

AN ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Irene Sandifer

Educator & Civic Leader

by

Mrs. Blossom Holland

for

The Marie Bennett Library of Local History

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League of Women Voters of Montgomery County, Maryland, Inc.

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LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY, INC.

Memorial Library Fund

Oral History Project

(In Cooperation with Montgomery County Department of Libraries)

Interview #1 with IRENE SANDIFER
(Mrs. Durward Sandifer)

- 006 Introduction
Biographical details
Community Activities
Service on Montgomery County Board of Education
- 195-300 Appointment by Gov. O'Connor - probable reasons for selection
- Reactions of PTA and League of Women Voters - at a time when movement to get local election of school board members was getting started
- Term of office for appointed board members - 6 years
Compensation (small amount for expenses only)
- Members serving on the Board in 1946, their backgrounds and contributions:
- | | | |
|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| James Gill | Stanley Stine | Mrs. Hauck |
| Arthur Joseph | Helen Walker | Irene Sandifer |
- Dr. Broome's contributions:
- Forefront for new ideas
 - Good management as an administrator - good relationships between administration and teachers
 - Leadership in state - led in obtaining retirement fund - first junior college
 - Use of Dr. Englehart of Columbia University as planning consultant for facilities
- 960 Reaction to Dr. Broome's innovations in teaching - THE 3 R PROTESTERS:
- | | | |
|--------|-------|---------|
| Brooks | Hiser | a Stock |
| Acton | Miles | |
- How Dr. Broome met the attack (1948)
- Lay advisory committees from each school
 - Citizen participation in curriculum workshop - result, a tightening up
- The climate of the nation - conservatism - concern with subservion
- 296 The citizen movement for a voice in school board selection
A segregated school system

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY, INC. (Con'd)

Oral History Project

Interview #1 with IRENE SANDIFER

- 600 Issues during period of 1946-53 (metamorphosis of county's change from rural to urban)
Need for teachers--deplorable facilities due to depression, war and population influx
- Board responsibilities:
- Land purchase for a building program
- 650 Innovations during this period
- A new position - Assistant Superintendent for school facilities
- Qualifications - a degree in education as well as knowledgability of school functions and plans
- Recommendations (Oct. 1947) of Dr. Englehart:
reservation of 17 school sites immediately
construction of 11 new buildings
land purchase and planning for others
- 800 Up-county objections to down-county building program
- Dual system with its poor facilities for negroes - no kindergartens - separate teacher association - separate junior college
- New consolidated schools for negroes to bring services and facilities up to quality of white schools (1949)
- 900 Mr. Horad - Citizen's Committee for Mutual Improvement (a Negro group) Evidence of change in county - social concern
- Negro trustees and teachers (especially Parlett Moore) of high quality
- 130 Mr. Barrow's appointment (1849) to board by Gov. Lane to replace Mrs. Walker - perhaps an answer to criticism leveled at schools
- Barrow's vote on re-appointment of Dr. Broome
- 225 The drive for an elected school board - no participation from schools or board
- Baylor appointment (1950) by Gov. Lane and also Jackson, a lawyer to replace Joseph who resigned to avoid conflict of interest - on purchase of Bliss Electrical School for the Junior College

- Gov. Lane's effort to aid schools - the sales tax
- 400 (1949) election of a non-partisan Council for new Charter government, and election of a Republican Delegation - the overthrow of the Democratic regime
- 550 The first school board election (1952) - four members, Baylor, Barrow, Bullis and King
Mrs. Sandifer's preference for appointed boards
- 640 Outstanding improvements of this period
- Improved teacher salary at both local and state level
 - A retirement program
 - Eastern Suburban Study Group for Unmet Needs of Children: handicapped, mental and physical; emotionally disturbed, remedial programs
 - A school cafeteria program, integrated with the school administration
 - Junior College
 - Improved programs for custodians - training, standards
 - Supervision of bus drivers - addition of crossing guards

Note: See continuation on tape #2 of Irene Sandifer.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY, INC.

Suggested Topics for Interview #2 with IRENE SANDIFER

The Charter Campaign Beginnings in 1942-43 Con'd.

League positions and action

May '42 - Board accepted Study Group's recommendations on home rule

October '42 - membership endorsed Board's position and voted to elect a Charter Board

November 1942 election - won; Alice Hostetler elected to Board

1943 - Mont. Co. League submitted suggestions to Charter Board: Provide for a County Manager chosen solely on his professional qualifications

Elections for Council should be non-partisan
State law?

That a true merit system be required
in the Charter

LEAGUE Involvement in Charter Campaign

Charter Committee members - Edith Dinwoodey, Eleanor Vaughan
Hearings - Purpose

Opposition to Charter - arguments
Higher costs of gov't
Wholesale firing of employees

Presidency of Maryland League

740 The preceding State president - 1943-45 - (Hostetler?)

The names and number of local Leagues comprising
the State League

Meeting place of the State League
office? secretary? (as in the days of Lavnia Engle)

Program making - the annual convention

Program for 1942-43

Education?

What about the Declaration of Intent Law repeal - when?
Lobbying at the General Assembly - how done and by whom

075 National League
Changed from state basis to local basis

317 Conclusion - LWV more mature now.

OUTLINE OF ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW
with
Irene Sandifer

- I. Background
 - A. Childhood and education
 - B. Move to Montgomery County
 - C. Civic activities

- II. Service on Montgomery County Board of Education
 - A. Appointment and community reaction
 - B. Other members of the Board
 - C. Dr. Broome's contributions to education
 - D. Changes in Montgomery County Schools
 - 1. Building program
 - 2. Schools for "colored"
 - E. Three R Protest Group
 - 1. Attacks on curriculum
 - 2. Charges of subversion
 - F. Drive for elected School Board
 - G. Later appointments to School Board
 - H. Outstanding developments in Montgomery County Schools
 - 1. Teachers salaries
 - 2. Special education
 - 3. Custodians and crossing guards
 - 4. Cafeteria program
 - I. Selection of new superintendent
 - J. School for cerebral palsied children
 - K. Citizen pressures for federal school aid
 - L. Building problems
 - M. Open Board meetings

- III. Presidency of League of Women Voters of Montgomery County
 - A. Organization of League
 - B. Financing of League
 - C. Formulation of positions
 - D. Studies of League
 - E. Charter movement

- IV. Presidency of League of Women Voters of Maryland
 - A. Organization of League
 - B. Studies of League
 - C. Reactions to changes at national level

- V. Look at League today

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW
with
Irene Sandifer

Interviewer - Blossom Holland

HOLLAND: This interview is with Irene Sandifer, Mrs. Durward Sandifer, on November 16, 1971. The interviewer is Mrs. Edward Holland, and we are at Mrs. Holland's home.

Mrs. Sandifer lives at 8304 Oakford Place in Silver Spring, and she tells me she has lived there since 1940 except for six years when she was away.

Mrs. Sandifer, would you tell us where you lived as a child?

SANDIFER: In the state of Illinois, in the country, in the central part. I went to a country school.

HOLLAND: A one room?

SANDIFER: Yes. A one room school, and I went there for ten years.

HOLLAND: And from there, did you come to this area?

SANDIFER: Well, we came to this area after my husband and I both had done graduate work at Columbia University, and my husband got his degree in international law and taught at Rutgers University in New Jersey. Because he was interested in what he could do for world peace and that kind of thing, he was very much interested in coming to the State Department to practice his international law. So he came to the Department of State in 1934.

HOLLAND: I think there is a hiatus we'd better fill in.

You said that you went to a one room school in Illinois
for ten years and then suddenly we got 2

SANDIFER: Oh, yes. Well, then I went to high school for
the last two years. Then I went to Eureka College.

HOLLAND: Which is where?

SANDIFER: Which is Disciples of Christ College about
twenty miles east of Peoria, Illinois. That's where I
met my husband. Then I taught in high school in Washington,
Illinois and Eureka, Illinois. My husband taught in the
college from which we graduated, and then we went to Columbia
University in 1927. I got an M.A. in history while my hus-
band was getting an L.L.B. and doing his residence for a
Ph.D. in International Law and Relations.

HOLLAND: Tell me then now. You moved here in '30?

SANDIFER: No. My husband taught at Rutgers University,
New Brunswick, N.J. from 1931-1934. We moved to Washington
in 1934.

HOLLAND: '34.

SANDIFER: We lived in Montgomery County because that's
where we happened to find a house. We lived first on
Philadelphia Avenue in Takoma Park. Then we moved further
out on Dale Drive and then on Kingsbury Drive and then on
Oakford Place where we bought a house in 1940.

HOLLAND: Did you get involved in community activities as
soon as you came to this area?

SANDIFER: Well, when I first came, I was already a member
of the American Association of University Women in New Jersey
so I first went to the Washington branch of the American

Association of University Women and was on the board there as vice-president for about a year. I was chairman of a government study group for Takoma Park Women's Club. Then about 1939 I decided that it seemed that I was going to live in Montgomery County and Maryland, and I'd better know something about it since I'd never lived here before. My child would be going to school here. I'd be paying my taxes here and living here so I dropped my membership down at the American Association of University Women and joined the League of Women Voters primarily to learn something about Montgomery County because the State of Maryland and its government is quite different from that of Illinois where I grew up.

HOLLAND: So you joined the League, then, in 1939 and have been a member ever since?

SANDIFER: That's right. As far as other activities are concerned, my daughter was then in the first grade, and she went to Parkside School which, at that time, was considered the most, let us say, far out school in the county. It was the experimental school.

HOLLAND: Public school?

SANDIFER: Public school. The public Parkside School with Miss C. Mabel Smith as the principal. Dr. Broome and Miss C. Mabel Smith used the Parkside School for new ideas in education. My daughter never had a grade until she went to junior high. All the many things I read about now that are new in education, we did at Parkside when my daughter was there in the elementary school.

So when we first went there, and my daughter started going to Parkside, people would say, "Oh, you go to that school where the children do what they want to do." We had no Parent-Teacher Association in Parkside. Miss Smith met with the parents and gave us really a course, I would say, in child behavior and education. It was that kind of parents' meeting.

HOLLAND: I think that's great, and certainly I didn't know that they did things like that back at that time.

SANDIFER: We had fourth, fifth and sixth grades in one room with different teachers, one for art and another for mathematics and so on. The children were trained to be leaders. The children that got along faster than the other children had more time for their leisure reading, or they had time for leadership, doing something else. It was the philosophy of Dr. Broome and Miss Smith that every child had great potential and so maybe one child could build better than another, and maybe one was better in art, and maybe one was better in something else.

HOLLAND: I think we'll get back to Dr. Broome and his philosophy and so forth. I just have one more question on the Parkside School. When you say the fourth and fifth and sixth grades were all in one room, are you I guess what I want to know is were there several rooms with fourth, fifth and sixth grades or is such a small school that

SANDIFER: It was a small school, and they were not definitely divided but some of them would be over here doing mathematics over in another room, and somebody would be over in another room doing something else. Probably I (Con'd on next page-5)

shouldn't have said one room. I should have said in the one school, they were not divided rigidly.

HOLLAND: Well, let's see. We had you joining the League in 1939, and I believe you became president in 1942 when the former president had to resign?

SANDIFER: Yes, and that was chiefly because most of the chairmen were so involved and so necessary in what they were doing at that time that I seemed to be the one that was expendable because I was the foreign policy chairman and they just put someone else there.

HOLLAND: I don't think being expendable is the way a president is chosen but anyway that is an interesting comment. So that you filled out Mrs. Dinwiddie's term and then had a year when you were elected president for yourself, I guess.

SANDIFER: I don't remember exactly. I don't think so. I went on to the state.

HOLLAND: That's true, that you were president of the Maryland State League in 1943. Then, I understand, you went on to a Governor's Commission. Would you just tell us what that is?

SANDIFER: Well, the governors in those days, and I don't know whether they are still doing it or not, but the League really had such a good reputation in Maryland--it had been made for it by Mrs. Ellicott and her executive secretary, Miss Engle--that the Governor was in the habit of appointing a past president of the League of Women Voters of Maryland to some kind of a state commission. So I was appointed to

the commission on the revision of the adoption laws which really wasn't my own field, but the League had such a reputation in the welfare field that he apparently thought that was a good place to appoint past League presidents.

