

Marge Dalskog

NAME	PG.	PLACE	PG.	DATE
EARLY YEARS Period				
11* Scottish (background)	2	British Columbia	1,28	*1917
11* German ("")	2	Saskatchewan	1	
1* Grain Growers' Union	2	Rockies	1	
1* Wobblies	2			
2* CCF Cooperative Commonwealth Federation	2			
10* May Day	2			
11* French	2			
CAMP LIFE/ DEPRESSION				
OBILL BOLT	1	Lake Cowichan	1	8 30's
11 Chinese (Cook)	2	White Rock	3	
WWII				
BOEINGS				
6* Boeings	1,2,3,4	Hulu Island	5	8 1942
JACK BENNY	3	Bridge port Rd. (Van)	5	
MARY LIVINGSTONE	3			
WWII W.A. IWA	1	Marpole Vancouver	1	8 1944
W.A. IWA				
WWII WA IWA	1			
EARLY INVOLVEMENT				
WWII WA IWA	1		1	
MISSION				
0* HAROLD PRITCHETT	1	MISSION	1	
0* MONA (?) MORGAN				
WWII - P.W. AUXILIARY				
0* RUSSIAN REVOLUTION IWA, 1* DISTRICT COUNCIL, ■■■	1	North Vancouver	1.	8*1946
0* ABBOTT - MINISTER OF FINANCE	1	Ottawa	2	
9* LUMBERWORKER IWA, 1* B.C. COUNCIL	2	Hulu Island	3	
9* Vancouver Sun	1	Richmond	3.	
0* MONA MORGAN	3	STANLEY PARK	4	
10* MAY DAY	3,4			
4				
POST - WWII AUXILIARY				
7* HOLDEN BUILDING ■■■	1	B.C. (spelled wrong)	1	
1* IWA (spelled wrong)	1	Portland	1	
STRUCTURE				
		Russia	1	

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NAME	PG.	PLACE	PG.	DATE
IWA WA P.W. Women's Issues	1			
EFFIE JONES	1			
IWA P.W. 1*	1, 2, 3*	United States of America	1, 3*	1948 1
ERNIE DALSKOG 5*	1	New Westminster	2	
1*	1, 3	Mission	2	
1*	1, 3	Vancouver	2, 3	
1*	2	Vancouver Island	3	
1*	2			
5*	3.			
PW IWA	1			
LPP	1			
CCF (spell out)				
LPP Labour Progressive Party				

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CAMP LIFE / DEPRESSION

Notes

Definition of Pad? p. 2

IWA WA WWII /MISSION

ftnt. Harold Pritchett p. 1

ftnt. Mana - [Morgan] p. 1

P.W. Auxiliary Activities

Ottawa - date of trip. p. 2

Abbott - ftnt. p. 2

Newspaper she worked for? p. 3

Split in IWA

Taft - Hartley? ftnt. p. 1

Background to IWA split, Auxiliaries p. 2.

MARGE DALSKOG
Early Years Early Period

We came to British Columbia in 1917. We drove in a 1916 Ford--with the curtains that you take off and you fold the top down--and we were seven days camping from Saskatchewan to British Columbia, through the Rockies. That was quite an experience for a little kid. One night we heard the wolves howling all over the place and I think Mother was nervous. But Dad just laughed, "Go on to bed, forget it. They're not going to do anything," so we didn't care. We didn't have enough sense to be scared, I guess. I wasn't very old, I was six.

my parents
We came from the prairies because we were tired of being pioneers. They ~~were~~ were one of the Prairie pioneers; they broke the sods. They didn't live in one of those sod shanties, but they could have because the neighbours did. We would have been more comfortable, because we had a little, thin shack in those winters. But that was the era! Mother had had ten babies, and the life was hard. They were fed up with it. She had relatives here and they were fishermen and they said, "Come to B.C. and you'll have a better life," so we packed it up and came.

