

Jean Scott
Peggy Kennedy

Original Filmed Manuscript

Photocopy in Black Binder.

My grandfather, ^h Major Arthur Charles Spencer Wells, came from England in 1882, and helped to form the Conservative Party in Manitoba. So that my mother was always politically conscious ^{and [so was]} my father, perhaps partly through the cruel experience of this foreclosure. I had nightmares, up until a few years ago, about walking into a store of my dad's, and if I dared turn my eyes, the minute I would look back, everything would be gone.

no context

I think both parents then, through both experience and background, joined the C.C.F., or were sympathetic to it, even before it formed. So I was listening to that all the time, and had a rebellious instinct, which I still have.

Conservative Party
 C.C.F.
 needs explanation

In Calgary, I think my mother and dad and I were the only people that voted C.C.F. in the whole Beau Valley constituency. We spoke about it openly, and went to a few public meetings that were held down there in Calgary East in the Labour Temple.

All her life, my mother was what we would have called a "staunch fellow", and her devotion ^{to} to what she believed very deeply was more humanitarian than political. She changed her Christian lab^{or} ^{er} once or twice; she was born into the Anglican Church, and as long as she ever went to Church, although she became a Presbyterian and then United through marrying my father, she would intone the Lord's Prayer, rather than say it, because she had a British background. She was so true to what she believed in and felt that I'm sure I would have felt that I was sinning against her if I hadn't been true to the things that she believed in.

JEAN SCOTT 1.1. DEPRESSION Family Background

The happiest days of my life were spent from the time that I was a small child in Brandon, Manitoba, and we moved to a little town called McCauley, Manitoba, originally named Rutherglen by the Scottish settlers. After forty-four Irish families proliferated at a very fast pace the Canadian Pacific Railway came through and renamed the place McCauley. We moved from McCauley when I was fifteen to Rokenville, Saskatchewan, which was an entirely different milieu. McCauley was an integrated community with everyone enjoying life together and Rokenville had about five strata, definite cliques. And you knew which one you belonged to. We were near the bottom. That's why Frank Scott, whose father was a partner in the biggest store and I, didn't get married 'till fifty years later. We've just been married two years, but we were sweethearts from the time I was sixteen until we were twenty.

My family's Depression began ten ^a years before anyone else's, in 1922, when my father, who bought a general store in McCauley, had the business foreclosed. My mother became ill with fibroid tumours of the uterus, which meant she wasn't really sick in the ordinary sense but she was bed-ridden, and I had to take care of her.

By the time the real Depression came on we were in desperate, terrible straits, my father had graduated downward from the store that he owned in McCauley, to a small grocery store, to a tiny grocery store, to the final move into Rockenville where he was just a clerk, for a man in Rockenville who was dreadful. Every month my dad had a fight to eke a few dollars out of him, and there were five in my family and my mother was ill. So I found life pretty rough and couldn't even complete my Grade Eleven because my mother said, "You can't go to school; Don--my brother four years younger--and Pat--six years younger--and Betty--eight years younger--have to go to School." And of course, Mother was in bed.

I had no skills, although I'm musical by nature, so I went to Winnipeg and enrolled as a student nurse in the Victoria hospital. If you were lucky your parents sent you to normal school, you became either a teacher or a nurse. As a nurse you got no pay, in the little hospital I was in, for the first three months anyway, and then you got two dollars and fifty cents a month for the first year. By the time you graduated you got twelve-fifty a month. In the general hospitals it was better than that, but I didn't have Grade Twelve and had to go to a smaller hospital.

The very day I got my cap my Dad phoned and said, "Mother is worse than ever, you have to come home," So I went home and nursed my mother, who had a recovery several months after that.

I wasn't a qualified nurse; I didn't have an R.N. I went to the doctor of the small hospital and said, "I have had some experience practical nursing with my mother and other people, as well as my little bit of training."

I'd felt like I really came up a notch because I earned twenty-five dollars a month and I had to be receptionist, cook, laundry woman and run-around girl in the operating room. I worked very, very hard.

I learned to despise the nurses because they wouldn't lift a finger to help me, and I ran my health down very badly. I knew that I had to get out of that situation and I answered an ad in the Regina Leader Post that offered ten dollars a month for just working in a house.