HOLLAND: Do you think that he felt that he had to appoint or ?

SANDIFER: No, I think he wanted to. I think he looked around for women leaders, and the governors just looked to the past League president as a good person to put on a commission.

HOLLAND: So you were on the commission from 1945 until 1946.

SANDIFER: That's right.

HOLLAND: Well, we'll get on to your other activities particularly in the Board of Education, but you wanted to say just a little bit about any national or international activities that you've taken part in?

SANDIFER: Well, the only international activities I've really taken part in is that since I was always interested in history and foreign policy I think I forgot to say I once taught school back there before we went to Columbia University. Maybe I did. So after we had served in the foreign field in South America and I came back from Argentina, the people who were working with the Carrie Chapman Catt Fund immediately began asking me about the Argentinian women because Peron had been overthrown, and there was great hope for democracy and activities of the women there. They had written me while I was down there. So when I came back

HOLLAND: Let me interrupt you for a moment. People (Con'd)

listening to the tape may not know who Carrie Chapman Catt was or what the Fund was, at least.

SANDIFER: Well, it had been set up by the League of Women Voters in 1947 to answer a need which seemed to exist at that time when women after the World War were coming to this country and asking how the women were effective in politics and in government in this country. This was set up in honor of Carrie Chapman Catt, one of the founders of the League, because of her interest in women all over the world. Then the name was changed to the Overseas Education Fund, which seemed to describe a little more clearly and easily what we were doing.

I felt when I came back, since I had a smattering of Spanish and since I'd had a little experience with the women of South America, I would find it most interesting and most useful to put all my previous experience together to work as a volunteer down with the Overseas Education Fund, which I have been doing for the last ten years, but I now feel it is time for me to retire from that. I'm not doing it any more.

HOLLAND: Well, in another interview, you know we are going to talk about your League experiences, and we can talk about the Overseas Education Fund at that time, but today let's get on to your service on the Montgomery County Board of Education, which was, I believe, from 1946 to 1953. Who appointed you to the local board of education?

SANDIFER: The Governor.

HOLLAND: The Governor. Do you remember which ?

SANDIFER: I think it was Governor O'Connor at that time.

HOLLAND: Why do you believe that you were chosen?

SANDIFER: Well, it was always interesting to me to think why I was chosen, and I think I can best tell you this. I'll just tell you exactly what happened.

I was out in my own garden one day, and the telephone rang. On the telephone was Mr. James Gill asking me, if I were recommended to serve on the Board of Education of Montgomery County, would I serve? Well, you can imagine what a surprise this was to me. Mr. Gill had been a member of the Legislature. He was well known in this county as one of the Democratic politicians, and, of course, at that time, we all knew that Colonel Brooke Lee controlled the Democratic Party to a large extent. This meant that someone was willing to recommend me to Colonel Lee, who would recommend me to It was the Democratic State Central Committee, I think, who did the recommending at that time. That was the policy that the Democratic State Central Committee would recommend it to the Governor.

Now why did Mr. Gill call me? I had two friends on the School Board, I would say, that I feel were probably responsible for my appointment. I knew Mr. Gill because he was the father of one of my daughters best friends. I also knew Mr. Arthur Joseph, who had been my neighbor on Philadelphia Avenue. His daughter was also one of my daughter's best friends, but we were neighbors of the Joseph's who were good neighbors (Con'd on the next page)

so we knew them quite well. He was, at that time, the president of the School Board.

Now, there was a big agitation going on in the county at that time. The PTA Council was very active, and the PTA Council was trying to establish the principle that they should recommend to the Governor who should be appointed, who the Governor should appoint.

So I had the feeling that since I had served on the League of Women Voters, both as Montgomery County president and as the State president, and this at a time, however, when the League was working hard for the charter and all this change in the county government, that they felt that I had a reputation behind me which would please the PTAs and groups like the League of Women Voters, the civic associations. But at the same time, they knew me, and they felt that I was a good appointment.

Now, I don't think that they accomplished their purpose if they thought that this was going to appease the PTAs because my friends that I knew. . . . You see, I had not been real active in PTA. I had worked in the PTA in Montgomery Hills and then when my daughter moved on to Blair, I was a member, but I never was a part of the PTA Council. Probably someone has explained somewhere else how the PTA Council, in those days, was made up from representatives of all the schools, and they were quite an important influence in the county. They weren't pleased with my appointment. I might have had the same kind of qualifications that many of the people that

they would recommend [would have] because I had done nothing in politics, but they wanted to establish the principle that the people the PTA recommended would be chosen by the Governor. So they weren't happy with me. I knew that from what even some of my very best League friends said to me.

There was, at that time, a great suspicion of anyone involved in politics. I might say that when Mr. Gill asked me if I would accept appointment to the School Board, he said, "You're under no obligation, whatever, to the Democratic Party." I want to say here what I've always said, but what many of my friends never seemed to believe, that that was true. The suggestion was never made to me that I should vote or act in any particular way.

HOLLAND: Well, you mentioned that some of your best League friends didn't really believe this at the time. Do you think that this was general reaction of the League members as well as the PTA members that they would prefer that you hadn't been appointed?

SANDIFER: I think that they wanted the PTA recommended representatives to be appointed although the League took no part in making recommendations, but it was all a part of the movement on the charter and the home rule. They were really opposed. . . . This was the beginning at this time, it hadn't really been formulated yet, but this was the beginning of the movement to take the appointment of School Board members out of the hands of the Governor and have an elected School Board. I don't know whether, if the Governor earlier had accepted

recommendations from the PTA and gone right along with them, whether they would have moved so strongly for the election of a School Board. I don't know but anyhow that movement was in the works at that time.

HOLLAND: Was there reaction among the politicians?

SANDIFER: No, not that I know of.

HOLLAND: What was the term of office for the appointed School Board?

SANDIFER: Six years.

HOLLAND: Six years.

SANDIFER: I was appointed to fill an unexpired term. The first time, I had three years, and then I was reappointed for the six year term but we were going to go to a foreign post so I did not serve my full [term].

HOLLAND: Do I assume, then, that there were six members on the Board, and one went off each year?

SANDIFER: That was it. There was a reorganization of the Board in May, and so somebody would either be reappointed or go off.

HOLLAND: Were you people paid?

SANDIFER: As I remember, we were paid thirty dollars a month for expenses, a very small amount but. . . .

HOLLAND: Just for your expenses obviously. There was no salary.

SANDIFER: It didn't pay expenses either, but it helped.

HOLLAND: Would you tell us something about the members serving on the Board at that time?

SANDIFER: Yes, we had a good Board in spite of the fact that

some people might object because they had all been appointed by the Governor.

On the Board when I went on was Mr. Joseph, who was the chairman of the Board of that year. We usually rotated chairmanships, the presidency. Mr. Joseph was sort of the executive superintendent of the Bliss Electrical School. He was in charge of all of the buildings and grounds and food and dormitory and all of the physical part of the school. [He] helped to administer the school.

HOLLAND: That was in Takoma Park?

SANDIFER: That was in Takoma Park. The Bliss Electrical School was a one year electrical training for students out of high school.

Mr. Joseph had a great knowledge of buildings. He could walk into a room and know instantly that that door jamb was not straight. He saw that kind of thing. He knew how heating plants should be run. He was very good on all of those practical kinds of things.

Mr. Stanley Stine, from Silver Spring also, was with a title company in Washington, and he was very knowledgeable about the county and about property and about values and that type of thing.

Mr. Gill, as I have told you, had been a member of the Legislature. He was a lawyer in Silver Spring, and I suppose he would be the one that people would most think was the political appointee on the Board that would do everything the way the Democrats wanted it done. Perhaps he would but I would say Mr. Gill practically always backed Dr. Broome

in anything that Dr. Broome wanted. I would say that he used his political acumen more or less to judge what we could get out of the Commissioners and how to deal with the Commissioners and how far that we might go.

If I would see anything there that indicated politics, it might be that when we were going to appoint somebody to some of the posts like school maintenance and things, he would only say "Well, why do we have to go out of the county for this? Why can't we get somebody in the county?" But as far as I know, he didn't push any particular person for these jobs.

There was Mrs. Hauck, and I never really knew Mrs. Hauck. She came from Bethesda, and I rather think that she probably came from a PTA recommendation. Her husband was an Army officer, I think, and she had been active in the PTAs there, and I think brought to the Board the same kind of support for the schools that most women would bring to the Board.

Now Mrs. Curtis Walker certainly knew all of the politicians of the county, but Mrs. Walker's father had been the Commissioner of Education in the United States Government. Mrs. Walker just naturally had grown up in education with a feeling of support for education.

So on the whole, I felt that we really had quite a good School Board even though we were all appointed.

HOLLAND: I guess you've pretty well said that you think that there wasn't much relationship of the political machine or political boss to the schools except possibly in the appointment--like Mr. Gill suggesting that it should be a county person, not necessarily a Democrat.

SANDIFER: No. He just. . . . I think it was the idea that you use all of the county people that you could use, and I would say that that probably comes from a politician's background.

HOLLAND: Well, was there any relationship of the political machine to the schools in other ways such as in the budget or in the capital program, the planning of either one?

SANDIFER: Not that I know of. There never was any emphasis on that. . . . Now the people from the PTAs were always pushing for a higher budget, you see, but, of course, we could use much more money than we ever had. [They] would think that the Commissioners should give us more money but the interesting thing is that when we got the new Council, we had a hard time getting more money, too. I mean the people that are responsible for the money are also sensitive to the taxation.

Dr. Broome was a man who was very much interested in education, very much interested in the children of the county, but also got along with people and so he didn't push for more money in his budget than he thought that it was possible for us to get from the Commissioners, if you know what I mean.

HOLLAND: Yes. He knew what was possible and worked for that possibility.

SANDIFER: Yes. So you worked more or less with those people in telling them what you needed and not asking for unreasonable amounts, it would seem to me.

HOLLAND: Well, let's talk about Dr. Broome. What were his

contributions to the Montgomery County Schools, do you think?

SANDIFER: Well, of course, as I told you, I'm a great admirer of Dr. Broome. I felt he was always in the forefront with new ideas. For example, I gave you Parkside. When he thought things were successful that he tried, then he worked them gradually into the other schools. So that in reality, we had one of the most forward looking county school educational systems in the whole country. We ranked among the outstanding ones because he did bring in these new ideas. Dr. Pullen worked with him in bringing in. . . .

HOLLAND: Dr. Pullen was the State. . .

SANDIFER: State Superintendent of Schools. I always felt that Dr. Broome did wonderful things with the amount of money that he had. He also brought in Dr. Englehart from Columbia to help him to plan schools before we had an Assistant Superintendent for that purpose. It was one of the ways he had of getting things that he wanted. For example, if he had Dr. Englehart, who was a recognized authority on school buildings over the whole country, recommend a certain school site and type of building, he can say, "Well, Dr. Englehart recommends this." He has a backing behind him.

Then we had cooperation between the administration and the teachers. He [Dr. Broome] used teachers' committees and administrative committees. We used a teachers' committee, for example, to help in the selection of Dr. Carpenter when he came to be the Assistant Superintendent in charge of buildings, and that kind of thing.

The Board worked closely with the teachers. I was on the administrative committee which worked with the teachers in setting up salary scales.

Now Dr. Broome was not too aggressive about salary scales because money meant nothing to Dr. Broome personally, you see, and perhaps it meant so little to him that he didn't realize that he should push harder for his teachers' salaries. But he pushed as much as he thought he could, and we worked with the teachers on that in trying to establish teachers' salaries that would be on a par with salaries in other parts of the country of similar type.

HOLLAND: Did the experiments tried at Parkside get transferred to other schools?

SANDIFER: Yes. They got transferred to other schools so much, you see, that then we had this reaction against Dr. Broome by certain people in the county. We'll talk about that, I guess, a little later.

HOLLAND: Would you say that Dr. Broome's contributions to the Montgomery County Schools were more or less than what he was reputed to have done? In other words, is his reputation greater than it should have been or less than it should have been?