Early on in the Prairies when they were building houses and getting farms going, my father got blown off a neighbour's roof in a twister. It carried both of him two miles, then dumped him down and broke every bone in his legs. We had a very bad time. He was in a hospital for two years. I don't know how my mother survived, but that was before I was born. In those days they didn't have the medical appliances that they have these days in hospitals, especially for broken bones. He was all wired up with silver wire. He had forty-seven different breaks in one leg, and he had these wires in his legs, and when he learned to walk, he had two canes, and then he had one. He would always limp always worse, if it was going to rain and the wires would come out through his skin every once and awhile. He'd pick out a wire. "There's another one!" As the bones mended.

My mother was a French woman and she had a Scottish ancestor back somewhere, but she was essentially French. My dad was a German, Pennsylvania Dutch, so they were a good pair, weren't they? I was a mongrel. My parents were quite old-fashioned. She just kept in the background. She gentle, was a quiet little woman and when she got awfully mad at my dad, she'd say, "Now, George!" That's about the worst of it. She didn't have an opinion about the labour movement--she was just concerned with keeping her family's values in other ways.

My dad was always a labour man. He was a Saskatchewan farmer and he was right up there with the Grain Growers' Union. He was well-known for all his work in the labour movement. He was one of the Wobblies. He knew all the songs. He ended up joining the CCF before he died. When we got to British Columbia, the first thing he did was look up anybody he could find in the labour movement. On May Day he used to go over there with his red tie on and march in the parade. Every May Day. My mother used to worry about him, walking all that way on those pavements. But he wouldn't be stopped, oh no!

I wanted to be a teacher, but my parents couldn't afford to send me to university for one year. That's all you needed in those days. Then I thought I'd save money and be a nurse, but instead of that, I started going around with this fellow and I went and got married.

In the thirties I was living in logging camps. At that point, it was the union it self that was struggling to be organized, and nobody worried about auxiliaries, none of the camps that I was ever in. It was just a case of your husband probably got fired because he went to a union meeting.

My first experience in living in a logging camp was when I was just a young bride. This was in a construction camp about four or five miles farther on into the woods than the main logging camp. It was a camp of mostly tents. I was the only wife of a worker in that little camp. I thought it was a lark. It was lonely, but I was interested in all sorts of things. To go for a walk it would be four or five miles down the railroad, 'cause in those days they were logging with trains. You'd walk over the trestles, or else through the bush. There were acres and acres of the slashings logged off. Usually the camps were nestled somewhere amongst the rolling hills full of slashing and the fireweed used to grow in there, and just be a pink carpet. The seeds would drift. Later on, we graduated to half houses, which would be a floor and about three feet of boards up the side, and then a tent over that. We loaded up on flat cars to move from camp to camp. The first camp was somewhere beyond Lake Cowichan.

My husband worked for Bill Bolt^Whe was just a contractor who went in above the logging camp and broke the trail into the spot where they were going to put the logging camp next. In those days, they had a gas shovel and it was a forerunner of a Cat. It was a huge affair. You climbed up on it and it had a bucket seat, made out of metal, and it had a great big bucket sticking out there, and it would swing and swivel. They just delved into the woods with that bucket and flipped a tree

out of the way, and put a twelve foot wide path in there. You had a swamper
in the back. He was called the pad man, and he hooked the rope into the pad.

When this part in the forest was cleared, he turned around, picked up
the pad and put it in front of him and went ahead on that pad on the machine
and cleared another twelve feet. No matter what was there, they just took
it out of the way with that thing. Then the railroad came in after them.
They got loaded on the railroad and taken out and put into a different place.

We lived in tents year round. The first tent that I had was ten by twelve,
and that was an everything house. Kitchen, living room, and bedroom. Of
course, no bathroom. It was quite something. There was no running water
and you were lucky to have a decent lamp. Mostly you just had a lantern.
You had to have someplace to put it and you didn't have any place, so you
had a hook from the middle down and you hooked it on that. The cupboards
were made out of butter boxes. In those days, butter came in fifty pounds.
The inside of the butter boxes were waxed, and they were square, like a box.
You took the butter out and the corners were dovetail corners. When the cook
was finished with the butter boxes you could get them. You just put them
flat and laid them on the ground and that was your floor. And you made cupboards
out of them. You made everything you needed.

