

## Interview with Millicent Fenwick

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AMBASSADOR MILLICENT FENWICK

Interviewed by: Robert Miller

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This is a record of an oral history of Millicent Fenwick, prepared in collaboration with the Women Ambassadors Program and the Association for Diplomatic Studies, for deposit in the Foreign Affairs Oral History Program at the Lauinger Library of Georgetown University. Mrs. Fenwick was Ambassador to the United Nations Agencies for Food and Agriculture (FAO) at Rome, Italy, from June 1983 to March 1987. The interviews were conducted on December 17, 18 and 23, 1985, by Mr. Miller at the FAO headquarters at Rome, using guidance and questions prepared by Mrs. Morin.

*Q: We'll start this conversation by asking what normally would be some pretty indiscreet questions, and the first one, of course, is where and when you were born, your hometown, and some background on your youth and growing up. So, let's start by asking you where and when were you born.*

FENWICK: I was born in New York on February 25th, 1910, but my hometown was never New York. My hometown was Bernardsville, New Jersey. We went to town, the family did, only in the extremely cold winter months. The house in the country took a ton of coal a

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day to heat, and that meant someone's entire activity, so we went to town for the very cold winter months, but the rest of the time we lived in Bernardsville.

My mother came from Hoboken, New Jersey, where her ancestors had lived since they bought the land at an auction right after the Revolution. It was what was called the island of Hobbuk, and it had been given by Stuyvesant, the Dutch Governor, who came here in 1635 with his sister and her three children. She was a widow, and she had three children, Nicholas, Balthazar and Samuel Bayard. He couldn't give land to a woman, so it was given to her second husband, but the Bayards inherited it and kept it until "Weeping Willie" Bayard decided in the Revolution to be a Loyalist. He fled to England. His place was sold in an auction—I think it was 1784—and John Stevens, the "Treasurer on Horseback of New Jersey," and my mother's ancestor, bought it, and that's where the family lived, and where my mother was born and was married.

My father came from St. Paul, Minnesota. His father was an interesting man. He became a brevet Brigadier General in the Army, the Union Army, having formed his own little group. He went to the University of Palermo because he wanted to grow wine vineyards in California.

*Q: May I interrupt for a moment? You say Palermo, on the island of Sicily here in Italy?*

FENWICK: That's correct. I don't know how he happened to choose that, except that his mother left New York where my grandfather was born in 1830 and moved to the Mississippi and he went to a Jesuit school, and I think it must have been the Jesuits in this school that gave him the idea of going to Palermo and starting vineyards. Anyway, he got to California and then not long after the Gold Rush, when the Civil War started, he formed his own little company and joined the Union Army, and wound up in Kentucky and married there. He must have known the last remaining member of the expedition that Jefferson sent to the coast. Do you remember? What was it called? I've now forgotten.

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*Q: Lewis and Clark?*

FENWICK: Lewis and Clark. I think Lewis was killed in a bar on the way to report to Washington. Clark was left in this Kentucky town. Somehow or other, grandfather wound up with his personal papers, because many years later, when his daughter died in St. Paul and his desk was gone through, in his desk was found a missing section of the personal papers, the other half of which Huntington had given to Yale.

It started quite a lawsuit between the Federal Government who said, "It's ours," the family who felt that they had some (rights), but they withdrew very nicely from this picture, and the lawyer for Yale (who) managed to reunite it to the Yale section. So that was my father's (background). He went to Yale himself as an undergraduate with his brother, and met my mother when he came to stay in the country in Bernardsville with a Yale classmate. They married and they had a house in New York, as I say, 70th Street, and then we lived in Bernardsville in the summer.

My mother died on the Lusitania. She insisted on going to England in the middle of the war, 1915, May, and was warned against it, but she was very headstrong. My father wouldn't let her go alone, of course, so the two of them set off on the Lusitania. There was no room in the lifeboats for men, so my mother got into the lifeboat, and it tilted over, as sometimes happens, and she was never seen again. But that was 1915, and my father remarried in December of 1917, and so I had a stepmother for the rest of the time as a child.

We had always gone to church with my mother, to the Episcopal Church, very high church. The house in Hoboken had a chapel and a downstairs room for the chaplain, and it was all very high church and very serious. Mother took us, I can remember, with the horses, of course, because in those days when you had to get on time somewhere, you took a carriage; you didn't take one of these fancy new inventions, the automobile. If you went to church or to the station, you took the surrey and the horses. And I can remember going to

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church with my mother in those days, pushing buttons in the grey duvetyn cushions of the surrey, pretending I was turning the horse right and left.

We had cars, and I can remember Mother dressing for the drive. She'd put on a big hat and veil with isinglass in the front so she could see. The veil went over her shoulders and down around her throat. Then over that would go a white cotton dustcoat with big mother-of-pearl buttons and white cotton gloves, and Daddy would wear a very sporty cap and goggles. And they'd set off in the car for what was known as a "spin." It was a kind of sport for Sunday afternoon. And we had a variety. I can remember the old Packard. It had two seats in front with, oh, they were buttoned seats, you know, buttoned leather seats, and lanterns and leather mud guards, and behind the two leather seats was a platform with a little brass rail and a stool for the footman, if there was a footman. I don't think we ever had footmen. You could put your golf bags, though, on the floor, and they wouldn't fall off, thanks to the rail. And in winter that rail and the little stool came off and a cab was put on which closed it up for the winter. So you had a back seat more covered over, and then a black leather awning went out over the two front seats where the chauffeur was. Everybody, of course, bundled up. No such thing, you see, as heaters in the car. Everybody, I think, was tougher then, really, and it was a very, very different life.

We children lived on that hilltop. Nobody ever thought of taking us for tennis lessons or things; it just wasn't that kind of a life. You did with what there was. I had an older sister, wonderful older sister, and a younger brother. She was always very literary and would climb a tree and read. And my brother and I had projects—I remember one summer we decided to climb every tree on the place: that was our goal. And we had a rope. We'd throw it over the branch and then at the other end of the rope was a stone, you see, and then the other end of the rope would be a ladder and we'd somehow affix the whole thing without killing ourselves and climb up the tree. But that was life in the country in those days. It wasn't all grand and fixed up. My sister and I later both had rickets, but we were

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fed according to the fashions of the times. I suppose nothing but cereal and milk—but in any case we got rickets, and we have beaded ribs to this day.

Hobbies, early books and friendships—well, it was that kind of life. We had, of course, a lot of early books. We had a French governess, a very wonderful woman. (We were) very fond of her, and we read the whole Biblioth#que Rose. It was called, the “Pink Library” of children's stories. And we had all the usual children's stories, you know. I've forgotten the names right this minute, but I could tell you about them later, probably, when they come back to me. And then in time, we got the older ones, adventure stories that everybody was reading at the time, children's adventure stories.

We went to school first in Bernardsville in a little Nuns' school. We used to go in the cart with the pony, and I remember learning to read in the Nuns' school. It was held in an old house, and we'd read on the landing, the stairs, a small group. I guess I must have been four; this was before my mother died. Then we went to the Froebel League in New York. That was very advanced. Then we went to Miss Nightingale's. At Miss Nightingale's we had a wonderful teacher, Miss Perkins, history, and I took my first fancy in an intellectual subject—history—the thought of all these people on the stage of life having disappeared so many centuries before. From there we went to Foxcroft School.

I left there when I was 15 because Daddy was made Ambassador to Spain, and the family didn't think it was important in those days for girls to have an education, so my sister and I were taken out of school. I had no high school diploma. I still have none, except an honorary one. I was too young, they said, to graduate. So we went to Spain and we lived there for the next four years, and that was a fascinating experience, too. I don't know how much detail you'll want about that sort of thing.

*Q: Can we go back just a moment? You speak of a grandfather who was Jesuit-trained. You speak of your mother's very High Church attendance. Was the household a very strict household? You've also mentioned a Nuns' school. Could you explain some of these*

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*things? Was it a strict household? Were you free to do the many things that young children at that period wanted to do?*

FENWICK: It was a strict household. My stepmother was a very devout Roman Catholic, and from the time that she married my father on December 17, 1917, we went to church with her. She was indeed very strict, and, of course, in Spain in those days the strictness was built-in to the whole way of life. We did go that spring when I was 16. I was born in February—we went for two or three months to a French Nuns' school, the Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny. They were missionary nuns who had lost their health in Madagascar and had come to Madrid to recover; and, really, I wouldn't have missed that for the world. It was the most fascinating experience.

Our science teacher was an awfully nice, very intelligent nun (who said) the world was divided between animal, vegetable and mineral, and that was science. And our sports—we had, of course, sports. What did that mean? That meant that in your school uniform, which was a white blouse with over that a dark blue sleeveless dress, quite long, and a hat. Two by two we would walk in the garden, the public garden, nun in front, nun at the end of the queue. And that was our sport. Then every spring we had a Kermesse, a sort of festival. We were all dressed up in paper dresses that the nuns made for us. They were so sweet. They were such wonderful human beings. Ma M<sup>re</sup>, the Mother Superior, was a very terrifying, dignified older woman of whom everyone stood in awe.

We were taught how to float down the stairs. You stand at the top of the stairs and bend your knees, and then you don't jig-jig from step to step, because your knees are already bent; you float. It was very effective: in their habits the nuns would seem to float down the stairs, and they taught us how. They taught us how to make a dignified, deep curtsy, so that if you should happen to be presented to royalty, you could make the appropriate gesture. It was a wonderful experience, a whole different world with the sweetest, most gentle, wonderful atmosphere.

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*Q: What year was this that you went to Spain?*

FENWICK: We went in 1926, in January. I was not yet 16. We came back in October, 1929, just in time for the crash.

*Q: Was your father in politics, or was he a businessman?*

FENWICK: He was both. He was a businessman interested in politics. He was in banking. His brother was a lawyer, but he was a banker interested in politics. I was never terribly interested in politics until Hitler came along, and that really attracted my attention. Somewhere in all of this, and I don't know where, I picked up something that has never left me, and that is that we have to search for justice. That's what struck me about Hitler. I couldn't believe it. I must have read somewhere that Wilson said, "The purpose of government is justice." To see people treated by their own government in this absolutely outrageous way alerted me to the whole subject of politics, and really conditioned me to be wary of governments ever since. I don't like any kind of dictatorship, whether of the right or the left. I don't like any system that pretends that the state has the ultimate and endless rights above the people. It absolutely is to me terrible injustice that we must all fight against. So that was the direction that I picked up sometime during all this rather haphazard education.

When I came back to America and married in 1932, I did go at some point to some philosophy courses in Columbia, and after 1939—no, it must have been later than that, about '41 when I was working at Vogue magazine in New York, had the opportunity to go, encouraged by my boss, to a class with Bertrand Russell in the New School of Social Research. That was a perfectly wonderful education. Every Thursday night Lord Russell would dine with me and my friend (we were both going to these classes) and then we'd go to the classes and we got to know him quite well. He came out to the country with Lady Russell and little Conrad, and that was a very fine, mind-opening experience, and my last education really. They were extension courses; there was no credit involved. Mr. Barnes,

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who invented Argerol had brought over Lord Russell, Lady Russell, and Conrad, but they had had a misunderstanding. He had been teaching in Philadelphia or near Philadelphia where Mr. Barnes lived, so he left there and came to the New School of Social Research. It was wartime; the war had already started. It was really a great eye-opener. We parted, we were never—we didn't end friends.

