

Interviewer: Johanna Russ, AFSCME Archivist

Interviewee: Joan Goddard, former President AFSCME Local 101, San Jose

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JR: Okay, so it's Tuesday, July 7th, 2009. I'm Johanna Russ, AFSCME Archivist, interviewing Joan Goddard. This is a telephone interview. I'm located in Detroit, at the Reuther Library, and Joan in in San Jose at your house? Is that correct?

JG: Actually, I live in Campbell, but it's in the San Jose area, yes.

JR: Okay. So she is on the West Coast, and we are going to be talking about the 1981 Comparable Wage Campaign in San Jose. We'll go ahead and get started. Joan, could you tell me a little bit about what you do, or did, for a living, what positions you've held in AFSCME, and when you held them? Kind of a little timeline, or background?

JG: Well, I'm a librarian. I was hired by San Jose Public Library in 1971, and retired in 1998. And I now work as a part time, substitute reference librarian for the Santa Clara County Library. I have enjoyed that work, and the fact that I'm a librarian has a lot to do with my being involved with the comparable worth efforts. As far as AFSCME, in the late 1970s, I was asked to be secretary – to run for Secretary of Local 101, and I didn't realize I'd have no opposition. But I became, so my first active role in the union was to be Secretary at the Local 101 level, which was the legal level that does not do any active representation of employees or negotiation for them but is an umbrella level of the organization for involving the representatives from the different chapters in the school district and county.

Then, soon after I became secretary of the Local 101 board, I joined the board of MEF, the Municipal Employees Federation, which is the San Jose city employees' chapter of Local 101, representing a lot of the city employees but not by any means all of them. By 1980, during the City's comparable worth committees work, I was on the negotiating team. We'll talk a little bit more about that later. That was part of what led up to the strength that led us to the strike. Then I was elected to the city negotiating team in December of 1980 that same year, then the city negotiating team continued along with the regular contract negotiating team in the spring of 1981. After the strike, I was on the negotiating team through the 1980s. Not every year, but our contract would come up for renegotiation periodically. I very soon became MEF president, which I did with the idea that I would be able to help make sure that we continued to work on comparable worth and salary adjustments until we reached our goal. After I had been MEF president, for a two-year term I believe, I

became Local 101 President for a couple of terms in the late 1980s into the early 1990s. I may have those dates slightly off.

JR: That's fine. That's quite a lot. So MEF was a chapter within Local 101.

JG: Right.

JR: And the City Women for Advancement and the Coalition of Library Activist Workers, were those separate groups, or affiliated with Local 101? How did that work?

JG: They were separate groups and they included people who were not necessarily active union members, and in some cases not technically union members, but were represented by MEF and Local 101. The City Women for Advancement included some library employees, but not all of those who were active in the union were involved with that organization. It included a lot of the women clerical workers in the City and also specifically in the City Attorney's Office as well as other City Hall offices – some library and probably some recreation workers also. The Coalition of Library Activist Workers, CLAW, was a group that became active when there were threats to library services, and worked in conjunction with community groups, friends of the library, etc. But also independently, and pretty much independent of the union, although many of us in the union were also active with CLAW. I think those were the main active groups.

JR: What made you become involved in union leadership and the pay equity issue? Was there anything in your youth or your parents, any kind of role model like that that encouraged you to become involved in justice work?

JG: Well my mother was active in the League of Women Voters, and she also did some work as far as jail library service, which I became involved with also; not as a person providing the service but as a support and organizing person within the library association. Before that I had been active in the Civil Rights causes. And my grandfather was in the Carpenters' Union. But I think the work as far as comparable worth grew out of being active in the union rather than becoming active in the union because of equal pay issues.

JR: Can you talk a little bit about the comparable wage efforts leading up to the Hay study?

JG: Yes. As we said, the City Women for Advancement was an organization that had been encouraged and organized by Maxine Jenkins, who was the union representative, the staff person for MEF, in the late 1970s. She had come from SEIU San Francisco where she had been very active in starting to educate herself and other people about the issue of equal pay for women's work: comparable worth or pay equity. It's called a lot of different terms. Then she left SEIU and became an AFSCME staff person, and was assigned to the staff of Local 101, particularly to MEF.

So she was working with the City Women for Advancement, and they did quite a large project. Again, a few library employees were involved with it, but I was not. They made a presentation to the City Council that, in 1978, before the Proposition 13 election. That was called Women Working [inaudible]. They were talking about eliminating sex discrimination from pay and personnel practices of the City of San Jose. The union aspect of that, in addition to the City Women for Advancement, was the MEF Affirmative Action Committee. They presented this paper, which included a section about the Carlsbad School District in Southern California where there had been a comparable worth study and salary adjustment. This was very encouraging and educational for a lot of women.

The City Women for Advancement, about the same time, were concerned that they were not getting a good response from the City and the City Council. The police were having their contract negotiations in the spring of 1978 and the City Women for Advancement group, again, not really involving the library people very much at all, organized themselves to be sick on the same day that the police had blue flu, they called it. So there was a sick out of clerical workers basically, secretaries and typists in City Hall on the same day that the police had a sick out in relation to their contract negotiations. And this was right around the same time that the city manager had decided to study the management positions in the city of San Jose because he felt that salaries were not based on logical practices and they should look at the overall salaries so they could recruit better people to work in the city.

After the blue flu and the women's sick out day, City Council, fairly soon, was looking at okaying the study for the management classifications in the City. Maxine Jenkins and others went to the City Council meeting and spoke up demanding that there also be a study of the non-management classifications. With some short resistance, this did happen in a fairly short time. The City agreed to do what turned out to be the Hay study on comparable worth. So this process of doing the Hay study included all of the City employees. It was not just our union, but all of the city employees that were being studied, I believe, with the exception of police and fire. That included architectural engineers; it included outdoor gardening workers that were represented by the Laborer's union, and other categories.