I cooked in that same little room, on a little tiny stove. It was eighteen
inches square, and it had little legs, and it had a little tiny oven you could
put one pie in. And a water bucket sitting on a box. There was a cookhouse
built out of wood, with a tent roof too. It had a big stove in it. There was
a Chinese cook.

The boss' wife sometimes spent some time in camp. I knew her quite well, and
we'd go for walks sometimes, but mostly I entertained myself. You'd keep
busy, you had to wash all your husband's clothes by hand. It took all afternoon

to cook something on that little stove. I used to get dressed up in my things-in those days we didn't have the kind of clothes that you wear in the woods these days^m we had boots that come up to your knees, that you laced, and riding pants. That's what we wore. And lots of sweaters. I used to do a lot of walking, I had a little pistol in my pocket, going through the woods. I don't know what for, because if you ever found anything that you were scared of, you'd never shoot it anyway. We went bear hunting and deer hunting. I was eighteen.

I had my first child two years later, I was twenty. I lived in a camp, but when the baby was due, I came down and went to stay with some relatives in White Rock, and that's where she was born. But I took her straight back up to the camp as soon as possible. We had moved into a regular logging camp, and my housing situation was just a little bit different. The house had walls halfway up and a tent above that with a big fly over the top. A fly is a huge tarpaulin that just covers the whole top of the tent with about a foot of air in between.

There were seven women in that camp and they all had these kinds of houses. We were quite good friends, and we did a lot of coffee drinking in the afternoon. A really good bunch they were. They were busy doing their work^m we had lots of work to do. For exercise, we used to go out and saw a great big chunk off a log, 'cause that's what they used to dump us off, a log, and that was our firewood. We could use a cross-cut saw. We'd laugh at each other to see which one was going to do it and which one wasn't. I sawed off big pieces in those days. They were big logs! Then when our children got a little bit older, we used to have a lot of fun. They used to bring big cars of coal--they were for the donkey engines. We weren't supposed

to touch that coal, but we didn't notice it if our kids got up there and threw~~an~~ a few pieces down! We used to have a lot of fun that way.

On a typical day you'd wake up early in the morning, really early, and make a good, big breakfast, and prepare a big lunch. In the first camp I was in I just had one baby, so I looked after my child. Probably you'd have to do a washing, because when you're washing by hand you have to do it often. You'd probably go down to the cookhouse^m there was a little post office in conjunction with the cookhouse, and you send a letter and get your mail, and you could order some meat to come up in the next few days. Everything was fifteen cents a pound--soup bone or a steak. The time keeper would look after the commissary, and the commissary included the meat. You could buy cigarettes and things like that. You might drop in on one of the other women and have a cup of tea. You might go for a walk. Sometimes we had afternoon tea parties. There'd be six or seven of us together in somebody's house and we'd make a scrumptious cake and we'd all gather together. It was a happy bunch. I understand that there was a bit of gossiping and criticizing of each other, but I never partook in any of that. I just ignored that^m it wasn't much anyhow.

It doesn't matter where you are, you'll find that people are always the same. Down at the other end of the camp, they'll talk about people at this end of the camp and say, "I think she's stuck up," and then somebody will say, "She's not really stuck up, she's just shy." That's about the worst that I can tell you, because I liked those people. In some camps you'd find a little problem of drinking. Often the boss's wife and her close friends, they might be drinkers and the others couldn't afford it anyway. It never seemed to touch my life. The women were mostly young. They hadn't been married^{all that} long and they had their first

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or second child and there was generally a lot of happiness there. If the women had been in their middle years, there may have been a few more problems.

They were not a militant-type people, not in those days. Not in the first camps I was in, anyway. Later on I was in a camp where the women were a little scared to be actually militant. If you r husband went to a union meeting and was on the list to get his walking papers, you didn't talk about it, you just took it. People would say, "He was at that meeting, eh? Oh, well, we see, that's O.K." You did it, you knew what was going to happen, but you did it. Nobody got in one person's home, for instance, and said,

"Now look, we're gonna have a union. What do we do about it to help?" Nothing like that was going on—that was in the Thirties. People felt lucky to get a job. The wages were low, but you were lucky, because you could get meat for fifteen cents a pound. There were a lot of things on the minus side. For instance, you took an awful chance having children up in those camps, because you couldn't get out of there in a plane if your children got hurt. You just had to do home remedy type things.

