Spring 2009

Interview with Kathy Devine

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Oral History
April 30, 2009

Transcription: Interview with Kathy Devine

Deseree Zimmerman: My name is Deseree Zimmerman and today is the date of April 26, 2009. This interview is taking place in the home of Kathy Devine, located in Chicago, IL. Umm, so to start it off. What are the years of your activism with the Anti-Apartheid Movement?

Kathy Devine: Uh, I was active, I mean I would go to the council many many times before I got involved with the labor network against Apartheid, which I helped organize. But the years of the labor network against Apartheid were umm from 1987 to 1995.

DZ: Ok, Could you please state your full name?

KD: Kathleen Devine.

DZ: Umm, what was the location of your activism?

KD: Well, I had a office at, we had several offices in various unions. But the main office was located in AFSME American Federation of State County and Medicinal Employees, local to thousand. Umm, which was, umm downtown-

DZ: In Chicago?

KD: In Chicago, right. And I also did some of the work out of my house and I also did part of the work out of the machinist district office in Forest Park.

DZ: Ok, umm, what year were you born?

KD: 1943

DZ: Where is your place of birth?

KD: Chicago.

DZ: Where were you raised?

KD: Chicago.

DZ: Uh, where is your father from?

KD: New Mexico, from a tiny town in New Mexico.

DZ: Where is your mother from?

KD: From Oak Park.

DZ: Umm, what is one of your earliest childhood memories?

KD: (Pause) My earliest childhood memory was probably when I was 3 years old when the landlady didn't like kids so she would always turn off the heat.

DZ: Owe.

KD: (Laugh)

DZ: Ok.

KD: (Laugh) I didn't understand much I just remembered that, but were you talking about that kind of?

DZ: Yeah, yeah.

KD: Thats probably the youngest thing I could ever remember. We lived in a apartment, umm, and umm, a few years ago I was walking down the street with a friend of mine and umm, I said this looks like the apartment I used to live in when I was a little tiny kid. Then I came home and looked at my birth certificate and it was.

DZ: Wow.

KD: Yeah, it was amazing, the building was in perfect shape. I remembered it from the ally way, they had the ally ways. But anyway, yeah.

DZ: Ok, what was your parents occupations when you were in grammar school?

KD: My father started, I don’t know where he was at the time, but he was a first supervisor of the Illinois telephone company, in grade school. And my mother was a part time pharmacist.

DZ: Ok, what was your favorite food as a child?

KD: (Pause) It certainly wasn't vegetables. (Laugh) My favorite food, probably Barbecue, Barbecued uh, uh something. I always liked Barbecued food.

DZ: What was your favorite subject in school?

KD: (Pause) History.

DZ: What kind of extra curricular activities were you involved with?

KD: In grammar school or high school?

DZ: Outside of high school.

KD: High school, umm, I was active, (Pause) in school, (Pause) umm, I don't remember specifically, umm I don't know, my college activity was better. When I was active in high school, I went to a all girls school that was taught by nuns. And I was always getting into trouble. (Laugh) Thats what I remember. Umm, umm, umm, I didn't like the rules, the ones that I thought were useless. There are rules they have for safety and things like that, but they have some just to control people. And I remember being half way in-between a few things.

DZ: Umm, what was your relationship like with your parents when you were in high school?

KD: Good, very good. (Mumbles) I was an involved person in a number of different, uh, I think I was involved in the history club or whatever. I don't really remember anything. But umm, umm, my parents were always supportive with whatever I got involved with. You know, because they thought kids should be active.

DZ: Umm, who was one of your biggest influences when your were in high school?

KD: (Pause) I, think, probably my father, who was the biggest influence outside of a public figure. I don't have a lot of recollection, I did not come from a political family like that or a activist family. My father always believed that you should be thankful for what you have. And umm, he made us all contribute back to the community. That was one thing we didn't have a lot of choice about, you should do it because you should be grateful for what you have a give it back. You know, we were a middle class family, you know.

DZ: Umm, when did you first become aware of racism?

KD: (Pause) I know it, (Pause) you know when, let me just put this into a little bit of a perspective for you. We didn't watch TV much in those days, we just didn't have obviously the internet and stuff like that, and so, (Pause) and we lived in white neighborhoods, I mean thats just the way people lived. It was whites and blacks and whatever. Umm, for the most part. So, in the early days in the Civil Rights Movement little things would come through. The first time I remember, I might have known something before this, the first time I really, really remember was having a argument in high school in the lunch room. (Pause) About the Montgomery bus boycott. I hope I have my years right, I think that was what it was about. But I remember because I remember some of the students talking about, how dare they, you know, and Im like, who the hell would want to ride in the back of a bus? You know, and thats my first recollection of really, you know, umm, (Pause) really became conscious of you know, how, people were already thinking people were wrong for doing this. And thats really one of the things that mobilized me over time was seeing what they did in the Civil Rights Movement, early Civil Rights Movement, and, umm, uh, things that your parents didn't tell us. My parents never told us anything bad but they didn't tell us anything good about it either. You know, it was like don' talk about it, so what you learned in school. When I heard other white students, I was white, when I heard other white students talking about it, uh, race, you know. And being afraid of blacks, thats when I became conscious of it and thats when I started arguing the other side. Which, I didn't know any african

americans at the time. I mean I had met a few, through my father, people he worked with. But, other than that, you didn't know, you just didn't know people when you were growing up. So.

DZ: (Cough) When did you first become politically aware?

KD: (Pause) Well certainly in high school. I was in high school when JFK was elected. You couldn't be anymore aware as a young person in 1960. (Pause) Umm, during that election I was in a Catholic school, of course there was a lot of Anti-Catholicism at that time. But umm, I was actually amazed how people were talking about how the pope was going to run for the white house. What? (Laugh) What? What are you talking about, you know. Umm, so yeah, it was in high school in the election of John F. Kennedy and a friend of mine who's parents were republican , kind of moderate republican. I don't think there was such a thing today, in those days there were. Somebody I knew in high school wanted me to go see JFK, to go to York high school. Do you want to go? And I said no I don't want to go. You know. (Laugh) Come on, so I went. And actually got to meet him. And I came home to my house and my uncle was in the living room. He was a avid Nixon supporter, and my parents were in the living-room and I said, I just met the next president of the United States of America! And my uncle says, I didn't know Nixon was in town. I said he's not, he's not going to win. (Laugh) But anyway, 1960 was my first. I didn't know squat but we spent our whole class in current events on that election. And you had to choose side and debate so I debated on the democrat side, but I started as a republican in that class. So you know, when I would just look at the issues I would debate them vary differently today but a yeah. What that to long of a answer?

DZ: No. What was your dream job in high school?

KD: What was my what?

DZ: Your dream job.