SANDIFER: I think that he certainly was as good as his reputation, and I would say he was as good as his nationwide reputation. He was really a great man.

HOLLAND: I'm sure that we will talk some more about his contributions as we discuss the rest of the . . .

SANDIFER: Well, as I see other superintendents and the troubles that they have with their teachers and with people,

parents, I think that he was a genius for getting along with people.

HOLLAND: You mentioned parents. Did he work with them?

SANDIFER: We had great cooperation. For example, I don't know whether you want me now to get to talk about the participation of the citizens of the community and how we worked with them in doing different things that meant progress with the schools.

HOLLAND: Let's go on just a little bit more about Dr. Broome, and we'll get into that. What would you say were his contributions to the Maryland public schools in general?

SANDIFER: Well, I would say that because we started new things in Montgomery County, then they were taken up by other counties in the state. I think he was a great leader. For example, I don't know whether anyone else has told you this or not, and I don't know too much about it, but I'm sure that he is one that helped to start the teachers' retirement fund, which was later taken up by the State of Maryland.

When we started the junior college, then I know that we had Dean Price talking to our delegation to the Legislature about the Legislature establishing junior colleges over the state and pointing out how important it was.

In all sorts of things, he [Dr. Broome] was helping, I suppose through his influence with our own delegation over there. I don't know in detail just how much that was but he was the kind of a man who knew how to work with people. As I say, he might have been criticized for not getting more

money for his schools, but he also knew how to work with people to get what he wanted most.

HOLLAND: Did he have influence on the private schools in the county?

SANDIFER: I wouldn't know about that.

HOLLAND: Well, let's talk a little bit about the outstanding issues during your term of office.

SANDIFER: As I look back on it, it seems to me that those years--I suppose everyone thinks that his years are most important--were really the years in which the county schools and the government, also, were going through the metamorphosis which changed us from a rural community to a metropolitan area. That was really the beginning of what we see now.

The first School Board meeting that I went to was really a surprise to me, and I went home wondering if I had any business on the School Board. I thought I knew something about education, that I had learned what Dr. Broome was doing in the county and what he wanted. I had been a school teacher. I had felt that education was the most important thing we could do. That the improvement of education was the most important thing that we could do. It had been one of the things we had emphasized in the League of Women Voters I had had a good chairman for education in the county League and the state League. I really felt that I was qualified to be on the School Board.

When I got there, and I found that buying tracts of land,

approving architects' plans for schools and so on seemed to dominate the meetings, I felt that I should be an engineer or an architect and that my whole philosophy on education was really not as helpful as I had thought it was going to be. It's really appalling the condition that the schools were in at that time.

Now this, I think, was a part of a nationwide picture, perhaps. One, we'd just been through the depression period in the Thirties, and in Maryland, as in other places, the first place they cut in the depression period was education, the money that goes to education. Then the war came, and there were not materials available if there had been money. We scraped the bottom of the barrel for teachers during that war period.

So when I came on the School Board in '46, the great increase in population was suddenly coming into the county after the war. I don't know where they came from.

Secondly, we were just on the verge of this increase in population which came as a result of the war babies, you know. Then with the rundown schools that had to be repaired, that hadn't had sufficient repair, plus the new schools, plus the need for teachers and more teachers for the new population--we really were in great growing pains.

So one of the first things that happened when I was on the School Board was to hire the new Assistant Superintendent in charge of the building program and to administer all the physical part of the school system.

HOLLAND: This was Dr. Richard Carpenter?

SANDIFER: This was Dr. Carpenter. In this case we set up a new type of criteria that the county had not been used to. Before you'd had a Supervisor of School Property. That man had been the Supervisor of School Property, but not the man who could recognize an educational building, particularly. They decided that the new superintendent must be a man who had his degree in education as well as in physical plant. He must be a combination of the two which sets your standards very high and higher than we had ever been accustomed to.

HOLLAND: What you are saying is that the Supervisor of School Property was not an educator in any way.

SANDIFER: He was not supposed to be an educator. He was the man looking after the school property. Now with all these buildings that had to be built and the plans made as to where we should put them and how many children they are going to handle and helping Dr. Broome in building the kind of schools that would fit his philosophy in education Now when I read today that our schools are so different from what they were twenty-five years ago, that now we have rooms that we can move the walls, that's what happened. That's what Dr. Broome was already doing when I was on the School Board. We already had that kind of school in the new schools that were being built.

So the Board and the teachers agreed on the requirements for the new Assistant Superintendent of Schools, and then we got Mr. Carpenter.

And then just immediately I just took a glance yesterday at the minutes, and I saw that in October 1947, Dr. Englehart had come down and he recommended seventeen sites at one time. Seventeen sites were recommended, his working with Dr. Carpenter. Dr. Carpenter came in '47.

In October 1947, Dr. Carpenter's report to the School Board showed new construction on twenty-five school buildings, eight land purchases and nine options and eleven plans being made for new schools. Mr. Carpenter came in in the summer of 1947. It just gives you a slight idea of the kind of thing that we had to do at that time.

HOLLAND: I should think there would have been a taxpayers' uprising.

SANDIFER: Well, interesting enough, there did not seem to be a taxpayers' uprising. One of our main criticisms came from up-county. Up-county was still rural then, and the increase in population was coming down here. So these new schools were being built down in this area next to the District. So we were remodeling and repairing the old schools up in Gaithersburg and Damascus and up there at the beginning because they at least had a shelter over their heads, and the new people coming down here didn't have any schools at all to take care of the children.

I remember that some of the members of the School Board said to me, "Well, Brooke Lee used to tell us that whatever we did down-county, we had to do the same thing up-county." But that was not being done.

I remember going to a fried chicken supper that we were invited to up at Gaithersburg, and the people letting us know that they weren't at all approving of all of these new buildings that were going on down-county.

Now I should say also by 1949 we were building the new consolidated schools for the colored children. We called them 'colored', and up-county didn't like that because they were getting new schools before they got their new white schools [up-county].

HOLLAND: You were telling me that the schools were just for colored people.

SANDIFER: Oh, yes. We had segregation. It was the law in the State of Maryland at that time. To me, I was uncomfortable because I had not grown up [in] this situation, I had not come from an area that had segregation, and I was uncomfortable, really, being on a School Board that administered two sets of schools. But that's the way it was, and I felt that I could do a better job by doing the best I could under the existing laws as we had them, but at the same time saying occasionally to different people like

I said to the Executive Secretary of the Maryland Teachers Association--he's the same one they have now; I can't think of his name--how silly. Why do you have two separate teachers associations? They all have the same training. They all have the same qualifications. You're using the same method. Why have them meet in two different

meetings? Well, it was the State law at that time.

Dr. Broome, at that time, used to have his fall meetings with his teachers that he had before he started the school year, first with the teachers in his white schools, and then go through the same thing with separate meetings with his teachers in the colored schools.

When I went on the Board, we still had these little local elementary colored schools in very bad condition throughout the county. That is a case in which we just moved along. They were still in existence because the country as a whole, the South as a whole, had not yet come to this consciousness that they couldn't do this any more. A part of our building program was to consolidate the colored schools so that they could have kindergartens and the same kinds of services that the other schools had.

The movement was starting. At first, instead of desegregating, it was to very quickly get these people-- nobody said that, but it was obvious to me----everyone was so anxious to get those colored schools just as good as the white schools.

HOLLAND: So they would continue to be separated?

SANDIFER: Yes.

HOLLAND: Mrs. Sandifer, how many of these new consolidated schools were there for the colored people?

SANDIFER: I might be wrong, but I believe there were four new consolidated schools. There was also in this movement,

the way in which we worked with the parents, a group of the colored people in the county, called the Citizens Council for Mutual Improvement, and there was a Mr. Horad who was the chairman of that group.

HOLLAND: How do you spell his name?

SANDIFER: H O R A D

We met with them, and we pointed out to them what we were doing for the consolidation of the schools. Also, around 1949 after the junior college had been established, we also established one for the colored people.

HOLLAND: A junior college?

SANDIFER: A junior college, just as we had started the one in Bethesda-Chevy Chase, we started one in the Lincoln High School in Rockville. There was this whole movement. For example, I remember one time soon after I was on the Board, there was something about that we have the same health services in all the colored schools that we had in the white schools, the same nurses services and so on.

Now things had been bad. I think it is just that I don't condemn anybody in the past. It's the whole social movement and our consideration for people that changes as we go along. It was too slow, but, nevertheless, that's the way it was.

Those country schools were like the little country schools that I was accustomed to as a child, but they were in much worse condition, of course. And to see how the

county was really changing in that period Mr. Joseph once told me that when he first went on the School Board, Dr. Broome would even be out in one of those country schools fixing the pipe from the stove that went into the wall, when it was down. Then we jumped to the consolidated schools.

I would like, while I am talking about this, to say something about our teachers. Those teachers and the parents that we met from those schools, when they met with us, the trustees from different schools, I just had the greatest admiration for them. Those teachers had the same qualifications that our white teachers had. They had the same salary, and they had the same seniority and the same qualifications. Dr. Pullen told me one time that, during the war when teachers were so We had so few teachers, and it was so hard to get good teachersthat we suffered less with the colored teachers because we really had the cream of the crop, that the school teaching was one profession in Maryland where they ranked on an equal with the white people so that we had much better quality there, on the whole, than we had in the other teachers.

I would like to say that I thought Mr. Moore, Parlett Moore, who was the superintendent of the Lincoln High School was just outstanding. He reminded me so much of Dr. Broome in his way of dealing with people and his mannerisms and his whole philosophy. He had taken it all from Dr. Broome.

HOLLAND: Now, you mentioned just this moment Lincoln

High School. A little earlier, you said there was a junior college at Lincoln?

SANDIFER: Yes. You see, you start them in the high school like we started what later went to Takoma Park. We started that in the Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School.

HOLLAND: So the consolidated schools included the elementary schools and at least one high school?

SANDIFER: One senior high school. We had that before. We had a senior high school, and we had a junior high school, but the consolidation was for the elementary schools.

HOLLAND: I'd just like to ask you to tell me briefly who the trustees were. Not who they were but what they were because in most school systems, I don't think we had trustees.

SANDIFER: We had school trustees in Illinois in our little local district where I was. Every school here had trustees, and those trustees were appointed by the Board of Education. There would be a list of trustees brought in practically at each Board meeting from different schools. I assume that those were recommended to the Office of Education by the PTAs and maybe the principal because the names really meant very little to us. We just approved who was brought to us, but the colored schools had them and the white schools, too.

Those people were supposed to be the people who looked after the plant or brought to our attention if there was any problem involved around the schools, that kind of thing.

HOLLAND: They were a little more intimately involved with the schools than . . .

SANDIFER: A little more than the PTAs, who were volunteer, yes. They were really official representatives of the School Board because they were appointed by the School Board.

HOLLAND: Well, let's talk a little bit about the Three R Protest group now.

SANDIFER: I think before I get to that, I could say that those little elementary schools I was on the committee that worked with the community because the people, the trustees and the people in the community, asked to keep those schools for community centers, and the Board adopted that policy that they could keep them, and we would continue to carry the insurance on the school and that kind of thing, but they must help take care of its upkeep. They brought to us when there was a group that wanted to use the school and what they wanted to use it for, for a community center, and then I met with them, and then the Board would approve if I would recommend it.

HOLLAND: The only thing I don't understand is--are you saying that this is after they were no longer used as schools?

SANDIFER: As a school, yes. They wanted to keep their schools as a community center. They didn't have any other one, you see. How long they did that, I don't know because I left.

HOLLAND: Ok. Now shall we talk about the Three R Protest group? Who was in it and what did they want?

SANDIFER: Well, there were some various people in it. There was a Mrs. Brooks, who sent a communication to the Board. This was in 1948 that they began to get rather vociferous, let us say, criticizing our curriculum. They attacked the curriculum. They, I would say, attacked what we would consider the more

progressive methods of education, like you have a social studies program where the history and the geography and things are sort of welded together. Well, for example, in Parkside, you might have your reading, your mathematics and everything all developing around one subject that the children were working on at that time.