Lord Russell really disliked the United States very much. It was entirely contrary to his view of life. Our ways were unpleasing to him. We didn't stand in line readily enough, he felt. He told me once that in England when he would buy a third-class ticket on the railroad, or second-class, the conductor would come along and say, "Your Lordship can't sit here," and would take him to the first-class wagon. He said that would never happen in America. And I said, "No, Lord Russell, it certainly wouldn't." And that was part of what he didn't like about America. We didn't recognize the gradations that were to him second nature, and something entirely fitting and right. I am in that sense, I suppose, passionately democratic. I don't like sense of privilege. I don't like people who rely on privileged position. I don't like "pulling your rank," as it says in the Army parlance. And this was something that ended our friendship. But I continued at Vogue until 1952. I started in 1938 there.

*Q: Before we go into some of your employment history, your schooling, therefore, was not formal in the sense of completing a high school education, entering college, and then moving on to work or other activities.*

FENWICK: Absolutely not. It was really terrible. When I got broke finally in 1938 in the summer, I needed a job terribly, and I went to Bonwit Teller and was ushered away from the airy, plush area where the customers move around, up little, narrow, winding, iron stair—it's a ladder—to the personnel office. And there was an awfully nice woman, and she said, "Name?" you know, all that, and "Parents?" and on and on, and then, "What college did you go to?" And I said, "I didn't go to college." She looked up, startled, and she said, "But you have a high school diploma, I presume." I said, "No, I'm afraid not." She put down

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her pencil and she said, "We can't employ you." I said, "Couldn't I even get a job selling stockings?" She said, "Certainly not, not without a high school diploma." I said, "Well, couldn't I get a job as a runner and start there?" She said, "No, you're 28. You're too old."

I remember going out from that air-conditioned heaven, which I had chosen because it was a very hot summer day, and thinking, "What is there? How do I fit in to this country? Now, where do I go?" It was a terrible feeling. I know it's given me a very sensitive feeling for those who seek jobs. When I used to make speeches in the basements of our churches in New Jersey later, Puerto Rican churches, black churches, white churches, whatever, usually young people, even eighth graders, I'd say, "You need a high school diploma." And I tell them about my experience, because I don't think there's anything that is better than making some experience that you've had useful to others. I always felt that somehow that would convey something to them, that there I was, by that time I was probably in the legislature in Trenton or somewhere, and that I had been so turned down. "Don't let that happen to you!" I can remember.

*Q: Now, in this early schooling, you spoke very highly of the Mother Superior when you were being educated by the nuns in Spain. You talked very warmly about some of your early schools. Was there anyone in this schooling period that might have imbued you with, as you have said, your very strong sense of justice, your sense of democracy, or did this just happen?*

FENWICK: I wish I could tell you that more clearly. I don't know. Now, I always loved history; that was my best subject. I had Miss Perkins at Miss Nightingale's and I had Mrs. Robinson at Foxcroft and I reveled in both of those fine history teachers. I've never forgotten them. And there was a wonderful Miss Wellman who was the Englishwoman who taught Greek and Latin. I only took Latin with her—but she was wonderful. We had really very good teachers that I felt were interesting people. But where this came from, this kind of obsession about justice . . . I still have it now. I run into things now that strike me as patently unjust.

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I had a very happy time as Consumer Director in New Jersey because I felt there was work to do to make the marketplace fair to all. You can't go after business saying, "All businesses are bad," or after consumers saying, "All consumers are crooks" or "All consumers are saints victimized by these terrible businesses;" that's not the way. What you've got to do is to make the stage equal for an interchange between two parties. That is the way I see life. We must have a sense of justice, so that if the odds are heavily loaded on one side or the other, you must try to make the regulations such that the stage where they operate together (or in confrontation, we hope not, but together) would be a fair place. That was, that's been, my guiding point, and in politics the same way. In my voting record, about 50 percent the Chamber of Commerce liked me and about 50 percent organized labor. I mean that I've always tried to even things up.

*Q: Well, was that perhaps influence of which you were not aware at the time by your parents, your friends, perhaps even your sister and brother? Was there something that you can think about where this spark might have been ignited? Maybe it was the way your father ran his business, or the views he had generally.*

FENWICK: I don't think so. Daddy didn't have what I would call political views. Daddy accepted that a man's word should be as good as his bond. An honorable man doesn't need a \$10,000 penalty clause before he lives up to his word. Daddy said things like that, sayings, you might say, that were sort of a staunch, Middle-western American traditional background, doing business that way. Not just business, but human relations; on the level, straight. Daddy did have that. He had hordes of friends. Everybody loved him. He was a gentle soul. He never took pleasure in other people's defeats. He was always pleased with other people's victories. He was a very kindly man, but he was not a person that I would say had many views.

I don't know where this came from. I know that Mother had a copy of Machiavelli that I found when I was growing up, and it was marked. But I can't remember now in what, according to what judgments, those markings were made. Whether that had an impression

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upon me or not, I don't know. But I do remember that I was impressed by that book, thinking that it had belonged to Mother, whom I hardly knew, of course. I remembered only just flashes of her. I can remember the winter that the chimney burned down, the last winter of her life, 1914-15. The chimney in New York caught fire so we were delayed in New Jersey, and the snow fell, and quite deeply, and Mother was in a leopard-skin coat. She never wore gloves. She made a great big snowball for us, and her bare hands on the snowball—she had an emerald ring—I can remember, and she looked up and laughed. Her hair was sort of chestnut-colored. She didn't have a hat on, either. And the ball, the snowball, by this time was almost as big as I was. That was the winter of 1914-15, her last winter. So I don't know. I never heard Mother speak of justice.

I don't think I've heard Daddy speak of justice. I know that I read somewhere that Woodrow Wilson had said, "The business of government is justice," but I don't know why it struck such a deep chord. Because my sister didn't have that feeling. She was more like my father, very popular, masses of friends, loved people. Married a gentle, oh, wonderful man, Italian, who became a super brother. My brother wasn't like that. My brother was a rather sort of easygoing, rollicking fellow. He went to Yale, too, but he married, and left Yale to get married, wasn't allowed to stay in Yale and be married in those days.

So I don't know where it came from; I wish I could tell you, but I can't. But I did get a taste for reading, and when we were living in Madrid, I used to send to Smith, Rue de Rivoli in Paris for books. I had a Russian period, all the Russians, you know—Tolstoy, of course, Turgenev and Chekhov and all. One phase after another—Russian phase, and French phase, and finally all-English phase, all Thackeray, all George Eliot, and my sister particularly, all Dickens. So it was that sort of haphazard education, you might say, that we worked out for ourselves.

*Q: Now, you had mentioned earlier that as a youngster you had mastered or at least had read the French stories. You lived in Spain. You talk about Latin, Greek. How many languages do you speak?*

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FENWICK: At the moment I speak French and English, and Italian I've thrown myself into with great enthusiasm. I can speak Italian, but I don't think it's absolutely perfect. I can still speak some Spanish if I'm with Spanish people enough to lose some of the Italian that creeps into my Spanish—there's the difficulty—because, actually, Spanish poetry, for example, I can recite at length and not have it interfered with in Italian. But in conversation, when I try to talk to Spanish friends, I find that an Italian word is creeping in; it's hard to separate them.

*Q: Incidentally, what was your father's full name?*

FENWICK: Ogden Haggerty Hammond. That was his full name.

*Q: You kind of brushed over your marriage. You said you were married in 1932. Would it be impertinent to ask you to go into some more details?*

FENWICK: Well, we were married in June of 1932, and we lived for the first year in Bedminster, which is right nearby, and then bought a house in Bernardsville and lived in Bernardsville. In 1934, February, my eldest child, a girl, was born, and in 1937, January, my second child, a son, was born. By 1938 we were in very hard ways, indeed. My husband left to try to make some money abroad, and I stayed behind to get rid of the farm, which had caused a lot of our trouble. You have to be a genius to farm in New Jersey, I think. I tried to write some short stories and tried to get a job at Bonwit Teller, as I've told you, and finally did get a job that autumn at Vogue magazine in New York.

*Q: As a writer?*

FENWICK: As a writer. I was so grateful and so frightened every Friday. It was \$40 a week, and the pay envelop would come, and you'd always peek in to make sure there wasn't a pink slip. I had an awfully nice editor, Allene Talmey. I will always be grateful to her, she was so kind to me. I was no writer, wasn't trained. I did my best, and she was very encouraging, and so was Mrs. Chace, the head editor, and Jessie Daves, the managing

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editor, and Cond# Nast, the publisher. It was a good place to work and I stayed there for 14 years. I was war editor, on account of Hitler, of course.

I joined the National Conference of Christians and Jews and threw myself into that kind of thing—evening meetings at Mr. Strauss' house, or on the West Side with Judge Proskauer, and he would tell us about—oh, he told us a wonderful story, Judge Proskauer did, about campaigning with Smith, Governor Smith of New York in 1928. They would take the train to go out west and leave little villages on the big plains of America, the train curving away, losing the lights in the darkness. Once they came to Oklahoma City, and apparently you go through a cleft in the hills that surrounds the town, and there on every hill was a fiery cross, because Judge Proskauer was Jewish, and Smith, of course, a Roman Catholic; that's what this was indicating. There was one man on the station platform to meet them, Judge Proskauer said, a young lawyer named Wendell Willkie. Now this was, of course, before Willkie ran for the presidency in 1940. I was Republican. So was my father. All my mother's family were Democrats, but I didn't trust government, and really, that's what, I think, kept me in the Republican fold, and I was awfully happy to think that Willkie would be a fine candidate.

I remember going to Philadelphia. Cond# Nast encouraged us to take interest in these things, and I went to the convention in Philadelphia. When Minnesota or Mississippi, I forget which, but when they announced their number of votes, it meant that Willkie was over the top and had defeated Taft, who was a fine man but not in Willkie's class as far as I went, and I fainted away, I was so excited!

It was really great fun, and I was very involved in politics by this time. I was a Republican Committeewoman, all that sort of thing, volunteer work of that kind, but I was so busy. I was on the Board of Education from 1935, I think. Imagine, that's 50 years ago, my first election to the Board of Education. [Pause in Tape] I was then war editor on Vogue, so-called, and very, oh, very convinced.

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I joined something called the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies, and I guess it must have been the summer of 1940, somewhere in there, I went up to Yorktown and made a speech for them. There were two or three of us, so they said, "Come into the side street here and talk to us about this." Well, I went into the side street and before I knew it I'd been knocked down. I was lying in the gutter, being kicked in the back, and was rescued by a soldier who came along and freed me from the crowd and dragged me into a bar. My hat was over my eyes—because everybody wore hats in those days. The soldier said, "Why? What are you doing? You can't do this kind of stuff." I said, "But it's so important. We've got to do something!" The Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies. The "America Firsters" used to drive me crazy. They were always talking about "our boys." I could always tell an "America Firster." The minute, instead of saying "the men in the Army" they said "our boys," you knew you were dealing with an "America Firster."

If you can believe it, until 1945, when I was sitting in my office one day, that my cousin called me up and he said, "There's something you ought to know about. There's a Committee for Justice in Columbia, Tennessee." A black seaman had come out of the Navy, taken his mother to have her radio repaired and she had been neglected by the shop owner. Other white people came in. She was pushed aside, made to wait, pushed aside, made to wait, pushed. And he said, finally, "Hey, my mother came in here before these others." Anyway, a scuffle developed and he couldn't get a lawyer. So we contributed, I contributed, to the Committee for Justice in Columbia, Tennessee, and then I joined the NAACP and became aware of the injustice to our fellow citizens. I was absolutely horrified.