KD: Owe, I don't know if I ever had a dream job really. Umm, there were lots of things I considered. Umm, but I never really had a dream job. I wanted to be a good person (Stutter) Ill get to it when we talk about other things.

DZ: Ok, what were your expectations about going to college?

KD: My parents wanted us to go to college. Umm, It was vary hard for my father to go to college, having three jobs in a poor neighborhood. Umm, we had been ill during college and really had a tough time so he really wanted us to go to college and so did my mother. Umm, so they would like us to stay at home while we were going to college. So, no way, my oldest sister went away, then my second, my next oldest sister went away, and I wanted to go away. Umm, so I decided I wanted to go to California. My parents said, you can forget that! (Stutter) Your not going to California! (Laugh) Not that they didn't like California. They just thought it was above our status. Or what ever you want to call it. So they gave me a range, you can go within 300 miles and if you earn part of it you know. Which I did. So, I went to St. Louis University, I wanted to go to a urban school! That was part of the whole umm. (Pause) That was part of the whole era with poverty being raised as issues and things like that, I wanted to go to a urban area.

So I picked St. Louis University, in part because it was in the middle of the city, which it was. Not isolated from the realities of life and because it was judgment, the judgement had a great reputation as teachers, so thats where I went.

DZ: What was your concentration?

KD: Umm, my major was political science, but I was only one class short of a major in history, American history. And I also came close to majoring in Philosophy. (Stutter) I took a lot of Philosophy. But my major was political science.

DZ: Umm, what were your plans after graduation?

KD: I really wasn't vary directed. What I wanted to do at school was something that people do today but people didn't do it in those days, I wanted to take a year study over seas, during school. And I had some money because I was in a serious auto accident. And put the money from that auto accident that I was almost killed. And we had that money in the bank so, that plus the fact that I worked for many years… Is it easy to follow? I had work for many years part time in school from when I was 16. Umm, I would stock a little money away. So what happened is, I surprised my parents and told them I had enough money to go study over seas, for my third year of college and they wouldn't discuss it with me. (Stutter) So when I got, they said, your not doing that. (Laugh) You are not doing that, we will not pay our part of the tuition and stuff and we will not discuss it. Your in school to learn. So my goal after college is to learn, dad said, soon as your on your own you can do what ever you want. But when your in college and we're helping pay the tuition and your helping pay the tuition, you go to school. So, went to school and after college, I didn't know what I wanted to do for a living. (Laugh)

DZ: Umm, why did you choose to go to grad school?

KD: (Pause) Umm, I wanted to learn more and to be more serious than I had been in college. You know, umm, and I wanted to go to New York city. But I ended up in Washington DC because I got a full scholarship, to grad school. Umm, But it wasn't a bad experience and it wasn't a good experience, because the graduate school wasn't so hot. You know, so the good teachers I loved but some of them were just pathetic. And I said, why am I going to graduate school? So I quit!

DZ: What school was that in Washington?

KD: George Washington University.

DZ: Ok, umm.

KD: I wanted to go to New York University, which had a fine reputation for public administration. I was obviously looking for something along the lines of public administration. You asked me what? I don't know. Jobs were freer at that time, so you had a lot of choices. The one thing I knew I didn't want to go into a field that was considered a woman's field. That was the 1960's right, that was teaching or nursing or something like that was neither of which I

wanted to do. Not particularly because that was the way woman were challenged, but because I just had other interests. And was clearly in the public sphere I had interests. Public, government, Esc, but I didn't know what.

DZ: So what was your exact concentration in grad school?

KD: Umm (Pause) It wasn't public administration, but it was something. I forget. Umm, (Stutter) But it was a area of, umm (Pause). The one part of it I can tell you I liked was, I cant tell you the subject name because I don't remember and I didn't finish it. I finished all of my class work but I didn't finish my thesis. Umm, because I didn't have a adviser. Umm, but the one part of it I like which directed my future in part, was that I had taken two classes on constitutional law and first amendment rights. The concentrating on that was a unbelievably good, small class, was by far the best classes in graduate school. And it taught me to think about our rights.

DZ: Where did this take your occupation?

KD: It didn't take me anywhere because I didn't have a adviser. That was the schools fault not mine. I did have a advise and I wasn't sure what to do, and one of my roommates walked in. Owe I cant take this job, I promised I would take this job, and its with the federal government and I think you should go apply and take it. And I said, I didn't want to work with the federal government, I want to work with public administration. Which I thought the government was old fashioned, which it was. But I ended up taking the job for the summer, and stayed for 2 years.

DZ: In state?

KD: It was at the Department of Treasury and I stayed there for 2 years. In Washington on the job, in part because they were looking for younger and women, to do things and open the place up. This was during the Johnson years. And umm, when I came in the government was almost all white. And they were looking to reengineer new jobs and (Stutter) and I got sort of in the back door of the war on poverty. Ok, by this job and when I first took it, it was a summer internship. Ok, but then I stayed for to years. And worked in the personal department, working on reengineering new jobs and change jobs so people can come in with a certain level of wisdom. It was interesting. (Stutter) It was a vary dynamic time, so we say, and people were raising a lot of questions and I was one of those. So I hadn't planned on going into the federal government or anything like it, but because my roommate Kathy. Another Kathy. Umm, had this job that she promised she was going to take it but had to turn it down because she got something else. And I couldn't get a adviser at my college, to finish me thesis. Umm, because there was none available. So I took the job and ended up staying for to years. That was my first time (Stutter) that was my first time working full time in a summer internship.

DZ: When did you move back to Chicago?

KD: Well, I worked to years in Washington, after I had gotten out of school. (Stutter) Washington D.C. And saved every penny I had a traveled. And it was 1968 when I left. And Washington DC was on marshal law when after Martin Luther King died, was assented. And

umm, I was going to go travel a while. And then come home and work for Bobby Kennedy. In the presidential election. And when I was in Europe (Mumble) people did go back packing in those days, women traveling by themselves was very unheard of. You know, even my parents were like. Do you really want to do this? I said, yeas I really want to do this. I had heard on the radio that Bobby Kennedy had been shot. And I didn't know what to do. I wasn't going to support Humphrey because of the war in Vietnam. I didn't know what to do, so I traveled more. (Stutter) I traveled more and when I had came home, I had been gone 8 or 9 months. When I came home I had gotten a job offer in Chicago and I could make up my mind whether I wanted to work in Chicago or Washington. But, I decided to come and work on the war on poverty in Chicago. (Stutter) So it was early 1969.

DZ: Ok.

KD: Am I taking to long to answer?

DZ: No.

KD: Can you edit this?

DZ: Your good. Umm, how did you first learn about Apartheid?