In the process of doing the study, they did the process where you have everyone define their jobs, answer a lot of questions about them and so on, and our union did the workshop to help people ensure that we did a good job with describing our jobs. We circulated some information about this kind of study, and worked very hard to make sure that the committees had the actual job evaluation set up in a good way, because the original idea was that the various departments in the city would send their personnel person or someone representing the department and would be on the study. And it was not necessarily going to result in something that the employees could accept and believe was accurate. If the department management decides who is going to be involved in this and it's all from the City administration's point of view, without any involvement by people recognized by the other employees as knowing what the job is really about because they are people doing

those jobs, then it's going to be difficult to hope that it would be done as well as it could be done and that it could be accepted and believed in by the board afterward. One of the earliest things that happened was – that helped to make the study go very well – was setting up those committees in addition to the workshops that were being done and the information that was being shared, and I believe there was a meeting with Maxine Jenkins and one or two of the union leaders who happened to be library people – they were talking with one of the City Council members, Iola Williams, whom we had helped to get appointed to the City Council – about this idea that it should be representative of the employees, including some that were suggested by the union, along with the city human resources people and others who would do the actual evaluation of the jobs and ranking of them and so on.

In other words, there was a lot of involvement over a period of time. Leading up to the negotiation itself was the actual job evaluation. We were getting reports from our representatives on the committee and helping them to be strong and encouraging them.

Another major thing that happened as part of the growing awareness and involvement was that we were doing contract negotiations in 1980, at the time that the Hay study committee was doing their work. The management case study was a little less complex because there were fewer jobs in the city administration at the management level, and they did have representatives from among those classification levels on their committee. But it was a smaller committee and fewer jobs and they finished theirs earlier.

We were nearing the end of our contract negotiations in 1980, and I was on that negotiating team. The MEF negotiations were coming to a close at the same time that the management pay study was finished. The City's negotiator told us that it had been completed and they would be acting on it with the City Council. Ours would probably not be finished until some time later in the year, in 1980. After they looked at it, they would let us know whether they wanted to discuss it with us. Now that created quite a stir. The response of our staff negotiator, who by then was Bill Callahan because Maxine Jenkins had left our union staff, said, "What did you say? Do you understand what you said?" Because of course we were going to negotiate about the results of the Hay study. So the negotiator repeated that and we said, "Well, if that's your position we need to leave the negotiating table until you agree to negotiate with us about it." So we left, and we found a book that said...we were at impasse about this. We found a book that was political cartoons called *Political Bestiary*, and one of them was a moose. The moose stands firm and he does not give in. So our union mascot became the moose.

We picketed City Hall, and within a week or so, the City actually announced the salary adjustments that they were going to make in the management level. The library management were going to – appropriately – get huge increases. They had been underpaid just like the rest of us through the years. The newspaper came out; the headlines talked about it. Our negotiating team went to – I can't remember what

office, the negotiator or the City Manager's office – and Bill Callahan threw a copy of the paper on his desk and said, "We will be negotiating with you about this for non-management people."

Then we fairly quickly got back to the negotiating table and the city's position obviously was not very tenable. We finished our negotiations for that year, and then awaited clear results of the non-management pay study so that we could get started with that same City Council that was the body to do the study. Some of them were going out of office in January or February of 1981, so we wanted to get our first meeting with the City about the non-management Hay study results while they were still in office. We did accomplish that. There's more, of course, in the spring of 1981, but we can probably talk about that later.

JR: You mentioned a few things I wanted to go back and ask about. You mentioned that as part of the things you had been looking at for examples and for models, you saw that the Carlsbad School District had done a job evaluation study and had implemented adjustments for pay equity. Was that a union campaign?

JG: I'm sorry, I don't know.

JR: That's fine. Presumably there was no strike, since your strike is commonly referred to as the first pay equity strike.

JG: Right, they did not go out on strike.

JR: Do you know what caused the City Council to begin the study of the management job classifications in the first place?

JG: My understanding is that the City Manager felt that the salaries were not at an appropriate level for management. And not particularly with the idea of women's occupational fields like library and recreation, but just that overall they were not at an appropriate level and he was looking for a personnel evaluation analysis method. He had learned about the Hay associates and their methods of assessing jobs and also looking at the market in relation to those and felt that would be a good method. I believe that he had in mind raising library and recreation and Office of the City Clerk and City Manager and so on – that their salaries would increase dramatically as a result of this.

JR: You mentioned Maxine Jenkins a few times, and you've talked about her role already. Do you think this would have gotten off the ground if you hadn't had a leader like that?

JG: No, I don't think it would have. Not at that time, certainly. There were things going on around the state and around the country that were helping with this, but for instance in the California library system there was a program where people who had been working in this general area – learning about it and writing about it –

spoke. Also the state Commission on the Status of Women had a series of 3 or 4 hearings around the state about it also. And Maxine may very well have been involved in helping to get those going too, because she had been working in San Francisco on the concept of comparable worth in the early to mid 70s. There was also some attention around the country but I don't remember exactly the examples of what was happening, nor do I know where the leadership was on this, the push for it, was actually coming from.

JR: Can you talk about the Proposition 13 in California and what role that played in the lead up to the negotiations and the strike?

JG: When Proposition 13 passed and the property taxes were going to be cut, or were not going to be increasing very rapidly over a long period of time, this was very devastating to a lot of city and county government. One of the things the state did was to provide some bailout money. But the Governor at the time, Jerry Brown, required that in order to get this money from the state, city and counties agreed not to have any salary increases for their employees for a period of time – at least one or two years. So we had not had any general salary increase, although of course inflation was going on, all the reasons that you'd need to increase salaries were still true, but at least we did not have as many layoffs as we might have had otherwise.