One time, when I had two children, two little girls—one was a year and a half and the other was three and a half—~~she~~ dropped a piece of coal off of the coal car right on her little sister's head. She had a little white tam o'shanter, made out of some felt material, and it bashed her, made it bloody. She was fainting and I just conjured up what I knew, cold compresses on her head after I cleaned it up. They were just home remedies, and I prayed! If I'd picked her up and taken her to town, she'd be dead before I got there. It was dangerous to live in a place like that. But the women were young, and when you're young you just don't worry about things.

You have a lot of faith, I guess.

WORLD WAR II Boeings

My first experience with a labour union was in Boeings. They got union recognition and they got coffee breaks. It would be 1942 that I went in there. I hadn't got any kind of an opportunity to do anything for the war effort, so I decided to see if I could get a job at Boeings. It was quite easy. I had absolutely no experience, but I got into one machine shop. It was shop thirty-five, which is for cutting. You have all the saws and you make rivets and things in there. You cut all the material to the template. Then it goes from that shop to the next shop where it was assembled. We were doing the B-27s, those big flying hospitals. They had a great big belly in them, and they came down on their belly in the water. I don't think they had pontoons. They were big ungainly looking things. After a long time, we started making B-29s. That's about the time I quit.

When I first went in there I was running a machine that put screws, nuts and bolts in. All this was little piece work. You got a box full of peculiar shaped little flat metal parts, and you had to put screws in them, and pull the handle down. This machine did the work and put these things in. Then that was finished, and you sent it to another place, but you didn't know what the heck you were doing. Just like an assembly line.

Then my next job was really interesting. That was on the cut-off saws. You not only had to understand the templates, which are patterns that you get to do each job, but you have to know the kind of material you're using--and most of it was angle aluminium--and you have to know how to take yours apart and put it together again, and set it up for all the different angles and directions that you need for these jobs. Then you have to be quick and deft, or else you cut your fingers off. You sit and the saw comes down and goes, "zip", "zip", "zip", and [and] cuts off the pieces, and you're feeding it in. You get very good at it, very fast.

I think I could do several thousand in an hour.

Most of the workers were women, but there were some shop overseers. They would look after a section and show the girls what to do. Conscription came along and [they] lost most of those, so then the girls had to take those jobs over.

It was a great big, huge shop, but it was all in small compartments, like the cut-off saws had a small place about ~~to be~~ as big as this house, and then there was table saws next to that. So when all these foremen got conscripted, I ended up by having that job. I was looking after four cut-off saws and five table saws. That was interesting because you had to teach the workers how to do the parts. I had to remember all the numbers of the materials, like when you ~~got~~ a job in, it would call for so many feet of such and such a number you had to know what that was. I memorized that because I was interested in it. It took my mind off my problems at home. I enjoyed that quite a lot. It was very nice in lots of ways, you didn't have to sit down and worry.

My little girl, she was in the school parade on the twenty-fourth of May, and she wore my uniform, with the legs all rolled up. We had white overalls, and a white turban on our heads. She won a prize in the parade as a Boeings worker. Boeings workers were very popular, because they were women out in the working world. That was one of the big boosts for women. When the war came along you could get a job without experience, and get trained, and you were doing something that you felt was worthwhile, and you got a lot of credit for it. Your wages were, in some cases, better than your husband's. That's the first time that I realized that women could have a say in their own lives. They didn't just have to keep quiet and wash the dishes. There was something else they could do. That was a great big thing.

no.

I found that I learned to say . . . For instance, my husband thought that since I was working, I should buy all the groceries for the family. And I said, "No, I'm not going to do that. You buy the groceries. You think you're the head of the house^mbuy the groceries!" I insisted on having a family budget. There was so much for clothing and so on. And I put my money in bonds, and I also put it in a bank account. But I didn't do anything smart with it! When I quit my job I spent it all on the house. I bought a piano, for one thing, which something that I'd always longed for. That's the only thing I bought for myself, a piano, for one hundred and twenty-five dollars. With the rest of it, I got paint and curtains, and venetian blinds, and rugs for the floor. I redid the whole house. That's where the money went, all my savings. So when the time came that I found that it wasn't going to work and I was going to leave my husband, I didn't have a cent.

