Goldblatt and other labor leaders were invited to lunch at the White House by Eleanor Roosevelt in one of her efforts to help defeat Hitler, Mussolini and the Mikado. His experience that day was quite different from his other adventures in wartime Washington: Goldblatt was rebuffed by generals, admirals and cabinet members when he offered his plan to utilize the skills of ILWU longshoremen in facilitating discharge of military cargo in tiny foreign ports devoid of modern unloading facilities. But his effort was not entirely lost; later in the war someone had the sense to put major parts of the Goldblatt plan to good use.

No sooner had he settled into his executive job in San Francisco than Goldblatt, ever on the lookout for new worlds to conquer, began to think and read about Hawaii, then only a territory of the United States, operating under martial law. As he familiarized himself with ILWU records (other than those made by the Warehouse division, which were well and intimately known to him), Goldblatt learned that ever since 1935 there had been attempts at forming Longshore locals in Hawaii — at ports like Hilo, Honolulu, Port Allen on the island of Kauai and at Kahalui on Maui — but no success with the employers, no recognition, no contracts. In 1941, when the ILWU finally won NLRB elections for longshoremen in Hilo and Honolulu, charters were issued to locals there but still no contracts ensued. The war came along, martial law was imposed and the people in charge of enforcing that law on the docks were the shipowners. Even so, the ILWU locals in Honolulu and Hilo, though muted by the war, held together fairly well and were ready to rebuild when Goldblatt learned of their existence.

Looking back on that situation, Goldblatt said, "When we began to study the whole thing, we found the Island economy was such that longshore plays a different role than it does in most parts of the country. Longshore is a specific industry on the mainland. Hawaii was different; longshore was really an economic offshoot of the principal industries there, pineapple and sugar. These would determine what, if anything, would be shipped out of there.

"I began to read up on Hawaii because I was fascinated as to why we did not have well-organized longshore groups covered by contract or tied into the Pacific Coast agreement. After all, Hawaii was at least 85-90% dependent on West Coast shipping. Matson Navigation Company (owned by the "Big Five" at that time) had about the nearest thing to a complete monopoly on all trade to Hawaii."

Eleanor Roosevelt, during one of her war drives, received Goldblatt and his proposals for labor aid to the war effort more cordially than did many military officers and cabinet members.

In Hawaii, Goldblatt and the ILWU collided with the Big Five, first successfully suing under the Fair Labor Standards Act and then striking on the Big Five's money thus netted.

Initially, Goldblatt suggested sending somebody to Hawaii to look over the scene. First to go was an old-time longshoreman named Bill Kraft. Kraft repotted that the longshoremen, by and large, wanted to be in the union. Next went Matt Meehan of Portland, former secretary of the International. He came back with the very specific suggestion that the ILWU ask Jack Hall to go to work for them.

Hall had left ship in Honolulu during a 1936 strike and had made the Islands his home thereafter, spending his time and whatever money he could scrounge trying to organize workers — all kinds of workers, for any recognized union.

But when war's advent made organizing impossible, Hall went to work for the Fair Labor Standards Act in Hawaii, a federal job. (This was important later when, armed with Hall's experience, the ILWU sued the sugar plantation companies under that Act.) Also Hall, not eligible for military service because of his bad eyesight, was happy to be appointed regional director of the ILWU.

This activity soon led to a head-on colli-

Hawaiian sugar cane cutters c. 1920. The Big 5, descended from companies formed by the first Christian missionaries to the islands, gained control of most of Hawaii's economy by using "the bed, the Bible, and a deck of cards". Dr. Clark Kerr, University of California president emeritus and longtime observer of Goldblatt, described conditions in Hawaii as "the most nearly semi-feudal . . . that ever existed on U. S. territory." Courtesy, The Bancroft Library.

Notes on Hawaii's Big Five

The Big Five in Hawaii consisted of the following companies: Alexander Baldwin, C. Brewer, American Factors, Castle and Cooke and Theo Davies. (Theo Davies was primarily held by British capitalists, including British royalty.)