There had been no general salary increases since Proposition 13 had passed in June of 1978. That meant that by the time we got to 1981, there were a lot of deferred increases to general salaries. The financial situation was somewhat better then in the cities and counties so they were starting to make general salary increases throughout California and the Bay Area. Traditionally, the City and the Union had agreed to use the nearest public jurisdictions to the cities and counties as the labor market for city employees to compare to see if we felt a particular jobs' salary was out of line. We were required to compare similar classifications in other neighboring jurisdictions in the labor market for that particular kind of work. The fact that other jurisdictions around us were getting significant salary increases and our increases were unusually high also, to make up for this lost period of time between 1978 and 1981, and they had not had any general salary increases. Was there something else?

JR: That's great. Wasn't Proposition 13 overturned by a court?

JG: No, it's still in effect. It's had very much of an effect both for individual families that stay in the same house they've been in since the 1970s and also for city and county governments that don't get as much property tax as they would based on residential. Only when the house is sold does the tax go up to a reasonable level, otherwise it's quite low. Which is nice for the people who stay in the home, but it decreases what the money is that's available. And the other major problem is that commercial property is handled the same way. With commercial buildings, there's a way that they've worked out not to technically sell them, so the property taxes do not increase and there's not anywhere near the amount of property tax coming in to

the cities and counties as would be appropriate from business offices and sales of commercial property.

JR: Okay. I must have read something incorrectly about that, sorry.

JG: That's my understanding.

JR: So when were the non-management results released?

JG: I think it was approximately November of 1981.

JR: 1981? Or 1980? Sorry, I didn't hear you.

JG: 1981.

JR: Okay. So once they were released, you started negotiating immediately?

JG: We knew that they were going to be released fairly soon, and they had started working on selecting the negotiating team to work with the City in that regard. And the first [inaudible] before December of 1980. We worked quite a bit to prepare for that. I'd be happy to talk about that.

JR: Sure, go ahead and tell me about those preparations.

JG: When the management study was released, we looked at it. One of the major things it included was a graph which had indications of predominantly male and female classifications, indicated that way with symbols, and also indications of the ones which were fairly balanced, so not more than 70% either male or female. The Hay Associates firm had calculated what they called a trend line, which was basically an average of salaries in about 10 or 12 different job groups where the committee had found a variety of classifications to be equal in their complexity – skills required, working conditions, etc. So if you imagine a graph where there are 10 or 12 vertical columns and each of them has plus marks and zeros and minus marks – 3 different symbols for predominantly male, predominantly female, or balanced. Then there was a line that starts at the lower left, with the different salary classifications at the beginning of the left hand side of this group of columns, and it rises somewhat to the right, so where the higher level of complexity of jobs were in the column, using a linear regression as it's called, so it becomes a line rather than a zigzag as it goes along. So this average salary line is made up of the salaries of appropriately paid, male-dominated classifications and opposed to that, inappropriately paid, underpaid, predominantly female job classifications.

This trend line is interesting, but it has nothing to do with where salaries ought to be, because the male – this is our position, and I believe it's true – the male classifications are paid appropriately. They're not overpaid, the city's not paying them more than they have to pay them in the labor market. So those are the ones

that are paid appropriately. Some of them are paid pretty high, for obvious reasons, but when you average them out – which is what we did – you can do a trend line of these predominantly male classifications. And that's what we had as our goal, that male average salary line. That was the goal for our other occupations and classifications to move toward. Whereas the city heard the Hay study people say this is the trend line, and we're going to put a line 15% above it and 15% below it, so that you have sort of a range above and below the average. It's true that many employers have occupations or employees whose salaries are outside of this cone of whatever they called it, the 15% above and below the average line. The City had an unusually large number below, and I remember them saying also an unusually large number above but I don't think so. The City was looking at this 15% below the trend line and thinking that was their goal, and that was so far from the average male salary line that it provided quite an outrage to us. That they would think that if they raised the very lowest salaries to 15% below the average salary line, which means nothing in terms of where salaries should be really. That could be what they would do. And that was their position as it turned out.

In the meantime, we had figured out this male trend line and were presenting that as our goal for our first meeting with the City's negotiators about the Hay study.

JR: So just to clarify, the Hay study and the City was operating from a trend line that included the very underpaid job classifications. You at the union were operating from a trend line that only included the male dominated, appropriately paid classifications.

JG: I believe so. I don't think we included the balanced classifications, but I'm pretty sure we just went with the predominantly male classifications.

JR: So you went into this meeting with two different trend lines?

JG: Yes. Of course theirs was the "official" one because it's a part of the Hay study.

JR: Right. So how did you come to an agreement?

JG: Well, we didn't. We never came to an agreement on the male – but actually, the City did not have their regular contract negotiator meet with us at first. I can't remember if he was ill or busy with other union negotiations, but for some reason the City had a management person in the personnel department meet with us as the representative of the city. His instructions were to hold the line as the 15% below the trend line. He described it as a brick wall. Which, again, gave us quite a bit of motivation and energy to try to break through that brick wall. When we kept meeting with him and we kept educating our members and we weren't getting anywhere, in the early spring of 1981, we realized that we had a real problem. We needed to start looking at the possibility of some real public action. We did the picketing, and the flyers, so on and so forth, and we also got to a point where we had started the regular salary negotiations probably in April or so, with additional union

members on the negotiating team for that. The combined teams always met together – also with the city – from then on. When it was clear that the city was not ready to negotiate at a reasonable – not for everything to happen in the first year, but to plan for salary increases over the period of the contract with the understanding that we'd look at it again when contract negotiations came up. For a long time, they were not willing to go beyond that 15% below Hay study trend line. We eventually took a strike vote, I believe in May, and we got a strike sanction from the central labor council towards the end of May, I believe. Our contract was to expire at the end of June. After the strike vote and the strike sanction we were starting a countdown kind of thing. Every few days we'd send out a progress report on flyers to employees.

