

NAME	pg.	PLACE	pg.	DATE	pg.
Early Period.					
Family Life	7	Hardwick, Vermont	1		
	7*	Montreal	1		
	7*	Canada	1		
Early work	7	Bennington	1	1913	1
	7	Vermont	1	1914	1
	7*	Chicago	2		
DEPRESSION					
Domestic Life/Relief	9*	The Tribune	1		
	10*	Depression	1		
	7	Chicago	1		
	7	Canada	1		
	7	Chicago	1		
	7	Lethbridge	1		
	7	Alberta	1		
WWII					
Starting to work					
Fishing	6	Canadian Fish Co.	1		
	6	Imperial Canneries (?)	1		
	6	Canadian Fish Co.	1		
Conditions	6	B.C. Packers	3		
Organizer	0	Homer Stevens	1		
	0	Alec Gordon	1		
	0	Leo Ashton	2		
	11	Ukrainian	3		
	0	Homer (Stevens)	1		
Labour Relations	6	B.C. Packers	1		
	7	Tommy Parkin	1		
POST WWII					
Paid Organizer	1	UFAWU <small>United Fishermen's Allied Workers Union</small>	1		
	0	Tom Parkin	1		
	0	Alec Gordon	1		
	0	Homer Stevens	1		
	1	UFAWU	2		
	11	Chinese	2		

	NAME	pg.	PLACE	pg.	DATE	pg.
Post WWII						
Paud Organizer con	*Ken Fraser	3		8	1968	3
	Mrs. Kewan	4		8	1968	4
Religion	*Mennonites	1				
	*Jehovah witnesses	1				
	*Hindus	1				
	*Mennonites	1				
Race + L.F.	*BC Packers	1				
	*Indians (native)	1				
	*Chinese	1				
	*BC Packers	1				
	*Japanese (Nobles)	1				
	*Japanese (pro-union)	1				
Union structure	*Alice Gordon	1				
	*Thomas Stevens	1				
	*Al Parkins	1				
			*Nanaimo	2		
			*Prince Rupert	2		
			*Vancouver	2		
*+Unionism	*Frieda Erickson sp?	2				
	*Mrs. Trewell	2				
	*Berly Paulson	2				
	*Mrs. Udi	2				
	*Ellen Zeske	2				
	*Jesse Martin	2				
W.A. UFAWU	* ^{UFAWU} Ladies Auxiliary	1	*Steveston	1		
Native Bro.	*Native Brotherhood	1				
	*Indian	1				
	*Mrs. Essie	1				
	*Catholic Church	1				
	*UFAWU	1				
Credit Union			*Steveston	1		

Notes Eva Vaselenak

EARLY PERIOD Early work pg. 1. note the direct action methods re: industrial relations - mgs. used too vs stewards - was there wobbly influence?

DEPRESSION Domestic Life / Relief pg. 1. note her husband was a carpenter at Tribune,
pg. 1. advice on Alberta welfare system could be of help!

WWII starting to work

pg. 1. note sale of Japanese property / impact issues.

pg. 1. maybe note medical system in 1940s

pg. 1. need to get canneries correct

Conditions in Industry

pg. 1. note Indust. disease info + was rel thereto

pg. 3. decide in final copy on rel. to other text - should this be extracted or moved?

pg. 3. note BC Packers child care!

pg. 3. was there tree cookies previous to this

Organizer

pg. 1. check sp. Alec (?) Gordon; Homer Stevens;

pg. 2. Lee Ashton sp. + role

pg. 2. who was "the one that was kicked out of the union"

pg. 3. these events need context or removal!

Postwar paid Organizer

pg. 1. Is story of vote (pg. 3 organizer) about election to paid position? If so "move it"!

pg. 1. who are Parkin; Gordon (roles) check sp.

pg. 2 explain CPC link w/ UFAWU

Race + UFAWU

pg. 1 Explain history Japanese ♀

1) BSTWII Union Structures

pg. 2. Note on history of Fishermen

Womenen + Unionism

pg. 2. names of ♀ - who, when etc.

Womens Auxiliary

pg. 2. connect to W.A. movement

Native Brotherhood

pg. 1 connect to UFAWU history

Eva Vaselenak Early Period Family Life.