They protested specifically because they wanted textbooks, for one thing, out of which you knew that you were on this page of the textbook at a certain time. They didn't like the rather loose structuring of some of our subject matter. They thought we didn't teach enough reading and spelling and arithmetic and so on.

Now, they did not like Dr. Broome, and his methods. So, in reality, what they wanted, I think, was to get rid of Dr. Broome. That was their first goal.

They had meetings of their own. They protested. Mr. Hiser was one of them. He had the movie house in Bethesda. Then there was a Mrs. Acton. There was a Mrs. Edward--I think it is--Stack, Edwin Stack, I believe.

They wrote letters, and the main thing they did was, if you were to get hold of the Star, for example, for that period, you would just find letters to the editor and these things in there all the time from this group, just criticizing the school system terrifically.

Well, they were strong enough in their criticism that I think they had a definite influence because at one time,

when the group met with the--this is one of the ways that Dr. Broome would meet this kind of an onslaught--they met with the Board and expressed some of their criticisms. Then this Mrs. Brooks wrote a letter criticizing the curriculum, and then there would be all these things that appeared in the papers all the time.

Well, that summer, in 1948, after they had been very vocal in their criticism, Dr. Broome and the Board wrote them a letter pointing out to them there would be a workshop. It was already being planned that summer to work on curriculum. This would open to parents, and the parents could come and work with the teachers and the supervisors and the school people. As a result of that Now how many of them came to that workshop, I don't really know but they were invited to come.

As a result, after the workshop, then a report was sent to them, and sent to everybody. The report that came out of that workshop was a definite tightening up of things, like say, identify the geography and reading and arithmetic, and more definite course of study for each grade which would identify the reading skills that were to be learned in each grade, and the geography, et cetera.

Then also, there was the attempt to have the principals have an advisory council of the parents to work on the individual needs of the children. I don't know that that really did anything to stop them, but that was the method of dealing with them, to try to make them understand the curriculum and come in and work with the teachers on this.

Then we had this person by the name of Mr. Miles. I don't have Mr. Miles' first name in my mind, but he harassed us. He sent all kinds of charges during the years '48 up until '50. He finally asked the Governor to take these charges to the Attorney General accusing us on the School Board and Dr. Broome and the administration of subversive activities. He made definite charges against some books, one called the Rudd Books, another the Bruner-Smith Books, another group of books called the Building America Series, and then a woman by the name of Mrs. Lewis had spoken in the Montgomery Blair High School and they objected to her speech.

The Attorney General replied to Mr. Miles that the Rudd Books had not been in the school system since 1940 so he didn't need to answer that, that the Bruner-Smith Books had, at one time, been used as reference reading but not as textbooks, and they were no longer in publication so there was no use in talking about them. Then he [the Attorney General] had gone carefully into this Building America Series that they were attacking, that Mr. Miles specifically was attacking, and he hadn't been able to find anything in that series that he would consider subversive, and explained to him Mr. Miles that Mrs. Lewis had appeared there on a recommendation of Mrs. Yauky and that they didn't feel that there was anything in Mrs. Lewis' speech that could be considered subversive, and so he dismissed the charges.

Miles appeared at the School Board after that, and I was away at that time, and I did not see or hear him, but the School Board simply asked him what basis he had for these charges. He didn't really have any, and they just told him they couldn't accept that kind of charges. Apparently, he was quite bad when he spoke that day at the School Board, but that's the kind of harrassment that we were subjected to during that period.

You see, it was also the same period as the McCarthy hearings down in Congress, and it was the same kind of thing. It's interesting. It seemed to spring up, you know, all over the United States at that particular time if you had a system that they could attack because it was a little outstanding in some way or another and different.

Now another thing that came as a result of that was Mr. Barrow's appointment to the School Board. Mr. Barrow was part of that group, Mr. Wylie Barrow, and he was appointed to the School Board at the time of Who resigned? Let me think. Mrs. Walker was appointed to the State Board of Education, and Mr. Barrow was appointed to take her place. Now he was appointed by [Governor] Lane. That was in 1949, and I had the feeling that the people who recommended that Barrow be appointed felt that his appointment to the School Board would help to bring to the School Board the ideas of that group and make them feel that they were being considered, and would probably put a stop to some of the criticism.

I remember that Mr. Gill, I think probably not that he believed what they were saying, but that he expressed the opinion that any group had the right to criticize the schools, and we should listen to their criticism. I would agree with that, too, except when it was carried to the extreme to which they did it. I don't know how many people felt as I did that it was really a part of a national movement. That was just my personal opinion.

I will say, in regard to Mr. Barrow, that he's honest, and I disagreed with him on many things. When we reappointed Dr. Broome for four more years in 1949, Mr. Barrow voted against him. I mean he was honest. He represented the group that did not want Dr. Broome and would have gotten rid of him if they could, but he was one vote, and it was obvious that the rest of the people in the county wanted him and that we wanted him, the rest of us on the School Board. He [Mr. Barrow] was a good member of the School Board.

HOLLAND: Well, now I wanted to talk with you about the citizen movement for a voice in the School Board election which we had sort of mentioned in that you said the PTA wanted to have a voice, and I was supposed to ask you about the nominating convention.

SANDIFER: I don't really know too much about that. The PTAs and other organizations had a nominating convention in which they took names and decided on who their candidates would be, but I think somebody who took part in that movement

in the PTAs can tell you more about their selection of candidates.

I can only tell you that the School Board simply went ahead doing its business, ignoring this other thing that was taking place and letting that go on. I mean the law was passed at the State Legislature, and we all knew it was coming, and that was the business of the people who had gotten the law through and who wanted to do this. As far as the School Board was concerned, we weren't doing anything about it at all. When they asked us for permission to send the materials home with the children from the schools, saying that it was non-partisan and no one was recommended, the Board said "No". They couldn't send the things home with the children.

HOLLAND: Well, the reason I brought up the nominating convention at this point was that I understood that Wylie Barrow's appointment was the Governor's response to the citizen movement for a voice in School Board selection.

SANDIFER: Well, I think that it was not that he responded any more to the PTAs than he ever had before. I don't think the PTAs recommended Wylie Barrow because the PTAs, the American Association of University Women, the League of Women Voters, the child study groups, all the study groups in the county, came out and supported Dr. Broome and the Board of Education. At the time we were having such critical comments made by these other people, they all supported us.

I may be wrong but my opinion is that it was a politically

wise thing to do to try to appease this group somewhat, but didn't think, didn't know if the PTA recommended him.

HOLLAND: No. I wasn't saying that. Perhaps it was the Governor's response in trying to represent a group of citizens who were complaining about the schools to let them have some way

SANDIFER: Yes, and I would guess that the Democratic Central Committee suggested it to him.

HOLLAND: Then who was Mrs. Baylor and who appointed her to the School Board?

SANDIFER: Well, Mr. Gill resigned in 1950, and so Mrs. Baylor was appointed. He [Mr. Gill] resigned while Governor Lane was governor, so she would have been appointed by Governor Lane. Now Mrs. Baylor had certainly been very active in the PTA. I don't know I couldn't say whether the PTAs had recommended Mrs. Baylor. I would guess they might have, but I would have assumed no one objected. I'm not positive whether the PTAs recommended her, but she was appointed by Lane to fill the vacancy of Mr. Gill's resignation.

I do know I don't think that Mr. Jackson who came later when Mr. Joseph resigned Mr. Joseph resigned because we were buying the Bliss School property, and he was conducting the negotiations, and so he resigned from the School Board when it became apparent that we were going to want to buy the Bliss School. Mr. Jackson, Tom Jackson, from Kensington, was appointed to take Mr. Joseph's place. He also was appointed by Governor Lane. That took place

the same summer in 1950. I do know that he was a very close friend of Mr. Stine's. Mr. Stine knew him because he was a lawyer and had great respect for him, and he was a parent in the school system. I would guess that Mr. Stine probably recommended him to somebody because Mr. Stine was the one who knew, I think, because I heard him say, "Tom Jackson would be a wonderful member of the School Board." So I could just guess that he passed that along to somebody.

HOLLAND: Then let's move on to Governor McKeldin. I gather that he attempted to appoint another conservative about the same

SANDIFER: I don't know who he attempted to appoint. I don't remember that. I remember the man he appointed was Dr. Davis, to whom no one could object. He was a good Republican and a good educator.

HOLLAND: This was Roy Tasco Davis?

SANDIFER: That's right.

HOLLAND: You said he was a good Republican. Was Governor McKeldin a Republican?

SANDIFER: Oh, yes. Governor McKeldin was a Republican who came in as a result of the Democrat fight among themselves. You see, Governor Lane Now at this time, not only were we going through a metamorphosis in the county in getting people willing to pay more money for the schools, getting a bigger school [budget], but the State also was establishing a much higher scale for teachers.

You see the State had minimum standards. The State had raised its standards. Governor Lane did a great deal for education in the State of Maryland, but he also was responsible for us getting a sales tax. So the Democrats split themselves right in two and elected Governor McKeldin just as they did when we elected Agnew. The Democrats have to split in two for us to get a Republican Governor in the State of Maryland.

HOLLAND: Tell us about the drive for an elected School Board, and perhaps you want to talk about the Republican Assembly and what role they played in this.

SANDIFER: Well, I would say the drive for the elected School Board was simply a part of this whole home rule movement which gave us the charter. So I was in this School Board at the time when the new Council came in, which was the new charter form of government.

HOLLAND: Was that in '49?

SANDIFER: Yes, the new County Council we met with about our budget for the first time in June in 1949. Now the new County Council considered itself non-partisan. They were elected under the new charter. At the same time that they were elected, we elected a Republican delegation to the State Assembly. This was the overthrow, really, of the Democratic regime in the county, and we on the School Board were still Democratic appointees administering the schools.

When we asked for our budgets from the new County Council,

I remember that we asked for such big budgets that
I'm not sure whether it was Dorothy Himstead or not, or
someone else, that called me on the telephone and said,
"Irene, what are you trying to do to the County Council?"

HOLLAND: Who is Mrs. Himstead?

SANDIFER: Oh, Mrs. Ralph Himstead worked very hard for
the charter, and she was a very good League of Women Voter.
She was our government chairman always, and she was the
State government chairman when I was State president. She
was one of the most ardent workers for the charter and the
first woman elected to the County Council.

HOLLAND: I see.

SANDIFER: People like Roy Tasco Davis, who was one of
those Republicans elected to the State Assembly, was a very
good friend of Mrs. Himstead's. You see, they had all worked
together for the charter, and she used to have great in-
fluence on any of our State legislation or any legislation
going to the Council because he had great confidence in
what the League of Women Voters wanted and the things that
we stood for.

At this time, also, this new group going to the Legislature
was very suspicious of us, and when we presented to them
Dr. Broome's twenty year plan and so on, they just wouldn't
believe us that we were going to have this large population
in the county in twenty years and therefore, that the State
had to begin to make these provisions for us.

You see, there was this great movement--well, we've

elected the County Council now and we are going to elect the School Board and get people that we want.

HOLLAND: Well, what was the attitude of Dr. Broome and the school personnel about the possibility of an elected School Board?

SANDIFER: Oh, they didn't take any position. They just went along with whatever the political movement was in the county. I mean, outwardly, he didn't take any position in regard to it.

HOLLAND: Well, when did it become a law that there should be an elected School Board?

SANDIFER: The first elected School Board took office in I don't know when the law came. I can't tell you exactly, but the election took place in '52, and the first elected School Board came in to serve in January of '53. See on that newly elected School Board, it was for seven people instead of six. You see Mrs. Baylor and Mr. Barrow were already on the Board, and they ran and were elected. The new people who came on were Mr. Bullis, who ran the Bullis School, and Mr. King from up in the Gaithersburg area. Let's see. We have to get the first name of Mr. King.

HOLLAND: It was Mr. Harrison King.

SANDIFER: Harrison King. There was a big King family up in the northern part of the county.

HOLLAND: Let's see. Did we get them all then?

SANDIFER: Yes. The School Board now was newly elected

Bullis and King, elected who were already on the Board-- Mrs. Baylor and Mr. Barrow, and the hold-overs--Mr. Stine and myself and Mr. Davis.

HOLLAND: I see. I guess I don't understand the law.