KD: (Pause) Umm, well I joined the war on poverty in 1969, I mean I had worked in a less direct way in Washington D.C. But when I joined the war on poverty in Chicago in 1969, (Pause) there were a lot of people in the war on poverty that all expect Im incompetent, who were (Stutter) active in a lot of things. Very active and also there were people that didn't want anything to happen. (Stutter) It was a dual war on poverty. It was a dual thing, there were people who did want anything to happen and there were people who wanted everything to happen. The whole world, it was a time of great activism. Umm, thats where I started working with and becoming friends with african americans. And Apartheid was always known by them. You know, that was the first time I really got to know people well. And umm, thats probably when I first heard about it. And also when I joined a union. (Stutter) I joined a union (Noise/Music from outside) I went to my first meeting, umm, I went to my first meeting, umm, this is not Apartheid, but its related. I went to my first union meeting and I think we are going to talk about our union contract, and I go to our first meeting and they are talking about. Why are we supporting farm workers in California? And Im like, what the heck are you talking about? We're supposed to be here for a contract. (Laugh) And umm, but, that union made me conscious on how fighting for yourself is fighting for everyone else. And um, so, later when I heard about Apartheid and more, umm in depth. I mostly heard about it from the polish and black trade unionists whom I worked with on many things. You know, and that would have been not to long after that. I mean you knew it existed, but you didn't know what it was. And umm, sometime in that period when I began working with the union and getting more active with unions, with the labor movement. And worked with a lot of black trade unions. They made me conscious of it, wether I wanted to be or not. You know, and umm, we would go down to the consulate and picket on Martin Luther Kings birthday and stuff. I mean I don't know why we have a consulate here anyway, (Stutter) We do have a consulate for the South African government. And made a lot of scene even though I particularly didn't want to follow it.

DZ: Why did you get involved with the Anti-Apartheid Movement?

KD: (Pause) Well, (Stutter) as years progressed, right, your views change, (Stutter) or lets say they deepen. And so when I first got in I thought it would be a good idea to be a union member (Mumble) and fight together and all that kind of stuff. Then I started thinking, your not just fighting for you, your fighting for other people. You know, so you can support them and they can support you. Sort of go in a direction in your life right, and umm. (Pause) Did you ask me why?

DZ: Yeah.

KD: Umm, specifically, I had done some really good organizing, of labor coalitions. You know, umm, stating with the war on poverty, then when I got out, I just continued that. And umm, so in 1987, when I helped organize the labor network in the department, um. Several times different people had come up to me to see how to get unions involved. They are kind of asking outside of the labor movement, compared to inside the labor movement. There were people that were involved with the Anti-Apartheid in the labor movement. But umm, (Pause) people would ask me how to do it and finally I would say, look, you want to organize labor around this. Quit coming to people last minute and giving them 2 minutes, when they are in the middle of negotiation, and stuff like that. You got to help educate people if you want to get a base in the labor movement. We got a million members in Illinois, it takes some work to do this. You cant just walk through the door and get a hearing. You may get somebody in the program but you not going to get a base in the labor movement. So I was asked by people I knew, Prexie being one of them. And um, I was like, ok, I'll take a few months to organize a community, but we got to be able to do this. So labor can do it. Which means you have to go through their structures and you have to get approval and you have to take enough time to get it oked so its not just bounced off. You know what I mean? Its like just calling a neighbor and saying come out for a rally. This is like, I want to put united steel workers on this. You know what that means. You have to do some work to get that done. So I said, ok I'll do it for 4 to 6 months, to get it going and we'll go from their. And um, one of the reasons I did it was because I was asked, but also because that period of time was a vary wonderful time, for those of us activists in Chicago. Because, not only because we had major Washington in city hall, we had also won the city conceal. The only time in my life time. Umm, so we had done some things locally and had been able to win a lot. I thought well I can do something more international for a short period of time. (Laugh) I thought it was important, because I was always involved locally organizing campaigns and other things. So I did it because people asked me, but also because I thought it was important and also because it was a period of time when we were kind of rolling on a high. And I will never forget the day in 1985, when we had a rally for - Archbishop Tutu, thats the Tutu in South Africa. And before Harold came to office, the ANC wasn't allowed into city hall. I mean it was banned by the US government, it was called terrorist and all that stuff. And uh - imagine, you know, uh we can has conciliates in Chicago, but we cant open our doors to the ANC, was opposing the South African government. And umm, so there was a rally in Chicago in 1985, which was really inspiring. Where Harold and Bishop Tutu stood outside and said the door of city hall are now open. (Laugh) To the people of South Africa. Im crying my eyes out because, when you think of it over time, when you start, when you come from a neighborhood where you don't know anything about any of these things, you stick your toe in the pool, right? And you start beginning to find

out, then you start hanging around with African American Activists, right? And then you start finding out more. And umm, so, by that time we had elected a mayor and had elected all kinds of people and we had been been parts of movements. And so it just seemed like a logical progression. And when people asked me to do it, and I knew I had done a lot of good work bringing unions together on other issues and I thought, I think I can do this! I have a unique distinction, not to be wedded to one union. Im a member of the union, but because I work for myself, opposed to in plant, I had some freedom to try and bring unions together. Across racial and other lines, work lines and other things, public virus private employees, and stuff like that. And I had found out that I can do it. I decided to do it because I felt Apartheid should be getting support (Mumble) and it wasn't going to happen it you ran in and asked if you could get 25 people to support a rally next week. (Stutter) and the other thing that was vary important, was the time of getting involved in 1985 and 86. The mine workers in South Africa went on a huge strike. Ok and these are all the people who make your diamond rings and all this stuff. Where you get your diamonds for a lot of the diamonds in the world. And so the 350,000, if I remember correctly, went on strike, against this brutal government. I wont call is government, brutal regime of South Africa. I started reading more and more on it, and the mine workers union, nationally hired somebody to work with them from south africa, and stuff started getting in various union news letters, right? Peaking peoples conscious, about doing it, including my own. Why are we supporting them (Stutter) Its like a time when we were like, why aren't we standing up to them? The reason isn't because people don't want to do it, it because someone needs to sit down and figure out how to do it. You got to put the pieces together, you know what I mean? So umm, I decided I would be willing to give it a try, but first I want to go meet at union black trade coalitionists, so I did. And asked them what they thought, and they said we are with you on that. And so thats how I stared getting involved in doing it. Sort of a series of things that come together. You know, umm, the distinction of the work we did, opposed to other things. We wanted our unions to speak as a union. Not just individuals, I could speak as a individual. Right? So, why wasn't this union, that union and the other union on board on this, or were they? We didn't even know, you know. I work with the coalition black trade union, for the most part. Figuring out how to do it, I said, Ill do it if you guys do it with me. You know, and so they said, it a good idea. So, I was asked by people and what I could really say is it was a era. You know? Where you raised more questions and became politically astute, as you went along and learn more. So it isn't like I read it in a book or anything like that, because I didn't. Its that you became more conscious of racism. (Stutter) to understand Apartheid. I had a goal - I did it through books, did it through interviews, I spent the first few months before I did anything, figuring what it was all about. I mean understanding how a small government of people can control the rest. The question I raised with you earlier. I couldn't coordinate something I didn't know very well. So, I had to learn about it if I had to teach others about it. But the thing we know for sure is, they had hundreds of thousands of workers on strike in South Africa. There was nothing on the news in this country, you had to find out about it on BBC or other places. The British Broadcasting. (Pause) The whole world would celebrate Nelson Mandela's birthday, even when he was in jail. Except for this country. I figured there are ways to do things and I decided to try because I didn't think coming from the labor, saying get involved with this was vary effective. I've seen it with other things to get labor involved, its a bigger constituency, they have rule, conventions, there are things they have to get through and if you want to get support. And if you want to get activists want support from labor without going through all of the steps to get it. So when people