Louis Goldblatt obtained much of his information on the Hawaiian economy and its background and structure from a study done by Dr. James H. Shoemaker, formerly with the U. S. Department of Labor. This study showed the enormous concentration of wealth in the hands of the Big Five.

It is estimated that when Captain Cook first landed in Hawaii, the native population was estimated to have been somewhere between half and three quarters of a million. Hawaii was settled by the people who migrated in canoes from the islands of the South Pacific, probably about 1,100 years ago. These people were great navigators. It was quite common for their seamen to sail down to Samoa, 2,000 miles away, to take in a royal wedding or some celebration of similar importance. And they navigated by fixed stars, showing much more highly developed seamanship than the Phoenicians, who sailed only within sight of land.

The Hawaiians lived mainly on a limitless food supply — fish. They grew taro, a starchy root indigenous to the Islands, and they imported a few animals (a pig for sure, maybe some chickens) during their early migrations. Bananas and coconuts did not exist on Hawaii when the first humans arrived, but they came along in due course, by means known only to nature.

In 1855, at the instigation of the missionary families, the "great *mehele*" took place — a system of dividing the land between the king and his commoners. The missionaries persuaded the natives that there was a need to firmly establish title to the land, something that had not bothered the Hawaiians before. The "great *mehele*" wound up with all the prime land in the hands of the Island royalty, while the commoners got some bits and pieces here and there, mostly marginal land. The missionaries, who some would say had become more greedy than good, then began the slow process of acquiring the royal land.

The technique they used became famous as "the bed, the Bible, and a deck of cards." In other words, they married into the Hawaiian royalty, they used the Bible to instruct the natives in the ways of civilization, including wearing *mumus* and taming the eroticism of the hula, and they preyed on the weakness for gambling they discovered in those gullible people.

Goldblatt tells how Sterling Mossman,

part Hawaiian and a favorite Island entertainer, had a song about how "They're looking up at the heavens, having been told to do so by the missionary, while the missionary is taking away the lands down below." The stench of this operation eventually reached the churches from which the missionaries had originally set out, and Goldblatt stated that "there was some threat of expulsion."

Goldblatt once described a visit he made to the home on Diamond Head of Paul Fagan, a very wealthy San Franciscan who once owned the baseball team known as the San Francisco Seals. He was married to a descendant of the Irwin family, which owned half the island of Molokai and other spots in the Islands as well as immense holdings in California. During the years, Fagan and Goldblatt became "pretty good friends".

"He was showing me around the house," Goldblatt recalls, "and there was a round table, five or six feet in diameter; it looked quite old." I said, 'What's that?' He said, " Thousands of acres changed hands at that table. It was used for poker." Prince Kuhio of the Hawaiian royalty was an inveterate poker player. It was common for them to bet so many thousands of acres on the turn of a card.

As Goldblatt commented, "Land by its very nature is the key ingredient of wealth on any island, partially because you have no frontiers. There's only so much; after that you're in the water.

"Castle and Cooke, founded by missionary families, owns or owned the biggest pineapple operation in Hawaii, a couple of big sugar plantations, a tuna packing cannery, 25% or more of the Matson line. Alexander Baldwin was founded by the Baldwins, also from missionary stock, primarily on the island of Maui. They were a pretty adventurous, daring lot; there are some very colorful accounts about them.

"And you had interlocking directorates, at least when we got started. Now there has been a diversification, primarily because the ILWU helped to break their grip. Everything went back to the Big Five; the banks and utilities held places on the board of directors. Each of the Big Five was also a general agent for insurance companies; one would be Prudential, another would be Hancock, you name it. This went so far that in a place like Maui, Alexander Baldwin even ran the little railroad that ran from some of the plantations down to the port of Kahului." — *E. E. Ward*

sion with the Big Five — those companies owned by the descendants of American missionaries who, according to one saying, "came to the Islands to do good, and they did well." In any case, when the organizing drive began, the Big Five controlled virtually every phase of Hawaiian life.