I took that job, in Sevelota, Saskatchewan, and it turned out that the woman who was then just over fifty, had been a complete cripple since she was twenty-three. She had had five miscarriages as a young woman and apparently arthritis had crippled her into a position where she was scissor-like. I had

JEAN SCOTT Early Work Experiences 2,2.

to clean her teeth and her nose and every bit of food and also look after her evacuation. I stayed with that job, even though I was really unhappy with it because she was bitter. I thought that by singing to her and reading to her I would make her life happier. It didn't turn out that way. She actually resented my talent, and treated me so badly that I had to leave. I went there on July the 1st and by Thanksgiving time I tried to quit, and ^{her daughter and husband} ✓ begged me to stay, even though he couldn't pay me.

In those days the Saskatchewan government gave domestics five dollars a month, and he promised me two-fifty more. I never got the two-fifty, and it wasn't because he was dishonest, it was because he never had that two dollars and a half.

That was the hardest year of my life. The hired man got seven-fifty, which is another example of the government and general populace: the fact that I worked harder than the hired man and he got more money than I did.

It was because of the local MLA, whose nickname was "Beef," he looked like a hunk of beef, actually it was Mr. Dundas and he was a very vulgar, illiterate man. You were supposed to have this hired girl if you owned enough land to call it a farm, she was farm help. He got his wife a domestic. I remember one little controversy where the mechanic in his garage said, "My wife's having another baby and I want a hired girl," and he said, "You can't have it!"

The mechanic said, "I want to have the paper to say I have a hired girl by five o'clock tonight or you'll know why because I'll complain to the government about all this fraud." Other people with a little pull around town were also getting a girl on the basis that they were supposed to be farming. ✓ ^{The mechanic} got the hired girl! It was really on the basis of relief. I'm talking about 1935, '36, '37. There was no organization of domestics, whatsoever.

JEAN SCOTT Early Working Experiences Domestic 3.3.

Believe me, I was so, so deeply hurt by the way I was treated as a domestic, because I never felt that I was any less a human being--this was harder for me than the actual work I did, was to be treated the way I was treated.

I finally left my husband after trying to live with him five times at different intervals. One of the threats he always held over me was, "I've got a job, and you've got nothing."

Jean Scott Early Work Experiences 4.4. DOMESTIC WORK

My first job as a domestic was for a woman in Valcara, Saskatchewan, who was the meanest woman I've ever worked for. She was the Anglican minister's wife, and she wanted me to feel subservient, and finally I did something I never thought I'd have the nerve to do. I was making only seven and a half dollars a month to houseclean. That means washing down all the walls and floors, and doing all the meals and everything else. She treated me like a real slavey, and I walked away from that job. With nowhere to go and nothing, even without getting paid, because I couldn't bear to have my psyche so damaged.

You could say it was a kick in the stomach that started me on my domestic career in this little Saskatchewan town. The next morning I left my husband with clothes enough to keep warm, that is, I had a skirt. It had come to the family in Rokenville from relatives in Moosejaw where my uncle was a C.N.R. baggageman, considered by us to be rich. That skirt, in my present mind's eye, still looks neat and ^{even} nifty. Fitted close to my narrow thighs, it was a soft, beige, knitted fabric with two shirt inverted pleats in front, causing motion and eye appeal. My one sweater was really attractive since it was unique in style. The wool colour was described on the label as Spanish Tile, rather elegant, deep maroon.

My galoshes, wool underwear, brown boucle winter coat with dyed rabbit fur trim, small brown felt hat, were a carryover from the husband days, when for the first and only time in my life, I'd gone out on the urging of friends and charged these items to a store in his name. Considering I had no money and a Prairie winter temperature, it was necessary.

How I got a job? I can't remember who told me about the Rever^e and Mrs. So-and-So. Faced with being a hired girl or not eating, I let it ^{be} known that I was available. Right away I got two offers. I was well-known in that little town as a soprano soloist at both the United Church and in public concert. The

Jean Scott Early Work Experiences DOMESTIC 5.5,

school inspector's wife sang alto to my soprano, so we were on a friendly basis. She and her husband were to go to Ontario for a holiday in May, and in their family, two teenagers were still at home. When I told her I had two offers, she deferred to the Anglican minister's wife, 'cause they didn't need me just yet.

So I went to the Anglican house, and in retrospect it's interesting to note how Mrs. Anglican Minister treated me, knowing that I had some other work to go to. My God, what would it have been like if I had nowhere to go! Maid of all work was no loose job classification in those days. It was a locked-in condition, because a hired-girl was expected to do every and any kind of work pertaining to feeding and cleaning humans, house and livestock. If you carried water it was natural, and necessary, to carry it out, from the bedroom, the bathroom, the kitchen or any other spot where living and working conditions occurred.