ask me who to get labor involved, Ill give them a suggestion but eventually its all with the comity. (Mumble) If CBT will do it with me, the Coalition of the Black Trade community.

DZ: What did your family feel about your activism?

KD: Well, Im not going to talk much about that - When I was younger, I was active. My parents thought it was great, I don't know if they would have thought so, they died when I was much younger.. So I don't know what they would have really thought. I know I was about 26 when my dad died, and he thought the stuff I was doing was great - like the war on poverty and my mom was always pretty enthusiastic too. But they both died when I was young, I mean relatively young - and um, they encouraged it. I have 3 sisters, and um, I don't know, I think um my activism meant I didn't have a career. Thats why I said - you asked me early on what I wanted to be, right. I was one of those kids that came out of the 60's and wanted to change the world - or make a difference is probably a better way of putting it. So - I think they'd think it was ok. But they don't know very much about me.

DZ: Ok. Um, how were other people you knew involved in the movement?

KD: In the free South Africa Movement?

DZ: U hum.

KD: I know a lot of people who were involved with it and a lot of people who didn't get involved in it. Um, but it touched people in a lot of ways that you didn't know. So, um, over time - if you were politically active - overtime everybody is going to be touched by it in one way or the other. - So some people were touched by it sometime in college - some people got touched by it in different ways, you know in a organization. Somewhere or the other along the lines their was a union. Our state of Illinois building in part by the South African steal while the steal companies were - de-industrializing the south side of Chicago. If you want to get workers riled up - a beautiful example of it is right downtown Chicago (laugh) right? People got involved in different ways, like the steal workers were easy because they were already involved. Um, but people I know I found out when I started doing - getting involved in a big way, right? That people had done all types of little stuff hear there and everywhere. You know, they had done something at church one time - It was one of those movements that touched people one step or the other. Your asking me if - some were more conscience of it, some were less conscience of it. A lot of times people were touched by it one place or the other. Owe yeah, 10 years ago lalalala. You know, or, does that make since?

DZ: Yeah.

KD: So, there were a lot of people touched by it, but there are a lot of people in this country that pay no attention to something happening over seas. Even though its our corporations that a helping make it happen.

DZ: Right.

KD: You know - I was rather surprised at how many people had been touched by it in some place or the other. It was either their union, their church - or their university or something like that, you know. It was one of those movements that reached out a lot. So over time people had been touched by it. I found a lot people I didn't know worked there and done something at least one time or the other.

DZ: I'm going to ask you a couple of mandatory questions.

KD: Huh?

DZ: I'm going to ask you a couple of mandatory questions. Um, what group. What kind of group, institution, or coalition did you work with or were apart of?

KD: Well. I coordinated the labor network against apartheid, which was unions - standing in solidarity with unions in South Africa. So it was - I guess you would call it a ad-hawk, it was a ad-hawk for several years. I call it ad-hawk because it wasn't a permeant institution, it was there to stand with the mine workers - it was union.

DZ: Ok, what was your role in the movement?

KD: I was the coordinator - there were two of us that were coordinators. (Pause)

DZ: Umm.

KD: And also, we two organized it and we two coordinated it and we played different roles in it.

DZ: Um, ok, what exactly was role, that you two played different roles?

KD: I mobilized the unions and he mostly did the work with South Africa.

DZ: Ok

KD: Because he had already knew them when we started. So it was kind of like - I tried to mobilize the unions of what I knew best, right? And he did a lot of the work that was going on in South Africa. You know, and go to conferences and things like that.

DZ: Tell me about conflicts or tension among Anti-Apartheid activists that you work with or supported?

KD: I don't think there was much conflict. I would say - that people were - there wasn't much conflict that I knew about. There were a few things that happened but - it wasn't like a lot of conflict. But um, one of the things - our role, to stand with unions in South Africa. Was a little bit different than the other groups and some people - they didn't say it to me very much. I sure that some people thought that - What's the role with the ANC - I'll be damned if I was going to get into that issue, I wanted unions involved into this issue. We were going to be debating on the politics of the world. And so, personally when you asked me that question, it is interesting

because (stutter) I was just floored. And um, but basically, I asked people to put their politics aside. They're other politics aside. Could w do this, could we actually have a group of unions, official unions. Meaning, we can speak in the name of, dot dot dot. - You know, stand up and support South Africa - and that meant, we could not be fighting about every union about conflict we've had over the years about foreign policy, and stuff like that, we just couldn't do that. We do this project and people thought it was great, and the UAW kicked it off and said to me, tell us what you want to do. They were my first meeting with the executive board of the region. I said, this is what we want to do - this is before we had our first meeting, this is what we wanted to do, if we could get it - they said, tell us what you want to do and they said we will approve it, but we are not approving if you do other things. If you stick to your agenda, we will stick with you. If you do not stick with your agenda, then we will not stick with you. - Thats the lesson that divides, right? You ask organizations especially big organizations, to support you and you have to tell them what you are going to support. - I had a lot of people ask me, a lot regional directors wanted to know, what do this mean, to who? What were we going to support in this. So um, we came up with a agenda that we thought was good, that I've worked with the coalition of black trade unionist. People joined it, so we didn't have a lot divides, the divides were people who didn't think that we gone far enough. You know, to me its just to bad. If you want a big union to be involved or a big organization to be involved, you have to give them a agenda, you can't just take off on anything or whatever, all over the place. Even if you think its right, so as a individual you may get involved with things that you didn't ask your organization too, you know, am I making since?

DZ: Yeah.