JR: Did you involve other community groups in this campaign, or did you get support from the community, from the International Union, anything like that?

JG: I don't know what kinds of discussions there were with the International Union staff and officers. I was on the negotiating team but I was not hearing a lot about that. I remember – I don't know what was happening as far as that was concerned – I know that we did work with some women's groups in Santa Clara county – the Commission on the Status of Women, I believe, at the County, though I'm not sure about that. There were several women's organizations in Santa Clara county who publicly supported us and came to public meetings and talked with city council members and so on. Unfortunately I don't remember the names of those organizations right now.

JR: That's okay. In June of 1981, the Supreme Court decided a court case called the County of Washington, Oregon v. Gunther. How did that affect your campaign?

JG: It affected our campaign in that in the earlier stages of that case there were decisions along the way that...I think what must have been happening was that we knew that there had been a federal district court or appeals court level decision in favor of the women jail workers in that county – Gunther was one of them in the case – so we knew that was this case that was proceeding that had to do with not exactly equal jobs, with people sitting side by side doing exactly the same work over the same period of time. Or at least the woman has been working on it just as long as the man has, and yet the woman is getting less pay. This was not exactly that kind of situation because their jobs were somewhat different. We knew that it wasn't really a comparison of men's work versus women's work, unless you consider male guards guarding men to be men's work and women guards guarding women to be women's work. But that's not what we mean when we talk about women's work and men's work. We talk about different occupations, the ones that are predominantly male or predominantly female, and the point at which you are looking at them closely. By the time the Supreme Court ruled on the Gunther case, we were well into our negotiations and that particular Supreme Court decision didn't have a lot to do with us other than to sort of reinforce us. "Something good happened, that's good," type of situation. But it was the lower level decision on that case that would have been

part of what was helping to encourage us. It wasn't really comparable worth at stake.

JR: Following the Supreme Court decision, didn't the union file a claim with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission?

JG: I don't know how much it was related. It may have been, and it probably was following it. I think what happened was that until sometime well into June, the City was still at this 15% below the average trend line level about what they were willing to do as far as salary adjustments in that particular contract. They wouldn't even talk about what they'd do in the future, and this was probably going to be a two-year contract. So they were not really bargaining with us as we thought it should be done in regard to the results of the Hay study. So we felt we needed to keep doing things that would give us other avenues or put more pressure on them. At least that's the way I remember it, looking back, but I don't have my notes from the negotiations or the discussion. I have them, but I haven't looked at them in however many years so I don't know whether I have any notes about it or not. My feeling is that what we would have been doing is to add another angle of pressure. Okay, if you're not going to negotiate with us realistically and appropriately, considering the fact that one library management employee had gotten a 25% salary increase and others had gotten significant ones. We were comparing what they're doing with the non-management people, and refusing to do what they did with the management people less than a year before. That was another major injustice factor to lead to our indignation. Filing with the EEOC was another tool to use, I believe, to try to emphasize to the City that there are a lot – well, not a lot – but some other avenues that we have, and we're going to be using all the ones that we possibly can if you're not going to be appropriately negotiating with us. They said that we were using unfair labor practice, but they were using a far more unfair labor practice by refusing to treat the non-management employees in an appropriate manner compared with the management.

JR: We've mentioned this a little bit in our discussion so far, but let's talk a little bit more about some of the arguments from opponents. We mentioned briefly equal opportunity legislation, equal pay for equal work, affirmative action. Can you talk a little bit about some of those arguments and how you and the union countered them?

JG: And also market forces? So the three aspects of salary setting or salary patterns that might emerge for women – employed women. The market forces had been used. I mentioned that we were required to look at other jurisdictions in our general area as the labor market and those jurisdictions also had salaries that were set based on both the public and the private sector's practice of paying women as little as they could get away with and paying men likewise but much more appropriately, and part of that came from strong men's work labor unions in the past. So the market forces were just going to have the same effect on our salaries. There was not a way to improve women's salaries unless you organized all the women across the

whole geographic area and we all had a giant sit-down, but that was not at all likely to happen. Also I think we needed some sort of rational basis other than you're paying us too little. But what we were able to see from the Hay study was that the personnel people do analyze jobs, they do compare apples and oranges, you can compare men's work jobs to women's work jobs and break them down into categories.

Once that was done, it was possible for us to say that this is not a situation that's covered by the Equal Pay Act of 1963 and earlier equal pay act from 1949 or something. It had been 30 years since California passed an equal pay for equal work law. There was the Equal Pay Act of 1963, and then the Civil Rights Act followed that. But those had to do with whether women librarians and men librarians are paid the same amount, not whether the librarians were paid an appropriate amount compared to the engineers and the planners and other men's work occupations. The Equal Pay for Equal Work Act, even though the discussion during the legislation consideration period for those included comparable worth, it was not clearly included in the legislation and now we're still trying to get that fixed with the Fair Pay Act in Congress. Equal pay for equal work just was not relevant to this situation.

As far as the suggestion that many people make, that gee, the way to solve the problem of the women's wage gap was that there will be higher average or median salaries for women across the board compared to men's salaries across the board is for women to go into men's work jobs. That's fine, and there are some women who want to do that, and they usually encounter a lot of resistance from the men in the jobs but they persist. The problem with that as a solution is that it might increase the median salaries for women if that were totally successful, but that doesn't have anything to do with what the salaries are for occupations that are now predominantly done by women. Which is valuable work.