1 PAR. { Furthermore, the hired girl slept there. She was the employer's prisoner--no chance to sleep in, and no government-run scheme for supplemental income if let out.

So Mrs. Anglican Minister explained that she actually wanted the housecleaning done in addition to other work. Her morning tea would be brought to her bed by the Reverend, who put their tiny terrier pup in bed with her. The hired girl would be up, of course, keeping the kitchen stove properly drafted to produce boiled eggs, toast, and more tea...as well as a stove reservoir, and a tin boiler, capacity at least seven pails of water, full of hot water. Dishes, people, walls, floors and clothing requires that amount of water, and more.

Kitchens are cozy, friendly areas in one's home, but to the hired girl every new kitchen is like finding that you've met someone you daren't trust. Instinct won't help, knowledge of dozens of other kitchens are of no real help. If the woman who'se hired you is reasonably kind, that makes a difference. But Mrs. Anglican Minister was not kind, nor did she ever try to be. Dishes were washed in the shallow enamelled washbasin, and when potatoes, carrots, etcetera were prepared, the washbasin served, as it did when I went upstairs to wash walls. Mrs. Anglican Minister used her funds for the tea table, not for the unseeable kitchen.

Hired on a monthly basis, unexpectedly, the reverend got word that they were to be transferred. Washing ceilings, walls, woodwork and floors, getting meals and cleaning up, is so dreary, that anything else seems preferable. I asked Mrs. Anglican Minister, "Need I stay?" Years after, I still wonder why that woman kept me on, because she knew they were transferring. From that time on she treated me with more obvious contempt than previously; when someone called I was expected to stop cleaning, make tea and serve her and her guests as though I were horribly low-cast, though Mrs. Anglican Minister was aware that I enjoyed a community reputation as a singer.

One morning I'd been called downstairs to get dinner ready, and was peeling potatoes at the washbasin, when I answered a knock at the back door. Mrs. Anglican Minister sat in the dining room and could have answered the door. I suspect she rather liked to have callers presented to her. This caller was a nice-looking young man, a salesman. We began a conversation, which lasted only a couple of minutes, when Mrs. Anglican Minister called out, ordering me to stop talking and usher in the young man, whom she hadn't seen, in to see her, in the parlour. Embarrassed, but aware of her rights, I asked the

fellow to follow me. In his presence the grande dame angrily and with pomposity, said I should get on with the dinner and the walls, floor and woodwork-washing, topping it off by shutting the door with force between me in the kitchen and she and the young man in the living room! Embarrassed, yes! Enraged, damn well!

Some few tears fell on the potatoe peelings, and they catalyzed and crystallized my benumbed psyche. The salesman had left by the front door. I knew a middle-aged couple who had a spare bed and were kindly. The potatoes still lay in the washbasin, only partly ready for the pot. I'd not had one dollar of pay. Perhaps Mrs. Anglican Minister thought I'd put the potatoes on to boil, because it wasn't until I'd put what I owned into my only carryall, that old flannelette sheet, and walked out the front gate, that she realized I wasn't there.

With her plain, mean face pulled back as though the her bun of hair was stretching the skin over her bones, she ^{roared} hove^d open the front door, yelling at me: "Mrs. M., I expect those potatoes to be ready for dinner!" Courage, or some dormant instinct for survival, not of the body, but of the spirit, made me find my voice, not easily. I called back, wanting more to cry than speak, "In that case, Mrs. Anglican Minister, you'll have to do them yourself." I didn't see her again. The Reverend^e looked me up and paid me for the exact number of days I'd been hired, as a hired girl.

Housework was heavy work, and there were no amenities. I could pump pails of water and carry two pails of water, and if I wanted, sling one pail around without a drop spilling, in a complete circle. In the winter of '35, '36, when times were very hard, we had no pork fat for pies, and I made pastry out of beef fat, and you should try that when it's cold. The yeast was the

hard, cake yeast, and you started it the night before and hung the old honey pail on a little stick so that it was in the reservoir where the water kept the yeast from freezing during the night. (???) My ~~(original reads: where the water kept the yeast...the yeast froze during the night)~~ friend married a Frenchman over by Lazare, and the old French lady knew how to keep one ^e piece of yeast dough from the first baking that she had and rolled it in all the old winter coats and unused quilts inside the trunk upstairs, where it kept warm. Like sourdough starter.