The workers — Hawaiian, Portugese, Japanese, Chinese, Filipino — had been chafing under not only the generally poor pay and conditions but also under the harsh restrictions imposed by employers under martial law. The ILWU's organizing effort was, therefore, a natural; the workers joined by the tens of thousands.

Goldblatt and Jack Hall, working in concert, took great pains to lay a solid organizational foundation before doing battle. First, they concluded that there was no way to break the grip of the Big Five if they confined the ILWU campaign solely to the Island waterfronts. The waterfronts were merely the transportation division of Hawaiian industry, which consisted of pineapple and sugar. Therefore, most of the organizers headed for the plantations.

Their second consideration was a political one: it was necessary to get local legislation permitting unionization of the agricultural workers if they were to march alongside the millhands, who were covered by the National Labor Relations Act. So, all the meetings called during the campaign turned into classes in politics, and by language groupings the new members of the ILWU were taught how to mark a ballot and who to vote for. As a result, the 1944 Hawaiian Legislature was controlled by a majority of ILWU candidates — and the law allowing unionization of the agricultural workers was passed.

Third, every effort was made to wipe out the ethnic distinctions and pecking orders that the employers had manipulated to prevent the workers from uniting effectively.

Fourth, Jack Hall was instrumental in working out an unusual goody, at the employers' expense, which gave the new union a financial backlog to work with. When Hall was on the staff of the Fair Labor Standards Act, he became convinced that the plantation labor system had committed innumerable violations of that Act. Carrying this conviction with him into his new job with the ILWU, he prepared material on which ILWU attorneys based their suit against all the plantations.

Just before Christmas, 1945, word came that the employers wished to discuss settlement of this suit, and Goldblatt hied himself to Honolulu to talk it over with Hall. Goldblatt recalled, "We weren't quite sure what would be a fair settlement, but [thought that] it ought to be something over a million dollars; the potential liability of the employers was enormous — millions and millions of dollars."

The first meeting with the employers, held a day or two before Christmas, yielded an offer of half a million dollars to settle the suit. Goldblatt, Hall and the rank-and-file union committee didn't even call a huddle; they just stuck up their noses and walked out.

The next day the offer jumped to three-quarters of a million, and a few days later, to a full million. This began to tempt some of the union members, and even the ILWU attorneys. A million dollars! Whereas before they had had not one red cent!

Goldblatt, however, took this succession of offers as a sign that the employers were worried, and managed to hold his ranks firm. The settlement achieved at that time was for $1,800,000, a million and a half of which was to be distributed among the workers involved, with a hundred and fifty thousand each to the union itself and to the union's attorneys.

Long before the 1946 sugar strike began, the workers began planting vegetable gardens. Everything was planned to make sure that the strikers and their families would get enough to eat. The ILWU used the money already won from the employers to finance needy units. Soup kitchens were set up on all the plantations; people could come there with their own utensils and take home food, but in many cases the families found it more social to eat with everybody else; the children especially seemed to enjoy communal meals.

Crews of people who had green thumbs were assigned to gardening; others to the kitchens and the cooking. Hunters were assigned to go out in the hills and bring back meat — wild boar was a great favorite — and fishermen went fishing — all in addition to doing picket duty.

The kitchens were huge outdoor areas, sometimes with a tent if it was raining. Nothing was overlooked: occasionally the strikers would hear of some farmer whose cattle had found a break in his fence and got lost. They'd make a deal to get those cattle back, "if we get one." Then there would be a slaughtering and a celebration. Some strikers did share cropping for small farmers, taking their pay in produce for the strike kitchens. There were bumming committees; many small merchants helped out. Some people needed nickels for their children's school lunches, and a few staples had to be purchased, such as flour and condiments. Mostly, however, the strikers simply reverted to a primitive economy, living by their hands, by hunting and fishing.