KD: - I think that one of the people who was active in the - Chicago Comity and Solidarity um with South Africa said I love everything you do, I just don't like that you do everything. (Laugh) So that was our divide, people wanted us to do more. We weren't in there to do more or to do everything, we were there to stand in solidarity with every time a union took action and we did more than anybody ever expected any of us to do. Um, it came at a tremendous time for South Africa because we were about to raise resources and money and stuff like that, that we couldn't do as individuals. Um, it came at a time when South Africa was on a break. We needed more individuals speaking out, we needed big institutions speaking out, we needed other things speaking out, especially not just from the coast. People speak out from California and New York, but what about Peoria, Illinois? It makes people nerves when they start marching in Peoria or East St. Louis or all of these other places, it does. And the message was to give the message to South African government, that we are not going to be still. So we did what we wanted to do, I the terms of - I remember people wanted us to do something and I said, that is not within the agenda. We agreed to work with unions so we didn't do it and some people didn't like that. If you want to go with big institutions than you have to let it slide, which also means your sinking your roots down and you want people to be activists - At the conventions we had speakers - got teachers in classrooms. Union teachers in classrooms to do their whole class about South Africa as a way of educating people - So, I don't think there were any major disagreements, probably the biggest one would be the trouble with the plumbers hall - but I don't want to get into that here.

DZ: Um, What Liberation movement did you support in South Africa?

KD: What?

DZ: What Liberation movement did you support in South Africa?

KD: - We supported the mass democratic movement, it changed names over time (Laugh). But, essentially we were supporting workers solidarity, International Workers Solidarity. So, while other people were using liberation names, we were working for works solidarity. Before it was very well known in this country at all - It wasn't exactly a main stream thing. (Laugh) Thats what we supported, we were supporting international workers solidarity. International Unions Solidarity.

DZ: What national or international organizations, coalitions and groups did you work with or support?

KD: Um, are these your teachers? (Laugh) Um, I supported, I worked with the uh um- Coalition of Black Trade, The Coalition of Labor Union Women, both those are national groups and local groups, The International Metal Workers Confederation, and um and any union or union body that wanted to join us. We organized, so, umm, uh, plus ?? South Africa which was the labor federation that grew up in the eighties, which was the (stutter) I think was not too long before we formed. I mean when we supported the mine workers, right, the strike, mine workers, which happened in eighty five and eighty-six, I think it was. The federation that we supported in South Africa, of unions, was the congress of south Africa trade unions, which was formed in the early eighties. So, it's not like it hadn't been around for twenty years, we hadn't supported it. You know it was relatively new, and well the AMC (stutters) many people in the AMC were in exile. This South Africa trade union movement grew up was killed off ?? In the nineteen eighties under the congress of South Africa trade unions, which is a militant, strongly organized, uh, union federation that we could follow, because they were organized, we could follow them. In other words, you could figure out how be supportive, because they were pretty well organized. You know, they knew ow to let people know what they were doing even though they lived under restrictions under South Africa. They, because they were part of The International Metal Workers Federation and The International Public employees Federation all unions are part of an international body. Those international bodies, which is different then what other peoples (stutters) other people working in the free South Africa movement, hooked in different things, but in labor we did it through the international bodies like the free South Africa, I mean excuse me, the uhh, International Mine Workers, people like that. They were like a channel of communication between the workers in South Africa, so we would know how we could do things right and umm, to help, so, for example, can I give you an example? When Ford, perfect example of what unions could do internationally, uhh, we were asking companies to divest, get out of South Africa, stop supporting the economy, etc. Umm, and that took awhile to figure out how to explain that to workers because the effect of what the saying is, we want you to take our jobs away, in some cases-right? They say, what? So the Norwegian labor movement did a magnificent ?? Film called Changing, Changing a Country and it did for western workers particularly American workers so that we would understand what they were trying to do in South Africa, you know, and umm, an what workers are trying-what they really wanted- And they were asking companies to divest-cause they wanted that economy to fall. And so, what does Ford do

or any other American company, who was a large part of the South African economy, uhh, why that was? Guess why. (Laughs) Ford, when they divested, the company, I think they were basted in Port Elizabeth's South Africa. Umm and uhh, they took part of the workers pensions with them (stutters), so we organized Ford workers to go in Ford meetings with the company and protest what they were doing in Port Elizabeth, and it sort of blew them away cause you know you have a meeting and Ford-United States somebody would stand up and say, "Excuse me Mr. President of Ford (laughs) Why are you doing this?" -And then we would educate people about what was happening. "Why are you doing this to the workers in Port Elizabeth? We asked you to divest in from-(laughs) We didn't ask you to take their money from them." You know those kinds of things. We always had inside knowledge. There was a lot of American companies over there and we were able to do that but we were able to do that coordinating with either Cusatoo?? Or with somebody that knew Cusatoo??. In that sense, we were not dealing with as much exile community like many people who were working on pre South africa stuff. We had a deal with what was underground with South Africa, what was going on with the company, what was going on here, and you know that was a little bit different. But the group the Congress of South African Trade Unions. And we didn't always do it directly. New York would lots of times be in touch with them and my co-coordinator, my coordinator, (stutters) he would be in touch with people in South Africa and then I would just go out and do what I needed to do, which was get people ?? We had a very good coordinator of different group-labor network in umm, New York City and so they would keep in touch with Cusatoo, which was the main group we supported in South Africa, congress of south Africa Trade Union, which was a non-racial trade union confederation that grew up in the early eighties, and umm, which the South African government tried to crank down on too late

DZ: Ok. Why did you work with these organizations and not others?

KD: Because it- (stutters) South African trade unions was the dominant trade unions group in south Africa. It was, umm, clearly had correspondent groups here like United Mine Workers which was very much supportive of what was happening of the trade unions of South Africa and same with the United Auto Workers. We supported Cusatoo cause as I mentioned to you umm, we were not picking the government, we were standing in solidery with the workers in South Africa who were recently militant. Umm and umm, that what we saw in a role, that's what we thought the role of labor should be, not just could be in international solidery work. It was standing up with workers who were taking action and the umm, so we stood with the congress of South Africa trade unions and I recall meetings with AmC at the very beginning of a we were starting to organize and umm, a person who sat at the meeting with me was Harold Rogers said umm, tell them what you're planning to do, tell them what the plans are and see what they think and I said this is what we are planning to do. That's what labor should be doing. But as far as unions go, unions are always a stand with workers. That is what or role is and that is what it should be and the workers can umm, take I if they tell us in South Africa to do this that-Nelson Mandela's our representative- We're sending them to your country please raise money for the election bla bla bla fine. Right, but it should come from the workers and so the people we work with called the congress of South Africa trade unions, the group we worked in support of I should say, and it affiliates, mine workers, metal workers, etc.

DZ: Ok. Umm, how many people we involved with the Chicago Anti-arpartheid labor coalitions?