I was born in Hardwick, Vermont.

My parents were born in Canada around Montreal and went to Vermont from Canada. My dad was a ^gwhite cutter, he had his own shed.

I had a job working in a stocking factory. And in those days, they didn't have a union either. You know how you used to negotiate? They'd lock the manager inside the plant and get him in a corner and negotiate with him to get higher wages. That was in 1913, 1914. I worked there until they sent me to Bennington, Vermont.

I worked there for awhile. They paid my way out there and they paid my room and board until I was able to make enough money to pay for my room and board. I stayed there for about two or three years. Then I went into making garments for men. They didn't have no union there either. We wanted bigger wages. We locked the guy up and he wouldn't do it. So the next day we went back in and we locked him in there, still getting after him for higher wages. She says, "I'll talk it over. I'll be back tomorrow. We'll see what we can do."

The next day he didn't come back. We waited for him--we didn't work all that day. He wanted to know why. So then we locked him up in the corner too. Finally they came over and gave us a ten cents increase in our wages. I was about sixteen then.

I had to go and work for my uncle then. ^{My aunt} She was blind and he had t.b, from the mines, from stone-cutting. I worked for them for a long time.

Eva Vaselenak The Early Period continued Early Work 2.

Then I went back to Chicago again and worked in a garment factory there.

That's how I got married. I was married at twenty-five years [old]. Meanwhile

I had travelled and worked, did everything. There was sixteen in

our family, sixteen children! That's why I had to quit school. They

couldn't afford to keep the sixteen children and feed them.

Eva Vaselenak Depression DOMESTIC LIFE AND RELIEF 1.

The Depression started when we were in Chicago. ^{FIRST} My husband worked at the Tribune, in Chicago. My husband's folks wrote to him and told him to come out here, that they would set him up in business. Then when we got out here, they didn't set him up in business, so we had to struggle for ourselves then, after we came to Canada. I had two children in Chicago, the rest of them were born during the Depression.

He had a sister that had a store and she was selling ladies' goods and she gave him a bunch of dresses and told him to go out and sell them and make a bit of money, So he went out and he just about went broke. Then he said, "To heck with it!" We stood around and waited to see what we could do with what little money we had--we spent our last cent before we went down and asked for relief. It was humiliating. It was terrible! There was a place there where you could go, they'd give you clothes for your kids and everything. I wouldn't ask for it. I'd go to the nursing mission, get some old clothes and I'd wash them, fix them all up for my kids.

I used to do all that sewing--I did good sewing. They were expensive clothes. My brother-in-law was a lawyer, we brought him to the house and we told him about [our financial situation]. He says, "You get down to relief tomorrow--you'll get something." We got it through my brother-in-law. That was in Lethbridge, Alberta. You had people going and investigating your house to see what you had and you didn't have. ^{FIRST}

My husband worked for the unemployed organization. He went into one of the houses where the relief worker said that this guy had so much clothes he didn't need any relief. My husband, he went in there. The guy didn't have a goddamn thing. I was so busy with the kids and with sewing, I didn't have a minute to myself there--when you sew for

a bunch of kids like that to keep them going. They were after me to join the organization but I couldn't join. I always tell my kids, "I didn't get my education out of a book, I got it from experience!"

[The Women's Labor League]

Starting to Work: Fishing Industry

Eva Vaselenak WWII 1.

in 1943.

We moved to Steveston. It was hard to get a place to live. We got a Japanese house to live in. ^{FISH} My husband was here before me so he found this place.

I had a little girl that was sick. In order to give her what we could, I got a job at the cannery. I'd work during the day and then I'd go and see her at night.

I got the job through my neighbour. She knew I was having trouble trying to get to the hospital. I didn't have money to go to see my little girl.

It was very hard to find a job, you couldn't get a job. It was hard for my husband also, and he was a carpenter. Finally, my daughter came home. I kept her at home for a while. On her ninth birthday, she passed away.

I worked at the Canadian Fish ^{Company} -- that was when I first started to work in 1943. In 1944 I went back to ~~Imperial Fish~~ and worked there for four or five months. They were closing down. Then I went to Canadian Fish doing some herring and on the line these people were being paid by piecework. I went in there to work, but you couldn't get no fish to work with, so I just quit and went back to ~~Imperial~~ the next day. The competition was so heavy because of piecework.