Goldblatt related, "Every once in a

while, Jack and I would make the rounds of the soup kitchens, talk to the members and see what the general feelings were like, whether the strike was holding together. There was a bit of socialist competition as to who could turn out the best food for the lowest amount per head, with some of the plantation getting down to under ten cents per person. And a fairly good meal, at that."

The soup kitchen-based sugar strike masterminded by Goldblatt left the union solid and well-organized — but the next year, 1947, the ILWU's tides of fortune ran the other way.

The strike lasted 67 days; during that time federal mediators made several attempts to get the opposing sides together, but nothing came of this.

Two bargaining points of major concern to the employer side were the union shop demand and a claim for $25,000,000, stemming from the borderline Fair Labor Standards Act cases. From the ILWU viewpoint these "give away" demands could be dropped in bargaining for points more important to union members. The union shop, often a sticking point in labor management negotiations because it enforces union membership, was of little interest to Hawaiian workers. Goldblatt explains:

"We were riding such a powerful movement in the plantations that it became a question of status in the community, your whole relations to your family, your friends, even to doing business in the community, whether you were a union member or not."

The Fair Labor Standards Act claim later came to an unusual and dramatic conclusion, worked out by Goldblatt and Hall. The points of most concern to the ILWU were a guaranteed, substantial wage increase for every worker, and abolition of the perquisite sytem. These were won along with vacations, grievance machinery and formalization of sick leave pay — this last time, most union contracts on the mainland had no sick leave provisions.

Probably the biggest bone of contention in these negotiations was elimination of racial discrimination. Goldblatt explained:

"These plantations had this facade of complete racial equality, the 'aloha' spirit in Hawaii, but that wasn't even a half-truth. . . . There was an unwritten rule that every job beginning with the first grade of supervision — what they call *lunas* — was held by a *haole* (white man). There were a few exceptions, but they were rare ones. Integrating the people on the plantation was essential to putting together any kind of effective fighting machine. The employers saw our anti-discrimination drive as a move to open a wedge in managerial control, even though we did not have *lunas* in the union; we never managed to get them in. [But] we finally won [the anti-discrimination] clause. Now, local foremen are a thoroughly mixed group of Japanese, Filipinos, Hawaiians and what have you. There has been a general moving up. After years this began to penetrate the Big Five, where some of the men in charge of industrial relations are not *haoles*; people like Ed Wong, Chinese, now vice-president in Alexander Baldwin; Mits Fukuda, Japanese, now an officer at Castle and Cooke, I believe; Harold Hee, obviously of Chinese background, is an industrial relations man for Brewer.

"Sugar was a very successful strike. We emerged with a good, solid, well-organized union." All these events were masterminded by Goldblatt, either in person or by correspondence.

The next year, 1947, was rough for the ILWU in Hawaii. The tides of fortune ran the other way. A strike called on the pineapple plantations soon ran into trouble. Harry Bridges, visiting the Island for the first time, exercised his leadership and called off the strike, over the opposition of Jack Hall (who had a tip from the employers' camp that the strikers could have won had they held out two weeks more). Goldblatt later concluded that Hall's information had been accurate. In any case, from that point on enmity existed between Hall and Bridges.

Their pineapple victory encouraged the employers to enter into an all-out battle against the ILWU in 1947 and '48. They persuaded Amos Ignacio to desert his ILWU leadership post on Hawaii and lead a move to cleanse the union of the mainlanders, pushing a Hawaiian union for Hawaiians. Goldblatt claimed that the Ignacio revolt was partly financed by one of the Big Five. But whatever its money source the revolt had some success. Local newspapers attacked the ILWU and some of the union's members began to lean toward Ignacio.

Goldblatt recalled that the newspapers called him and other ILWU people from the mainland "kolea birds". "A kolea bird is a plover, and they are said to use other birds' nests instead of building their own. They didn't need any of these kolea birds. That combined with a great deal of redbaiting, which had some impact, particulary with the small merchants, who had been pretty much friends of ours in '46. This patriotic pull, this newspaper pull, got greater and greater."