It seems hard to believe, doesn't it, when I was so aware of other injustices. You see, in Bernardsville we had two black families. One lived opposite the fashionable golf course, the other had an enormous farm outside of town. He was a great friend of mine. He used to come and have tea. He was a veterinarian. I had, as I told you, a farm with dairy cows. (My uncle had given me a purebred Guernsey bull for a wedding present, so we had

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cows.) And Dr. Baxter was wonderful. We had good conversations about all kinds of things. I didn't really realize what was going on. What was it like? I didn't realize that in Newark black people couldn't sit in the orchestra, they had to sit in the balcony. It was incredible to me. So I threw myself into civil rights and joined the NAACP.

By 1952, I was on the board of a self-help group in Newark which was started by a wonderful woman, a black woman who had been a teacher in Camden. She was married to a doctor, and she started this black self-help group. I'm still on the board. Wonderful. We tutored children with volunteers. A volunteer lawyer, Mr. Reginald Hale, I've never forgotten him, one night calling his wife and saying, "Listen, I can't get home to dinner." They would come, you see, after work and after school and train these children. We trained one of the best singers. We trained a wonderful woman who ran the recovery room; she was a head nurse in the recovery room of the hospital. We got a scholarship for one of our students at Cornell. He went on to Cornell Law School and became Justice Warren's law clerk. Wonderful.

Years later I was sitting with Eric Sevareid at a little table at one of the those buffet (terrible!) receptions that they have in Washington and here, I may say. This man came up and said, "Mr. Sevareid, I guess you don't remember me. I'm so-and-so." Telling his name. I looked at him. It was our star. It was the boy who had gone from Cornell Law School to be Justice Warren's law clerk. And I said, "Is it you? Do you remember the Leaguers?" He looked at me and he said—of course, time had passed, you see, and I had grey hair—and he said, "My God. Are you Mrs. Fenwick?" And it was so extraordinary. Life, you know, always comes around again, it seems.

But it was wonderful. I worked hard, and then when the Civil Rights Commission came along, Peter Frelinghuysen, who was my predecessor in Congress, had me nominated to the New Jersey Committee, and I wrote the reports on housing in Newark central ward and employment. And then, of course, I got into employment and the whole business of civil rights.

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We had 4,700 registered apprentices, registered in the skilled trades with the Department of Labor in Washington. Fourteen non-whites—11 blacks and three Puerto Ricans. Fourteen out of 4,700. They couldn't get in. They wouldn't accept them as apprentices. It nearly broke my heart. I got a letter just the other day from Governor Hughes, the wonderful Democratic governor who's a great friend of mine, and we worked together in this field, and he wrote, "I remember you in Newark standing up to the labor people so long ago." Well, yes, it was long ago, and we've come a long way.

One day I was on a platform in Newark with Justice Marshall, Thurgood Marshall, and somebody very mistaken was talking to these young people in high school in Newark, saying that America was racist, that it was hopeless, that they'd better learn to fight, that there was no way if they didn't fight that they could get anywhere. Justice Marshall and I were both getting restive. He got up, a majestic figure, tall, strode to the front of the little platform where we were in the school auditorium, ignoring the loudspeaker, and he said, "I can't listen to this talk." He said, "You shouldn't talk that way to children, because it isn't true. It isn't true and you ought to know it isn't true. I've seen a revolution in race relations here in this country in my lifetime." I've never forgotten that. I mean, even now it gives me a thrill to repeat it, because we did see a revolution. People have no conception, except those who are as old as I am and who were interested in it 40 years ago. They don't know what strides have been made. Thank God. It isn't finished because there are lingering beliefs still that we have to grow out of, but it really was an enormous change, of that there is no doubt. Civil rights, on account of justice, prison reform and conservation were my main occupations, together with politics, all through the '50s and before I got into elective office, first in local in 1958, and then in state in 1968, '69.

*Q: Can we go back just a bit? You had mentioned you worked for Vogue for 14 years, was it? Now, was it all the same work that you were doing? Were you promoted along the line? Did you find, even at that period, in an organization such as published Vogue, any discrimination because you were a woman? And then, after we've finished that, we'll pick*

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*up chronologically with your elective career, your political career, so-called. So let's go back to the Vogue thing. And also, was that the only job that you ever held before going into politics?*

FENWICK: That was the only job that I was ever paid for, yes. I was on the Board of Education, but that's not a paid job. No, there was no discrimination. We were all women except in the Art Department. We had a wonderful head of the Art Department, Mahomet Fehmey Agah, who was a great friend of mine and who was succeeded eventually by Alexander Lieberman, also a great friend of mine, with a wonderful wife, Tatiana, and a wonderful child, Francine Gray. So the Vogue era was very pleasant. Yes, I was promoted. Allene Talmey, as I told you, was very kind. And then eventually I was war editor still in her department, which was features, not society or clothes or fashion. It was books and movies and plays and articles, and all that sort of thing. I was war editor, which fitted in with that. Then they made me head of my own little department, which was household, which was great fun. It was wartime, and how to have something to eat, with rations and war work, encouraging women to go into Curtiss Wright airplane factories. It was all very interesting and it accorded with my bent and my prejudices, so I was very happy there.

No, there was no prejudice. Vogue was a very good place to work for. You might wonder, how it is that you could work for a fashion magazine, which, of course, is what Vogue is, and be war editor in the middle of such a terrible war as the Second World War? Well, we did our bit in our way, encouraging women not just to work in wartime things but also in charities, by always mentioning the charitable work of any prominent person we photographed for Vogue or mentioned in Vogue, but also Mrs. Chace was a very principled person. She was a descendant of old John Woolman, the Quaker, and Edna Woolman Chace.

I remember when some people arrived from abroad with some beautiful designs from a well-known designer. We were short of designer in this country in the beginning of the war, and they wanted to sell them to Vogue. Mrs. Chace looked sort of skeptical and said,

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“Where will this money go?” “Well, the designers in Paris.” Mrs. Chace said, “So are the Nazis, and I would rather publish Vogue with blank pages than have one cent get into the hands of the Nazis.” See, that was the atmosphere in which we were all working together at Vogue in those days. So it didn't make it an impossible place to work at all.

They did ask me to do, many of us to do, a kind of report on House and Garden which was one of the other magazines published by Cond# Nast Publications, and I did, and they offered me a job as editor. And I had to refuse because there was a very nice woman who was editor. I had no intention, in my analysis of House and Garden, to criticize her, and I felt terrible at the idea that I'd take away somebody else's job, on account of my trouble getting a job. I'd been sensitive about other people's jobs ever since.

*Q: Now, you had mentioned so many of these various causes, as they say today, these various organizations, in which you became interested and with which and for which you worked. At that time, were there any organizations, or was any of this work specifically aimed at what we today call “women's issues” or “rights of women,” or did your quest for justice and for equality encompass both male and female?*

FENWICK: It encompassed both male and female, and frankly, I do feel that that is the way we have to go. We have to keep our eyes on a goal such as justice, it seems to me, and that means that wherever you find an injustice, whether the person who is suffering is black or white, male or female, old or young, Christian or Jew or Muslim, it doesn't matter. Justice is justice and it has to be pursued.

Now, a very interesting thing happened not too long ago. I was in Congress then. I was on a panel with two Democratic women, one a member of the Assembly in Trenton, the other the Mayor of her own hometown. The other three women were all heads of non-elected organizations, women's organizations, and they were shocked that the three of us said our business is not to go after, to devote ourselves to women's issues; our business is to try to make this society a better place for everybody to live. Now, I had my idea of justice, they

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had their ideas of security, perhaps, but that was the point. You cannot stand before an electorate, it seems to me, and be a one-group person. You've got to be equally interested in all groups.

I'll never forget one day when I was still in the Assembly. A man was leaving the office. I'd worked awfully hard for him in this particular thing in which I had felt he was getting the raw deal, and as he was leaving the office he turned and he said, "You know, I feel awfully guilty. You've worked so hard on this and put so much into it. I should have told you I'm a Democrat." And I said, "Now, you've hurt my feelings. If you think for one minute that you would have received less attention as a Democrat just simply because I'm a Republican, I would feel very badly. That is not government. You can't have this kind of division." And that's one of the sad things here in the United Nations, that we have this unfortunate group identity business which I think is destructive in itself, separating one group of human beings from another. We're all in this together, and we ought to learn that profoundly.

*Q: Let's now go to your, should I say political or elective career. You say that the first elective job you held was with a Board of Education for which there was no salary but it was still a job to which you were elected. So could we now go chronologically, beginning with this Board of Education? The year, if you can remember, as I am sure you can, and then let's move on all through all the elective positions that you held.*

FENWICK: Okay. Well, the first was the Board of Education, and I don't remember exactly how that was suggested to me, but I do remember exactly how I got sort of spirited into my second job. I went to a meeting of the Republican Municipal Committee—I told you I'd gotten into politics—and the Committee was not paid, it was elective but not paid. It was a party position, not a regular public position, a member of our Borough Council, Mr. Phillips, an awfully nice man, was being ordered to leave town because his company wanted him to live in Gary or somewhere. At the meeting was another committeeman, Mr. A. J. Maddaluna, who was the plumber in town, awfully nice and a friend, and he said, "Why don't you run for Phillips' position? He has to get out." "Oh," I said, "I don't know. Do

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you think that would be all right?" "Certainly," he said. "Look, you've done a good job on the Commission for Recreation for the children in town, as Chairman. People know you. You're on the Board of Education. That would be good. I think you could make it." So, encouraged by A. J. Maddaluna, I decided to run and did make it. It's a Republican town, so it was no tremendous feat.

I was very happy on the Borough Council. We had a wonderful mayor, Michael J. Nervine. I was determined to get a swimming pool for the children. We had land that had been given years before to the town and we got, with no tax money, all donations. Everybody rallied 'round, Rotary, Elks, everybody. Children, parents, mothers had fashion shows. People gave—Charles Engelhard was awfully generous, gave the big push that made the pool possible, and I collected other monies, in total money \$94,000, and we built this really beautiful pool.

*Q: All right, so it was Board of Education. What year was it?*

FENWICK: 1958 I got elected to the Borough Council. Then I stayed on that for, I think, six years, and then I sort of went into a you might say a retreat, I don't know why exactly, and I didn't run for office again until 1969 when I ran for the Assembly in New Jersey. I didn't get any pay on the Borough Council.

*Q: Now, what was the motivation for entering into political life, even though there were no salaries involved? What was the motivation? Why should you, happy presumably at Vogue, doing a fine job, why should you suddenly turn to politics? What was it?*

FENWICK: Well, you see, I turned to politics, you say. I left Vogue in '52 and I think I got on the Recreation Commission in 19—oh, maybe it was '54 or '55, I don't remember. But I had been State Committeewoman, and a friend of mine asked me to support Clifford Case, who was running for the Senate in 1954. So I was getting closer and closer to politics, if you see what I mean. I worked as a volunteer very hard for Cliff Case. I thought he was a good Senator. I was horrified with Mr. McCarthy, Senator McCarthy, and I really

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wanted our party to be represented in an entirely different light, and I thought Clifford Case was very much a different light, so I worked very hard for his election. So that pushed me nearer and nearer into the active political field, whereas in Vogue I was so hard working I didn't have time for the super active political field. But I think that it's a combination.