If you look at women's work jobs, they tend to be working with people. Whether it's teachers, nurses, librarians, recreation, clerical staff, secretaries, social workers, etc. Women's work jobs. Those are very important jobs. Working with people in some ways is a lot more complicated, a lot more difficult, and a lot more important than fixing a car, which is pretty straightforward if you think about it – compared with working with people. But fixing a car gets a really good salary, and working with people does not. And that is part of what this whole thing is about, besides the money for women and their families, and men who do women's work as well, and their families. It's not just women; it's women's work. There are a lot of male librarians who don't get paid what they should be getting paid. So the suggestion that women should go into men's work is fine, and we try to encourage people who do that so they can cope with all the negativity and things you see in movies like the one about the woman in Minnesota who went into mining work. I can't think of the name of it right now.

JR: I can't remember it either.

JG: Anyway, wonderful story and very inspiring. There have been projects around here with the labor council. The building trades council has a woman who works to encourage women to go into building trades and recruit them and work with them – they actually have someone who is paid to do that. These are all wonderful things but that’s not going to improve the salaries for women’s work: teachers, nurses, social workers, librarians, clerical staff, recreation workers, etc. etc. Which is what we need to have happen. What they have done in Minnesota across the state, all public jurisdictions, all school districts, school districts, every level – they adjusted salaries. Every two or three years they’re required to review the situation at each jurisdiction and make a report to a state office to show and correct any problems that have arisen in the meantime. And that is what we need across the entire country, in every state. And I worked to get towards that, but that was negotiating.

JR: Well, we’ve been going for about an hour, do you need a break or anything?

JG: Well, that would probably be good.

JR: Should I call you back in about ten minutes?

JG: That sounds good.

JR: We are back from our break. We were trying to go somewhat chronologically, but I was reading over the questions during the break and I realized there was one that we missed. It was in the new question list so you may not have seen it yet, but in my reading I read a lot about an internal union struggle in the late 70s between the public works employees and the librarian faction, if you will. Can you talk about that?

JG: There are two aspects to that. One of which I don’t know a lot about – it was before I became involved. I became involved after several library employees who were stewards in the union decided that they wanted to have a larger role. My understanding now is that the people who were running the union before were primarily public works employees. I was not aware of that situation – I just knew that there was a group of people running the union, and at some point, I heard later, that there were some stewards and also some stewards who were not library people - In fact, I don’t know if they were clerical workers - one of the women later became a construction inspector for the city. That group of stewards, the way I heard it, for people other than the departments where most of the union leadership was coming from, which I guess was the public works department. They decided to take over the union, or at least have some of their people elected to the board and offices and so on. They were successful in doing that perhaps beyond their original intent. There was a major change in the union leadership in the mid 70s, shortly before I got involved in the union. So I don’t know very much about that, but I’ve been learning

more as I read some of the books that give background on the strike. The thing that happened during the strike, or during the lead-up to the strike, and to the negotiations, was that some of those public works and surveyors and construction inspectors became part of the negotiating team and we worked well with them. I can talk about that now or I could talk about it later.

JR: Sure, you can go ahead, since you're on that.

JG: There were several people who could be considered either technically part of Public Works or part of departments that had been split off when Public Works was divided into more than one department. The ones that I remember the most, the two or three people, were men who were able to understand the situation and see that it was part of family income, and this movement could effect their spouses, other men's spouses, and realize that this was a good thing. Also, we were always very clear that men's work salaries were at an appropriate level, not "too high," on average, as many people tried to say well, the reason that women's work seem to be underpaid is because men's work is paid too much. That was never the position of the Union, and it was very clearly something that we were not about to do anything in terms of holding the – I forget the term they used now, but it has to do with holding a particular classification's salary levels without increases when other classification level salaries are increased because there's an assessment that somehow the city has let these salaries for some of the classifications get too high. Our position was always that the City had not done that, that the City was paying what they needed to pay to have good employees in men's work jobs, therefore we were not at all willing to even consider the possibility that those salaries should be held or somehow decrease over time in order to let the women's occupation jobs increase to a level that was closer to them.

JR: Did the City negotiators ever suggest that as one solution?

JG: I don't recall that they did, but they probably said it at one point and we quickly said no, that's not appropriate or possible.

JR: So you had the support of male union members because of this?

JG: Also, whenever we heard that there were problems we tried to go and talk to people, if we heard any inkling that there were concerns. Some men are very aware and knowledgeable and sensible, and they were involved.

JR: Leading up to the actual strike, it seems that there were two things at work: there were the wage adjustments as a result of the Hay study, and there was the normal cost of living increase that you said had not happened for several years because of Proposition 13. What actually pushed you to strike? Were both of those things in play, or had some of it been settled?