You emptied all slops. When I bring lettuce from the garden now and can wash it under a tap and people talk about, "Isn't it great to have a dishwasher," I think, "My gosh, isn't it wonderful ^{just} to have water come out of a tap!" When you have to walk for a block or two and pumped it and then had to use it sparingly because you have to wash things two or three times...I will never accept all these amenities of life.

And you try to make butter; on a hot prairie ^{summer} day, where you have to wash the little bits of fat that coagulate to make the butter, and it just won't, in quotes, "come", it's heartbreaking. You just have no idea! The heat can be so oppressive, and the bugs, outside. And cleaning lampshades... My mother told me in the summer of 'nineteen-thirty-four, that she's got all of a dollar eighty-nine in cash, to send to Eaton's for a pair of what was called, Balabriggen underpants and a cotton vest. That's all the cash she had. It was ~~a~~ ^a major tragedy to get a hole in your silk stockings, there was no nylon then, because you didn't know when you could replace them.

In the situation I went to after the five dollar a month farm, I was replacing the ~~a~~ lady of the house, who had high blood pressure and the doctor had said, "Don't work anymore." So always, I ^worked where the whole load was on me.

JEAN SCOTTE Early Working Experiences DOMESTICS 9.9.

I had gone back to this man I was married to in 1932, trying to make the marriage work, mostly because of my Christian upbringing I thought I had to do this. We worked in Glenborough, where he was the baker and I was to be a ~~help~~ in the kitchen and bedroom and serve in the restaurant that adjoined the bakery. I didn't get anything, he got twenty-five dollars a month, and the conditions under which we worked were really terrible.

I'd try to have a rest in the afternoon.

The heat was so intense in this tin-covered building that to go upstairs and just put your hand on the bedstead, which is metal, would burn you.

The men there, the owner and his son, and the man I was married to, all required white clothing because they were working in a restaurant and bakery.

I used to iron seventeen shirts, and that meant keeping a fire going in a hot prairie kitchen. That's the year that the grasshoppers were so bad the only jobs any of the men had in town, and they all wanted jobs, was to spread sawdust that was impregnated with poison to kill the grasshoppers. Speaking

of grasshoppers, in the spring of 1937, I saw fields planted where not a blade of grass came up. That year there was Memorial Day; it was in August. They always had a march to the cemetery and placed flowers on the grave in remembrance of men who died in the First World War. I had to sing In Flanders Fields, and I got up to sing and the dress that I had had a strip of organdy around the hem, probably to lengthen it--you either lengthened or shortened according to styles, that's all you could do--I felt something biting my leg just above the knee. There was a grasshopper, at least four inches long, the one biggest one I think I've ever seen. The pianist had already begun the introduction; I didn't want the audience to notice; so I very slowly reached down and very, very unnoticeably grabbed clutched this part until he cracked and then let him drop on the platform. (Laughs.)

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JEAN SCOTT Business College 1.1. Wartime

I had to get out of being a domestic, I just couldn't take it any longer. I worked my way out of housework by first going to night school. The reason that I got out of night school and was able to work half a day at housework and half a day at school was that the war happened and my brother became a pilot and was generous in sending my parents a very nice allowance. My mother loaned me fifteen dollars a month to go to the Garbit Business College in Calgary. I kept going back to school until I got secretarial status.

JEAN SCOTT WARTIME RCAF Experience 1.1.

When I had just acquired enough typing speed to be able to type with two hands, I did get a job in Headquarters Orderly Room, up on Tenth Street hill in Calgary, which was the number two wireless and air gunnery school. I was a civil employee, I didn't belong to the women's division of the R.C.A.F. And men ran the show then; there were very few women who were in any official capacity. They were the exception, rather than the rule. We had nothing to say about our salaries, of course. I was in a room of probably half a dozen women with thirty men. We had to start work at eight-thirty in the morning because it was wartime; we had nothing to say about that either. One thing, we did get three weeks vacation, which was way ahead of anything else at that time.

I was doing part clerical and part stenography, so that as soon as the first message came in to discontinue classes I knew the war was going to be over in a few days. I quit immediately, so that I could go to secretarial school and better my earning ability.

The terrible thing about working there was that every six months we graduated two hundred young men, and the mortality rate for wireless air gunners was eighty-five per cent. I used to see them standing there graduating with the flag going up and the air force tune and realize that eighty-five per cent (would) be dead in a few months.