KD: It wasn't Chicago. It was Illinois and somewhat midwest. I don't know. I mean there no- there were-there were dozens of affiliates of the international union that were involved with us But I can't tell you because we were not the one that brought people together we were one that went into our union to try and work so it's a little bit hard- We had a steering?? committee that uhh, changed- Had a couple dozen people on the steering?? committee from different unions And umm, but there was no- I mean I can't give you an answer to that cause it's umm, we had like hundred people from unions and we had nobody in other unions and hundreds in other unions and we you know- I mean there's no- Our idea of organizing it was to get people in each union to be able to do things. So there's no exact number but of the people who were part of the labor network in terms of unions umm, it was umm, it was, I don;t know I'll give you a list but it- The affiliated unions- all the locals, umm twenty something international unions. In other words, they were part of us.

DZ: Ok. What did you use to communicate with other members of the movement?

KD: Umm, (pauses) We used our union- I mean we're all activists in labor so we used all our- we did our own conferences, we used speakers and conventions, we used -sent people around to a meetings sometimes, we did a lot of work to try and get people to put stuff in their union newsletters, you know. We'd send them materials to put in cause that's the most effective way to get the union members- Some unions I reported to regularly, meaning I every time the auto workers, the steel workers were ?? Had a meeting one of us usually would meet but not only umm, had to go to the meeting and tell them what's up and give them an update for the purposes of educating people. Um, so we would go to their conferences, their local meetings, their regional meetings, their- in some of the smaller cities outside of Chicago we set up educational programs where all the unions would come and find out- It was really different-there were a lot of different ways we did it. We used films, we used speakers but we used mostly union speakers. I mean, in other words, we would try and educate people within the labor movement so they could be-when they were in their own union, they would be informed enough to at least go and tell people what needed to be done, etc you know and how you work on people who have shares on stock in a company who's investing in South Africa-What you do about that and so umm, it's not-it's more if you have an organization and you have certain tools cause our thing was network to get through as many people as we could in the labor movement in the midwest and umm we hit it wherever we had an opening and wherever we had time to do it, you know. We did a lot of speaking, a lot of meetings, a lot of passing out information, a lot of fliers, some demonstrations, and umm, and then we had a pretty active steering committee which would- every time they would do something in South Africa, the labor move would do something in South Africa-We did a lot of stuff. You know, so let's say they were gonna have a one day strike, they have political strikes, more than just strikes for wages, they had a lot of political strikes especially cause- and umm, political strike meaning they're going to support something in the-you know, the new labor relations builder or they want to pose the crack down labor, which was really bad, um, in certain periods, right? They would have a one or two day strike where the entire country, (mumbles) the working part of the country (mumbles) everybody would stay home-called a stay home strike, you know-when they did something like that we always took

actions over here. When you asked how we connected, right if they were going to do something in South Africa, then we would use that as a day to go talk to every county board member and telling them what they should be doing to South Africa that related to the county, or if you know, we had to do more influence on either whether it was sanctions or taking actions, divesting, there were a lot work was just- informative, you know keeping people -of what's happening because you couldn't read about the stuff in the newspaper. If it was it was such a ?? you couldn't make any difference. But, if something was going to happen there, we took the advantage of going - doing something apparent here so they would pay attention-they would look at the paper-and they would because we were doing something here with signs and you know-and we used every tool we could use, banners to big huge banners people could paint, umm, that we would carry around to every union and put up . You'd asked what materials and ways that we can do things or ways to communicate, you know, we had posters up at every union, umm, I mean unions are gathering places for a lot of workers especially local unions so there's many ways to communicate with them exist and what you do is find out the best way to communicate with them, you know when they meet, when they got a speaker, when they allow us-and they would in turn ask us for help. Asked about racism a lot union committees came to me during those years and asked me uhh, if I would in turn help them cause African American workers couldn't get to through the whit workers and why this was important, would I come and talk to them about that. I said yeah. So, you know, it was a two way street, they didn't know how to (stutter) they couldn't get through sometimes to white workers. And so I spoke to many audiences of white workers about why it was important that we stand and on behalf of the workers of South Africa, workers of China, that's how workers of international labor started cause we wanted people to support us we should be supporting them. Anyway.

DZ: What was the typical day like?

KD: (Laughs) Well, since nobody had a job in this thing, I coordinated but I coordinated almost full-time. I worked part-time. I don't know I had a lot of volunteers over here working with me. Kept ridiculous on the contacts we had in labor so you know how to reach people, when to reach people, where to reach people, a lot of small meetings,you know a few people at a time. Me with the committee, who was going to put on a speaker with the convention of five thousand people. You know it was just a lot of meetings, but a lot of small meetings, couple people, five people, ten people. Umm, a lot of phone calls.

DZ: Where did your groups meet?

KD: Well, we met at unite hall which was (mumbles) which is a beautiful union hall. That's where our steering committee met ok. We organized a steering committee made up of unions and we met at (mumbles) we came unite umm, but the day to day work wasn't done at unite. The day day to day work was either done at my house or Ashmee?where I had half an office, half a big office or at the union. I mean if I was working with a union I went to where they were we didn't ask them to come to us. We went to them. That's the way you organize. That is the way you organize. (laughs) That's what it means to organize. You go out to people and find them and get their support. That's how you win support for boycotts, that's how you win support for things-people that you don't know. You find the people and you expand the list that's how you - I know that's something that not everybody agrees cause a lot of people bring everybody

together but I'm really the opposite kind of an organizer. For me you want to organize people, you go out there, you go to their church, their union, their school, whatever and you go and talk there. That requires resources which we didn't have but we had a lot of good volunteers and umm, including myself and that's the way to reach the people that you couldn't otherwise reach. They're not going to come to your meeting but I can go to theirs. So when you asked where we worked, I worked from my house you know on my living room table. Umm and I had an office in the union and we had meetings. I could meet at any union practically if I wanted but practically any union if I wanted to find room for us. But I met there you know for other people- I would bring people with me. Cause to me that is (mumbles) to me that is what organizing is about. It is reaching out to people as opposed to the other way asking people to come here cause then you'll only get the people that volunteer. I want to reach the people I haven't converted yet, you know the people that's kind of like oh yeah that's kind of important bye, you know. Thats how I became active cause people came after me and I'm just passing that on.

DZ: Umm, what were your responsibilities?