So, in early 1948 the ILWU called a showdown convention at the armory in Hilo. Also at that time, *Life* magazine sent to Hawaii a journalist and a famous photographer, Eliot Elisofon, to do a story on the Big Five. According to Goldblatt, when the journalists came to the ILWU headquarters he told them, "I'm not sure you want to talk to our people. We know you've been riding around in a car supplied by the Big Five; you've been wined and dined by them; you have a special rate at your hotel. We don't think much of your objective reporting. I don't think you're reporters at all." The more aloof Goldblatt was, the more insistenr the *Life* men became. Finally, Goldblatt gave them a letter that gave them access to all the union meetings and invited them to "walk in there, sit and listen. If the guys want to talk to you afterwards, fine. If not, too bad. We threw the whole thing open to the newspapers and everything else. Apparently the *Life* men realized there was a lot more to it than the story they were getting about lovely Hawaii and the beautiful situation in which the people lived. [T]hat's the first time I think we had any decent coverage in something like *Life*."

Speaking to the "showdown" convention called to confront the Hawaiian-union-for-Hawaiians dissidents, Goldblatt kept the members in the ILWU fold by reminding them of his testimony opposing the internment of Japanese-Americans.

Goldblatt later said that the ILWU tried to find Ignacio and invite him and other dissidents to the convention. "We had hunting parties out all over the place looking for him. I guess he decided he didn't want this kind of a showdown, or would just rely on

ILWU Local 142 negotiating team during the 1965 sugar negotiations, with Goldblatt fourth from left. Jack Hall is on Lewis's right. A majority of the committee — and of the officers of the local — are non-Anglo. Goldblatt's commitment to racial equality — particularly his vocal opposition to the internment of Japanese-Americans during World War II — saved the ILWU's Hawaiian organizing effort from disruption by Hawaiian-union-for Hawaiians dissidents.

the support of the employers and the newspapers. He never showed up."

Goldblatt's key message to the convention was worker unity. But the key "persuader" in Goldblatt's speech came when he read to the convention a letter received years before, unsolicited, from Dillon S. Myer, who had been in charge of the Japanese concentration camps on the mainland towards the end of World War Two. Myer complimented Goldblatt for his testimony in opposition to internment of the Japanese-American, describing it as "a beacon light."

After reading Myer's letter, Goldblatt asked the convention whether any of the Big Five had befriended "the local people when you were having the hell kicked out of you, when you were put in concentration camps, families broken up, people barred from certain employment, maids frozen in their jobs for $25 a month or less, or in a laundry so the colonel could get a shirt sometime? You just name one person. All you gotta do is think back and make a decision for yourself: are these new-found friends better than the old ones?"

The impact was obvious, particularly among the Japanese who were most active in the union. When the issue was put to a referendum vote, more than 95% favored sticking with the ILWU.

This, however, did not solve all problems. The advent of the mechanization of cane-cutting and slumping sugar prices caused the employers to make demands that led to yet another strike in 1948. This time, the employers asked for a wage reduction plus a differentiation for those plantations in distress because their terrain was too rough to adapt to machine cutting.

The ILWU studied the wage cut, but was adamantly opposed to differentiation, being determined to keep industry-wide bargaining intact. Although a strike was avoided, one plantation, Olaa, locked out its employees. The union supported the resulting strike at Olaa but resisted the invitation to widen the struggle. Instead, Goldblatt and Hall bargained as best they could under difficult circumstances.

"We couldn't get rid of the entire wage cut," says Goldblatt. "We got rid of about half of it, and then we got rid of the rest of it later on [when sugar prices bounced back up]."

In 1949, Goldblatt and the ILWU turned their attention to the Hawaiian longshoremen who, though 100% union and under contract with the Hawaiian shippers, had never achieved wage parity with their mainland brethren. The gap had grown to 47 cents an hour (basic wage) for identical work.