You know, things always, in life, they happen; they aren't always planned. You can't say you had a deliberate intention to go into politics; you can only say that A. J. Maddaluna suggested you run for the Borough Council. Luke Grey, who was our County Chairman, suggested I might run for the Legislature. I was interested. He knew I was interested. I'd worked hard in my hometown. People knew me in the county. I was President, I think, by this time, of the Somerset County Legal Aid Society. So I had some county-wide experience.

*Q: Was it to you a duty or was it something through which you thought many of these concepts that you had could be implemented in the daily lives of the people that you represent?*

FENWICK: I wish I could say that, because that's so attractive. It was an interest. It was a consuming interest. It drew me, and perhaps, I hope, not entirely selfishly, but it drew me as an interest, and the whole subject—for instance, in the Assembly, what did I really want to do in the Assembly? I did have one idea about women, because women had spoken to me about how difficult it was for them that they were always forbidden to work between midnight and eight in the morning. And some of them said, "It would fit my schedule better, my husband and so on." But organized labor was against it, but I managed to get that through the House, however, and I was very pleased, because it seemed to me unfair that it was perfectly all right for a woman to work from four to midnight but not from midnight to eight. So they couldn't say that the streets were less dangerous at 12:30 a.m. than they were at 11:30 p.m., an hour earlier. So justice in a sense drew me, and a sense of "this was where the action was" in a way.

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You see, in civil rights in 1963, I knew trouble was coming. I had been working in the central ward or the US Commission on Human Rights, the Civil Rights Commission, the New Jersey Committee for the US Commission, and I knew trouble was coming. Those people had a terrible sense of injustice, and rightly, and I used to go to the Bar Association, to my friends in the Bar Association, and say, "Look, there's trouble. I think that magistrate may not be quite honorable."

As a matter of fact, the people in the central ward were absolutely right, and some years later—two years later, or three—the judge went to jail, but what was the price? The sense of injustice. There were riots, looting, and 64 people dead in these disturbances.

People cannot stand a sense of injustice, and this is the history all over. All of our riots have been based on a sense of injustice. And we had the same situation to some extent, although the migrant laborers in the southern part of New Jersey never rioted, but there was injustice there, too. There's a matter of justice as to their wages. Were they going to be paid piecework or minimum wage for the hours worked? My bill provided that they had to get the larger, whichever was the larger sum. Also, interpreters in the courts. Also, I may say, some portable sanitary arrangements because there were big fields quite far from the house and there were absolutely no sanitary arrangements.

It was awfully funny, though, in that connection. I was introduced once in the south, the southern part of the state, as Mrs. Fenwick, and the Chairman, or the Subchairman, interrupted, and said, "Well, maybe in the northern part of New Jersey she's known as Mrs. Fenwick. Down here she's 'Outhouse Millie.'" I thought that was lovely, on account of the portable sanitation.

But, you see, I suppose the big thing that draws me, and always has, is the hope of being useful. When I was campaigning in New Jersey in the unsuccessful 1982 campaign for the Senate, there was a little church in Camden, a destroyed town, terrible, terribly sad town. All around, these houses were boarded up and windows broken, but the little church stood

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unhurt, unharmed. And on the billboard it said, “No life is pleasing to God that is not useful to man.” I was very struck by that. When people said, “Why are you working so hard in Congress?” (My answer was) I hoped to be useful. I hadn't yet seen this little church, but I hope that such lives are pleasing to God. I don't think a human being is happy with a totally self-oriented set of interests. I think there has to be some outward-reaching dimension, something that makes a person, you might say, almost in a more aerodynamic shape rather than a squirrel cage. I think that that's the great part of satisfactory psychological adjustment, quite apart from being pleasing to God.

*Q: And that, of course, was the keynote, as far as you were concerned, in your whole political career. Now, from what you have said, you were in—to review this—you were in the Board of Education, which was in what year?*

FENWICK: I think I started in that in 1935, somewhere in there, might have been '36.

*Q: Then in '54 and '55 you were on the Recreation Commission. You went to the Borough—you were elected to the Borough Council in 1958. And your first, some people might say, real political job was in the Assembly to which you were elected in '69. Now, how long were you in the Assembly?*

FENWICK: It was '69 when I was elected to the Assembly. I was reelected in '71 to a second term, and then I was appointed Consumer Director and took office on January 5th, I think it was, 1973, having served only one year of my second term in the Assembly. And I remained in that office for 15 months until I resigned on the fourth of April, 1974 to run for Congress.

It was a fascinating job, that consumer job, because there you had another question of justice, you see. The marketplace was not quite fair, and sometimes, it's true, the consumers took advantage of suppliers, but many times the suppliers were taking advantage of the consumers. I used to get about, oh, four or five complaints a week in the early part of my tenure, about funeral directors, and I got in touch with the funeral

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director's association. We had a meeting with the representatives of the association and their lawyers.

I had 16 lawyers as part of the law in the Public Safety Division of New Jersey government, and I could call one of them and say, "I want a regulation." And it was extraordinary. It had the effect of law. It could be challenged under the commercial code, but I never got challenged because I always got the association people with their lawyers to come and work on the regulations with me and my lawyers. I remember the first time I did it I could see it was going to be successful. I would make a folder of the complaints, and pass that folder around, and I could see these men, who had been elected and therefore were the cream of the crop of the association, nudging each other and saying, "My God, look what this fellow thinks he can get away with!" You know? So we would hammer out good regulations that protected the public. And may I say, the beauty of a good regulation is that it protects the honorable supplier from the crook, from the person who's cutting corners, who is not living up to the standards that the good people in the business or industry or whatever live up to. So there you have something which is ideal. It's a two-edged sword, if you will, of justice and mercy, because it protects both sides of the equation.

*Q: Now, you went into Congress. You won the election of '74, went into Congress probably in January of '75. How long were you there, and what were some of the things that you feel you accomplished, never mind what other people are saying? What to you was the most important part of your Congressional career.*

FENWICK: Well, you mean in the way of legislation?

*Q: Legislation or other things.*

FENWICK: I suppose the most enduring and single was the Commission on Human Rights. It was—technically it's called the Commission on the Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), in other words, the Helsinki Pact. The Helsinki Pact had three sections

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and provides in the third that human beings have certain rights every—35 nations signed the Helsinki Pact in 1975, August 1, and I had been in Congress obviously by that time eight months, nearly, and it was clear that Congress had to have some mechanism to monitor compliance with that third basket, as it was called, that third section, which dealt with human rights—the right to travel for personal or business reasons, the right to worship as you choose, to speak, to be informed freely.

Well, I thought that the ideal thing would be six members of the House, six members of the Senate. In my innocence I thought that they would be six, you know, three of each party in each place, but of course that wasn't so. Also, there would be one member from the State Department to work on the human rights specifically, one member from Commerce since there was some involvement of the commerce clause, commerce section, and one from Defense. Well, I did that because I wanted the Executive to know that there wasn't going to be any funny business behind the scenes. We'd just been through Watergate, and I was very, very anxious to have a Commission that was absolutely on the up-and-up, and that everybody could get in the act, and begin to protect human rights.

Well, it was resisted, of course, because it was the first time—and I think now still the only time—that we had a joint Executive-Legislative Commission. We have a very fine Chairman of that Commission who is now the Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Dante Fascell. We went to Europe the next summer, but the Commission was not allowed to go into any Warsaw Pact country—so we studied results of the civil rights aspect in the hostel in Vienna and in Geneva and in Bern, with World Council of Churches and so on, and in Brussels. But we had hearings in Washington with the Department of Labor cooperating. Some of our witnesses were workers. Much is made of the intellectuals who get out. The press interviews them and they're very articulate, but we hadn't had any meeting with workers to tell what it's like to work in the Soviet Union.

Lane Kirkland (whom) I'd sat next to at dinner (helped me.) I'd been trying to get one with the support of the AFL-CIO. Well, sitting next to Mr. Kirkland did it; the next morning I got a

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call from that wonderful man, Irving Brown, who represents AFL-CIO in Europe and whom I'd met when we came for the Civil Rights Commission work. So we got together and had a very fine meeting on that. I suppose that's the most—it's still going on, it's respected, it doesn't say things that aren't revealed by witnesses and quotes those witnesses.

Then I had other things that were pretty close to my heart. I had a bill that I wanted for consumers, you see. Consumers had no standing in bankruptcy. I got down there, and that's now the Drinan bill. Father Drinan was a Democrat on the Judiciary Committee, which is concerned with bankruptcy law, and I could see that the quickest way to get anything through was to give it to some Democrat on the Committee, and so I think that the Drinan Amendment to the bankruptcy bill gives them standing in bankruptcy courts. Another one was to protect consumers from out-of-state, terrible out-of-state persecution by collection agencies. There was a woman who'd been a cleaning woman in Rutgers University who had come to New Jersey from Chicago, and she was being hounded by this terrible collection agency pretending to be US marshals and all sorts of things that weren't true, and I had no way of protecting her because I couldn't control anything in Chicago, you see? So this was put through as the Annunzio bill. He was Chairman of that subcommittee, a Democrat, and he was thrilled with it. Oh, that's how I learned my lesson. He said, "That's a wonderful idea, Mrs. Fenwick. I'll put that right through, and your name will be right after mine on the bill."

So I understood right from the beginning that that's the way Congress works. There were endless amendments of that kind all the time. The other day somebody came here from the GAO and said, "Well, you see this? We're still living under the Fenwick Amendment." This one had to do with arms for Israel or for the countries around Israel. It's always a long procedure—I got some improvement in the tax on marriage. But I must tell you that almost all of my legislation came from what people told me were problems. At one of the campaign meetings, a young woman came up to me and said, "You'd better do something about the tax on marriage because my boyfriend and I aren't going to get married." She told me it would cost them \$648, so they just weren't going to get married. I looked into

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it, and sure enough. There's a perfectly simple answer, and we ought to be doing it, and some of the states are doing it already, which is to have one sheet with husband and wife on columns side by side and each one is paying a tax according to the income that they make. For two-income families it's absolutely a godsend, and it's just, it is fair, because each one is paying and nobody's getting away with murder. It's really right. I got some improvement but I didn't get what I wanted, which was to absolutely divorce them from the complications of the joint income-tax return.

There were lots of things like that. Funny, I never kept a list of all of them, isn't it? But once it's done it's behind you and you don't have to think about it anymore. I've got a lot that I think could be done. There's much more. Every now and then I think I must write and see if one of my colleagues wouldn't put that through—to give help to people in nursing homes—nursing homes in New Jersey have to take a certain number of welfare cases at a very much reduced fee, but still the fee is quite high: when I left New Jersey, it was \$42 a day; I think it's probably \$55 now—and I thought, why not give the family help, if the doctor says that patient ought to go home.” If the patient says, “For God's sake, let me go home, “ if the family says, “For heaven's sake, we want her back here,”—give the family half what it would cost and that half would pay for the therapist the doctor says she may need, you see? And she's in the environment, or he is in the environment that makes the patient happy. Now I know that it is not good to put people in nursing homes who have never been there. It's very unfortunate.

I thought of that first when [Joseph] Califano was HEW Secretary, and he thought it was great, and he said, “I'm going to try it in Texas.” Well, he didn't really try it. He didn't give the money to the family, he gave the money to organizations, speech therapists. That was not what I had in mind, direct aid to the organizations. It was better than nothing and it worked very well, but not from my point of view, because I think that we should have given half the money to the family, and then the only check, twice a month, the social worker

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goes to make sure that the therapist the doctor has ordered is coming and has been paid, and the patient is well looked after, happy.