SANDIFER: The law was that they have seven people and they elect four one time and three the other. They don't elect them all at one time.

HOLLAND: What did you do? Draw lots as to who was going to stay on?

SANDIFER: No, some of these people's terms were expiring

HOLLAND: I see.

SANDIFER: And I guess that they took the ones that were nearest expiration. Mrs. Baylor, I know, had been on two years, and her term would have been expiring anyhow.

HOLLAND: Well, what do you think are the limitations of that elected School Board law? Or maybe you don't think there are any?

SANDIFER: No. I didn't approve of it. I never agreed with the League on the elected School Board. I felt that the citizens of the county had accomplished their purpose when they got the Governor to appoint the kinds of people he was appointing.

After all, I felt he had appointed Mrs. Herman Wilson [who] was the next person that came on after me, and he had appointed Dr. Davis. He had appointed Mrs. Baylor. My theory was that the people who were really interested in

good schools could make their influence felt to the Governor or to the committee that was recommending to the Governor and with much less effort, let me say, and much less danger of getting a School Board they didn't like, by continuing appointed School Boards.

Well, they did, you see, elect a School Board in the early '60s when they elected a very conservative School Board, and also at the same time County Council, that they, in my opinion, gave the schools a definite setback at that period. In that period, I feel, that the people who had started this agitation back here, the Three R Group, really, with more people won out.

In a very rapidly growing county, as this was, I felt that we were pushing things pretty far to keep insisting on electing the School Board when, with this rapidly growing population, they didn't have an opportunity really to know people. So I just never really was enthusiastic about the idea of electing the School Board, and I do think they have to put forth a tremendous effort, a tremendous effort, in the school elections to keep the people that, in my opinion, are the best for the educational system.

HOLLAND: I was going to talk to you next about the segregated school system. It seems to me that we have pretty well covered it.

SANDIFER: I think we have covered that.

HOLLAND: The only thing that I wanted to ask you was

SANDIFER: But we haven't covered I don't know whether you were wanting to ask me that or not. But what

we haven't covered, I think, are what I consider outstanding developments in the school system in the new things that showed the schools growing from a little tiny system to a big system.

HOLLAND: Well, let's go ahead and do that.

SANDIFER: For example, one of the big things that we were doing at that time was the improvement in teachers' salaries, getting smaller classes, that type of thing. I worked with the teachers on improving their salaries. I consider that that was one of the big issues in the Forties, was getting the teachers' salaries in the State level and the local level both up to what, for then, was a good standard.

Then there were other things that we began to develop which shows Dr. Broome's forward looking policies also. There was a group called the Eastern Suburban Study Group for Unmet Needs that studied the conditions in the county of the children who had various difficulties that they didn't fit into the school system. They might have been psychological. They could be reading problems. All of that type thing was surveyed at that time by the citizens group who came and reported to the Board, and we studied what we could do about it.

That type of thing, just before I left the Board, was being handled, the kind where the children needed some special services in the school and couldn't fit into the normal school and yet couldn't be considered too subnormal to be

in school, were put into special classes in a regular school. Like we would take two classes off to one side. Now here was an educational theory. The idea was that they can play on the school grounds with the other children. They could have a normal life, but by being in the same school and not sent off to a separate school, they seemed to be having a normal school experience but they were being given special training. Then, of course, along with this idea that some of them couldn't read, and some of them were emotionally disturbed, that points up to the need for more psychiatric and personnel in the office for supervising. I think we have many more, now, remedial teachers, but that was the beginning of that kind of thing there.

Part of those children that went into the special classes could move later into a normal situation. I remember Mr. Knight telling me that unfortunately the school systems had, in the past, been built for the average child, and that the people who didn't fit into this, the public school systems, in years past, had not been taken care of, and that it was one of the saddest days of his life when he had to tell a parent that that child could no longer fit into the school system because he had no place to send that child. The State was not adequately prepared to take care of it.

We also had at that time, and this was long before the great emphasis that was put on trying to force children faster,

we had a study group who studied the specially gifted child. Some of us felt that we were spending a great deal of energy on the children that were difficult children or handicapped in some way, and we weren't doing anything specially for the children who might be very specially gifted, and something more should be done for them.

Another thing--we started the junior college, and I think you probably have had other people talk about that.

But we had other things. For example, with the Assistant Superintendent in charge of the buildings and the whole physical plant of the county. Another thing that took place at that time was improvement in the school custodians. Dr. Carpenter, for example, set up standards and training procedures for the school custodians, and we established a retirement plan for school custodians. Now that was an element, a part of the school system, which you can imagine under the old, small country-type county was the most neglected. We had under Dr. Carpenter a director for the building program. Also there was this thing of more careful supervision of the bus drivers.

I remember that it was Mr. Gill who suggested that He observed that, over the country, women were being used for school crossings, for watchmen, to relieve the policemen, and that was the beginning of that.

Then another thing that developed and became a part of the school system at that time was the school cafeteria program. During that period, Mrs. Scharf was chairman of a

committee who studied the school cafeteria program and made a recommendation. When I first went on the School Board, we didn't really know whether we were responsible for the people who were hired in the schools. You see, it was one of those cases. The school cafeterias grew from the PTAs' interest in having a school cafeteria. Many of them developed through the PTA helping to get the equipment into the school and hiring a cook, and many mothers going and giving their time. Well, this was made an integral part of the school program with a qualified person in charge of it about 1951.

HOLLAND: When you went on, you weren't sure whether the School Board was in charge or the PTAs were still in charge?

SANDIFER: That's right.

HOLLAND: Well, it must have been an exciting time. You mentioned that there was a study group studying the gifted child. Then I assume that something happened as a result of that study.

SANDIFER: I don't remember specifically. I think that was sort of at the end of that period, and they brought in a report of what was taking place in other places and what was being recommended by men like Conant and those people. I think the way in which our CORE programs were set up and some of those things at that time helped to take care of that. But the thing that I am getting at is that we were beginning to think along those lines, and we had this group doing this. I can't remember what specifically came out of it.

HOLLAND: We seem to be skipping around a little bit

because the next thing I wanted to talk to you was the background of the winners in the election in '52. I think we've said a little of it, but do you want to give me the background of Mrs. Baylor?

SANDIFER: Mrs. Baylor is a teacher by profession, herself, and she had worked very actively in the schools and the PTAs. I suppose that Mrs. Baylor would probably fit the qualification of what someone would think was an ideal member of a board of education.

HOLLAND: I guess you said that, is it Mr. Bullis or Admiral Bullis?

SANDIFER: He's not an admiral. He was from the Navy. Well, Mr. Bullis I disagreed with many times also. I don't know why he wanted to be on the School Board. I think he probably wanted to be on it because he didn't like the cost of our building program I don't know. Maybe he thought it gave him more prestige for his school, but his school had a good name for people who wanted to send their children to the Naval Academy.

But he caused us more trouble on the building program than anywhere else. He did not like our style of buildings that Dr. Broome had put in the county, the little, low school and the small elementary school, you see. Our elementary schools were supposed to be about every mile and a half or two miles apart so the children could walk to them and so you didn't get too many children in one school, Dr. Broome's idea of what was good for the child.

Mr. Bullis still was of the opinion that schools should

have two or three stories high and brick walls, like the old school buildings were built. He was always picking at the school buildings and Dr. Carpenter's building.

Now he didn't object to teachers' salaries, but you couldn't tell exactly what his position was going to be on things. I would say he was rather erratic.

Now with Mr. Barrow, you knew where he stood, and Mr. King represented the up-county people, generally more conservative on his point of view than my point of view, for example, but I think he represented well a segment of the county.

HOLLAND: Tell me about the selection of the new superintendent.

SANDIFER: Well, that was very difficult really. If you look at the make-up of the Board at that time, you can see why it was difficult. We were very anxious to have a new superintendent come in who would have the support of the Board, and so, therefore, you couldn't bring in somebody that was all out for all kinds of new ideas because he would not have the support of a certain group on the Board. Some of us would not support someone who was not fairly forward looking in his views.

There were some of us who thought we should pay the salary that was necessary and really just go out for the outstanding educator in the country, whoever he was, and pay whatever was necessary. I think that's what we should have done, but we were hampered no end by the money that

the County Council and the County Manager said we could have.

We were always fighting with the County Manager, whether he was there representing the old Commissioners or whether he was there representing the Council. They held us to such a low salary that it was impossible to go out and ask for the best educator in the country, and I don't know that the School Board could have agreed on him, anyhow.

So the man we selected seemed to be a good moderate man who was willing to come for the salary that we had to offer him. I always felt, myself, a little bit guilty that Mrs. Baylor, Dr. Davis and I all left the School Board that fall, as we were on the Board that hired Dr. Norris when he came in.

So those were the problems we had. It was a difference in philosophy of the members of the Board plus the salary.

HOLLAND: Would you say that four of the Board members were representing the Three R Group, and then you three were

SANDIFER: No, no. I would say that generally speaking Mrs. Baylor, Mr. Stine, Dr. Davis and myself voted together on most things that came before the School Board. You see Dr. Davis was the Republican appointee in there, and I always told Dr. Davis that the republicans always were holding the money bags, you know, holding on to the strings, but he was so basically for education that he always had to vote with Mrs. Baylor and Mr. Stine and me on the things that came up because he was basically an educator, and he really

knew good education. Sometimes he had to squirm because he knew that his political party in back of him wouldn't come forth with the amount of money that he needed.

HOLLAND: What about the people who replaced you? I gather that there was a deadlock on the choices in the replacement.

SANDIFER: Well, you see, when I left, I recommended very highly You see, the Board selects the people now under the new law. At least they did then. It was not any more done by the Governor or done by any committee outside. The Board selected the replacement, itself.

HOLLAND: You mean between elections?

SANDIFER: Between elections, if there was a resignation. Now all I can say is that I resigned in September because I was expecting to go away, and when I left, I recommended very highly Helen Scharf. She went on as my replacement, and I don't really know anything about what happened after that.

[INTERRUPTION TO CHANGE TAPE]

SANDIFER: There is one thing I would like to say in conclusion, and that is that while I was on the School Board, regardless of its complexion, the people who changed from time to time, this School Board was always very professional in its relations with Dr. Broome and the school authorities, the assistant superintendents and teachers. We did the things setting policies, but we did not interfere with the internal administration of the school system. Personnel matters were

Dr. Broome's and his assistants' business. I think a School Board must have a superintendent in which it has confidence and leave to him the internal administration of his system.

Oh, I forgot another thing, too, on the cerebral palsy.

HOLLAND: Ok.

SANDIFER: I think I should probably say a few more things about citizen participation. In addition to the things I mentioned a while ago, I think that a very important thing that happened that shows how you can work with citizens is the setting up of a special school for the cerebral palsied children, which was established in 1949. This was definitely done working with a group of parents. Parents, themselves, helped us a very great deal, and got help from other organizations, say, somebody who would supply them with a car that was necessary to go and pick up the children. A school for children who are handicapped as those are with cerebral palsy is very expensive because of the equipment and the therapists that are needed, and special speech people. The cerebral palsy people, themselves, carried part of this expense and got help from other people that the Board of Education cooperated with.

All through these new things, like the establishment of the junior college, the teachers' salaries, all of these things that we did took citizen education and citizen desires,

and working with the Board, and then they gradually come about in a year or two.

Another example of that might be when Mrs. Agnes Meyer, who was very much interested in public schools and wanted to help with the public school situation after the war when she saw it was so difficult, came out to the county in 1949. I happened to be the president of the Board at that time. She called me, and she wanted to come to make a study of our school system and our problems.

She studied Montgomery County schools. This was also at the time we had just been having these attacks from the Three R's, and since Mrs. Meyer very much approved of our system, it was somewhat helpful to us when she published her report on what we were doing. She was very much interested in what we were doing with handicapped children and special help to children and so on. She saw the needs that we had for increased teachers and school buildings.

She made the study in Montgomery County and Prince George's County and the two counties in Virginia, and then she ran a series of articles in the Post.