They were the volunteers. It was the French Canadians who were sent out there as what we called, General Duties. That caused terrible trouble on the campus, because all the others were in the thing for a matter of life and death and they were just clean-up men; they didn't have to join.

It was a Commonwealth air training plant. There was a riot there while I was there.

The Australians and New Zealanders were rebels, they even burned the efficiency pennant, and the flag, and took the man who was in charge of the station

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that night down to the ring and pummeled him. They went down to the guardhouse and freed all the prisoners and tore out all the toilets and commandeered trucks and drove wildly through the streets of Calgary. There wasn't a thing in the papers about it. They were protesting the conditions. The commander of the station was British Army, ~~and he thought he could treat these fellows like you used to treat people in the British Army.~~ For instance, he'd have a man who had committed the minor misdemeanor do pack drill with forty pounds on his back, up and down in front of the school for several hours. And they rioted. When they give a dictum that the Australians were not to wear the Australian felt hat--with one side turned up, a very gay looking thing--they all appeared the very next day wearing their own Australian hats.

The day after the riot, Air Vice-Marshal Housen was at the gate with army trucks. He said, "I hear there's been a bit of trouble here. At that gate and that gate are army trucks, Anyone who is dissatisfied with the Air Force will please just step out and go into the Army." Nobody moved. The two people, an Australian and a Canadian, who incited the riot, were charged with mutiny, which was punishable by death. They were given jail terms.

The RCAF was bloody glad that women would do anything, and women were getting pay that was unheard of. I quit right away because I was part of the rumblings that were going on about, "Now what are we all gonna do for jobs?" So I didn't even wait for the school to disband. I enrolled in Mrs. Hoagan's Secretarial School, and upped my status considerably, in both earnings and prestige.

I had to raise a child without many so-called daycare, although my mother came to my rescue when my son was about seven and said, "Come out to Vancouver, there are jobs and I'll keep an eye on your child while he goes to school." I had to work in Vancouver and live in Burnaby; we could afford to live in Burnaby easier than Vancouver.

I was aware all the time of the extra burden that women had, not just in the welfare of their children under a mother's care, but also in the difference it meant to children in their daily life with their peers, their schoolmates and their other friends, when there was a mother at home, or someone caring for them. I saw, and still see, adequate daycare as a meaning the difference between a liberated woman and one ^{who} is tied down, because believe me, even if you don't keep them clean and fed all the time, there are still so many things to do for a child, and they need that.

I argued strenuously and vociferously for that in the B.C. Federation of Labour. I must say that I got a better response than I expected. The reason that I was pleased to get that response was that I noticed ¹⁰ men were glad to hear about it, they had never thought about it. After I spoke I was asked by a number of delegates to tell them more about it. They just hadn't even contemplated what it would mean for women to be able to have careful and educated supervision for their children, outside the home. That must have been in 1966. That was just when it was beginning.

JEAN SCOTT Women's Rights Post-War 1.1.

needs an intro i.e. what is Retail Wholesale
Retail Wholesale got very good contracts, except that I used to get sick and tired of sitting in the Vancouver Labour Council Committee and hearing over and over again, "We got ten cents for the men and a nickel for the women."

That was the usual, not the unusual. There were areas where men and women did equal work. If it came up at all, and it did come up, the old argument was, "But if they won't pack bacon..." He has to push that ~~tray~~ away [?] because the Factory Act says that she can't lift more than fifty-five ^{* thirty-five} pounds. Even though you carted a baby around, and moved the washing, a load of heavy, wet clothes, at home.

In 1951 I was one of the speakers at the Town Meeting ^{of the Air} in Canada: "Should Married Women Work?" Of course I was married, but divorced and had a child. There I was having to argue that ^{all} it was ~~a~~ right to work. The other lady on the program was a very fine person who was a prominent in the Roman Catholic congregation of Vancouver and her argument was that it was better for the family and the community, for a mother to stay home. Of course, you didn't get divorced and you took whatever your husband would give you.

It was a position that the B.C. Federation gave token interest in, that's what it amounts to, token only. I spoke on the right of women to earn as much as a male.

JEAN SCOTT Women's Rights Con't.