Please amalgamate
Paris.

B.C.
Packers?

(At first.)

Seeing how I needed work so bad, I didn't even stop to think about the conditions. I was washing fish and nobody bothered me. I knew the lady pretty well, that got me the job in there. I was a green-horn about washing fish. They used to take you from the washing line onto packing fish in the cans.

It was very, very cold. You had cracks in the floor. In the wintertime, you had to stand in buckets in order to keep warm. Your hands would go real cold until they would just have a ~~spring~~ to them. You ~~worked~~ like that. I got arthritis from it. The doctor called it an occupational disease.

The girls work all day on filleting. You got a great, big fish in front of you. You got a knife, You gotta take that knife and just go right down that bone and you get a nice big fillet. You do that all day long with dull knives. We had to fight to get sharp knives to do that job. ~~You'll see~~ that everybody that's worked in the cannery had ^{an} their arm that's gone. They can hardly move it. For about two years I could hardly comb my hair, because my arm was too far gone. Then you take a leave of absence for that. They just used to give you time off for that--you'd go to the doctor's and see what you could do.

We should have had a sanitarium of some kind in case people got crippled, so they would have a place to go to--those that didn't have homes or somebody to help them out. I never could get it through the union. ^{First}

The people work hard in really ice water and you come home and you're really cold. You can't warm up or anything--the cold is right through you. Three pairs of pants, three pairs of stockings and then you got two ^{or} three sweaters

WWII

Eva Vaselenak Conditions in Industry-fishing Industry 2.

on top of you and you're bound to come out with arthritis. We fought to have heat put in the places, so they have heaters in the corners that come down on you.

The canneries were out over the water. You'd have great big doors that opened when they bring the fish in. The jeeps were coming in all the time, back and forth and waves from the water just comes in and hits you. In the wintertime we used to get them to put plastic sheets down to keep the wind from hitting us.

Sometimes you'd go and sit around for a whole day, before the boat would come in. When the boat wouldn't come in, they'd make you sit around there with no pay, all day long. If you made sixty-five dollars a week you were lucky. This was all hourly work. The packers, that put the fish in the cans, they were on piecework. I didn't do any of that, just once in awhile if they were short. I was lucky to make enough to live on there.

The men would take the fish and put them on the table. It would come ^{off} the boat on an elevator and run down into great, big bins. They used to feed the fish from the bin over to the iron chinks and then it used to come on the line to the girls. They used to have great, big bins at the back of us. After we washed the fish, it would go back into those bins. Then the men used to take them up to the hand fillers. Men used to work on retorches where you used to put the fish where it would cook, "retored!" The women would wash the fish and then they'd pack it in the cans. The wages weren't too far apart. The women who were working on piecework made twice as much as the men.

They had a charge hand. She used to come around all the time, to watch

WW II

Eva Vaselanak Conditions in Industr-- Fishing Post-war 3.

to see how the girls were doing their work and place the girls where they ^{were} needed. They were all the same pay though. Women were both single and married, they were around in their twenties. The school kids used to come and work--they'd be about ^{FIVE.} eighteen, nineteen. Everybody that was working had children.

They just left their kids at home and went to work, unless they had a mother to look after them. But, at B.C. Packers they had a place where they used to look after the children. The people used to come from way up Alert Bay and they had the bunk houses. They used to bring their children with them. They used to have somebody looking after them there. The company paid for that. ^{FIVE.}

I continued to work because we needed the money. My husband wasn't working steady either. He was a carpenter, but he used to have to go out of town. That meant he'd be gone for a month or two and there wasn't enough money to live on. The community never said too much about it around there. There was a woman also across the street who was doing the same thing. Her husband was a carpenter.

We had a fifteen minute coffee break--we could go and have a cup of coffee and have something to eat but you had to be back on work. About the last year that I was there, they got these machines in ^(H) here where you had to pay for your coffee and sandwiches if you wanted them. The ^(H) company took the ^(H) cookies away from the girls because the girls used to cart them home.