*Q: How long were you in Congress?*

FENWICK: I was in Congress eight years, from I think it was January 5th, 1975, until '83.

*Q: Would you care to guess or at least speculate publicly what went wrong in '82?*

FENWICK: Well, you know, I couldn't understand it, because the lead in the polls had been 20 percent. Wednesday morning, when I woke up, I thought, "It isn't possible. This hasn't happened. It isn't true." Thursday morning, when I woke up, I said to myself, "I am not going to think about this. I'm not going to go over what I didn't do or should or did do or what he didn't do or should have done—I'm just not—the good Lord knows best." I mean, maybe I'm just meant to retire. After all, it wasn't too extraordinary. I was by this time over 70. When I was elected in '74, I was 64. When I retired I must have been 73, or nearly, so I thought maybe it's just meant to be, you know, "three score and ten" and so on.

But then an extraordinary thing happened. We had a session of Congress after Election Day. I was sitting at my desk. The telephone rang. "We'd be grateful if you'd come to the White House this afternoon at 2:30." And I said, "Okay." We didn't have a session, so I went, and two charming young people met me, and they said, "Would you be willing to work for the Administration?" And I said, "Well, I hadn't thought of that, but if I could be useful, I'd be happy to." In later meetings they suggested a couple of things. I said, "No, I don't really think I would be useful." Then they suggested this job in Rome. I said, "Yes, I think that would be very interesting; I'd like very much to try that." And so it happened. That must have been about, by the time we finished all these talks back and forth, probably the end of January or February. By June I was an employee of the State Department, and by September I had been okayed by the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee.

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*Q: Then actually you did have to go through the normal routine of being approved as an Ambassador, although the type of Ambassadorial work you are doing is not like, say, the American Ambassador to Italy or the American Ambassador to Spain, as your father was at one time. Could you explain all of that, please?*

FENWICK: It's very different. It's just a title that is given to someone who represents the United States Government at an agency or organization the way indeed we had an Ambassador to the UNESCO, United Nations Educational Scientific Cultural Organization and from which we've now withdrawn, in Paris. Ambassadors to the government or to the Quirinale, but they are (Ambassadors). If there are UN agencies in some country, you can be, in not all cases are, but you can be made an Ambassador or be given Ambassadorial rank. I guess that's it.

*Q: That means that the problems of an Ambassador to a country are not your problems, and I refer to things such as entertainment, such as an enormous staff, a full embassy of people under you, all of the details for which an Ambassador's technically responsible.*

FENWICK: Exactly, exactly. I have no large, permanent embassy. I have a rather modest apartment, and of course it's nice to entertain occasionally and we have an entertainment allowance, but I'm not very given to that sort of thing, and I don't think that this position really requires that. From time to time I have. Tomorrow I've invited to lunch with me at a restaurant here, so I don't have to go all the way home, the Ambassador from Kenya to the Food and Agriculture, because like me, he's an Ambassador to the UN agency, not an Ambassador to the Quirinale, not an Ambassador to the Government of Italy. But he and I are fellow Ambassadors to the Food and Agriculture Organizations. So I do some meetings of that kind, and I've had two or three, three or four, receptions in the house, in the afternoon, but it's not a feature the way it is in an embassy, in the real embassy.

*Q: What are some of the things that your duties require? Yes, you attend all of the major meetings of the Food and Agricultural Organizations, and, by the way, would you explain*

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*whether or not you are also accredited to the other food agencies here such as the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the World Food Program and the World Food Council?*

FENWICK: Well, the International Fund for Agricultural Development is the one, the only one, to which I'm not officially accredited, because that was set up originally in a different way. The official American representative on that board of the International Fund—IFAD, it's called, International Fund for Agricultural Development—is the head of our Agency for International Development. It's a branch, you might say, of the State Department, but somewhat independent, and so we have a man here who is in the AID branch who serves as a surrogate or representative for the AID department and I am not, although I'm very much concerned with AID, with IFAD. It is a splendid program and I would like very much to see it supported and furthered, and I've written my colleagues about it. But I'm not technically—but the World Food Council, yes, the World Food Program, yes. And of course, the FAO, the Food and Agricultural Organization, as it's called; that's the big one.

*Q: Yes. The nature of your work with these organizations?*

FENWICK: Well, it's absolutely endless. It's absolutely endless. You get a letter out of the blue from some company in Iowa, let's say, or Kansas, and they have a system for bagging grain or something. Well, then, you turn that over to the World Food Program, which endlessly concerns itself with bagging grain for different emergencies and disasters everywhere. Or you have desire for some kind of training. One of our embassies may say that they would like some training, technical training, somebody could perhaps go to the college or university in that less developed country for courses. That's the Food and Agricultural Organization. Or you have, for example, NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration), you know, the waters, the maritime waters; NASA, which is space, space in the American government; Department of Commerce.

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All of these departments of government want figures. I got a cable the other day from the Department of Commerce wanting the publications of the Food and Agricultural Organization on fishing, fisheries of the world, which they say are by all odds the best that's ever been published. Because FAO, the big Food and Agricultural Organization, is a remarkable organization in the sense of collecting statistics and data, whether it's soil, water, forestation, fisheries, crop production, population, all that sort of thing. Any part of our government that wants that kind of information is apt to get in touch and say, "Please supply that kind of information." Then, of course, there are people wanting to work in these organizations, and that takes quite a lot of time.

It's a very busy, busy—then we have to report to the government on the various meetings. We had a meeting Monday afternoon on aid to Somalia where they have a large group of refugees. WFP and the United Nations High Commission for Refugees asked us all to come just to listen to the problems there are in Somalia. And then yesterday morning we had one on Pakistan. That's the biggest. That's over two million refugees and the problems are tremendous, and we have to report. That's what I'm trying to do now, and that's why we'll have to be a little bit brief, because I have some cables to get out.

*Q: That would mean that there is policy of the United States government even in relation to these various organizations by which you are guided?*

FENWICK: Oh, indeed, indeed. And I am very much concerned because I'm very much interested in the guidelines of the International Labor Organization, which provide for the ways in which these enormous programs are going to be handled so as to make sure that people are treated properly who are working for food, part of their wages in food, in these various programs that are being worked out all over the world—Asia, Africa, South America—and we really have to be sure that our own programs are in line with the International Labor Organization programs. My responsibility is primarily the Food and Agriculture Agencies that are here in Rome that are conducting these big programs,

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to make sure that they are living up to the guidelines which protect the workers in these programs.

*Q: What was the relationship between FAO and the United States government at the time that you came here, and what did you do to either improve that or to maintain what may have been good relations at the time?*

FENWICK: Well, I think there must have been good relations because Gregory Newell was our Assistant Secretary of State for the International Organizations, and it was he who told the Director General of the Food and Agricultural Organization, Edouard Saouma, that he was going to be sending an ambassador. America had not sent an ambassador up to that time, so the Director General was very pleased, and I think that started off our relations on a very good footing. I have tried very hard to struggle for principle and not for whim or personalities or anything like that. There are disagreements between these agencies, you know, and they don't like to, as they say, blow the whistle on each other, and so you have to blow the whistle on them yourself, and get to the bottom of some of the things that are being said. But I think our relations are really much better than they were. So I'm told. People say that.

I'm very happy, because I don't pull any punches; I'm always perhaps a little too tactlessly frank, but I do think it's better. You can't have friends if you're going to lie to them, and there's no use pretending that things are different from what they are. I'm always perfectly clear: this is my government's position. Then I say, "And now I have a few personal words to add," and those personal words are a little more colorful than the words my government may have written down for me to recite, but they are along exactly the same lines, because never yet have I found, thank heaven, in this job, that my government has asked me to do something that I think is wrong.

*Q: Before we continue here with some of the other aspects of your job as the Ambassador here in Rome to the UN food agencies, let's go back over some of the things that you*

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*have said, and in thinking about them, there may be one or two holes to fill. So let's start with your paternal grandfather, whom you spoke of very kindly and told us some very interesting things about, his education, his attempts to be a vintner and so on. But what was his name?*

FENWICK: John Henry Hammond was his name.

*Q: And your mother whom you spoke of very warmly, although you were very young when she died, what was her name?*

FENWICK: Mary Picton Stevens.

*Q: You told us that she had perished in the sinking of the Lusitania. Why did she go to England? Why did she choose to go when she'd been warned not to go at that time?*

FENWICK: Well, she was planning to start a hospital for the wounded, and I'm not quite clear whether it was in Paris. I was told at one time it was in Paris but at another time—she was headed, after all, to England, so maybe she was planning to cross the Channel—but in any case, she was planning a hospital, and that's what she wanted to do, and nothing would stop her. It was curious, you know, that the family couldn't stop her. Her own mother and father were both dead at this time, and I suppose that my aunt and the rest of the family, the aunts and uncles, couldn't stop her. She was just determined.

*Q: Then you spoke of your stepmother, but again neglected to give us her name.*

FENWICK: Her name was Marguerite McClure. She was a widow. She'd been married to Mr. Dulaney Howland and he died and she was a widow, as Daddy was a widower.

*Q: You have an older sister, you say. Again, you didn't give her name. You have a brother, younger, no name. [Chuckles] Nor have you told us how much older she is than you, how much younger your brother is than you.*

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FENWICK: Well, my sister was born in 1908, May, as I was born in 1910, February, so she was about two years older than I. Her name was Mary Stevens Hammond and she married Guerino Roberti, Italian, diplomat, wonderful man, wonderful, wonderful man. She married him in 1931, so she was Countess Roberti, I suppose, for most of her life. She died in Rome in 1958. My brother was younger. He was born on September 17th, 1912, so he was two years and a half younger than me. His name was Ogden Hammond, Jr., and he died in the middle of one of my campaigns for Congress. I think it was in the 1976 campaign.

I was running against a Democrat who was an awfully nice man, a teacher, and I wrote him and said my brother has just died and could we put off these debates until after the funeral? He wrote back such a nice letter. When the election was all over they gave a "roast" to help him pay off his debts and I bought some tickets for the "roast." I've always had nice Democratic opponents. The last time I ran, 1980, I had a wonderful young lawyer, and he and I turned up at a ribbon-cutting ceremony in Morristown. He was there with an older man who turned out to be his father. I went up to him and said, "You know, let's not have one of these ridiculous expenditures. Let's cut our expenditures in this campaign and square off on . . ." He said, "How much do you think?" I said, "Well, \$20,000 would be a lot." He said, "How about \$25,000?" And I said, "Well, let's cut it, \$22,500." The old man jumped in and said, "That's it. That's it, \$22,500." It was his father, and he didn't want him to incur anymore debt. And that's the way we stuck. It was so nice to have that kind of atmosphere when you were running. He wasn't taking special interest group; I wasn't taking special interest group. You know. It was just a campaign.

*Q: Then, turning again to some of the things we left out earlier: you speak of your two children, again, without naming them, without saying where they are, what they're doing, whether they have families of their own.*

FENWICK: Yes, I know. Well, the oldest was my daughter, the elder of the two, who was baptized Mary Stevens Fenwick, and she married a wonderful man, a professor of the

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Classics, Latin and Greek, who now teaches at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He's publishing a book on Horace. The University Press has just announced to him that they're going to publish it. Mary Stevens Reckford. His name is Dr. Kenneth Reckford, and they have five children. Then there's my son, Hugh Hammond Fenwick, and he is living in Bernardsville. He has six children, so I have 11 grandchildren; the last were twins.