In Boeings, I don't think that we had a great big army of dedicated women^m the money was very important. And the freedom from the old yoke. But, Jack Benny and Mary Livingstone came and entertained us and praised us for doing our bit for the war effort and I think probably nobody can help but have a bit of patriotic feeling at a time like that.

A lot of the women were married. Quite a few of them were single too, but most of the people ~~T~~ associated with were married. I've always been the kind of person that gets loaded down with other peoples' troubles, It's a kind of fault I have. So, I heard ~~a lot~~ ^{whole} of things from a lot of the girls. I would say that they were were all striving in their home situation, for a better life. They were beginning to feel that they were not going to put up with the sort of treatment that they had in years past. Not only from their husbands, but from society.

The money never came to the wrong place. A lot of them were girls either on their own after having left their husbands, or, not having married, that were supporting themselves. Women ended up leaving their marriages. Some of them got the nerve to have another relationship that was satisfying to them, and work out something at home to figure that out later. That happened in numerous cases. It'd be somebody that they knew but they didn't have the nerve to do anything about it. They got the nerve, somehow. I can remember two or three telling me that after the war they were going to proceed with a new kind of life, especially if they had found someone to have a satisfactory relationship with, that they weren't going to go back into the old rut.

Women got more of a sense of importance. They got credit for what they were doing. They weren't put down so much as they had been in the past. Today women are still struggling to get equal pay for equal work. But suddenly, in the atmosphere of Boeings, women were making just as much as men. I can't say that in that if you work on this machine, on this shift, and there's a man working on the other shift, he'll get a little bit more than you, a few cents an hour, just to make him feel good, but a lot of those women were making more money than their husbands at home, me included.

I left before the war ended. Things were getting rather worse between myself and my husband, and I thought if I spend all that money fixing up the house, I might feel a little bit more comfortable there. I thought, maybe my children weren't getting the attention that they should from these old ladies that sit dozing in a chair all day -- I had an elderly lady. It was hard to get a babysitter or a housekeeper. So she was a grandmother, and she was just there to look after my kids when they came home from school and see that they got a piece of bread and jam. When I was on night shift

BOEINGS MARGE DALSKOG 5. W.W.II

I left a dinner ready to cook in a casserole, and she'd serve the kids and my husband when he came home. She didn't do my housework at all. I did that on my days off, or my hours off. I was getting tired, because we had an acre out on Lulu Isalnd, and we had a cow, maybe a pig. I had a lot of geese and chickens and a big orchard, and a garden, and ~~I~~ say up late at night candling eggs. I tried to find time to get the rolls of dust from out under the bed. You just can't do that forever, even when you are young.

They had a strike. ~~I~~ got my job just after that strike was over, and everybody went ~~back~~^{of} to work, and they got the coffee break, and they got a raise in pay, and some better conditions. One of the things they got was permission to go upstairs and use the washrooms and have ten minutes, two or three times a day. That was quite a concession, because you can't be sneaking away all the time~~in~~ you'd lose your job. I paid my union dues, but I couldn't go to meetings because I had a ride, which took me home, right almost to my house on Bridgeport ~~Rd~~, and there's just no way that I could go out again in the evening.

I didn't have a good home life by this time. I had three children and my husband was working in a mill at Marpole. That was my first husband. It was suggested that I join the Auxiliary, for reasons of mental health, I suppose you could put it. I became involved then, that was about 1944. My husband was a shop steward at that time, so it was simple.

I found it interesting. I liked the people. I can't remember how I got to Vancouver to go to the meetings. I think I probably walked ~~it~~. I walked a mile to the train and then took the train into Vancouver.

There were about thirty people. Most of them were wives and some, they were like me, their husband was a shop steward. Some of them had a lot of backing. They had a really labour-conscious home life, which I didn't have.

There were a lot of husbands who didn't like the Auxiliary at all. I think it was jealousy. I think they didn't like their wives to go out and find interests outside of the home. Just because you're a union man doesn't mean you're not a chauvinist. I remember the years when we were concerned with getting the men in the union meetings to allow us to come in and sit in on their meetings. They didn't want us there. They were afraid we'd get up and say something. That's my opinion. The men are afraid of change.