I was workin' in the cannery. I was their charge hand for about six months until the people got after me and wanted me to start the union going. I was trying to get them to go ahead and do it 'cause they had more education than I had. No! You couldn't get them going. Every morning I'd come in, "Eva, what are we going to do to-day. You gonna have the union in to-day?" I says, "It all depends. What's the ^a matter with you?" "We can't do it!" "Why?" They said, "I got too much to do." I says, "I got children to look after too."

Finally, I started. I talked to the girls and told them that if they ever wanted to start a union they'd have to do what I'd tell them to do. They says, "Fine." I says, "Well, I'll call up the business agent and see if he'll come down and organize us." I got all the girls together.

After the work was all done we went and got on the fishermen's wharf and organized. Homer Stevens and Alex Gordon came down. We elected our shop stewards. The next day we came in with our buttons on and the forelady says to the foreman, "Look, those girls went to the union last night." And he says, "And what are you going to do about it?"

I used to holler about the conditions that were in there. I used to holler about the way they used to have fish and then the forelady's come round and holler at them the way she did instead of talking ^{human} to them. I wouldn't take it. You used to have to keep up a certain pace in washing fish. She used to be behind you. If you can't do that she'll go and put you off someplace else, if you can't do that she'd put you someplace else and then out you go. She wouldn't keep you.

We had a meeting in the lunch room and this girl spoke up and I got up

and she says, "I've got a beef. What can you do when they start pushing you around?" After that the forelady got after her and asked her why she brought that up. She says, "Who'se been kicking you around?" She (the woman) says, "You." the forelady says, "Why?" She says, "You said that I took and cheated on my boxes for my punches." The forelady said, "Somebody--I think it was you--put and extra fish on that board for me to get an extra punch." The woman said, "I didn't do it." Finally we went to management about it. I had the shop stewards all up there trying to discuss this. Les Ashton says to me, "Eva, this isn't the first time^{FINI} this has happened." I says, "It is this time." This is unjust."

He asked each one of them what they thought about it. The one that was kicked out of the union, she stuck^{FINI} with the company with that. She says, "If people are going to cheat like that, I'm not staying here to talk about it." He says, "Okay, everyone can go, except you Eva. You're going to stay here until you see things my way." We were getting paid by the hour, so I lost about three or four hours pay that day." It wasn't resolved. She was kicked out^{of her job} and couldn't do anything about it.

I started in 1944 to get the union in there and I got it in there by '46. It was in pretty tight. The union went to see my husband about me organizing and that they'd give me a job. It was okay with him. he thought it would be a good experience for me.

When I started with the union we had^{to have} a big regular meeting to elect our shop stewards and also our executive board. We happened to get people from each one of these plants. You tried to get somebody on the board there and you just couldn't do it. We were trying to get a committee to draw up our by-laws. Finally, there was a little fellow that was in there,

EVA VASELENAK ORGANIZER UFAWU WWII 3.

and he says to me, "Are you going to vote for yourself?" If you don't we're out." I says, "I'm not going to vote for myself. I'll vote for you." He says, "Okay, you vote for me and then we'll see what we can do." He went and voted for me and I got in so I couldn't get out of it. I was on the executive board. ^{FINOT}

Steveston was mixed up about the organizing. Some of them figured that you're doing the wrong thing by having the union here. ~~You had~~ a lot of Ukarianian people as well. They're quite labour people--they used to push the union. Quite a few of the fishermen right in Steveston, they wouldn't ^{even} listen--they wouldn't eventhink of a union. FINally they kept having meetings--fianlly we got all the boys in. Even Homer says to me, "You've certainly started something. Those guys are going to the meetings all the time. You'll get a full hall, just like that." I says, "Because I go to the meetings. I go up along the wharf and I tell the boys that there's a meeting and that they should be down at the meetings." I'd pull them out to the meetings.

The union was mostly talked about at work. The shoreworkers--I think what started it would be the fishermen's wives where the fishermen was in the union. If their husband was in a union, they wanted also a union in the plant, right?

I was in there just at the end of the labour shortage. In the past they had tried to get a union in there. They just wouldn't do it. They went to managment to ask for a higher rate of pay and they got it. Then they didn't bother any more about the union. That's when they got after me to get a union in htere. Then people went for the union on account of wages. They couldn't make ends meet. with the low wages they were getting.