KD: Well, since I helped create the organization (laughs) whatever, I mean you know. It isn't like a job. This is a - We created an organization and it worked I mean we got out the brown well and all that stuff and umm our responsibilities were to figure out what to do with it, where to go with it, how to get support with it for -How to build international labor support for the workers of South Africa. You know so it could be anything (mumbles) doing anything,whatever we needed or organizing to make sure it would happen. One thing that I think probably some people- We didn't bring in- We weren't trying to bring in speakers to unions (pauses) (mumbles) We were trying to bring in (mumbles)When you go on strike you want support. When they go on strike they want support. You want to know about labor unions in South Africa we are here to tell you about it and they just ate it up. Cause they had said they heard a lot about South Africa. They didn't know that there were unions there, they didn't know there where unions in their field there, they didn't know the union they was, and they we brought speakers from South Africa. We brought people from South Africa to many meetings. We hosted many South Africans to come in so when you ask what I did on a day to day basis, whatever sometimes I did a tour with the state of Illinois with a South African worker. Sometimes I did you know,responsibilities were whatever provided ourselves the opportunity to build international labor solidarity and to push sanctions against South Africa cause for me it was the key thing for me to do politically on the issue of South Africa to push sanctions and because labor doesn't come in certain districts, right? You go down state to southern Illinois, you don't think that the congressman down state isn't putting sanctions into South Africa, well we made sure their workers weren't in their offices. Right? You can get the people with their constituence you know so I don't know if I'm running on that or if that makes sense.

DZ: It does make sense, yeah. Great. What problems did you face during activism?

KD: Sleep.
DZ: Hmm?

KD: Sleep. I wanted to sleep- I mean I had life too but I mean you know it's hard to have a life when you're doing that stuff. Uhh, but sleep. Umm, I mean essentially the problem is one- How

do you keep an organization dynamic and speaking to the people you want to speak to, which is not necessarily people in the room? You know how do you keep reaching out to people? I mean so hen you ask me what problems, is that what you're asking?

DZ: Yeah.

KD: Umm, Keeping momentum going, keeping a diary, you know a person- How we doing on time?

DZ: We're doing ok.

KD: How do you keep, umm, how do you keep things moving, focused, attention those kinds of things, you know, and umm, and i learned later- You know I learned over the years- I may have been called the coordinator, the chairperson, it really didn't matter what they call it, the fact of the matter is I was an organizer, that means you're making sure that something is achieved, right? The problems you face in that is, that you face in any organization, how ?? how do you, its all kinds of things that you need to do to keep things moving in a row to get people in the same room for an agenda and get them on the same page. That is never an easy job. It is just never an easy job, but I learned that there was something that I would have never had a career if i was ever anything in my life it was able to get everybody on the same page, on the same page I mean, why are we here, who are we doing this for, how are we going to do it, and that kind of stuff. So, to me that's the hard part about building a movement, building solidarity and stuff and that's not the initial stages. The hard part is maintaining it and staying on focus. You know in that- Somebody will take you over here and somebody will(mumbles) We wanted labor to play a role in the overthrow of Apartheid and there are times when you need those large institution there. The membership of various organizations could already be active through the coalition, labor union women, coalition of black trade unions, but how do you get the institution, you know, in supportive, in a critical time? We had to keep the hard part-the difficult parts were trying to maintain your sanity, you know, when everybody's like, you know, why don't you go this way, that way, the other way, or whatever and not get the- How do you move something, how do you create something. And umm, that is just something that I'm good at and it's a very wear and tear it's a very hard- It's not an easy thing to do. and so you don't do it all your life, you don't do it everyday of your life- You would die at forty, you know. I mean there is a lot of stress in (stutters) Cause you have to make sure that every part of your group coalition is playing a role, every union can find a way to contribute, every you know, it's not- And you don't have staff, so how do you do it? You do it by wits, using your wits and- The hard part- That's why I said sleep because its a lot like being a campaign manager. You don't sleep much. But umm, if you want to make something happen, if you want to be a part of something, and you want to feel apart of something, to learn something, etc. you got to spend the time. And so and one argument is because we had a pretty focused program if you wanna call it that, that we sat out in the beginning, had all the unions go on so we didn't go back to (mumbles). Umm, the hard part was just finding the time to do you know, ohh I could do so much with teachers in the teachers union, getting out to school both teacher unions (mumbles) opposing teachers unions were part of us. We wanted people to do things but to do that you had to spend some time with them. You know everybody's got jobs, you know so time was the biggest problem. We could of done a lot

more- We did a lot but we could of done even more. We didn't have the time of the day to do it. A part of the process with organizing was, which was why I wore my organizing shirt today umm, because that's - what my generation, you know, grew up on organizing (mumbles) We were going to change this country but (mumbles) Ronald Reagan, George Bush and all those (mumbles and laughs) I mean there's a reaction to it but you have to organize to change and in that process you are not only helping South Africa but you're helping the labor movement here so people became more aware of international solidarity, international workers solidarity, two way street and thats a real significant thing.

DZ: Hmm, thank you. Umm, how were you compensated for your participation with the movement?

KD: I wasn't. I got my expenses.

DZ: You got your expenses?

KD: Well the expenses of the organization and if I used my phone went sky high. I got my phone reimbursed and stuff like that but I wasn't copt.

DZ: Ok. Umm, what other other work did you do outside of your years as an activist?

KD: Say that again

DZ: Like, what other, like, did you work part-time while you were an activist, or?

KD: Well, let me tell you how I worked for the next thirty years cause it's all the same, I mean it's all sort of related. I was looking for a job in nineteen eighty, nineteen seventy-nine and umm – Somebody asks you to do something and uhh, I've been organizing- and anyway in nineteen seventy-nine I was looking for a new job and umm, I started working on stuff out of my home (mumbles) right? And uhh, I could write out of here, I could organize out of here, I could could do all these things that fit into the institutional (mumbles) I could organize in my living room and so I loved when I worked in South Africa. I could organize stuff out of my house. I did it when I lived long before that time but before uhh, nineteen seventy-nine I was looking for a job, umm I had done what I did when I lived in Lakeview before that-The best way to form a committee was to have a dinner, invite everybody over and have the best damn food in the world and make them sit on the floor and to talk and to not leave until we come up with a plan or something like that. There's different ways of getting a group to start molding. So when I was was looking for a job in nineteen seventy-nine to nineteen eighty I wasn't sure what I wanted to do next and umm, a couple union leaders said to me what would it take to keep you working as you are working now and contact with various people, and so you would you be available to have a campaign so we would have an organizer ready. I said I don't know about this cause there weren't many people that did this and so I decided that maybe that was a good route for me that I was on my own, for myself, with various unions and pulling people together and stuff like that the kind of stuff that not everybody can do or run institutions- It's harder for people to pull together from various places so I had to try it but I had health insurance and union card and so I bought into health insurance plan (mumbles) I

joined the CWA (mumbles) writer, I was a writer. What I did was write and I had – thirty years later- That's what I did so I'd worked for myself, contract with somebody doing bla bla bla bla (waves hands) you know writing for them or organizing a committee for them or whatever while I was doing the South Africa work, during the years I did the South Africa, I actually didn't do as much. I mean I didn't work as much for pay because you can pick and choose how much you were going to take when you work for yourself. So I could do that so I wrote for some groups you know and I always kept my organizing and my paid work separate. I mean I never tried to put it in one thing. So I would write for one group and you know, umm, do the South Africa work- I only needed to work part-time because- I didn't owe any money at the time when I did South Africa, uhh coordinating the labor work, I didn't owe any money . What I was thinking about doing, right? I paid off any bills I had. I made sure that I didn't start a debt and didn't owe any money for a car like that you know. Umm, and so but I earned income working for some groups, a couple of which were in the labor network, but a couple of which were not and then I just kept doing it and found it was a good way to organize- So we needed something special for the streets and a good campaign were we might get somebody elected and be surprised you don't have me available. You have some flexibility as opposed to having a regular kind of job.