I was much impressed with Mrs. Meyer and her sincerity in this. She had a number of us come to her house to a meeting. From Prince George's County I can remember Mr. Sasser being there, who was in the Congress at that time from Prince George's County. I can't remember who else was at this particular meeting, but then there was a large meeting of

citizens of these counties to plan this demand on Congress for aid for the areas for which the United States Government was responsible--for putting many new people there. Certainly this area around Washington was growth of the United States Government.

She said, "You know, you will get it." We did because in 1951 we were applying to the federal government for funds under an act which they had passed in September 1950. The first application that I saw that we made under that particular act was for a part of one of the elementary schools, in which we said the county had appropriated so much and asking the Congress to appropriate--asking the federal government for the additional appropriation.

There is another problem that we had when I went on this School Board, which I forgot to mention, and that was in regard to all these buildings we had to build. But right after the war, even if we could get the money for them, first we had to get the permission of the federal government to build these buildings. Did you realize that?

HOLLAND: No.

SANDIFER: And then, I thought, well, we get the permission. We make clear the case for this school building, that we have to have this building out at this particular place or we have to have this addition to this school, and the Government comes through and says, "All right. You may build it." But that didn't mean that we could get the materials. You see, materials were very short, and that was another one of our

problems. They said, "Yes", but they didn't say, "Here are the materials for it." We had to find them.

There was another interesting development while I was on the Board that happened soon after I went on the Board. It was not customary for the Board to hold open meetings where anyone who cared, the press or any citizen, could come and listen to what the Board was saying. The Board always received anyone who came with something which they wished to present, a complaint from parents or a suggestion from someone, but I think people had been rather discouraged if they suggested if they come in just to listen to what the Board was saying.

But not long after I became a member of the Board, a young woman from the Washington Post appeared one morning, and no one objected, and she sat and listened to all that took place. Thereafter, people came. That's the way it happened.

HOLLAND: Mrs. Sandifer, I understand that you'd like to make a comment about what you said earlier about the consolidation of the schools for the colored people.

SANDIFER: Yes. I just wanted to make clear that this was a sort of a natural development that was taking place of the social conscience of the people of the county. When you said "Perhaps to keep from desegregating", I think I rather agreed. I do want to make clear that it was more conscience that no longer could we leave the colored schools in the condition they had been in, that we must do more for the colored people and not have criticism brought

against us for that reason.

HOLLAND: Today we are having another interview with Mrs. Sandifer, and today is November 18, 1971. We are going to talk about Mrs. Sandifer's presidency of the Montgomery County League of Women Voters, and also later, her State presidency. What was your term of office in this local League?

SANDIFER: Practically one year. Mrs. Dinwiddie became the elected president in the spring, and she resigned in the summer. I was on the Board at that time as a Foreign Policy Chairman, and it so happened that neither of the two vice presidents was willing to serve. Mrs. Gardner Jackson said she couldn't possibly preside at a meeting, and a Mrs. Hendrickson had arthritis very badly in her arm, and it was just impossible for her to do it.

So it was necessary for one of us who was on the Board to do it. We had some outstanding people on the Board at that time, but each person was so responsible for the position which she held that I seemed to be the one who could be replaced as a chairman, and I became the president of the Montgomery County League.

As I mentioned in my other interview, I felt completely incompetent for this particular job, but I did have some sense of organization. I could preside at a meeting. It didn't frighten me to preside at meetings, and so I presided over this group whom I considered outstanding women.

HOLLAND: What was the size of the local League at that time?

SANDIFER: I have a feeling that the local League at that time You see, unfortunately, I don't have any of my materials on the League. But I think we were something like a hundred and sixty people or a hundred and fifty people. We were mostly concentrated in Bethesda-Chevy Chase, Silver Spring, with a few in Takoma Park, a few in the Rockville area, and a very few up-county.

We had county-wide meetings at that time, and we oftentimes had as many as a hundred people at a meeting, but sometimes seventy-five. I would consider that sixty was a small county-wide meeting. We had a county-wide meeting once a month where each chairman presented her material, what she was recommending or what was being studied. If there was any action to be taken from recommendations of the Board, it was done at those meetings.

Then we had study groups run under the different chairmen. Some of the study groups were on local, some on state and some on national things.

HOLLAND: There wasn't any Metro League at that time, I gather.

SANDIFER: No.

HOLLAND: I guess the need for the Metro League wasn't as great.

SANDIFER: Oh, no.

HOLLAND: There were small communities.

SANDIFER: Yes.

HOLLAND: What was the relationship of the local League to the state League?

SANDIFER: Well, in those days, the League organization. . . . I have to say that the national League was set up as a group of state Leagues, and the state program was decided at the state League level but also the national program came to the local Leagues through the state board. Generally, we had a state board organization with chairmen for the different subject matters, and then the county presidents went also to the state board meetings. We weren't very large in those days, and often a chairman would be duplicating, that is she might be a county chairman for social welfare and a state chairman for social welfare. I, at one time, when I was president of Montgomery County [League], I was also the state chairman of foreign policy.

HOLLAND: Oh, heavens. Well, did the state League have anything to say about what you studied on the local program?

SANDIFER: I don't remember except in the sense that, yes, I think they would because if they were going to take up. . . . If we were going to support something statewide, we had to have the support of all the local Leagues. Now a thing like studying our local government in Montgomery County would not necessarily have anything to do with the state League, but what we did on state government in Montgomery County would be done by the other counties over the state, or else if we were doing something in preparation to get the state to take this up We might study something and then bring it to the next state annual meeting to get the

other Leagues to take it up also.

HOLLAND: But any definitely local program was the local League's choice?

SANDIFER: That's right. In as far as it didn't Just as the League is today. As long as it isn't contrary to League principles.

HOLLAND: How was the local League financed?

SANDIFER: We were financed mainly by dues . . .

HOLLAND: Which were how much? Do you remember?

SANDIFER: As I remember, something like \$2.50 or \$3.00. And then by finance drives which were very meager in those days but I remember Alice Hostettler trying to get us all trained to go out and collect money from people. We had a few people in the county who would give us \$25, but that is the time when we were getting people accustomed to the idea of going out and asking business for money--the same type of finance drive we have today except on a much smaller scale.

Except that at the state level, we were helped by a very large contribution from Mrs. Ellicott, who was one of the founders of the League of Women Voters and the first state president of Maryland, and she, very generously, supported the League in Maryland and was still supporting it. That is, we were helped locally by her contribution in that we had to pay less to the state League and less to the national because Mrs. Ellicott practically paid our dues to the national League for the state.

HOLLAND: I think the state League would appreciate having

an angel of that type today.

SANDIFER: Today, when we're working down there at the Overseas Education Fund with the people in other countries, not necessarily forming Leagues, you know, but helping them with their local organizations, whatever they are, and there is this great attempt on our part to tell them that they should do something for their community in which they can get the support of their community. Then other people make contributions to them. We rather frown on encouraging them to get their money from somebody who wants to give them a great, large amount, and I always have to think back whenever we are talking about things like that, and say, "Well, you know, we didn't really start that way in the United States."

HOLLAND: I think that many people overseas would find much more to work with if they knew our history.

SANDIFER: I'm always saying that. I'm always saying that we should try to get them to see our little, weak Leagues, so they could see how Leagues really start.

HOLLAND: When was the decision made to sell calendars? Was this in that period?

SANDIFER: No, I don't believe so. I think that came later. Oh, I do remember. I don't think it was while I was president, but it was while I was being active in the League that we did adopt these calendars from Mrs. Scull in Takoma Park, and she . . . and I don't know whether some member of her family helped her. But that's the way

they started. That was while I was being active. I can't tell you exactly when it was.

HOLLAND: Which Mrs. Scull would this be?

SANDIFER: Not the Mrs. Scull today. I don't believe there is any connection, but it was a Mrs. Scull in Takoma Park who was a member of the League, and we started with her calendars.

HOLLAND: How was the work of the League done? Was there an office or a secretary?

SANDIFER: No. All of us did our own work and answered our own telephones, and the president's work was done from the president's office and every chairman

HOLLAND: President's home.

SANDIFER: The president's home, I mean, yes, and every chairman did her work out of her own home.

HOLLAND: Now you said a little earlier that study groups would bring their recommendations and their materials to these monthly League meetings. Could you tell me a little more fully how the positions were formulated, how stands that the League took were formulated? People came to the meetings and presented their material.

SANDIFER: Well, they were really presented at the meeting after the Board had decided that they wanted to support something. They might have been presented at the meeting for information purposes earlier in the year, but when it got around to the place to actually voting to take position on a certain issue, that chairman presented that to the

Board, and the Board decided that they wanted to recommend this to the county organization. Then it would be presented at the county organization was a recommended item that we should put on our local program.

Or if it was one from the state, that was done at the state convention. The national things were done much as they are today except instead of through units, they would go from our study groups to the Board to the whole organization that we wanted to recommend this thing, or that we wanted to support it at the convention, when the national board presented it.

HOLLAND: Then the subjects were studied at the monthly meetings, and was the position reached in the same way as we do now through a consensus?

SANDIFER: No. We voted. We counted votes. I would say, perhaps, it was more or less a consensus at the Board level. That would be, you know, the Board would agree on something, and we might not be exactly unanimous, but generally it would be fairly nearly unanimous decision. I used to always feel, in both the local board and the state board, what we really supported depended mostly on the chairman and her presentation, because the person who could push the hardest would get the Board to agree, and we could only do so many things.

HOLLAND: Well, suppose that the local League voted, a majority voted that they wanted such and such to be the stand of the League, was there ever any case where the

Board would overturn this or would they just go along with what the membership wanted? I guess I am trying to find out the

SANDIFER: You're trying to find out if we ever had a revolution on the floor, and I can't remember that now.

HOLLAND: But in general, they agreed?

SANDIFER: Generally, it came through the regular procedures, and I'm trying to think. You asked me this question, but I can't really think of one right now.

HOLLAND: Now, I don't understand this particular item. It says membership endorsement. Do you understand what was meant by that?

SANDIFER: I suppose that that means endorsement of the Board action. See, it says study group recommendation. I think that's what they meant.

HOLLAND: These monthly meetings were luncheon meetings, as I understand it?

SANDIFER: Yes. They were usually luncheon meetings, and they were usually held in a church. The women of the church, who made a little money by serving a luncheon, and that gave us Very often at these meetings, we would have a speaker. Generally, we had a speaker at the county-wide meetings, in addition to presenting whatever material we had to present. You see, we wouldn't have to be presenting something for action all the time at these meetings. Very often, we had speakers on whatever the subject was that we were wanting to help educate people on.

HOLLAND: Well, this was during the Second World War,

and you must have had some problems in meetings, just to get people there. Where did you meet?

SANDIFER: In churches, and generally, they were here in the more heavily populated parts of the county. During that time, we just naturally went in groups, all of us from area to another.

HOLLAND: Because of the gas rationing?

SANDIFER: Yes. It was customary. I don't remember that we had problems in getting of our local meetings because of transportation.

HOLLAND: Well, I understood that, at one time, you met in the District, down on E Street, because people could get there by streetcar.

SANDIFER: That was not while I was being active on the Montgomery County Board. We did use the train all the time to Baltimore. As I look back on it, it's kind of an ordeal, of getting early in the morning this train to Baltimore. Of course, we had much better train service than we have now. I don't remember ever using a bus. I don't know whether there was bus service, but we used the train. We got on the train right here in Silver Spring, and we went down to the Union Station and changed for the train going to New York because our train here was the one that went west.

We made that trip by train all the time, and Gladys Barber and Mrs. Oliver were, one day, so busy discussing their business on this train that they rode right through Baltimore and had

to get off at the next station and take the next train back. That was always one of our good jokes about how intent they were.

HOLLAND: Well, good League members. Do you remember what the study programs were in 1942 and 1943, on the different levels?

SANDIFER: What I remember mostly when I first became a member of the League was the study on county government, locally. Then there was always a social welfare chairman doing something about the juvenile court and whatever there was in social welfare that they were needing.

There was always the question of adequate salaries on both local and state levels. That was always one of our issues, to support adequate salaries and to get more welfare workers.

The person who could tell you the most about this would be, I think, Mrs. Morehouse. Is she on your

HOLLAND: Is that Mrs. Betty Morehouse.