I was really hurt when my boss and the secretary of Labour Council said to me after a meeting where my wages were voted upon as well as his, "They upped you another thirty dollars after Huey Allison made an emotional speech." I said, "Did you resist that?" "Well, we had already agreed to give you twenty." He was annoyed that I had been granted a higher rate of pay. He got a fifty-dollar raise at that same meeting. And he's a remarkable man; he's now the labour attaché in London England, and he worked with the then-unknown Tomemboya; his people came over on the good ship Hector in the 1600s to Canada and he's a real good socialist. Even his attitude at that time was women shouldn't be claiming the same rates of pay, or equity in every area.

I think it was very difficult for a woman to get elected to a position, even in the trade union movement. If she did, she was almost a freak, it was so unusual. Why? Well, simply because she was a woman, and it was just considered that we were in a world of patriarchy, and that we were upstarts if we tried to change the status quo. Women who tried faded into oblivion, mostly. Or, like myself, are too old to get into anything now.

Joséphine Hallock was resented because she would vote against. I remember one time, and this is a little less than fifteen years ago in Vancouver, on the Labour Council, it required unanimous vote for something. And Jo held out, and she was the only person who did. The men resented bitterly, and yet she was one of the most honest people I have ever known, and really believed she was doing right.

Eileen Sufrin carried on, not an overt, but a running battle, that people knew about, in the Steelworkers Union. Bill Mahoney and Larry Sefton, two very powerful people in the United Steelworkers, wrote to David J. McDonald,

JEAN SCOTT Women's Rights Con't

asking that he consider giving her equal pay with the other representatives, because she was doing representative's work, bargaining with John Englis and other big firms, and signing good contracts and organizing, and had done a good job that nobody else could be trusted to do, that is to try to organize Eaton's. David J. McDonald refused to give her equal pay and she resigned.

There were very few male office people who worked for the unions. The reason was that men didn't want to belittle themselves and become mere office people. If I sound cynical, it's quite natural and quite reasonable that I am, because that's the way that we were treated...we were to keep our place. I was an upstart, and it's a wonder that I had any male friends, but Joe Morris knew that if he yelled at me I just yelled back, and we had an understanding.

When it came to appointing people to top jobs, they were always men. This is what burnt me up. And when the Canadian Labour Congress presented its brief to the Royal Commission on the Status of Women, and I was a committee person here, who do you think gave it? Donald McDonald! A man gave the brief on the status of women. I was sick!

When I went the other day to the arthritis clinic, and the lady said, "Are you Miss or Mrs.?" I said, "Would you please put Ms.?" I got the same response as I always get. (Laughs.) A little giggle. I just stand on my dignity--sometimes I make a little speech--but most of the time I just insist that I want that category, not for myself, but for all the women.

My consciousness of women's rights has moderated since the 1940s--mind you, I still flare up too fast, I have often wished that I could be cool, but I can't

JEAN SCOTT Women's Rights Con't.

where there's injustice against human beings! Human beings who I know!
I have to say this with great feeling: women do have an ability, whether
it's God-given or what else, for greater sensitivity, for greater perception
to other people's needs and feelings. I will die a rabid feminist,
because I just can't be any different.

JEAN SCOTT OTEU History 1.1.

The only places organized in 1947 were the B.C. Co-Op Wholesale; the credit union movement hadn't even got on its feet yet. The offices we had in the OFWOC's were just trade union offices, and believe me, it wasn't very pleasant negotiating with some trade union people.

It was just as difficult organizing in trade union offices. It was grudgingly acknowledged that their employees, the women, had a right to be organized.

As a matter of fact, here I am, over sixty-five; I left the IWA after having quite a varied experience in the trade unions, twenty-five years, and I have no pension. But I sat in the Regional Executive Board many times, taking notes and hearing them argue over how their pensions would be.

Only once did I hear ^{it was} Kelly of New Westminster--say, "Don't you think that we should talk a little about the female employees of this union?" And nothing more was said, and they never got a pension.

They would say, "This is no gravy train; do you think you're gonna get the same wages as the guy on the green chain?" Well, the green chain was the lowest one in the union contract, and here were most of us, with many years of experience and skills and expected to do every kind of office work there was, and to be treated by this, "You think you're gonna get as much as the guy on the green chain."

Eileen (Sufrin) was responsible (for beginning organizing) by saying, in her own inimitable manner, "You know fellas, you've got to set a good example." She could embarrass people into going along with that. I started through the Steelworkers, because the Steelworkers, being established, had enough prestige and money behind them that they could give their employees not only a good wage but fringe benefits. From the beginning they had a pension plan, which they paid for entirely.