*Q: Do you see them very often?*

FENWICK: Well, I'm over here. When they come. I have seen them. One of them came, Jonathan Reckford, and stayed a little while with me here in Rome, and then I went home, of course. In August I see them. And I flew back for a lovely occasion in the spring, to get a degree from Princeton. Wasn't that lovely excitement? And mainly also to take part in the wedding of my grandson, Samuel Reckford, at Dartmouth.

*Q: What is the state of your own marriage now?*

FENWICK: I'm divorced. That's a defeat and a failure, and I feel it very strongly. I used to say that to all my students in colleges, "Sort out your values first." Sort out your values first, because if you don't, you won't marry the right kind of person. And a marriage, a good marriage, is in my opinion and my experience of life, the greatest source of happiness on earth. I think it can soften every defeat, it enhances every victory or every happiness. And then the second thing I would wish for you, if I could give you another present, would be an occupation so fascinating that the pay envelope is incidental, almost, just enough to cover what you and your wife or husband have agreed is the requisite, and so interesting that occasionally you forget lunch.

*Q: Incidentally, what does your son do?*

FENWICK: He is working in a very interesting science and technology commission in New Jersey. It's very interesting; it is a commission which encourages small businesses. He read me part of a speech he was making. "You provide us with the idea, and we can

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help you with the mechanics.” He described to me one day, he found this man in Newark in a little beat-up office. He already had, I think, three people working with him, with a wonderful idea. The federal government had agreed that they were eventually going to give him some kind of a grant which they give to small businesses that are starting. But he needed an interim grant. He needed something so that he could have five employees. There weren't enough chairs in the office where he went; they had to borrow another chair so that the two people that he had in there and my son and the reporter could all sit down together. That's what he's doing, and he absolutely loves it. He's very enthusiastic about it, and I don't blame him; it sounds fascinating. A little bit like what I'm doing here, trying to get the improvement down at the grassroots. That's where the jobs are, and I'm not just making this up. The professor at MIT said that that's where the jobs are, small business.

*Q: Since you mentioned something like you're doing here, you had also mentioned earlier, when we talked about women's issues, and you said it should all be one whole thing, not broken up into small groups as it is here in the UN. Now, would that particular facet of your work here make the job difficult, these various groupings, these smaller groups?*

FENWICK: Well, I don't know how I could have brought that in, because the UN—what I find here in the UN that is a little discouraging is the tendency of these agencies to merge out into areas that already should be covered by another UN agency already set up, already operating, and supposedly in the same field. Now, I don't know how I could have said that you shouldn't specialize in women's groups. I think that the UN agencies, if you're concerned about health, then the World Health Organization is where you ought to turn when you have some kind of health problems. See what I mean? It is absurd to have, to even think of setting up, in my opinion at least, as part of another agency, something to do with health. It isn't efficient—and it's just duplicative and it's the evidence of bureaucratic creep. You can hardly call it creep—bureaucratic flood! Because they do it; one after another will go rushing forward into fields that are already covered by another duly set up

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and established UN agency. Or they will not do what they ought to be doing, and that's another aspect, too.

*Q: And that is one of your personal problems with your job?*

FENWICK: It is, trying to sort that out. But, you know, to go back to women for a minute and this whole question—one of the people I consider an ornament to women being occupied is a woman called Mary Garibaldi of New Jersey. She comes from Jersey City. She's a lawyer, and highly respected, as you'll see, because she was President of the New Jersey Bar Association, and highly respected, as you'll see, because she's now on the New Jersey Supreme Court. What was her special field in all these distinguished ways? Taxes. Now, that's how women are going to get ahead.

I do think that women have got to be considered as equal citizens, but they've got to think of themselves as equal citizens, equally concerned with all the legitimate concerns of the populace that they're supposed to represent, and taking part, and in trying to improve, as she felt, with taxes. She didn't concentrate on day-care centers. Now, if there's trouble with little children, somebody's going to have to think about day-care centers and that's true, too, and equally valuable, maybe. It may be a person who has some more facility with figures would go into taxes, but there's nothing inferior to being interested in day-care centers. My goodness, what children go through, can go through, where they aren't properly supervised and regulated. So there's a great need—just as much as they ought to be in the working conditions of human beings.

I got a very fine letter from a young man in a neighboring town to mine one summer, and he said, "I took a summer job in this little factory in my district and I began to cough. The family insisted that I go to the family doctor. He said, "You get out of wherever you're working. There's something very noxious there in the fumes!" He said, "I feel worried about it because I left a whole lot of people behind who don't know which end is up and who are going to have the same troubles because the fumes are affecting them just as they did

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me.” So I picked up a telephone. I got hold of that wonderful woman, Beulah Bingham, I think her name was, who ran the Office of Occupational Safety and Hazards Act, OSHA, and said I had a real problem here. “Could you get ready to send two inspectors up this week?” She did and they were—because that's just as bad as a day-care center, and of the same quality: human life is being damaged in a place where they are; where they have to go to earn a living, or where the child has to be so the parent can earn a living, whatever. You see what I mean? I think that's a way that legislation ought to be approached. It isn't that one is superior to the other. It is simply that they are problems, injustices, of the same kind that ought to be met with the same vigor.

*Q: Mentioning this issue of women again—one final question in this present session. Do you find any sort of advantage or disadvantage in being a woman in this particular job? Remembering that you are the first woman who is Ambassador, or actually representing the United States at these agencies? There have been women on the various groups coming to the meetings and so on, but you are the first woman in the 40-year history of these food agencies to represent the United States. Do you find, as I said, anything advantageous or disadvantageous from your experience here in that position?*

FENWICK: Well, to be honest, advantages outweigh anything. I found the same thing in the Assembly. I was the second woman in the State Legislature of New Jersey, and the Speaker and the men have a habit of courtesy—I think I got more bills through, my amendments were more readily heard by courteous speakers who had the habit, and the same thing was true in the House. It's also true that I had very different, disagreeable experiences. Also, at some times, “That woman from New Jersey standing in the aisles; when she's finished I'll strip her office of any salaries.” And the man speaking had the power to do it.

Generally speaking, men form the bulk of overwhelming proportion, and all the important chairmanships and everything go to men, so there are disadvantages. If I were very ambitious, perhaps I would feel it more, but I didn't. I always felt—there were two things

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that operated: one, men have a habit of courtesy to women; and two, I was always so much older. I mean, when I got to the Assembly I was already 59. Well, nobody thought I was going to be working towards the Governorship in 1985—you know what I mean? It didn't seem likely. So that I wasn't the threat that a young woman or man might be.

The same thing in Congress. I didn't care enough about getting on the appropriate committees or pulling strings. It took me four years to get on the Foreign Affairs Committee, which I had asked for in November. Right away, as soon as I was elected, I had asked for it, in 1974. I didn't get on it until 1978, '79, I guess, in that Congress, so I was on it for my last four years in Congress. That was where I always thought I would be the most useful and always wanted to be, but I slugged it out on District of Columbia, Small Business, which I loved, Consumer Subcommittees, Banking, which I knew nothing about, but it gave me the opportunity to make a wonderful friend, Arthur Burns.

He was Chairman of the Federal Reserve, and such a wonderful man. He used to send me his speeches and a little word, "Please comment." I knew he was trying to educate me, make me read them so I have to comment. I found something so interesting, you see: every paragraph had a word like "understanding," "expectation," "confidence," describing psychological states of mind. That is why, if I were running a business school, I would have a course in psychology for those students, because in economics and business, I don't think enough attention is paid. You can't make things work unless you understand how the people feel who are going to have to be making them work at the working level.

*Q: Are you using that type of psychology here in your work? And might I also add, do you think that your work here is successful because, as you have hinted in some ways, being a woman, you could "get away" with saying certain things that men will not accept from men?*

FENWICK: Oh, I think so, I think there's no doubt about it. The other day, I don't know if I ought to say this, but there was a President of a country, a sovereign country, who came

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here and made some very imprudent remarks about how every country has sovereign right to protect its industries, to do what it thinks it needs to do in its own interests and in the interests of its people. All that kind of talk, feeding the whole protectionist idea, and so much against what Mr. Reagan has said at Cancun. We're interdependent. We don't live on an island. We're all in this together.

So I went up to the President after the meeting that was held, the reception after the meeting, and I said, "You know, I'm going to take advantage of my age. You're only three years older than my granddaughter. I do hope that you won't speak—it's a wonderful campaign speech, but I tell you, please don't say that in the world at large." Now I don't think if I hadn't been an older woman I would have dared said it. He was awfully nice, he's awfully young, he's only 36, and I felt, just to warn him. I said, "You see, we're losing jobs right and left in America, and so the unions that have always been more or less in favor of what might be called broad views, liberal views and so on, they are now becoming very much in favor of protectionism. And every time a factory has to close down and 13,000 people lose their jobs, the walls may go up against the textiles from the Third World."

*Q: When were you sworn in as Ambassador, and what sort of a ceremony was this swearing-in ceremony?*

FENWICK: Actually, I was appointed, but my appointment awaited confirmation by the Senate, which was not in session, and so I took office; I came over here and really didn't get sworn in. It was all very interesting. I testified before the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee, but it was just before they were going to adjourn. You see, I was appointed, at least I was nominated by the President in July, and they were planning to adjourn. I did see Senator Kassebaum, and Senator Percy and others. And Steve Solarz, Congressman Solarz, unrequested, came, a Democrat on the (House) Foreign Affairs Committee, and testified before them on my behalf. But I don't think I ever really got sworn in, except that I was just confirmed unanimously by the Foreign Affairs Committee and the Senate when they met in September. I was already here.

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*Q: Because of the circumstances of this nomination and this swearing-in and so on, and because of the special nature of this assignment, do you have any direct dealings with the White House, with the President, in the course of your work here?*

FENWICK: No. No, I don't. I go through the Department of State exclusively. The Assistant Secretary of State for International Organizations was Gregory Newell when I came. I liked him very much. Now I have Ambassador Keyes whom I don't know as well because he's only been here for a few months, and I only saw him in Washington last August for lunch once, so I haven't gotten to know him the way I did Gregory Newell. But I'm expecting the same happy—I like him very much so far.

*Q: What special preparations, if any, did you make for this position before you came here, or maybe even after you came here?*

FENWICK: I've learned an awful lot. I was really best prepared, perhaps, by being a farmer myself some years ago, a dairy farmer and chicken farmer. And working for consumers, oddly enough, in New Jersey, as head of the Consumer Division in the Department of Law and Public Safety, that was invaluable. Of course, Congress was a very good experience, too, the whole Foreign Affairs Committee, listening to the arguments about the agricultural bills, all of that experience. There's no substitute for it in my books. I think it all helped. But no special courses or anything.

*Q: What was it like, the first day on the job here, your first time as an Ambassador, your first time in a special Ambassadorial assignment? What was that day like to you?*

FENWICK: Oh, it was terrifying, of course. I had a meeting with all the staff, and I said, "From now on every cable that goes out I'll have to see, and will go out with my approval and signature." I think that was quite a shock. I don't think it was terribly happily received, but it's worked very well. I have a wonderful staff, and I've always had very, very fine cooperation.

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But I was terrified the first day going to the Program Committee, because I thought they'd all be such, you know, expert experts, and there I would be with my amateurish approach. Not at all. It was wonderful. I, with Mr. Ngongi of Cameroon and Mr. Palmer of Sierra Leone, we sat together and called ourselves the "gang of three." We understood things from the same point of view. It was remarkable, really, awfully lucky. Because, you see, try for the simple, practical approach—I'm not interested in global approaches. I don't think they work. It isn't that I'm against—I wouldn't be against them in principle; I'm against them in practice. Because I see these huge ideas that simply don't produce down at the level where people are trying to live and people ought to be, as Deng Xiaoping has said so clearly, bringing about a revolution in China.