The contract expired on May 1, and Goldblatt said that perhaps the employers thought the date was "more than a coincidence." (May 1 was the date of the original Labor Day, first observed in the United States. May 1, in the rest of the civilized world, still is the day for the working class to show its muscle.) There was a single demand for a wage increase, based on the raise of 15 cents per hour just achieved by West Coast longshoremen. If the Hawaiian longshoremen could win a raise of 16 cents an hour, that would close the 47-cent parity gap by one cent an hour, and if they could repeat this gain of a single penny in each succeeding year, in 32 years they would reach equality with their fellow unionists 2,000 miles away.

The employer stuck at 12 cents, with Goldblatt sensing that 14 cents was a definite possibility but not 16 cents, the lowest gain that could make a strike worthwhile. Only a two-cent difference but, if the union could get that two cents, it would give a glimmer of light at the end of the tunnel — wage parity! The strike was on.

Goldblatt tells of sitting at the breakfast table of Alex "Pinky" Budge, one of the Big Five, listening to an oration on the beauties of Hawaii which led, as always, to the standard argument that these beauties should compensate for the low wages obtaining there. Budge failed to mention, however, that living costs in Hawaii are much higher than on the mainland — a fact that added insult to the Hawaiian longshoreman's injury.

The Big Five, looking for a knockout that would rid the Island of the ILWU forever, used every punch in the anti-union repertoire — redbaiting, anti-Semitism (attacking in particular Goldblatt and an ILWU attorney with a Jewish name), strike-breaking and the "Broom Brigade". (This last weapon, more formally known as "We, the Women", consisted of employers' wives and their maids — mostly the maids — picketing the ILWU's Honolulu office.)

The federal government, while all this was going on, indicted Harry Bridges and two other union officers (not Goldblatt) on charges of Communist conspiracy, claiming that they had lied by swearing, at a cermony where Bridges became an American citizen, that he had never been a member of the Communist Party. These charges, like previous similar charges against Bridges, were ultimately wiped out by the United States Supreme Court. It seems reasonable to speculate that the charges were really intended to help the Big Five, because the then-U. S. attorney general, Tom Clark,

issued a statement declaring that the indictment "ought to help clear up the situation in Hawaii."

Goldblatt credits Bridges for playing a constructive role in the Hawaiian longshore strike that contributed, more than any other single factor, to the victory. Under Bridges' guidance, the mainland longshoremen made it impossible for the Big Five to ship sugar and pineapple (or any other Hawaiian products) to the mainland, and also thwarted efforts to ship goods, other than essentials such as food, medical supplies and passengers' luggage, from the mainland to the Islands. Also, Bridges came to Honolulu, walked the picketline with an official of the Teamsters Union and did other helpful things.

Goldblatt's genius for compromise set the Hawaiian longshoremen on the road to parity with their West Coast counterparts, and also helped usher in an era of more cordial relations with employers as well as other unions.

The Big Five raised their offer to 14 cents, but stuck there. Finally, the employers began getting restless: here the strike was nearly six months old — a length of time that almost always means that the strikers have lost — and the ranks of the Hawaiian longshoremen were as solid as at the start. Bridges, in contact with members of the Big Five on the mainland, sniffed a hint of approaching settlement in the air and returned to Honolulu.

Goldblatt learned that some of the key money-men (e.g., Walter Buck, Paul Fagan and people in the Matson Navigation Company) were fed up and eager to bring the pay issue to a head. They sent around a representative with whom Goldblatt had dealt on the mainland, and the two had "a very abrasive session." In between the angry exchanges, however, Goldblatt suggested to the Big Five representative that the employers could cling to their 14 cents and *still* pave the way to giving the workers their demand for wage parity. How? By way of a two-step contract, starting at 14 cents and going to parity within the one-year term of that contract.