JG: What pushed us to strike was the fact that the City would not negotiate for so long. For several months, they would not realistically negotiate about comparable worth adjustments over a period of time. After we started the general contract negotiations, that was still going on for a month or two. That was when we realized that we might be looking at a situation where we might have to go out on strike, because they were not negotiating with us about our major issue at that point. What we did was we prepared to go out on strike, primarily based on the City's refusal to negotiate appropriately about the Hay study. Once we had a strike vote on that issue and strike sanction from the Central Labor Council on that issue, at some point in June, after we had done those things late in May, the City finally started negotiating with us about a two year plan to raise salaries somewhat beyond the 15% below the trend line and to do a two-year batch of improvements. They were significant improvements – I can't remember exactly what the numbers were, but as it turned out, by the end of the strike, there was some adjustment for some of the classifications that would have gotten huge increases. I think it was the archivists at the museum who would have gotten huge increases. Even larger than the City management had been, just to get them to the point where the rest of us were going to be. They managed to talk our leadership out of that, to have a maximum of a 15% increase each year for the two years of the contract. Before the strike, I believe that's about at the point where we were except that we didn't have this 15% maximum aspect to it. And we weren't really at the point of having an agreement exactly, but we were very far along on the comparable worth changes that would be made – salary increases – a week or so before the strike started. At some point during June, the City started talking about how they were going to take these salary increases for comparable worth out of the general salary increase pot. We and some of the City Council members were pushing for the fact that this was really a separate situation, that there needed to be a separate batch of money that was designated to be used soon and over a period of time to put money into a fund that could be used to improve women's work salaries. And that this had nothing to do with general inflationary needs on increasing general salary levels in the city, for everybody. So there should be a general salary increase for everybody, including the women's work people, and that the comparable worth adjustments were a separate matter and needed to be separately funded. The City would not agree to that – to setting up some kind of a fund like that – and they were offering us at the very last minute in the negotiations significantly less of a general salary increase compared with the other jurisdictions. Alameda County got a 9% salary increase and one or two other major cities and counties in the area had settled their negotiations and were getting around that level. Again, the only reason they were that large was that we hadn't had any salary increases for 3 years, probably 4 years, since before Proposition 13. But that was when the restriction was placed on it so that our negotiations in 1978 were not successful in getting salary increases – because of these restrictions from the state. We could not take a contract that gave our overall general salary increase for all of us so much less than the neighboring jurisdictions. That was not appropriate. And it was a two-year contract that was proposed, it should have been 6% each year. I don't know about the other jurisdictions but as I said it would have been at the 9% level, and that was absolutely not something that we could do. That's

technically why we had to go out on strike, but in actuality, it was the whole process and the whole situation, how they interacted and didn't interact. Not in our minds, but in the City's mind, there was this pot of money and it had to be divided between general increases and comparable worth increases. That was not appropriate when the comparable worth situation was something that really had nothing to do with the general salary increase needs and why you need to make them. They had everything to do with a long-standing underpayment of women's work by the City, which means that library services, etc. are being financed by the people who work in those jobs and their families. Because we still don't get totally appropriate salaries.

JR: Right.

JG: That's pretty much it, unless there was some other aspect that you were wondering about.

JR: No, that's perfect. So then you did go out on strike? Tell me about the strike itself. Did you picket? What was the mood among union members who participated? How did those – was it nine days or ten days I think – go?

JG: We started in the middle of the night technically, Saturday night, although most of us weren't scheduled to work until Monday. We started picketing. I believe we went back to work on Wednesday, but it might have been Tuesday, a week and a half later. Some jobs, you know, go through the weekend, so we were picketing all the time. I did not actually do any picketing. I was on the negotiating team. The job that I got was that I would start out every morning, fairly early, and I would go and get soda pop from the store and I would go to an ice company that happened to be called Union Ice. I would go to two, three, four different locations where there were garbage cans that we would put the soda and the ice in at places like City Hall and some other places where there were large numbers of picketers. I didn't go around to every public library or every recreation center that had pickets. Because I was on the negotiating team, I needed to report to the union office even if we weren't negotiating that day. That was where we were supposed to go and work on things. I was not actually on a picket line, but there seemed to be a really good mood as far as I could tell interacting with people when I brought the sodas. Sometimes they didn't like the fact that I brought store brand sodas instead of Coke and Pepsi and so on. But that was probably joking around. The one story that I really remember from the picketers was that at the airport there were a few picketers. At least one of them was a library employee, and she told us about how wonderful it felt when the Teamster truck drivers drove their trucks up to the picket line and then turned their trucks around and left. That was very heartening and positive. The solidarity was wonderful.

Was there anything else about that? We did communicate, of course, by both going to the picket line places and there was a major activity that happened after the first week when the City Manager sent out letters to all of us that were not working as far as they could tell and told us that if we did not report for work they would use the

provision in the civil service rules, I believe, that if an employee has not been has work for some particular number of days without calling in or reporting sick, then the person could be fired. So this was the warning letter about the fact that they might do that. We then had a big action at City Hall, in front of where the City Manager's Office was at City Hall, and had a barbeque grill and we took our letters and we burned them, there in front of City Hall. We have the ashes of those still in a plastic urn.

JR: That's quite a souvenir.

JG: Well that was part of building up our morale, keeping us from getting too weirded out by such threats.

JR: Right. So the strike was called off and negotiations resumed, or how did that go?

JG: No, no. We finished the negotiations and we got the agreement of City Council – after a little set back we got their agreement before the strike ended. Actually the assistant City Manager was involved in the final negotiations. There was a point at which the City's...We were negotiating at a hotel meeting room or something, negotiating around the clock, so we had sleeping rooms also in this hotel. At some point in that round the clock negotiation, the City's veteran negotiator agreed to a particular package which he - from all indications, this was something he was authorized to agree to. That was the standard procedure with him. We felt that we had an agreement and we were very happy. That probably happened on like a late Saturday night, and the City Council was meeting on Sunday afternoon about the strike and what the current situation was. I believe that was the situation anyway. They met and we got word that they had turned down this agreement that their negotiator had made with us. We were together, some of us, and the rest got together, and a bunch of us went over to City Hall where they were meeting. We went into the room and one of the strange things was they had zucchini on their long meeting table. Somebody had brought their extra squash from the garden to share with the other members of the City Council. They had it on the table for people to take after the meeting, which seemed bizarre.