WW II

Eva Vaselenak Labour Relations in the Fishing Industry 1/

You'd go meet with the company once an month . We'd be about ten shop stewards that would meet. We would present grievances. We had papers. The next time, they'd have it on paper so tht we could hang it up in the gannery and show the membership what we had gone through.

Management didn't have no use for me. They did everything they could-- even the foremen and charge hands used to do things to me and watch me. I used to have to watch every little step I made. I didn't dare talk to my neighbour next door too much while we were working. If I did, right away they'd figure I was talking union and that was it.

They tried to get rid of me--they couldn't. They tried to say I wasn't doing my work. Then Tommy Parkins came in and tried to back them up on it. There was a guy that came in to try to teach these girls how to fillet soles. The first thing he did, he came to me to see how I was filleting soles and he says, "You're okay. You're doing a wonderful job, keep it up." They were trying to say that I wasn't doing my job. The union made Ken Fraser back up on that. He's the head of canneries.

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When the organizing drive begins (where you're working) you have to watch yourself on the job. They were very strict at B.C. Packers. They watched every move so they could fire you in case you did anything. All you had to do was say something on the job and you was off. I had to jump from the cannery to the fresh fish to organize the people. They were watching every move

I made. I used to sneak around and outside and then go in and through the other part of the cannery and organize a person when I knew that he wanted to sign up.

EVA VASELENAK PAID ORGANIZER UFAWU Post-War 1.

I was elected through the fishermen's union (UFAWU) to be the organizer. The people on the shop floor all respected me very highly. When I went for a paid organizer, the business agent went to speak to the company and told them that that I was going to work for the union. I was going to be a chief shop steward and I'd have to go to the plant and sign up the people. The company says, "We'd like to have you take a leave of absence . The business agent says, "How long?" The company says, "It all depends on how long she'll be on the job." So fine and dandy. I was on that for about four or five years, when they forgot to put my name in as a leave of absence, I lost ten years seniority there. So I

*Move to end pg. 3 ** (~~I had quite a bit of seniority, they just took ten years off me.~~) When I went back to the plant I had to go down to the line and then work myself up. I stopped working in the plants in 1968. I was on the Executive Board and everything--I had to quit, I couldn't go anymore. I got arthritis.)

I worked with Tom Parkin and Alec Gordon. We were always together. (When I organized) I'd ask people if they belonged to the union. They says, "Why?" I says, "I'm here to see what I can do for you. If you want to join I'll sign you up." The person would say, "We're not interested." I says, Why?" He says, "Because it's a communist union." I says, "What if it is. Who do you say that's a communist?" He says, "Homer." I say, "He's doing

EVA VASELENAK ORGANIAER WWII UFAWU 2.

a damn good job isn't he? After all, we're all working people. Look at the money that you're getting for your fish. Did you get that through the company or did you get that through the union?" He says, "Sure, the union fought for it." I said, "Therefore you're riding on the other guy's back. Why in heck don't you get out there with therest ofthem?" I'm ^{FIRST} Secretary here for the Fishermen's Union and I've been looking at the books and I'm trying to sign the people up that've gone back on their dues." He got in there with me! That's how I started signing up all the different men in there. Sometimes some of them would run away. They'd see me coming and run away. Then finally they'd come to me after.

I was jumping up on the big boats, seeing that they were cleared and everybody was in the union. Sometimes you'd get a problem with the men. They'd get kindof huffy with you. Then they'd finally sign up, because they knew that they couldn't leave unless they were cleared. It was aclosed shop. I had some fishermen that threatened me to get off the boat. They took a hammer at me.

I organized the canneries during my lunch hour. Many a days I went without lunch, just signing up members into the union. That's the only way you could organize them. As long as I wasn't interfering with people that were working, management was fine. In fact the union fought for me to get into the cannery to sign up members as an organizer. Though when I organized mt first plant I did it myself. I just did what I thought was right--I didn't even have the education tod it.

I organized all the ^emen that were working in the cannery. No trouble. I used to go in and organize the Chinese guys too. Some of them wouldn't want

to join. Finally the other guy would talk to them in Chinese and finally he'd sign with me. I'd go into the bunkhouse. That was fun. (Laughs.) The bunkhouse was right next door to the office --they guys told me to come in there that two or three of the guys wanted to join. I went in there, Ken Fraser went after me about it and I told him to go to hell.