Bingo! "I recall a session with Walter Buck," says Goldblatt. "There was sort of a general agreement that it would be 21 cents — 14 and 7 — and obviously the employer ranks were badly split. Buck announced the thing was settled; Harry did the same thing. And within a day or two it *was* settled; 21 cents. Instead of getting parity over 32 years, we had it in two years. And they still get automatic parity." A major turning point in ILWU affairs came with the West Coast longshoremen's winning of a 1948 strike, ushering in an almost complete change in employer attitudes and a peaceful era known as the "New Look". Goldblatt turned his energies toward implementing his belief that unions should be "instruments for change," not only in regard to the traditional wages, hours and working conditions, but also regarding other areas of life — pension, vacations with pay, low-cost housing, health plans, dental care for workers' childeren, etc. All these benefits have come to pass for ILWU members.

Among the best known of Goldblatt's projects in California is the workers' housing in San Francisco's St. Francis Square.

Into the scene of cordial cooperation between capitalism and proletariat came a new kind of employers' attorney, J. Paul St. Sure, new president of the Pacific Maritime Association. While unusually cooperative in many ways, St. Sure persuaded the ILWU to accept his "Modernization and Mechanization Plan" which revolutionized the longshore industry. Goldblatt was originally enthusiatic about this plan, seeing its inevitability and thinking it could benefit the workers. Experience with the plan, however, soon changed Goldblatt's mind — but not Bridges'.

In a speech at his "farewell" dinner a quarter of a century later, Bridges praised the membory of St. Sure as a man who had taught him many things. According to Goldblatt, one of the things Bridges learned from that source was that St. Sure, the employers' key man, was always right. "He gave," Goldblatt said, "but he took more than he gave. . . . He was a charming scoundrel."

Goldblatt thought that his resistance to some of St. Sure's maneuvers was the opening gun in a conflict with Bridges that grew until almost anything one proposed the other opposed. Realizing that this stalemate was harming the union, Goldblatt forced both himself and Bridges to retire in 1977. "I called the turn," Goldblatt said.

But in contrast, he could be a diplomat as well as a fighter. Starting in 1956 and 1957, Goldblatt engineered a series of face-to-face discussions, first with Jimmy Hoffa and, soon after, with a local Teamster official who had once worked for the ILWU. These talks eventually changed relations between the two unions from bitter hatred to close cooperation in many fields. As another example of his diplomatic ability, Goldblatt used union, political and social contacts that he had taken pains to keep alive throughout the years to achieve what most labor leaders called an "impossibility" in the 1968 San Francisco newspaper strike. He coaxed the Newspaper Guild, a CIO union and 15 AFL craft unions (all involved in the newsprint industry) into a mood of unity that led to accord with the publishers and a successful conclusion of the strike.

Outside the ILWU orbit, Goldblatt helped American Indians in their efforts to make Alcatraz an island fortress, the free speech movement at UC-Berkeley, Cesar Chavez and his fight to organize California's farm workers and the civil rights sit-ins of the '60s and '70s.

Epilogue

Now it is over. Until his death earlier this year, Goldblatt was enjoying family life in Mill Valley with his wife, his three daughters and two grandchildren. He taught a class in negotiations now and then and would discuss China with anyone who would listen. But let Clark Kerr sum up the man: "Lou Goldblatt walks through these [oral history] pages as he has through life as a man of the Left, as an energetic participant in history . . . as a realist, as a participant in many battles but who could stand outside of them and above them, and as a person of more good will and good humor than he appeared to be to some who knew him along the way. He ends these many journeys, as he began them, with hope."

From author to reader: This article is largely based on extensive interviews conducted by me with the late Lewis Goldblatt.
— E. E. W.

Author Ward, a labor historian, was Goldblatt's oral history interviewer, and is now condensing that document into book form intended for general publication. The oral history is now available to the public at UC's Regional Oral History Office at the Bancroft library in Berkeley. Ward also wrote *The Gentle Dynamiter*, a biography of Tom Mooney recently published by Ramparts Press.