SANDIFER: Mrs. Betty Morehouse, [P. Gad], and she has since, in recent years, been actually employed by the county, but that is her training, and Alice Hostettler, also, was a social welfare worker. Both of them could tell you, actually in detail, the things that we worked for. That was a subject in which I accepted what they said. As far as I was concerned, I always went on the principle that if she recommended it, that was a good program.

So we always had a social welfare program on the county

and the state level, and an active social welfare chairman at the state level, also. Then there was the movement on the county government and also on adequate money to support whatever we were asking for. The League prided itself on not asking for things they couldn't afford.

We always had education [studies]. Florence Saunders was my education chairman, and she was very good, and worked very hard. Of course, in those days, it was reducing the size of classes and improving the conditions of the schools, the same things, you know, and getting better salaries for teachers, and that type of thing.

On the national level, I remember particularly the battle for production. This was before we were in the war, you see. There was a great emphasis from the national board, the national office, on our doing without things and producing things for the Allies. I don't know whether you've ever heard of things like--there was an organization that had for its slogan "Bundles for Britain". But our slogan was "The Battle for Production", which was to increase our production to send more goods to the Allies. I remember that was my first experience of seeing the little leaflets, you know the little flyers that we put out for things. We had one of these flyers for the Battle for Production.

Then, at this time also, at the national level, we were working on You see, there had been this high tariff, and the whole world had been sent into economic slump. One of the things that the League, nationally, and then

obviously locally, worked very hard on was trade and the support of the whole trade agreements. We did a great deal of educational work in that field.

Then moving toward looking for whatever kind of world organization that there might be after the war. See, the League had supported the United States entry into the World Court. There was very much of a **neutral** feeling and neutral policies in this country during the Thirties, and Miss Wells and our national board had been--and our national staff--had early seen that we just couldn't continue this neutrality program. So all of our education on the national level in regard to international affairs was toward more international cooperation.

HOLLAND: Would you make clear who Miss Wells was?

SANDIFER: Marguerite Wells was the national president of the League at that time, and she had been president, I think, for something like twelve or thirteen years. I'm not positive. For a long time, she had directed the work of the League.

HOLLAND: Well, to go back to the local arena, you have said that other people know more than you do about the charter and the other local items, but would you like to talk at all about this charter campaign, which, I believe, began about the time that you were. . . .

SANDIFER: Well, Mrs. Frank Garfield was our county chairman of government, and as I mentioned the other day, I joined the League of Women Voters to go to Mrs. Garfield's study groups to hear about the county government. So she was active in the promotion

You see, there was a provision in the state constitution that you could have more home rule by having a county-wide vote that we wanted to have this form of government which the state laws provided, under a charter. We used to talk a lot in those days about the fact that you couldn't repair anything in the county without getting permission from the state. One of the things we talked about a great deal was the fact that the State Legislature had to spend so much time on county affairs, all these county bills from all the counties all over the state, over there in the State Legislature, that really just had to have the approval of your own legislative group.

HOLLAND: Delegates.

SANDIFER: Delegates to the Assembly, but it had to pass the Assembly, and sometimes they wouldn't pass something in one county because they didn't want that thing to be passed in another county. If your members at the Legislature really didn't want it, they could get it defeated by getting the support from the other people. So in those days, whatever you wanted at the county level, really you had to get not only past your own Commissioners but past the members of the Legislature, too. Of course, we still have a certain amount of that, but not nearly as much as then.

I can't help but interject here that Governor Mandel bothers me a little in that, all at once, we seem to be putting many more things back in the hands of the state government. This charter movement that we had in Montgomery County--the whole thing was home rule and taking things out of

the hands of the state. So I wonder if we are going through a circle, or just what this is going to mean.

HOLLAND: What groups besides the League supported the charter movement?

SANDIFER: Well, of course, all the Republicans supported it. It was unfortunate, I thought, that because the Democrats so controlled the county that, while this was supposed to be a non-partisan movement, the Democrats so controlled the county, and, of course, they weren't going to abdicate. At least, they didn't. I always thought they would have been wiser had they joined the movement, but they stood against it because it seemed to be taking power away from them since they controlled--you know, always won in the elections and so on.

As I remember, practically all of the civic organizations type of things supported it, and, then of course, they organized a charter group of people. Well, there was a group that didn't really belong to any other organization particularly, and some of your other people who worked in it more closely can tell you exactly, but they formed a charter organization to support these changes, and they had the Charter Board that was elected in the county. It had a large support of citizens' groups, but I can't tell you exactly what ones. The people who worked on the Charter Board and the people who worked with that charter committee could tell you.

HOLLAND: Well, perhaps you'd explain to me though what the difference is between the committee and the Board. Now, the committee was a sort of a public relations thing?

SANDIFER: The committee was an organization of people. Maybe, they didn't call themselves a committee, but they were the people of the county who got together and pushed this thing. They probably had the other organizations working with them, but all together they made up They were citizens who were supporting this, and first you had to get a vote to approve the idea of having a Charter Board, and then you had to elect the members of the Charter Board. Then the Charter Board was the group which drew up the form of government that we were to have. They were the ones that made the decision on the government.

Then later the first Council was elected. Now, Alice Hostettler [Mrs. G. Minier] was a member of the Charter Board, and then later when we had the County Council, Dorothy Himstead [Mrs. Ralph] was the first woman on the County Council, and she had been one of those persons who had worked very hard.

She [Dorothy Himstead] was the chairman for state government and operation on the local League when I was local League president, and also had the same chairmanship for the state League. Dorothy was very thorough. Dorothy is the one who carried on the activity in favor of a graduated income tax for the state.

At that time, our income tax was not graduated. That was one of the things that was on our program. I learned from Dorothy all about the state budget and how it was expended. She knew where the taxes came from and where they went. She was the person who represented us, the state League, at the

Assembly in Annapolis when anything came up there that we were supporting in regard to the state government.

HOLLAND: Maybe, we'd better return a little bit to the Charter Board. I assume that the Montgomery County League submitted recommendations or suggestions to the Charter Board. Do you remember what these were?

SANDIFER: You'll have to ask the charter people about that, the specific ones.

HOLLAND: Ok.

SANDIFER: I'm sure we did. I'm sure that we got a kind of government I know we were in favor of a County Council with a County Manager, and a County Manager who was a professional regardless of where he came from in the United States, that he should be hired according to his qualifications, and on a non-partisan basis.

HOLLAND: For both the County Manager and for the elections for the Council--should be non-partisan, too?

SANDIFER: Well, when you get into That was the original idea, but we had, at that time, passed at the State Legislature a law called the Lindsay Law, which was I think Lindsay was a Senator, who introduced the law that all elected people had to run for the county government on a partisan ticket. They had to have a partisan label, and so for that reason you have, today, the County Council in Montgomery County running with its labels as whether they are Democrat or Republican.

The theory back of it as far as the State Legislature was concerned was that we were breaking down the form of

government of political parties if we did not have our county officials elected on a party basis. My personal opinion is they weren't too far wrong.

HOLLAND: The League was actively involved in the charter campaign, I believe, and I understand that Mrs. Dinwiddie and was it Mrs. Bennett? Who were on the . . .

SANDIFER: Yes. Mrs. James Bennett [Marie] was active with the charter, and Mrs. Dean Dinwiddie [Edith] was very active with the charter. The League wholeheartedly supported the whole campaign and worked very hard for it. I think that they would consider that it was their basic study that they had started long ago that resulted in this. I think that it's one of the things that the League can point to as one of its accomplishments.

HOLLAND: Where did the opposition to the charter come from and what were their arguments?

SANDIFER: Well, I think the main opposition came from the Democratic Party, and I can't remember all the arguments.

I do think that as we are finishing our discussion on the local League, I should make clear that the person who preceded Mrs. Dinwiddie's election was Mrs. P. Gad Morehouse, who was great source of strength to me, coming in as I was, very new to the county.

HOLLAND: It is interesting, too, that Mrs. Morehouse has been very active in the League and served on our Corrections Committee for the last two or three years.

SANDIFER: Yes. She is very stable.

HOLLAND: Well, let's go on and talk about when you were president of the Maryland League, which I believe was 1943-45.

SANDIFER: I succeeded Mrs. Hostettler as the president of the Maryland League, and, at that time, as I remember, we had a League in Frederick County. We had a League in Harford County, in Cecil County, in Baltimore County, Baltimore City, Prince George's County. We made some effort, while I was state president and also vice president, to organize additional Leagues.

I remember that I went to Salisbury to speak with some group down there about League. I made some trips around, seeing individuals. I once spoke on the invitation from the Business and Professional Women at Hagerstown, not about organizing a League, but about the different issues we were supporting, particularly then, the post-war organization, which we were supporting.

But we didn't really get any other Leagues organized at that time. It was a difficult time, during the war, with people very much engaged in various kinds of activities relating to the war, and the shortage of gas and so on.

Again, I worked out of my home. Alice [Hostettler] had worked out of the Baltimore office because the state League and the Baltimore League had an office together in Baltimore. As I remember, one of Alice's jobs as state League president was sort of trying to separate what was the state League's

business and what was the Baltimore City League's business because they were working together out of the same office. Baltimore City did have a part-time secretary and whether or not Alice used that secretary part-time, I'm not sure, but for me, it was easier to work at home, than it was to make extra trips to Baltimore.

HOLLAND: As I remember it, Baltimore City League was a very large League. Wasn't it around fifteen hundred members?

SANDIFER: I don't remember the number, but it was a large, strong League. The Baltimore County League, I suppose, wasn't any more members than we had, but quite strong because Mrs. Williamson was from Baltimore County, and she had been a state League president. The Baltimore City League was a strong League, then.

We did not have a secretary at that time--neither did Baltimore City--who would compare with Lavinia Engle as Mrs. Ellicott's secretary. You see, Mrs. Ellicott, when she started the League, had started with a paid secretary, who was Lavinia Engle. In my looking back over the League material, Lavinia Engle or Mrs. Ellicott were the ones who were writing all the time or appearing at the state Legislature.

In our case, we were doing more of that as the president and volunteers and the chairmen of different committees.

As I mentioned earlier, the League, at that time, was organized through the state boards instead of being organized as an organization of the local Leagues, so that the state board had, not only the responsibility for the state program, but also the responsibility of funneling from

the national board to the local board the materials and the calls for action and that type of thing that, today, comes out from the national League to the local board.

Again, on the state level, we were doing similar kinds of things to what we did on the local level, except for the county government on the local level, that is, we worked on adequate funds, trying to get more funds for education, more funds for social welfare.

I remember that one of the first things I heard when I started with the League was hospitals for the chronically ill. The idea, then, was to do away with almshouses. At that time, Montgomery County had an almshouse, which out in my state where I came from, you would have called the poor farm. They had the almshouse in Montgomery County.

The idea was to have hospitals for the chronically ill which would then do away with the almshouses. That was one of the big things that was being worked for at the state level. Another was, as I mentioned before, the income tax, and the repeal of the Declaration of Intent.

HOLLAND: What does that mean?

SANDIFER: No wonder you ask that question because unless you were a resident of Maryland in those days, you wouldn't have known because Maryland was the only state in the Union that had that if you came into Maryland this fall, you must go and register your intent of becoming a citizen of Maryland. Come the election next year, a year from now, you couldn't go and register and say "I have been here for a year." The Declaration of Intent law meant that you had to go now and

register. Then next year, you could register as a voter and declare that you had been here a year.

So the Declaration of Intent law kept many people, when they first came into Maryland as a resident, from voting at its election, because you just didn't think of it, unless some person from one of the political parties happened to be on your street, which is what happened to us. A neighbor came by and told us, you know, got us registered, or we never would have known to register.

So this did keep many people from voting, and to enable all citizens to assume their responsibilities, one of the things that the League has always worked for has been to make it easier for people to vote. On this thing, we worked at this at the local level, and the other county levels did, too. I forgot to mention making it easier for people to vote by setting up registration boards around over the county so a man didn't have to take a day off to go to Rockville. We were doing it in the other counties in Maryland where there were Leagues, trying to make it easier for people to vote, and that was one of our problems.