~~(He called me into his office, wanted to know why I did it.)~~

* Insert paragraph on pg. 1

The first strike that went on out there, you couldn't get the people going. The woman that was the head of that, she stood there and couldn't do a darn thing with the people. They were all standing around in front of a company. "Mrs. Kewan," I said, "Let's get going. You can't stand here." So they started marching up and down the street with their little plaques. After that it started going okay.

That was in the '60s. There were not strikes in the '40s or '50s--not 'til you got fully organized. Then you had to know just when to have those strikes, when the fish were coming in. When they had a strike they always used to have food for the people. Certain ones in the family used to get so many fish--the fishermen used to go out and catch it for them, it was very nice. We'd both be on strike at the same time, the fishermen and the shoreworkers. We would co-ordinate. Your fishermen would negotiate with the company themselves and then we'd go and negotiate ourselves. (We would hold out for each other).

Some of the workers would go for a strike, others would say it was the wrong thing, for fear they'd be afraid they'd be out of a job. But once a strike (happened) they knew they had to follow.

RELIGION AND UNIONISM EVA VASELENAK POST-WWII UFAWU 1.

You had your Mennonites, you had your Jehovahs and Hindus who opposed unions on religious grounds. But I had one girl, she used to come over and see me quite often. She used to tell me that so-and-so will get into the union. Then I'd go and I'd sign them up. They were Mennonites.

B.C. Packers had mostly Indian women filling cans, packing. There was Chinese workers. They used to work on those "iron chinks" and then they used to stand at the end of the line when the fish used to come down and pick the good fish from the bad fish and put them in boxes. There was just racial tension at B.C. Packers. The work was all the same pay, but it was that they didn't want to work by this girl or they didn't want to work by that girl.

There was hostility towards the Japanese women when they came back. The workers couldn't stand having the Japanese come in and work by them. If I knew about it, I used to say something about it and tell the woman that the Japanese were just as good as they were and they worked the same way. They had just as much right to work in there as the others did. *etc.*

Your Japanese people--I never had too ^{much} trouble organizing them at all. They were very good in signing up. When I got into a tight spot with organizing where people didn't understand (my language) or I didn't understand them, I'd get somebody that could talk their language to talk to me or talk to them.

EVA VASELENAK Post-War UFAWU UNION STRUCTURES 1.

If things went wrong, you had a shop steward on every ^{so} job, in case something happened they would know just what was happening and then she'd take it up right away. Stewards weren't paid. They were after awhile. We fought for that--that they should get paid if they go to meet with the company with beefs. They shouldn't have to lose their pay. They

With the fishermen--as soon as we got them shop stewards on the boats that meant an awful lot. All I had to do was just go in and see the shop steward and tell him that there was a meeting arranged and he'd go and tell his gang. They'd all be down at the meeting without any trouble.

MOVE THIS PARAGRAPH DOWN

**Once a month we'd get newsletters. After meetings we had letters to know what went on at the meetings. We used to hang them in the plants to let them know just what we were doing.

con't after 2nd par. with:

There'd be ~~some~~ stewards in every plant. As soon as there was a meeting going they'd scatter the word around that they'd better be at that meeting. They collect^ed dues. Towards the last it was a check-off. We fought for that because it was too hard for people to pay their dues--they didn't have the money on them. They'd just pay by cheque. Half of them wouldn't pay their dues because they didn't have the change to see the shop steward. They always had an excuse.

Union officials were elected, every one of them. The contract was put together by the executive board, Alec Gordon, Homer Stevens and Al Parkins. They'd get things fixed up there. Before they did, they'd call

EVA VASELENAK Post-War UFAWU Union Structures 2.

a meeting of all the membership to find out what they wanted and what they should be negotiating for. They tried to have it all the same wages (across the industry). Negotiations with all the employers were all the same.

When you go ahead and want to negotiate on wages you call a meeting of people from every plant to meet, to bring up certain problems, what their wages are. From way up Nanaimo, Prince Rupert--they used to come to Vancouver. They had one representative (in negotiations).

MOVE PAR. ***** to here. FTWT. Paper

EVA VASELENAK Post-War UFAWU Seniority 1.

