Oral History of George Cohen, Esq.

This interview is being conducted on behalf of the Oral History Project of The Historical Society of the District of Columbia Circuit. The interviewer is Roger Pollak, and the interviewee is George Cohen. The interview took place at the home of George Cohen on Thursday, March 16, 2023. This is the eighth interview.

MR. POLLAK: This is the eighth interview, and very likely the final one, George. It's been a great time. I've loved coming to visit you. George has some clean-up items to go over today. I think we're going to talk about *NTEU versus Nixon* and a couple other things that he's going to get started with, and I guess I'll cue you up. You had something you wanted to add to your earlier OSHA interview.

MR. COHEN: Yes. So Roger, thank you. Everything you said about me goes double for you. One of the interesting things you're constantly reflecting on what is it that I actually said and did I leave anything worthy of attention out. So I have two items from prior interviews that I think are really worthwhile. One is just a fascinating vignette which I'll start with. I've already described in some detail my OSHA activity, which certainly culminated with the Supreme Court in the *Cotton Dust* case involving the Textile Manufacturing Industry, but I had an incident involving my argument in that 1979 case in the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals, which might be relevant to the folks from that Court. It went something as follows.

I guess it was three or four days before my scheduled oral argument. I was just about to begin to prepare, as you'd expect, knowing it was a really important case that was the culmination of a whole series of OSHA-related circuit court of appeals cases. The phone rang, and the

gentleman on the other end told me who he was. I already had a relationship with him, a wonderful gentleman whose name eludes me at this moment, but he was the Clerk of the United States Circuit Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit, a very important job in the administration of that court. He said, George, we have a little situation that I'm confronting that I'd like to share with you. I said, and I think his name is Tony, go ahead. He said something as follows: He had just learned that there were several busloads of workers who had been exposed to cotton dust and indeed many of whom were suffering from the effects of brown lung. They were planning to come to Washington, D.C. to attend the hearing before the three-judge panel of the circuit court of appeals. They were to be wearing something akin to large "Cotton Dust Kills" buttons. When he was done saying that, he coughed a little and said, you know, that would not be acceptable to the court. I said Tony, without a doubt, that would not be acceptable to me because inevitably, rightly or wrongly, those three judges might assume that I had something to do with those bringing these folks into the courtroom, and that create a big problem for me.

Instead of preparing for my argument, I spent the next 48 hours in a variety of mediations and discussions with the lawyers for public health groups, including the Brown Lung Association. I'm delighted to say in retrospect, we reached a mutually acceptable solution, although they were not thrilled with compromising. I said, listen, protesting while in the courtroom would be very counterproductive from the standpoint of

winning a case. Of course, I recognized the First Amendment implications, and we came up with an alternative. The protesters would be bussed to Constitution Avenue, in front of the Labor Department, the agency responsible for enforcing OSHA. They did that. They did exercise their First Amendment right. I received a report that it was all done peacefully, and most important of all, it was not done in the courtroom the day that I argued.

I've since learned that in the Supreme Court, those protesters would not be allowed in with buttons or anything that would indicate they were going to make some public outcry while the proceeding was going on. It's certainly possible that the clerk of the D.C. Circuit had similar authority, but just the idea of 300 people sitting in the courtroom with serious lung conditions and perhaps coughing or making noises was enough to be a deterrent to me.

So that is just a little vignette in the history of my memorabilia of what happens when you are in a high-profile public interest dispute.

MR. POLLAK: Fascinating. It's surprising that doesn't come up more often, honestly.

MR. COHEN: Yes. It probably is. I wanted that to be inserted into the OSHA interview. As you already have indicated, Roger, I gave some extra thought to what I said about the Federal Mediation and Conciliation tenure of mine from 2009 to 2014 during the Obama administration. I wanted to just double check with everyone and reemphasize that of all the things that I was pleased with most about my four years was trying to get together some of

the most prominent individuals in our world, the vice presidents of labor management relations of major corporations, public and private, and their union counterparts, private and public, who would come to a conference and actually speak about how they achieved success as a direct result of a meaningful collective bargaining relationship. I was honored that I was able to work very hard selecting them.

The first conference was in 2012 at Georgetown Law School. The common theme of all the panel discussions was their initial relationships were very confrontational. They started out with hostility, with strikes, with lockouts, and only over the course of time did each party recognize it was in its own self-interest to make a 180-degree turn and establish a meaningful, respectful collective bargaining relationship.

Just for the record, to explain the breadth of who actually spoke at the Georgetown conference, the panel of presenters included high-level representatives of the Ford Motor Company and UAW; Kaiser Permanente and a coalition of Kaiser Permanente unions; U.S. Steel and the Steelworkers; Alabama Power and the IBEW; Major League Baseball and the MLB Players Association; Alliance of Motion Picture and TV Producers and SAG-AFTRA. These were all fascinating discussions to an audience comprised of experts in the field.

I must quickly say, if I hadn't said before, that perhaps the most fascinating success I had took place about 48 hours before that particular December conference. I was called by the Mayor of Los Angeles,

Antonio Villaraigosa, who asked me if I could come to the West Coast to Long Beach where there was a big dispute between the major shipping companies and the ILA. When I said yes I'd be there that night, he was quite shocked that any government official would respond to a request that quickly. What he didn't know was at the same time on the phone the lawyers for the two groups were also beseeching me to show up.