Anyway, the woman mayor was very upset that we came into the meeting. Most of us didn't actually go into the room but a few representatives did. So after they came out from the meeting, and told us that this really was what had happened - I'm not sure if that was the time we stood along the railing in the hallway of City Hall, which has a wonderful sound quality to it and sang union songs. Eventually some people went and did a candlelight vigil at the mayor's house that evening. Then we went back to negotiating, eventually.

JR: A lot of the articles and book chapters that I read talk about the strike and leading up to the strike in great detail, but they don't talk much about after the strike and after 1981. I know negotiations continued for several contract periods

after that, and you continued to need to bring job classifications up to the line. Can you talk about that? You said you were on the negotiating teams for many years.

JG: Yes, and as I said, I became president so I could help to keep it as a priority. We had a two-year contract agreement, so probably within about a year and a half we were preparing for the next negotiations. We did make some additional adjustments during subsequent contract negotiations. Then I'm not sure whether that happened for exactly two more or exactly how long, but it sort of slowed down. Of course, the City was still not accepting our premise that the male occupations trend line was the goal. It was hard to build up the momentum again within the union. There were other things that we were working on. I can't remember what they were now, but we did continue to make adjustments and at some point I was no longer in negotiating teams. They were working on it. There was some point at which we had a three-year contract, and then at the end of that time it had been a significant length of time since the Hay study was done. The City and the union asked for an update on the Hay study. That was not done in a very thorough manner but it was somewhat of an update. It was more of an update about what had been accomplished rather than whether there had been a lot of changes in classification, just getting to that kind of depth. So that was the point at which we thought, "Well, it's been this long and we need to review the classifications as well." That was very difficult to get accomplished. At that point I had stopped being on the negotiating teams – or actively involved – for personal reasons. Others were trying to carry on and some others who had been actively involved in the process earlier on had either gone into management or had left city employment to go work for the Union or for various reasons. Those who had been some of the most involved people were no longer available to help focus it. For those and various other reasons, progress slowed down and the people who were interested in the subject and were on the negotiating teams were not able to keep it as a high enough priority compared with other things that other union members were pushing to work on. So it slowed down in the late 80s and there was probably a recession in there. We were threatened with losing jobs and that made it hard to work on this. I believe that's what happened. One of those good old recessions that happen so often these days.

The City and the Union have worked on it since then, and they've used different methods. Sometimes there were classifications that happened to be predominantly female that happened to be out of line with what is now the labor market around here. The County of Santa Clara also did a ten-year project of increasing salaries for women's work pay based on union negotiations and pressure between the two largest – city and county – the two largest public jurisdictions. The other cities and counties in our area have either had projects or have used the fact that our salaries are higher to raise their women's work jobs. Eventually there are situations where perhaps clerical classifications are out of line with the market. Or their jobs have changed significantly with computers, and they're able to reclassify and increase salaries that way, which has somewhat the same effect as doing it on the basis of comparable worth, but they're actually comparing it with other similar jobs in jurisdictions around here like they used to do but upgrading their classification to

get higher salaries. Those kinds of things have increased salaries for women's work jobs, but it hasn't been on the basis of a concerted comparison of jobs, updating of the Hay study, or that kind of thing. That's also true of the County. The County may have gotten closer to equal salaries, but I've never been able to really analyze that. They now are far enough from the study that was done in the County that they probably also need to review it. They may find that the thing that happens if you don't actually have the equal salaries is when you do a general salary increase based on a percentage increase, the higher paid jobs get more additional money than the lower paid jobs get added to their salaries. It's the same percentage, but the money is different. Therefore, the higher paid jobs pull away from the lower paid salary levels and you get a gap appearing even if they got to be fairly close. Over a period of time, which it certainly has been now, there can very well be a significant difference in salaries with classifications that actually at one point might have been fairly close together. That's a long-term project. So far there have been other major concerns, whether it's been layoffs or large increases in health insurance premiums that have interfered with being able to set a priority looking at the current situation as far as comparable worth in the city and the county.

JR: Were you ever asked by the International Union or other locals to help with comparable worth efforts in other locations?

JG: I think other people may have been. The only thing that I remember personally was one or two of us from the library who were involved in the negotiating team spoke at library association meetings in California, in Oregon, and also at the American Library Association meeting. There were a lot of people talking about the subject of comparable worth, pay equity, and reporting on the strike, actually, along with Eleanor Holmes-Norton at one point at ALA. The business agent and MEF president at the time of the strike and people who had been on the Hay study committee I think were the ones who would have been asked to talk or to meet with people in other jurisdictions. I don't know the details of that.

JR: Looking back almost 30 years now, how do you assess the legacy of this campaign for comparable worth? I know you're involved with the Coalition for Equal Pay. What challenges still exist, and what role do you think labor has in addressing those challenges?

JG: I think labor has a major role in the future as well as what's been done in the past. The unions negotiate with the employers to set the salaries. There really is not a way – other than for individuals – to negotiate in non-union situations. So I think it's a very important issue and to a certain extent why I'm involved in the single-payer healthcare movement. Not only to get coverage for people and to get vision and dental coverage for myself improved, but also because it is such a problem for unions in negotiating other kinds of improvements. So that's one of the reasons that after I retired I wanted to keep working on this issue. I worked with another – Coalition for Equal Pay – in our county, in our area. We worked to help with public awareness and education through using Equal Pay Day, which is a national day that