*FTNOTE.(NEXT PAGE)

There were some broken homes. When the women get the nerve to go out and do something, that their husbands haven't told them they can do, or give them any encouragement, then they find out that they're people.

In some cases, I guess they just clashed. I don't think I would have had the nerve to leave my husband if I hadn't known that I could get out and do something. I wrote that story, "The Song of the Tree" before I left home, and then, after that, I left.

MARGE DALSKOG 1. Women/family/union WWII IWA AUX.

) FOOTNOTE

* Ernie Dalskog: It wasn't that way so much in the local in Vancouver because they had women that was working in the shops, as members of the union.

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MARGE DALSKOG WWII Women's Auxiliary IWA

Early Involvement

One of the first things that I was asked to do [in the Auxiliary] was go on a committee to visit the loggers in the hospital who had got hurt in the woods. Believe me, there was a lot of them in those days ^{now} still are, I guess. It was a nice experience for me. I was kind of shy and I was scared ^A to go into the hospitals, and go talk to strange men, but I did it. There were two of us together, and we gave them cigarettes, and we took a copy of the Lumberworker. That would be once a week or two we went and did that.

Then other jobs came up in Auxiliary meetings, and I found myself involved with writing, writing out resolutions. I remember one of the first times they asked me to write a resolution all on my own, and then come back to the next meeting. I wrote one about ~~that~~ [a page] long [a page]. It was about housing. When I was called on to get up and read it, I took a breath, and I read the whole thing, and then I let the breath out. (Laughs). I don't think they could understand a word of it! I was quite shy, you know. Well, that didn't last very long!

We'd have socials and dances; We did our organizing that way too. I went out with Harold Pritchett once or twice. I helped organize that Auxiliary in Mission.

First of all, they'd be this big social, and all the women would be there, and they'd bring food and everything, and we'd have dancing. Then there'd be some speakers. One of the top-notch union men'd be there and they'd speak. Then, one of the women would speak. Sometimes it would be Mona, and sometimes it would be somebody else, and once in a while, it got around to being me. Who ever did the speaking would point out the necessity for having this organization, what it would do for you, as a family unit, how it would strengthen your ability to live a better life, in the society that you're living under.

THE AUXILIARY : Activities 1.

What I liked about being in the auxiliary was that you got a chance to talk about world things, not just home things, subjects that were interesting to everybody. We would discuss the situation in the logging camps where the loggers got hurt so badly. We would discuss the price of living costs, and how they were escalating. There was a lot of discussion about what was going on in the world since the Russian Revolution. There were a lot of divisions in people's opinions, and dissensions. I was in the midst of that.

Sometimes there would be a District Council meeting coming up, and we were asked to send in some resolutions, and send a delegate. So that took some meetings to get it all thought out, what we were going to do. Those women had husbands in the mills and they knew that conditions were not as good as they should be. Their husbands' wages were not as good as they should be and they weren't encouraged to use safety precautions. We would make up resolutions and send them in.

I think one of the most important things that the Auxiliary was for was to show the women that they had a place in what happened to their husbands -- backing up their husband's union views, sticking up for him when he's in trouble with the boss. If they want to call a strike, then you're organized too. So you go out to the mills, and you hand out leaflets and you give food and them hot coffee and more support and a laugh or two. We'd say, "Are you getting tired of this walking," and "Well, we're with you." We felt that was important and we loved doing it. It was fun too. During the 1946 strike I found myself in a mill in North Vancouver, with some other women, and we were doing exactly what I've just told you now.

We didn't go to Ottawa about a union contract. It wasn't anything to do with union business. It was just Auxiliaries. We were studying economics, I think. Abbott was the Minister of Finance ^M we interviewed him. It took us a couple of weeks, ^A we went on a train, and we met other women as the train went along. We picked up delegates. Quite a few delegates were there in the end. We sat in the galleries and listened to the arguments and we interviewed our Member of Parliament in his office. We were very assertive. The question was to roll back the prices because the cost of living was getting out of hand. We wanted price controls but we didn't want wage controls all mixed up with it.