You've got to put some money in the pockets of the peasants in order to encourage them to higher production, otherwise you won't get the production. What's the result? China now leads the world in the production of wheat and in the production of cotton. I was bowled over. I didn't realize that, too, their production goes up, in the last seven years 12 # percent a year. We, who used to lead in the world in the production of cotton—13 million bales of 480 pounds each—China makes 23 million! The Soviet Union is a poor third down there in both wheat and cotton. And I tell you, it's really a remarkable situation. That's what interests me, what works. And if you don't approach people with respect and some concern for their dignity, you're not going to get anywhere, either. You just cannot order people around and expect them to (produce). As Deng Xiaoping, again said that now we have the system of responsibility, and that the ordinary Chinese peasant (everybody calls them, I call them small farmer) is making money, so he's producing more, so he's buying, and little industries are springing up. That's how the nation gets to be economically sound. It's from the bottom up. You can't do this from the top down.

*Q: You mentioned the Program Committee. That was, of course, at FAO, the organization to which you were assigned?*

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FENWICK: Well, I'm assigned to really three organizations—FAO, Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations; the World Food Program and the World Food Council, which are the three. There is a fourth here in Rome, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, but I'm not really accredited to that. Mr. McPherson, who's our AID chief administrator and a wonderful man, is our head representative to that organization, and the AID man here in the office, Al Furman, is the one who represents us on the executive meetings.

*Q: Just how large a staff do you have?*

FENWICK: There are two AID people. There are two AID people, one agricultural, and then there are three of us in the State Department, but actually the agricultural and the AID are a little bit separate, you might say. They have separate reporting. I sign all the cables but they have separate funding and so on.

*Q: Do you, like other Ambassadors, have an official deputy?*

FENWICK: I have my deputy, yes, Deputy Chief of Mission Ed Parsons. Awfully nice, very good man. I've always had a Deputy Chief of Mission. Then we have one more in the State Department who does all the complicated employment in the various UN agencies and also everything to do with, oh, taxes and income and all those technical details.

*Q: Did you appoint your own deputy or was he already here when you got here?*

FENWICK: No, the one that I had when I first came I met when I was in Washington. He was proposed and I said, "Certainly." I had no particular—and he was very good. He's now the head of the commission, the Southeast Asia Commission, with its headquarters in Sri Lanka, in Ceylon. Then he was succeeded by Mr. Parsons, who also I had never seen but was proposed by the State Department. I have no particular axe to grind, you might say.

*Q: I suppose you have the normal staff meetings and so on, with your staff?*

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FENWICK: Every Monday morning we meet the staff, yes.

*Q: Do you have any special problems with the staff, or perhaps I should put it another way: how would you describe your personal relationships with the staff, with other women officers who might be in the Embassy here, and particularly with the wives of some of the male officers?*

FENWICK: Well, the women here on the staff, marvelous. Now, there's, no—I'm not being polite either, they are absolutely terrific. They work hard and long. They undertake to help out when one is ill or has gone home on leave or something. It's really a terrific sense of morale and sharing. In the Embassy here there's only one woman in a, what might be called a higher position. Very, very able, Miss Katherine Kemp. Miss Kemp is the Administrator and heads all the work of running this, you know, the administrative details of the Embassy. So I have something to do with her. I like her very much.

As for the wives, you know, when do I see anybody, come to think of that, except the people who come to see me on business? I leave home at 8:00 in the morning. I arrive here at the office. I'm very busy. I leave, if we have Conferences, at 9:00 for a 9:30 opening of the Conference. I usually have, when Conferences are on, a reception. I'm lucky if I get home by 8:00, 8:30. Generally speaking, if it isn't the time of the Conference, I get home before 7:30 or by 7:30 as a rule; sometimes it may have to be a little later. If I have an official dinner, of course, it may be 12:00 or 1:00. But there's no time. I don't know any of the wives of the people in the Embassy except Mrs. Rabb, the wife of our Ambassador, who's an absolute dear and has been wonderfully kind to me, as indeed the Ambassador has, too. Whenever one of my colleagues arrives from Congress, my former colleagues, I'm always included. Awfully nice atmosphere.

*Q: That would bring up the question, having mentioned your busy schedule, does this job allow you much of a private life? Do you have any time for recreation or entertainment of a personal nature?*

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FENWICK: Well, that's just laughable. There isn't any private life. I'm not allowed to go, I'm not allowed to walk on the streets or take a taxi or go in a friend's car, so that every time I do anything I have my wonderful driver, and a young man who sits next to him in the front seat with a gun. And it doesn't make things easy. I don't want to cost the taxpayers extra, and if I'm going to something they have to be there, and they have to see me home, ride up in the elevator to the front door, and I tell you, I have no private life. I have no, none. Once a week I try to see my sister-in-law, who's Italian, and one or two of my old friends, so that once a week I do generally have a night to myself, you might say. But those are early; I get home around 10:00.

*Q: When you say that you're not permitted to walk on the street, that you're always accompanied, would that be because of possible dangers, personal dangers, in relation to your job?*

FENWICK: Yes, that's it. Apparently the Embassy gets these threatening letters, so I said, really, maybe they threaten the Ambassador and I can see that, but I cannot see that I am so vulnerable or interesting to anybody. And the security people came to see me and said, "Please don't take that attitude. Please do as we ask. Our jobs are on the line. If something happened to you, it would be headlines." I don't want to risk their jobs, so I go along.

*Q: Would you say that because of your job, you're head of mission, to use a semi-formal term, actually isolates you? In other words, that old story of "command is a lonely post."*

FENWICK: I suppose so. to some extent, yes. I hadn't heard that. But I think it is, because you've got to keep everybody's secret. People come to me in this mission, or citizens, and they very often have private, personal problems that they don't want to have go any further, so that you have this feeling of responsibility and loneliness in a sense. I remember, at one point during all these conferences and things, one of our early mornings, I said to my staff, "Now, you're going to have to present your information very briefly. I feel like an overloaded circuit." That was really the way I felt—an overloaded

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circuit. Too much coming in, trying to keep it all separate. Trying to make sure that none of these confidential cables were mentioned in places and times when they shouldn't be. Really quite a—"overloaded circuit" really did describe it.

*Q: Does the idea or the concept of the power that you hold, at least formally, officially, as an Ambassador, ever intrude upon yourself? What sort of an impact does it have on you personally, this concept of being powerful if you want to use that power to its full extent?*

FENWICK: Absolutely zero, zilch, nothing. I don't like power. I don't like a sensation of power. I think the most dangerous thing in the world is to get to a point where you feel you're powerful. I'm absolutely against it, root and branch. I don't—I think—one of the things I've seen—people trip because of this desire for power, and I absolutely don't feel powerful. Maybe that makes it easier, because I guess a lot of these people who do trip feel powerful or enjoy it and perhaps feel more powerful than they really are.

I'm happy to feel that I'm a hard working person, with a point of view, and I have my two cents' worth to contribute. So has everybody else. Everybody, everybody, has two cents' worth to contribute, just as good as mine, probably. And mine is as good as theirs, probably. I mean, we're all in this together, and it's hard enough, you know. I think it was Aristotle who said, "Nobody knows the whole truth, but each one of us has some part to contribute." I think that is both a prescription for self-respect and for respect of others. I've got my two cents' worth; you've got your two cents' worth. Let's get together.

*Q: Obviously, some of the things you have just said would indicate problems in this position to you or to anyone else holding it. But are there any special problems that you have found in this job, perhaps relating to the usual inspections or distinguished visitors, or things of this nature?*

FENWICK: I love the inspections. I was very happy, I've always been happy to see the inspectors. We've had them twice and they've been a joy. I love people who are trying to

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find out the truth and not only the things that feed their bias; that to me is one of the most disconcerting things.

Yes, and now, you asked me what have I discovered that I don't like. That's what I don't like. I don't like the fact that I'm reluctantly coming to see that many of these agencies simply are not willing to live up to their mandates, or in some cases are delightedly exceeding their mandates, increasing their bureaucracy. It really is maddening, and one agency will not blow the whistle on another. When they do, it's considered to be an absolutely—I know of one case in which one agency did point out that between \$130 and \$200 million was missing in that agency, at least not accounted for. Nobody thought it was corrupt; it was just careless, clumsy, bad administration, and they felt that it shouldn't really be presented to the group, the governing body.

That's crazy. Of course it's got to be presented to the governing body. I mean, aren't we supposed to, aren't we supposed to govern? Can we govern if we don't know what's going on? Is one agency not supposed to say when another agency isn't living up to its mandate, especially when one agency is supposed to be interested in having certain standards to live up to? When they find that another agency isn't living up to them, they don't say a word? I think that's terrible. I think they ought to communicate with somebody and say, "Look. These standards are not being adhered to." Otherwise, everybody goes along thinking everything is fine. Well, it isn't fine.

This is to me the most discouraging and distressing part of this business. The agencies really don't, they don't make conditions, they don't explain to governments, what are the conditions of the project they're planning. It's as though they were looking for clients, as though they were Bloomingdale's and Macy's looking for clients and not wanting to put too heavy requirements. Now, I think that we're dealing with sovereign nations; nobody expects you to be able to say, "Do this and do that." But the project that you offer can have certain characteristics, and if the government says, "I won't put up with those characteristics," then it seems to me the agency should say, "Well, we'll try to work out

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something else.” But you don't give in. You don't just give in and get rid of any kind of principle or even common sense. It's unhappy.

*Q: I suppose that would fall into the class of unresolved problems that you face.*

FENWICK: It is indeed an unresolved problem.

*Q: How would you characterize your personal relationships with other diplomats accredited to FAO and to the other UN food agencies here, especially the Iron Curtain diplomats, or perhaps even the Third World diplomats?*

FENWICK: Well, I think they're very good, really. I have several friends among the African representatives and one friend who is in the Warsaw Pact countries, awfully nice man. We don't agree; there's no use pretending that we can sit down and have a little heart-to-heart about how important the citizen is and how the free press is absolutely essential to the proper functioning of a state. We have profound disagreements, but that doesn't mean that we don't talk happily about things we do agree about, which is the desirability of increasing the welfare of the little farmer at the end of the road. Now, they may not see the approach to the solution of that problem the way I do, but it doesn't mean that we can't have nice talks. The ones that sometimes disappoint me are those countries that know better, so to speak, that should be taking stands on principle, and like the agencies, just don't.

*Q: What about your relationships with the Italian officials here and with the local people here in Rome?*

FENWICK: Oh, I love Italians. I love Italians. I'm devoted. I have very happy relations with the new Ambassador from Italy to FAO. I don't know him very well but I was very fond of the old Ambassador, Ambassador Francisi, who had a wonderful second—a woman called Signora Dellacroce. She was absolutely terrific, and when he didn't appear, she appeared and she represented Italy so well. We were a very happy working relationship.

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The British, they've had a wonderful person, Peter McLean. He's gone back to England. Now I have another friend, Ron Deare, who represents Great Britain. We had a wonderful woman from Norway, Mrs. Rahaven. She unfortunately has been called back to the Foreign Office of her country, and I haven't gotten to know the new one yet. But they're all friends. Ambassador Martin of Belgium, very, very fine representative of Belgium. Mr. de Bey of The Netherlands. Mr. Leiber. I could go down, one after another.