is designated and led by the National Committee on Pay Equity, made up of a lot of unions including AFSCME – also, women’s work professions and other organizations, the AAUW and etc. at the national level – encouraging their local chapters to work together so they’re a part of our equal pay organization, and individuals of course, too. We’ve done annual media events for almost ten years, and then in the last couple of years there’s been a lot of attention in the media on comparable worth and better enforcement of equal pay for equal work as well, which is a big part of the overall women’s wage gap problem. So we have not felt that we have needed to try to get media attention here locally, because there is a lot of attention already, both through email and to the media. What we’ve been doing is to continue working on a project that we had started which involves working with high school teachers and also community college teachers to provide them with a focus for a lesson on the women’s wage gap, including comparable worth as well as the other causes – including not just women in non-traditional jobs as well as unequal pay for equal work, etc. What we do is we cut a piece out of a cookie and put it in a sandwich bag and put a little note with it inside another bag and tie it up with ribbon. We provide these free to teachers so that they can use them to help focus the students’ attention, which it does very effectively. We also give them an information folder of a single sheet folded in three parts, two folds, three parts, six panels of information. I realized this year that not only does it focus the students’ attention, but it also gets the teachers to make a commitment to do this lesson. So we feel that it’s the most effective thing that we’ve done, and we’re reaching hundreds and hundreds of high school and community college students this way over several years and will continue to do that. So that’s the main thing that I do, and I keep trying to see when it will be a time when both I have the focus and the unions are receptive enough that I can try to encourage other people that are interested to focus on comparable worth again the City of San Jose and the County of Santa Clara, because I have a connection with the unions in both of those situations since I’m now a member of the county union because I’m working for the County library.

JR: Right. And how do you think the recent Lilly Ledbetter law and the bill that’s in Congress now – do you think they’ll help with this issue?

JG: Yes. The Lilly Ledbetter situation of course did not make progress – it only took care of the major problem that the Supreme Court created when they changed the rules to say that people needed to file a complaint within 6 months – 180 days – of the first discriminatory paycheck – not that last one – which is a sensible thing that has been used for decades – but the first one, when most people don’t have any idea that they’re getting discriminated against. And when they do find out they want to try to deal with it some kind of way other than complaining to EEOC first. So the Supreme Court created a problem in the spring of 2007, and Justice Ginsburg said that Congress should deal with this and make it clear, and eventually they did. It was wonderful that President Obama was able to sign that bill as the first bill – first law – that he signed after coming into office. That helped a huge amount with public attention, but people probably think that that was making progress and it really wasn’t making progress. What will make progress is the Paycheck Fairness Act,

which is to strengthen the Equal Pay Act and its enforcement, and education, and so on and so forth, and that has already passed the House of Representatives once, or twice, I guess, it passed this year as well, and the problem of course is the Senate. Now, fortunately, we have one more Democrat in the Senate, which will probably be very helpful on this issue. There are a lot of other things they're working on, and I don't know what the timing plan is on that now, but that is in regard to equal pay for equal work, and it doesn't have to do with comparable worth. The bill in Congress that's been reintroduced several times over the past decade or so that deals with comparable worth is the Fair Pay Act, and that is to clarify that the Equal Pay Act of 1963 and possibly some other laws since then do include the concept – at least now, after they pass this bill – include the concept of comparable worth. Once we get the Paycheck Fairness Act passed, then we can really be educating again about comparable worth and its effect on salaries and the income of families, and the respect that there is or is not for women's work, and the salary adjustments that are needed and that can be used to do those appropriately.

JR: Great. Well, I think those are – I think we got through all my questions. Was there anything else you wanted to add that hasn't been covered? I know you've been interviewed a number of times in the past about this issue. Is there anything that hasn't gotten out about the story that you wanted to say?

JG: Well let's see. I don't think so. I think it's a – with these – yes, I guess there is. With the example of Minnesota, it really helps, because that was a really comprehensive solution which included union negotiations, and which is ongoing. They have to review their situation periodically and report every two or three years, and indicate how they're going to deal with any problems or inequities that have been shown in their review. Between that, the fact that there are across the country here and there a lot of jurisdictions that have looked at the issue, at least – done some kind of look at it and analysis of their situation. Perhaps some of them have done some salary adjustments and also the fact that around the world there has been work on this. Australia and Canada (in all the provinces except for British Columbia), have laws that require paying attention to women's work salaries in comparison with men's work salaries, and dealing with that. There was a strike that lasted – in British Columbia at the Vancouver Library – that lasted for 80 days a couple of years ago that was about comparable worth and they were not successful. I hope that they are able to continue to work on it, work on it again, or to help with getting legislation in British Columbia so that that will help them but apparently that's a very difficult thing to get done there, and that's why it hasn't happened yet. Also in the Greater Victoria Public Library I think, like a suburban area, a library that had had some studies done and that had not been able to get any success in negotiating. They were dealing with this right about the time of the strike in Vancouver and they were able to make some progress I believe in getting some of their salary adjustments implemented. So there are people around the world – undoubtedly other places I don't know about – working on this. It's just that in the United States we've had a period of – during the Clinton Administration there was attention paid to this but we weren't able to make much progress, and then of

course we've had the years since then when we haven't been able to make any progress, and now we're looking forward to step-by-step working on it again, along with a lot of other problems including wars, the health care situation, and things that really do take a focus and make it difficult to focus on this. Especially when here in our area things are not as bad as in places where there has not been any work done. So it makes it difficult for us to make it a priority when there are other major problems and our comparable worth problem is not as great as in places where no work as been done on it.

JR: Right. Do you know when the Minnesota program went into effect?

JG: The thing that comes to mind is something like 1987, some aspect of it, but I don't know for sure.

JR: Okay, great. Well, I think that's about it. I really appreciate your help.

JG: Well I appreciate being able to talk about it obviously.

JR: Yeah, I think this will be a big tool for researchers. As I think I mentioned in one of our emails, I don't know when this will be able to be transcribed, but at least we have the audio for now, and yeah. I'm sure we'll be in touch.

JG: Excellent.

JR: Great.

JG: Thank you very much for your work on this. I appreciate it.

JR: I appreciate it too.