Writing articles at the unit conference

Hold on, that's another story. We used to write articles for our unit conference and I studied Robert's Rules of Order. I used to study them and we studied them and wrote them up and we had a good time doing it.

I got into writing a bit. I got to be District Secretary and maybe that's when I started. I used to write a bunch of these unions songs and little bit of poetry about, "Johnny ^A was a union man." After a while, when the years went on a little bit, ^A I had a little column in the Lumberworker called, "Hold the Line, Please". Oh, I got a kick out of writing that! Something would come to my attention, in the newspaper, and I'd take the attitude of a union point of view, I would write about this thing. The thing that I remember was that story

The best thing that I ever wrote was that story of a tree, because it was a fanciful thing. It was the story of a tree, what happens to it, standing in the forest. Then when the loggers come along and cut it down, then what happens? It's like a light opera.

I was just a member of the local, and then I was a secretary of the local, and then there was a convention and I got elected Secretary-Treasurer of the B.C. Council. I'm glad I had that experience, because it changed my life. It made me realize that I could take hold of my own life, and do something with it, that I wasn't just a chip on a river.

I went down to the office in Lulu Island and they were just starting a new paper; they'd only issued one issue. I presented myself and said that I'd like to work for them and I got a job! I would never have had the nerve to do that if I hadn't been a member of the Auxiliary. They used to print all my reports about the Richmond City Council meetings in the Vancouver Sun. I got a phone call from the Vancouver Sun and ^{they} asked me if I'd like to come down and have an interview for the possibility of getting a job on the Vancouver Sun, as a reporter! And my husband wouldn't let me. Gee, I could have killed him! Said I'm away enough as it is. "Stay home and cook the dinner." (Laughs).

During one of the strikes Mona [Morgan] and I had that television program. That was Mona's program, "Five Minutes with Mona" and she took me on as a partner. We talked all about these issues for five minutes each morning.

Post-War Auxiliary Activities 4.

On May Day we'd be down at Stanley Park, and there'd be someone speaking. One year, I got shoved up there. I could have killed Mena for doing that to me! She shoved me up to that damn microphone, and told me to say something about joining the auxiliaries. I don't know what I said, but I said something. It was a lot of fun.

As the years went by the auxiliaries received a good deal of respect, and I mean growing respect, for our organization as a whole. For the way it was run, for the type of people that were in it. It was a very, very good organization in those years.

1. MARGE DALSKOG Auxiliary Structure WORLD WAR TWO

Our auxiliary was one of a lot of auxiliaries, from different locations in B.C. The central council was made up of delegates from each local. Once a year they'd have a conventions, and there'd be someone sent from each local, sometimes two people. They would take these suggestions and these subjects that they were interested in and have them written up as resolutions and take them up to the council meeting.

I remember one of the first times I went to a convention, It was an international convention. It was down in the States, in Portland. That was quite interesting because I got to see the ~~different~~ viewpoint of the American women. I didn't like it very much because they were very, very rightist, didn't like anything. If you had a broad idea about anything, you were called a Russian sympathizer, and, "Why don't you go back to Russia," cause that's where you came from, and all kinds of stupid things like that.

We had our meetings in the union office. There were rooms in the Holden Building that we were able to use, that were rented by the IWA. We ran our meetings according to Robert's Rules of Order. Those that didn't know the rules just studied them and got used to it, and it was all very proper and democratic. We had an executive. there was a chairperson, a secretary and a treasurer.

We were in a period of time when women were getting aroused. We had some leaders, like Effie Jones, and some of the other famous people who were leading the women's movement. They were our ideals, I would say. But when I was in there doing my thing, I personally was just getting into the struggle to support men.

We all had small children. We got somebody to look after them, and went off and did our thing. The Auxiliary talked about childcare, but as far as I was concerned, I never saw one come to be. They talked about the need for it, for working women.

The Auxiliary worked with anybody that was interested in what's going on in the economy and general living experiences. They had parades and they'd get church groups. You know, It doesn't seem like things have changed very much in the economy since we were doing this kind of work.