*Q: Do these relationships result sometimes in friendships?*

FENWICK: Yes, but they're very official friendships. Frankly, I haven't much time and I don't entertain as much as I should; I know that. And I ought to be making more personal friends of these people whom I like so much. They are personal friends in a way, but I only see them officially.

*Q: How have you been treated by the press here in Italy or in Europe generally, and even in the United States? You as the woman Ambassador, former Congresswoman? How do they treat you in this job?*

FENWICK: Terrific. I really am endlessly grateful to the press. I have never in all my life, and I've been dealing with the press for 50 years, told any member of the press anything in confidence that they've betrayed. Now, they don't always say everything I say, but I'm not Mount Sinai; I don't have to have everything. But the general flavor is so faithfully reported. I think I've had great luck with the press, in wonderful people. I had one disappointment only. A member of the press asked me for a certain letter. I gave him the letter and he only printed one clause, wouldn't print the whole sentence, and so that was a little disappointment, but that's the only one I've ever had, and that's pretty good—in all these campaigns. This happened in the campaign for the Senate; I suppose there's always more pressure there.

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*Q: Are there any special problems that you have here in Rome as one of three American Ambassadors? There is, of course, Mr. Rabb, whom you've mentioned, the American Ambassador to the Italian Government. There's Mr. Wilson, the Ambassador to the Vatican, and you as the Ambassador to three of the four UN food agencies. Does this present any problems, and maybe, is there any complication because of the fact that you are a woman?*

FENWICK: No, I don't think there's any—there are no problems. I don't see Ambassador Wilson so much because when my colleagues arrive, and friends from America, they generally get in touch with the Embassy and they ask to see me and the Ambassador. The Ambassador arranges that I can come to the tea or dinner or lunch or whatever it is that he's giving for the Congressmen. I have such happy relationships with Mr. and Mrs. Rabb, the Ambassador and Mrs. Rabb. They've been wonderfully kind to me; we understand one another. I go every Friday to a country-team meeting at 10:00 in the Embassy and listen to what the Ambassador has to say, and the Press Secretary, and the DCM, and the Commercial Secretary, and the Military Secretary, all of the different components of the Embassy, so that I'm kept abreast.

*Q: What would you see as your major success or successes, maybe even failures, I don't know, since you've been here, and were success or failure related in any way to the fact that you are a woman?*

FENWICK: I don't think that much of this has anything to do with being a woman. It's awfully hard to tell, if you're going to be absolutely flat honest, something that you advocated in the end of January, beginning of February of 1984, if it is now increasingly the policy, have you any part in that? I have no idea whether I have. Certainly, I cabled the State Department at the time, "We cannot stop what we're doing but we have to change direction," and outlined what I thought should be the direction. We are moving in that direction more and more. Have I got anything to do with that? I don't know. I think Mr. McPherson and the people in the State Department probably had the same feeling that

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I did, so that I can't really say that I think that that change, which I think is essential and most important, comes from me. I have had very nice letters and notes and cables, saying they appreciate the work we're doing, and so on, here in this mission. That's nice, but I can't think of any earth-shaking thing except this real change of policy.

*Q: But you did actually propose or suggest or talk about the change which has come about?*

FENWICK: I cabled a long and very carefully thought-out cable on three grounds, really; the reasons and the way I thought it ought to change. Human and ecological were the first. Second, the practical. And third, the political. Those were the three sections in which I divided my remarks. The one that I care most about is the human and ecological. And the practical, because, you see, they all hang together, really. If you don't devise something practical, you're never going to be able to save the forests and the water and the soil and you never, if you don't do that, are going to benefit the human beings for whom, after all, it's all designed.

*Q: Do you do much traveling or public speaking locally or internationally as part of your job?*

FENWICK: No, I don't. I've been to six African countries. I've been to three East African and three West African, and I may go to Central Africa this January/February, I don't know; I'll see. There's a meeting in the Congo in September, and I may go to that and delay any traveling until then. That's expensive for the public, you see, if you go and then pop in at Cameroon, maybe, at the same time you're going to Congo, they're so near.

*Q: You have already said that you don't do as much entertaining as you think you should, but does this position that you hold now require special entertainment for special occasions, special holidays like now, Christmas time or the Fourth of July, Thanksgiving Day, things of that nature?*

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FENWICK: No, our Ambassador takes care of our national holidays like the Fourth of July. He gave a wonderful one last year. Really, he did, he and Ruth Rabb did so well. They had this huge garden party which they have every Fourth of July in that lovely garden of the Villa Taverna, our Embassy. And, with great tact, they had the Alpine, the Alpini, the Italian Alpini Brigade or division—I don't know what you'd call it—anyway, the band that belongs to the Alpini Division. They played the “Star-Spangled Banner” and everything. It was so nice, and the Italians were so happy to see this crack regiment band. He and I, the Ambassador and I, conducted the band together. It was great fun. That's the kind of thing that the Embassy does, and extremely well.

I have had a couple of receptions, big, you know, 100 or more, at the house, and in the spring it's possible because there's a terrace. I haven't a very big apartment and it's not convenient for entertaining, really, except in the spring when the long, narrow—quite long, narrow—room can open up onto the terrace. So, I've had, I think, about three or four of those since I've been here.

*Q: We've talked about contributions that you have made, or hope that you have made. Would there be any special contribution that you made to the Service because you are a woman?*

FENWICK: Meaning the diplomatic service?

*Q: Yes.*

FENWICK: I don't think so. We've had very able women Ambassadors, so I don't have to prove anything—I don't have to prove that women can function, because that's been done over and over. We had a wonderfully able woman in London, Anne Armstrong from Texas, and everybody—Labor, Conservative, Liberal—everybody that spoke to me said what a wonderful Ambassador she had been, so there's no question that on the international scene women have proved themselves. We've had lots of gentlemen that weren't so

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ornamental and we've had some ladies, I'm afraid, who haven't been so ornamental, either. But whether ladies or gentlemen, whether men or women, it depends entirely on the character of the person and the quality of the person who happens to get the appointment.

*Q: In your time here in Rome, have you ever been received by Pope John Paul?*

FENWICK: Yes. When Ambassador Block was here—I mean Secretary of Agriculture Block, a man I greatly admire—wonderfully fine man; I'm very, very fond of him. That's his picture over there. He was very popular here, too, by the way, made a great hit by being so straightforward, so kindly, very tactful, but principled. He didn't give way on anything in which he believed. Anyway, he and his wife and daughter had an audience with the Pope, and I went along with the daughter in my hand, and her friend. We all went together and were received by Pope John XXIII.

*Q: You were not received in your own right as Ambassador, per se?*

FENWICK: No. No, because you see, I'm Food and Agriculture and I'm not even representing the United States at the Quirinale or anything, so it's a special sort of sideline, you might say.

*Q: Could you think of anything in your career, maybe in this short career as an Ambassador, maybe in your earlier career, that you would consider your most significant achievement?*

FENWICK: Well, I don't know. I suppose my commission to monitor compliance with the Helsinki Pact was a sort of landmark. It's the first and, I think, still the only commission which includes both the Executive and the Legislative branches of government in a joint exercise, a joint program, and I think that human rights are so absolutely important. They ought to be our prime concern, they and the welfare of human beings. So I suppose that that, really, legislatively (was most significant.)

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There are other things that are more practical, perhaps my migrant labor laws. My bill on child abuse and other aspects of child welfare was useful. My consumer regulations have affected the lives of many, many people. The consumer would be only in my state, really, but when I got to Washington I had two consumer bills that have affected consumers all over the nation, and I suppose that you could call those important. My amendments on foreign affairs also. I got a letter the other day saying, "And here's how the Fenwick Amendment is still operating." (It was a) deal with arms for nations in the Middle East. It's funny though; I've never kept a list of things that I got done. The improvements in the marriage tax, I suppose, have affected a lot of people, too.

*Q: If a young lady came to you to ask for help or for advice about entering the diplomatic service, what would you say to her?*

FENWICK: "Go to it, if you're really interested." You see, the whole thing in life, I used to say to my young people and I do believe this profoundly, in college, first you've got to set your values—what you really think is important. If you don't, you won't marry the right person, or, if you decide not to marry, you won't get into the right job. I would like for you, if you do decide to marry, a good marriage, which I think is probably the biggest source of happiness on earth. The second thing is an occupation, whether it's staying at home and taking care of husband and children, or wife and children. I hope these stereotypes will begin to disappear so that some husbands who really don't like the stress of modern life can let a wife who is the happy vice president of the bank become the president of the bank, and he can take care of the children and the holidays and so on, so the roles can be perfectly worked out between husband and wife in whatever seems to make a happy marriage.

The point is to find an occupation that so intrigues you that you're not driven in order to get a pay envelope; you're drawn. Every day you're drawn by the fascination of the subject, and sometimes you even forget lunch, I used to say to them. That is what makes for, I think, a happy life. You've got to have something outside yourself and your immediate

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interests that draws you irresistibly—the hope of being useful in something that is beyond just humdrum “doing it because you have to” and because everybody has to have a pay envelope to get food on the table.

*Q: As a final topic, to many people who do not even know your name, you are well known as a lady, the Congresswoman, who smokes a pipe—your trademark, in a way.*

FENWICK: It pains me.

*Q: Well, the question, therefore, is very simply, when, why and how did you decide to smoke a pipe?*

FENWICK: Well, my doctor suggested (I was smoking about 10 cigarettes a day) that I stop smoking cigarettes. He said the paper is no good for you; you can smoke a pipe. I never thought of doing such a thing. I went to dinner with friends and said, “Guess what? The doctor I saw today said I ought to stop smoking cigarettes and smoke a pipe.” They said, “Are you going to do it?” I said, “No.” Two or three months passed, and again I dined with the same couple of friends, and they said, “We have something for you.” The husband worked in Princeton and had stopped at the Princeton Pipe Shop and bought this little pipe—that's about 20 years ago or more, I guess—and a package of tobacco. To be polite, after dinner I filled the pipe and tried it, and liked it, and I've smoked it ever since.

When I got to Congress, they kept saying “pipe-smoking grandmother,” they were both true, of course, but I really minded it. I used to say, “Couldn't you say 'hard-working Congresswoman?' It has the same number of syllables, and it's a picture that I would far rather convey.” And they said, “No, there's no fun in that,” or something.

I thought of giving it up, but then I thought, no, I'm not going to be bullied; I'm not going to be bullied. I never smoke in front of young people. When they ask me about my “little pipe,” and they do, in colleges and schools, I say, “It's in my purse and it'll stay there as long as I'm anywhere near any of you, because if I thought that my smoking a pipe

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encouraged any of you to smoke, I would feel very, very badly. It's a bad habit. You ought not to start."

I started because I thought I was being smart. My sister and I used to climb the water tower and, with purloined cigarettes from the boxes in the sitting room, we thought we were so grown up. I guess I was about 14; she was 16, and if I'd known then what you know, I never would have started. It's a terrible mistake. Just don't start, that's all. I feel very strongly about it. I feel very badly that I know that it has been connected with my name, and I don't blame the press. I understand exactly how this sort of thing happens. But I'm too old to change.

*Q: Well, thank you very much. This has been the requested conversation with Ambassador Millicent Fenwick here in Rome. On behalf of the Women Ambassadors Program and Mrs. Morin, I thank you very much indeed.*

End of interview