It was hard to establish seniority. ~~We just got the ship steward and~~ We'd meet with management. They were hostile in a way because the shop stewards were down there all the time about people not being brought in to work the way they should. The first seniority list came in through the fresh fish. Then finally it worked into the cannery. There was quite a fuss about that.

For awhile there they had a cannery list and a (fresh fish) seniority list. That didn't work, 'cause they used to take the people from the ^acannery-- and they didn't go by seniority--and there was a big holler about that. So finally they just took the whole thing right down. Then, whenever the girls went to work, wherever their job was, it was written down that this girl did this kind of job and that girl did that kind of job. When it came to seniority, they'd go and pick out the girl--~~the next one~~ if the top one was out they'd pick ^{out} the next one--if she did the same job as that other girl, and put her on that job.

There was quite a few women (who were active) from all different plants. There were some young ones and some older ones. All of them were married, one or two not. I don't see why it would be hard for women to be active if they were married. "Cause the way I worked, heavens! If I could do it, I don't see why somebody else couldn't do it. Sometimes women would have to go home and do their gardens. Activity was up to them. They were never forced to do it.

We fought for maternity leave. They gave these women that were pregnant a certain leave of absence, whether it was a year or two, while they were pregnant. They had to have so long with their child while it got to be itself, so it could get along. The union fought for that--that was established.

The union fought for equal pay too, because the men used to do women's work and get paid the regular wages and the women would be out of a job while the men was doing their work. We were filleting halibut and the women had the great, big halibuts while the men were doing the small little halibuts for the same pay that they were getting^[before]. We were getting lower pay than they were! So we went at that and now they watch that. They used to put the women on the iron chinks for the same pay that they were getting in the cannery. They weren't getting the same wages as the iron chinks, so finally they fought that. If a woman goes on an iron chink to-days ^{Equal pay} she gets the same pay as an iron chink. It first came up in the convention, 'cause the people were asking for it. Men supported equal pay too.

The supervisors used to get after the women. They would come and "raise Cain" with them over nothing at all. They used to come over there and push you and push you and push you, "You're not doing good enough!"

Sometimes you'd be working at twelve o'clock at night--sometimes they'd have two shifts on. (It was difficult for women with kids.) It made it kinda hard for the company too because they'd have to pay us double time, time-and-a-half after a certain hour, so they'd watch that. That's why they put an extra line on at night, so they wouldn't have to pay the extra pay. I think it was ten cents higher for at night.

Women active in the union--I could name Frieda Erickson, Mrs. Treavell and Polly Paulson, Mrs. Udi, Ellen Zesko and Jesse Martin. They were shop stewards. ^{ETNT.}

EVA VASELENAK Women's Auxiliary UFAWU Post-War 1.

I started the Ladies' AUxiliary in Steveston. It just came to me to start going, to get the people there. We organized our president. After we were organized we told the fishermen to get their wives out. We put on socials, dances. When the fishermen would go away, they'd have nice big dinners for them to go away. During strikes women were there helping to bring the food around to the people. ^{PRINT.}

Native Brotherhood UFAWU Post-War 1.

Native people weren't involved at first until their organization went--there
was no more Native Bro^{therhood} ~~as far~~ ^{FIRST.} as your Indian people. I heard that
among the girls that were working. ^{So} I figure I'm going to see what I
can do to organize them. I went to ^{speak} ~~spoke~~ to one (woman) that was
a great friend of ours, Mrs. Essue. She says, "We've got no organization."
I says, "Do you want to join?" She says, "Yes, I'll join. You go and
ask the rest of them. ^{Guy} They'll join." As soon as the Business Agent, Williams,
of the Native Brotherhood heard about it he came after me, He raised hell for signing up his
people into the union. I told him, "Your organization is not a union, it's
an organization. Like with me, I belong to a certain thing in the Catholic
Church, that's what it is." He says, "We're in the union." I says,
"You're ~~not~~ in the union until you belong to it. You haven't signed into
the union." After that he left me alone. His wife was one of the first
ones that joined the fishermen's union (UFAWU). ^{FIRST.}

EVA VASELENAK UFAWU Post-War Credit Union 1.

We used to have meetings for the credit union down at my house. I started the one out in Steveston. The guy came down and organized the people--I got the people down to the meeting at my place.