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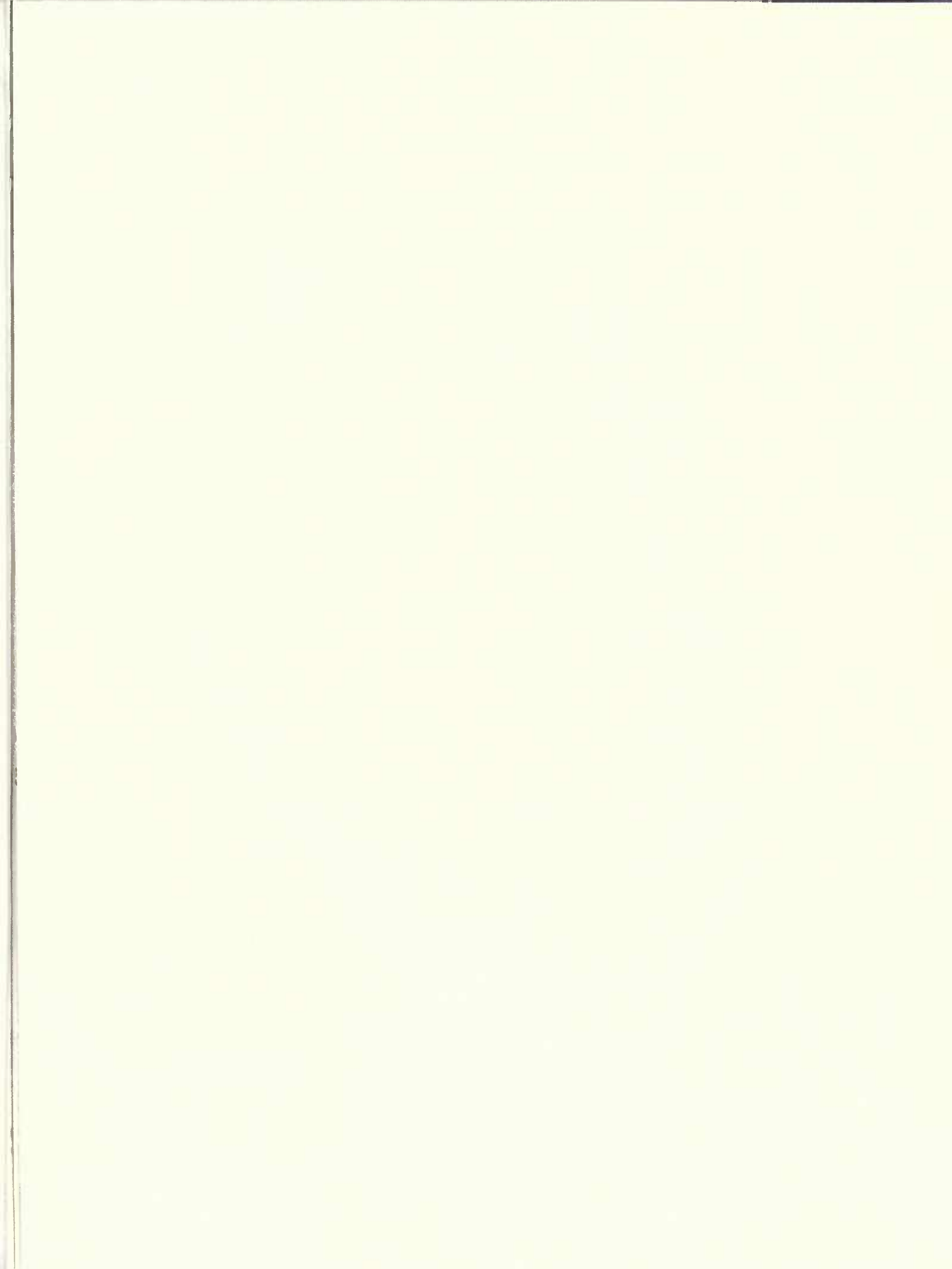

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