MARGE DALSKOG W.A. IWA Post-War

ERNIE DALSKOG

Marge Dalskog:

By 1948, the ~~Auxiliaries~~ were very big, very strong and very enthusiastic. The conventions were well attended and the speakers were very good, and we were in an assertive mood. The union men came to speak at our meetings and some of us went to speak at their conventions.

When the 1948 thing happened, the ~~Auxiliaries~~ were all disbanded. They just went, disappeared! When the struggle was going on to get out of the United States the ~~Auxiliaries~~ were impotent. They couldn't do anything when it was obvious that the new union was going to be defeated, and the IWA was going to continue through the United States. The ~~Auxiliaries~~ just simply didn't meet anymore.

Ernie Dalskog:

Taft-Hartley was one part but beyond that too, we got the entire International against us, because we didn't believe that we should have to sign the declaration that the people in the United States did. Because we weren't United States, we were Canadian citizens. Of course they put the pressure on, and we couldn't go down to conventions. We had the CIO helping the International, and here in Canada, we had the dissidents, a small group who didn't go along with us, who was very vociferous, and the Canadian Congress of Labour, the provincial government. These were all the enemies to our point of view.

We had about twenty-eight thousand members in the union at that time and then the break came. We got nineteen thousand selling cards, that is, declared that they were going to go out of the IWA and go in with the new union that was going to be set up.

Now we made a mistake, there's no doubt about it. We should have fought it out inside the union, but we didn't. We knew that they were going to do all kinds of things; they were going to get injunctions, they were going to sue us. So I suppose that some got, panicked, couldn't see any

Ernie con't:

outs, and they decided, "Okay, we'll set up our own union." It would have been fine if they had been able to tell the provincial government, "Look, we've got the majority of people here. Now we want to be certified, as the representative for the men." But the government wouldn't do that. They just stuck with the dissidents, even if there was no support for it. Consequently, after about three years, the WIUC went out of existence. This was the end of the union, but it was not the end of the auxiliary movement, because ^{the} IWA did have some Auxiliaries set up in New Westminster and Mission. But they were not the same people at all.

Marge:

Women were most supportive [of the WIUC]. The women, by that time, had become very conscious of a lot of things that they hadn't never thought of before. They took a very good point of view. It may look on the face of things that the union itself did not support the leaders, but that's not true. By any experience that I had in the District Council meetings, there were, by this time, all kinds of women who were very well qualified to get up and make a good speech. They had positive opinions, they were real people, they knew where they stood. I have always had the feeling that some women would have stood behind the men right to the bitter end. If you get a lost sheep here and there, that's natural, but generally speaking, they were very supportive. And not blindly supportive.

In Vancouver it was really different. For instance, it's the element of time. Time goes by, and you don't have a meeting, ^{not} because you don't know where you stand personally, but because you don't know what's going on

Marge con't:

right now ~~do~~ what should we call a meeting for? Everything was in a state of flux, and it was just impossible to get the women out to make a meeting on something that would grab their interest. What could you do? We were in a position ~~where~~ we were hopeless, because we couldn't do anything. Now, other places, they had meetings, on Vancouver Island. And maybe they said, "Shall we stay in and shall we not stay in?" If they had that kind of meeting in Vancouver, I wasn't at it.

Ernie: There was meetings, ~~But~~, regardless of what the members said, the authorities who were always enumerating ~~in~~ the government, and the Labour Department, and the Canadian Congress, the unions, and the IWA, and the CIO and the United States government ~~do~~ they just stood pat. They had their organizers out there. ~~and~~ The organizers who came into B.C. to change people's minds came from the United States. There was a whole flock of them that came over, They were trained agents of the United States government.

Marge: Personally, I was all tied up with supporting my children. I kept on writing for the paper, until it was no use.

Women had husbands that belonged^d to the CCF and the LPP. But, they never had any direct role in what we did. Unless it was that a woman would have certain viewpoints, and she would get up and express her viewpoints. No reference was ever made to any political affiliation. I don't think it was a real problem, not in our group anyway. You see, those people who belonged to the CCF, and they^f LPP, generally speaking, they had some pretty good minds. They had a presence, they were sure of themselves, and they could speak well. They were not in any way obnoxious, so why would you care?