Then, you see, with the Declaration of Intent law, a man had to go twice to Rockville to vote if someone didn't come around and try to get him registered. So one of my first appearances at the State Legislature was in behalf of the repeal of the Declaration of Intent law.

At this particular moment, there were many newcomers in Maryland to work in the war plants, many people from West Virginia and various places coming in to work in these

various war plants.

The State Legislature was quite indignant with us. As I mentioned, the League of Women Voters had an excellent reputation in the State Legislature, but when we went over asking for the repeal of the Declaration of Intent law, we had a hard time keeping our good reputation because some of the senators over there were really very annoyed with us. I actually had one man to tell me that [we should] wait until the war is over, [and that] we can't repeal this now and make it easy for all these newcomers in the state to vote.

This was kind of a shock to me, and I said, "But they are citizens. They have a perfect right to vote. They can't vote for the national officers." And he said, "Well, it would be all right except that their union leaders will march them right out and tell them how to vote." In other words, there was such an influx into the state that it was a very bad time to be asking politicians to make it easier for them to vote because, as the old vote stood, he knew where it was, you see, and he didn't really want to be bothered with all this new vote, these people who he didn't know how they were going to vote and suspected they might vote against the way he wanted them to vote.

So I was told again and again that we would not get the Declaration of Intent law repealed until after the war was over, sometime later, we might get it. At the same time, we were placed in an embarrassing position because we would be over there conducting hearings, and at this time, the labor unions all came in to support the repeal, and some

organizations which were definitely communist in their tinge in this state also came and supported the repeal, which made it embarrassing for us. But I maintained to those people that we had been working for the repeal of the Declaration of Intent since 1927. I think that was the date. We weren't going to stop just because some people that might be somewhat questionable from our point of view were supporting it, too. I mean we felt it was a good thing, and if they supported it, well, all right, but we were going to support it.

Of course, as you know, it was repealed later, toward the end of the Forties. I don't remember the exact year, and then, even now, we have much more lenient laws. You don't even have to be a resident for a full year.

But that was one of our big things, and also the graduated income tax.

HOLLAND: So I gather that the League was very active in lobbying from what you've said.

SANDIFER: Yes. We went as volunteers to lobby. We didn't send any paid persons to lobby.

HOLLAND: Do you want to go on and talk a little bit about the national League. You've already explained how it was organized--state Leagues made up the national.

SANDIFER: I should say also we were working very hard on education, to get more money for education, more money for buildings, more state support for education throughout the state. That was another big issue we had, and

Mrs. Willard Barber was the state chairman of education at that time, and worked very hard.

HOLLAND: There was state aid already at that time, but you were working for more?

SANDIFER: Yes, and higher standards. The State of Maryland gave money to the counties who couldn't raise enough money on their own taxation, with their own taxes, to meet the state standards. So the object was to have the state raise its standards so that it would give still more money to the counties who

It's what we call our equalization law. The counties who could not meet those standards, when they had levied taxes on their assessed valuation of a certain amount, if that didn't meet the state standards, then the state would give additional money back under state equalization law. In that case, of course, a county like Montgomery County, helps to pay for the education in a less wealthy county.

One of our things that we worked for, that I can remember Mrs. Himstead explaining over and over, was to try to get the assessed valuation, get the state to demand accurate, honest evaluation in the counties over the state because many counties did not assess as high as we did, and I still wonder if they do.

But that was one of the things that we worked for. We worked for more state aid, but we also worked for a system so that the counties would be more realistic in their evaluation, assessed valuations.

We also got money from the state, so much per pupil for

textbooks and that kind of thing, and more state funds for the handicapped children, and we did finally get more state funds for bonds for buildings.

We worked for higher salary You see, there was also a state salary scale for minimum salaries. All of this type of thing, we were working for.

HOLLAND: Well, do you want to say something more about the national League, now? You were saying it was organized

SANDIFER: Well, I've mentioned organization. Now, I think we need to talk perhaps a little bit more about the fact that Miss Wells was pushing us to become more activist. Now the League prided itself, all of us prided ourselves, always, on knowing what we were talking about. Many people are satisfied to sit down and learn in a study group and not be active after they've learned it.

I worked in a Woman's Club, as well as AAUW, and many people liked to come and study in study groups, but then they don't really^{do}/anything about it after they have acquainted themselves with what the issues are.

One of the reasons I was attracted to the League of Women Voters was that the League did act. I always felt that the League acted sufficiently, but Miss Wells felt that we needed to be much more activist in regard to the neutrality program and getting the United States more in support of the Allies and that kind of thing.

It was a part of her pushing us to be more and more activist in this regard--she felt that we had to support

the democracies--that I think probably was partially contributed, at least as I saw it, to the fact that, when we went to the national convention, there were people there who came prepared to not accept the nominees for national office that the nominating committee had brought in, but to put in some new people that they thought would give more satisfactory leadership to the League.

I was in the middle of this at this time because I had people in my local Leagues, well, both in Baltimore City I felt this pressure and in Montgomery County, who felt we were being sort of dictated to by Miss Wells, as to what we should think and what we should do. I remember that she wanted us to start talking with the people on the bus, that we were sitting beside, people like that, because there was an opposition to going into the Of course, there is always opposition in entering a war, and secondly, there was opposition to the idea of entering the war on the same side Russia was on. She had a number of suggestions that she made--of things to throw out to your acquaintances and your friends and talk about these things.

There were many people who felt she was being very dictatorial, but I had really gotten my League education from Miss Wells, and I thought she was very good. But after this convention, when the new people were put in as president, and the whole staff turned over practically down there, the foreign relations staff person and the person who was our representative up on the Hill, and by the way, we were doing

consumers type of education at this time, too

So then when they began to make their plans about the new organization that we should have, and began then, under Miss Strauss, we had the new organization which would be more effective and we wouldn't get national legislation bottled up at the state boards. That was the feeling. That was why you have now this direct communication from national to local Leagues. They sent out calls to action to state boards, and if a state board was too busy in something else or it didn't especially have an interest in it, it would never get down to the local Leagues.

So they decided--let the state board take care of state business and do much less with the state board. I observe, that it seems to me, a little more attention is being given to state boards now. It seems to me a little bit that way, but they really were bypassing them completely by going straight to the members, making us a real grass roots organization.

Then is when the idea of the units began to come in, the idea of these small, unit discussion groups, which now is fundamental to our program. Of course, our League wasn't so big then and so to try to divide us into these little discussion groups and sort of abolishing the study groups, it seemed

Well, then I had people, the same people as a matter of fact who had disapproved of Miss Wells because they thought she was dictating to us, what we should think, then they were disapproving of this unit thing, which discussed

things and began to work on a consensus basis and didn't base their discussion on sound study. You see, before we had had these good, solid study groups for a year or two. Then the study group would recommend to the chairman, and the chairman to the Board, and the Board to the people, and we went through a long process.

Well, now this was considered much too long, and we must get at things more quickly, and everyone discuss this, and you didn't have to know so much about it in order to discuss it and come to a consensus on these items.

Now, I think we've gone back to have some resource committees. Probably the resource committee, more or less, takes the place of our old study group. I don't know exactly because I haven't been so active in the League since it got into this form.

You see, to the old person, the idea of bringing a thing before a discussion group without having that discussion group really study it, as it seemed to be tending to. . . . Now, I think it is all ironed out and we have a very good form of organization in the League today. I really think so with the discussion groups. But this is when all this turmoil took place.

HOLLAND: Well, I have a question. Who brought the material, or who made a presentation, at the discussion groups? Wasn't there any resource committee?

SANDIFER: You see, I quit being active in the League when I went on the School Board, and I never ever really participated

in those first unit groups that were formed, and I can't tell you. I just can tell you what the old people who had been accustomed to this other, their objection to this when the idea was first proposed to us. But when I went then on the Board of Education, I had all I could do. I used to go to some of the county-wide meetings, but I didn't anymore take part in the units. I didn't have time, and I didn't want I just spent all my time working on the School Board thing.

So I don't know exactly how those first things were done, except I know that my good, old friends that had been on the study groups very much disapproved of them, and I happened to be in this position on the state League at the time they were beginning, and I had this opposition. But I never really saw them when they got going in actual operation.

HOLLAND: I wanted to get dates settled again. You were the president of the Maryland League from 1943 to 1945, and then you became a vice president?

SANDIFER: I think you told me that this was the custom of the

SANDIFER: We did it for a couple of years. I don't know. See, Alice Hostettler was vice president for me, and then when Gladys Barbour, Mrs. Willard Barbour, went on as the state president, I was vice president for her, my portfolio being mostly a back-up, just to give her assurance, and the person that she could consult, the person who could take over if anything happened and she couldn't do it, or to do

whatever assignments she gave me to do, which was supposed to be trying to help organize new Leagues at that time.

While I was state board president was when the foreign policy issue of post-war organization was very much to the forefront, and I had Mrs. Francis Russell as foreign policy chairman at that time. But I, myself, did a lot in that particular issue, also because that was my prime interest at that time.

I would like to say, in conclusion, that I think, today, the League of Women Voters is much more mature than it was in the days in which I worked in it. I think we recognize much more the value of the political parties and the importance in taking an active part in the political parties. I remember very well that, as I mentioned when I was talking about the Board of Education, not only were my League friends, some of them, in opposition to my accepting this appointment on the Board of Education because I didn't happen to have been recommended by the PTA Council, which principle they were trying to establish, but also a little bit of the feeling that I had kind of sold out to the Democratic machine of Montgomery County.

They certainly treated Alice Hostettler in that manner. When Alice felt that the business of the people who had worked actively in the League and had learned all about government, then they should go, select the party of their choice and work in it. She really was not strongly supported by her League friends at all, many of them.

I think today we've outgrown that. The League is being used much more by people as a good training ground to really learn and see how to learn about things, and then to recognize the fact that government is not going to be run on non-partisan basis, that it has to be run through the political parties or else we have to devise a different method, and that's the way it's being run and that there are two places to work. One, there is definitely a place for the non-partisan organization, such as the League is, and that secondly, there is definitely a place for the kind of people who work in the League to choose a party and go into the party. I think we were not that mature at the time I was working in the League.

HOLLAND: Let's go back to the subjects that were on the Montgomery County League program. I understand that one of their interests was the merit system in the county.

SANDIFER: That is because the merit system had been established long before as one of the principles for which the national League had stood in its early days. So at both the state and local levels, the idea of promoting a merit system and more or less standing guard over certain positions to see that the merit system was used was one of these policies of the League of Women Voters, both at the state and local level.

It was the League's interest in the merit system for county employees, that, I think, had a great influence in the formation of the county charter. That is one of the things that was emphasized a great deal by the League, and

as a matter of fact, I believe that Mrs. Dinwiddie was one of the people who was I believe she was the person who was first in charge of county personnel policies under the new form of government.

At the state level also, we always had our eye out to see that we were using the merit system. You see, in the question of the state police and a number of other state positions, Maryland had the merit system, and we were always on guard jealously to see that they continued it.

HOLLAND: But there was no merit system before the charter was adopted in the county, right?

SANDIFER: I don't believe. I think that there were many officials at least that were subject to change, in case there was a change of political government in the county. That's the way I remember it. Of course, I think that was one of the main issues.

HOLLAND: Well, it would seem to me, quite likely, that there couldn't be a merit system when one party was so fully in power in Montgomery County, that they would want the ability to appoint people to different jobs at that time.

SANDIFER: Yes. They might be appointing people that were good to fill the jobs, but I would guess, one would expect, that they would have the right political affiliation. However, as far as I know, this had nothing to do with school teachers. They were definitely on merit. I am not in a position to say, first hand, whether this would have applied to the custodial services in the early days.

HOLLAND: I think you might also say that it certainly didn't apply to the type of people that they appointed to the School Board. You made it clear earlier that you thought that you were appointed because of your experience in teaching and your knowledge about education and

SANDIFER: And my service for the League of Women Voters, and so I was appointed in spite of the fact that the League of Women Voters had been one of the main organizations that helped to bring in the charter form of government.

Perhaps these people were all Democrats. They certainly had gotten their positions through recommendations to a Democratic Governor, but the people that I knew that served on the Board all had some special qualifications that made them acceptable Board members.