DZ: Ok. How did your organization help fund Nelson Mandela's election?

KD: How did it what?

DZ: How did your organization help fund Nelson Mandela's election?

KD: Oh, well we had- We asked every union to contribute and many did- I never kept it complete count but labor raised a considerable- It wasn't out organization didn't do it. Our affiliates, the union affiliates did. And they raised millions.

DZ: Wow.

KD: Huh?

DZ: I said wow.

KD: They raised it through their members (mumbles) Whatever. It didn't matter. As long as you know but – The whole about having we were making people conscience of thing, there was no worry people were going to give. I mean there wasn't any question because we'd been working – especially, I mean certainly, some unions in particularly. But a lot of them, really, and umm, were very supportive. You know? And the more you let people know about what was happening there – we had done the ground work. Not just here but else where. And the ground work had been made many many years before – the coalition of the black trade union, within the labor union, so that the people who were active in labor were conscience of the South African Movement. And were conscience about the issues of South Africa, so when it came time, its like a piece of cake. It may not have been enough, but its – there's already a relationship there. So, when push comes to shove, labor gives.

DZ: Yeah.

KD: Umm, a lot of people don't understand a lot about the labor movement. There was a lot of money raised in the labor movement and labor was a large part of coordinating the things that went on. You know, the UAW went to Detroit when Mandela came, umm – I trying to think of which union went to New York. When they coordinated the rally at Yankee Stadium, because, you know, they had a lot of resources and time, and staff that they could put into it – when push comes to shove. So they gave money and they – gave resources to the election. I don't know if there is any kind of figure some where. It was a lot – there was a lot of – checks written – I mean we raised some in Chicago – but the big money in labor at a international level, and um, - also, it wasn't just for Mandela. Money was gave for the strikes as well, you know? to get there.

DZ: Right.

KD: And umm, the UAW did a real interesting thing – during the Mayekeso campaign, umm, they did this big campaign that had a lot of money getting this guy out of jail. (Noise) But, when I saw that they were (Noise) – I didn't know at the time, because they said, you know, they wanted to convince the South African government that they were serious. And so they sent the head of Yale University, they paid for his way to go and monitor the trial in South Africa. That costs a lot of money, right? umm, and they were not to happy about that but, he got there and he went and he did it. He wasn't one of us, he was just – are you following me? We gained in a lot of ways. It wasn't just for Mandela, it was in some of the fights along the way. - Some of the things you wouldn't have seen, certainly at the strikes on South Africa – most of it had been built up ti support unions here and support unions there, vice, versa. So, we gave for Mandela, and our unions, and many unions. But I don't know who's got the record for that. I don't know who's got the record for that, there is no – I mean no body kept tabs on it. But, it was a lot. It was a lot. It was a lot. At the ? convention of 1993 – they – I think they presented him, with either a pledge or whole money of about half a million, that the administer remembers. I mean, there were some big time collections. Union conventions are always a riot, when they collect money. Because people are pretty generous – and then people always raised money to go to South Africa, for the election. Many of them went, I mean, many observers – We also did things for buses when it came to going to Detroit, New York, you know as a reconciled member. Um (Mumble) but I couldn't have been any prouder – because how many unions came through all the way across the board. You know, I mean, there were some, that didn't give us support, but as a labor movement, it came through in a big way, when push came to shove. And umm, umm, when South Africans started sending out feelers, before the election, umm, ? Your teacher will know.

DZ: Who was it again?

KD: Gotcha Brudalasy (?) - well what I was going to say, they would send people, to the United States, right? And there were more to the South African government than there were for the people of South Africa. They started sending, who were, people of color. Right? Umm- No union, I mean I found churches these people that they should have had speaking because – we shouldn't be inviting – We wouldn't have the Apartheid government, so why should we

having somebody else who is in essence representing the Apartheid government. Right? Come and speak at our church. Right? And, are you following me? One of the wonderful things about freeing Nelson Mandela, was that there were millions of people around the world who know about him as a concept, as a concept. They didn't know him. They hadn't been born when he went to jail. You know? And umm, its empowering if you hadn't connected people at that level, right? Then you start understanding the other levels. And so, thats the kind of activism, that to me is meaningful. You connect people at one level so they start making - understanding other levels. You know? Putting them into a program and not tell them about, you know. But, you don't tell them, I don't know if I'm rambling here or not. Its, to me, being active, not being active just to be active. It means being active to do something, get somewhere and teach something, and move from there. We don't have to - accept in this country. We don't have to accept terrorism - I don't mean terrorism from, over seas. I'm talking about - we don't have to except things in our government. The only reason we do it is because, we don't feel that we could change it. You know, so, to me activism is about changing peoples view, of what, it means to make change. I'm still active, but I find it harder to still be active. But I think that there is a lot of people who mouth some, but they haven't gone into their neighborhood and come up with a group that could fight this or do that. You know who can empower a bunch of people, so that they feel empowered because if thats really what it is then they can feel perfectly comfortable standing up and articulating issues their own way, you know and coming up with solutions and suggestions. Ways to get things done. Umm, that what I'm about, thats what kind of activism I'm about. So, I was just proud of what labor did. Thats all I'm saying, I mean that hard time understanding the concept sanction of the essence that they were asking us, were people to take their jobs, and they did it, they did understand and they came fully supportive of it, I think they learned a lot about the South African Trade Union. So, I was very proud of what the unions did, even though, I've had fights with many people on occasion about many thing that wasn't even about South Africa. You know, umm, I thought they did the right thing, at the right time, at the right place. Thats what I'm was most proud of. You know?

DZ: Thank you. Um, well that concludes the interview with Kathy Devine and Deseree Zimmerman on April 26, 2009, in the home of Kathy Devine, located in Chicago, Illinois. So, thank you again, for everything. Is they anything you would like to add?

KD: No, I don't think so.

DZ: Ok, thank you.