I flew to LA, was picked up by his motor vehicle staff, and with the neon light flashing, was driven speedily to the terminal at Long Beach with my colleague Scot Beckenbaugh, the Deputy Director. As I arrived and was briefed by the mayor and his staff, it became apparent that what I was being told was that just the thought of my showing up that quickly was going to generate an interest in the parties to resolve their own dispute without the need for federal mediation involvement! And over the course of the next two hours, the parties met themselves. I never saw them at that moment. They walked in at 10:00 or 11:00 at night to announce they had reached a mutually satisfactory agreement, at which point, of course, a press conference took place, actually on the waterfront. They were both kind enough to say the thought of my showing up, in their own words, was significant impetus for them to reach an agreement.

I told the panel on that day some cynics would say I did nothing, but I think I created a new standard, that I didn't have to actually mediate a dispute, just the thought that I was going to show up to mediate it was

enough to guarantee there would be a successful collective bargaining solution, and I'm standing by that story for the rest of my life.

MR. POLLAK: That's a beautiful thing! The audience embraced my conclusion. What else could they do?

MR. COHEN: And then what followed the next year was maybe more impressive because it was a White House Summit. The participating parties agreed that the actual theme would be "Partnerships That Work." And you know, Roger, the notion of the word "partnership" between a company and a union in and of itself is quite radical and revolutionary. I was honored to say that not only did Tom Perez, then the Secretary of Labor, join me in sponsoring this event, but quite surprising to me and thrilling as well, Penny Pritzker, then the Secretary of Commerce, a member of the cabinet, not only volunteered to come, but actually spoke on behalf of the business community concerning how much they appreciated the opportunity to support privately negotiated collective bargaining agreements. The group of panelists included important representatives from both labor-management – the Federal Aviation Administration and the Air Traffic Controllers, Montgomery County Public School system and its unions, the Walt Disney Company and a variety of AFL-CIO unions, Ford Motor Company-UAW again, and International Paper and the Steelworkers, plus some high-profile media folks. Again, we had a wonderful turnout, and we had a great amount of much-needed enthusiasm for collective bargaining.

As planned at age 80, and with Phyllis suffering from Alzheimer's, I retired from my position two weeks later. I reflected back on those two conferences. They exemplified the ultimate that I was trying to accomplish in the public domain, getting parties to appreciate how much FMCS could do to help them through their difficult tribulations. Enough said.

MR. POLLAK: Yes. It really makes me reflect on how rare those kinds of interactions and demonstrations of constructive collective bargaining relationships work by 2010 versus the 1960s when you began your storied career when the idea of constructive collective bargaining relationships was much closer to the norm and permanent replacement of striking workers and similar weapons only arrived in the 1970s, and by the Reagan era, followed by the use of union-busting law firms and consulting firms that have really changed the world of labor-management relations.

MR. COHEN: I subscribe to every word you said. I would only add, as you'd expect, globalization and technology have also proved to present an amazing challenge to the economic well-being of corporations and in their response to unionization. And those are just facts of life.

I'm going to be talking in two weeks at a retirement community about what has caused the incredible decrease in the number of union workers, particularly in the private sector, and those two things stand out as part of the reality of it all.

MR. POLLAK: And I subscribe to that as well. It's been a long journey. It must be so for you as well, but when I joined Bredhoff in the early 1990s wanting to be part of the renaissance of the labor movement, we were at 23% or 24% union density, and today it's 11%. So it's just been interesting to fight and interesting to watch.

MR. COHEN: Yes. So when we hired fabulous young people like you, we were not thinking that we were going into a downward posture. We were thinking about more affirmative, more pro-active initiatives to increase cutting-edge solutions to increase worker well-being.

MR. POLLAK: Believe me, so was I.

MR. COHEN: I understand. We share that in common.

MR. POLLAK: Yes. Fascinating. Let's turn to your involvement in *NTEU versus Nixon.*

MR. COHEN: Yes. So I should say as an introduction for the record that I am not, nor have I ever been really, a constitutional lawyer in that sense. A lot of the labor law issues of our day have had constitutional law implications, but I don't want anybody to think they're listening to a world-renowned constitutional lawyer. Having said that, this was without a doubt an extraordinary litigation experience by any standard. Indeed, that is the bottom line of the decision issued by the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals. And what else should be said is that I believe the decision has been cited only once or twice since 1974 when it was handed down. To understand the George Cohen aspect of this, I should tell you what actually unfolded.

MR. POLLAK: Great.

MR. COHEN: At that point in time, our law firm was representing the National Treasury Employees Union ("National Treasury Employees Union NTEU"), a public sector union representing IRS agents and others. The General Counsel, Bob Tobias, was well known to Mike Gottesman and me. We had handled a number of traditional kinds of lawsuits together plus providing some advice and counsel for the union pre-*NTEU versus Nixon*.

I'll set the scene: The phone rings, as it always used to do in those days, and I am confident it was very close to the Labor Day weekend because I can still envision myself kissing the Labor Day weekend goodbye. In essence, this is what Bob Tobias told me: Congress very recently had passed this comprehensive new law called the Federal Pay Comparability Act ("Federal Pay Comparability Act FPCA"). I'll summarize the relevant terms. The President of the United States, and he alone, was given the statutory authority and responsibility to periodically have experts review the comparison between federal worker compensation and private sector compensation for the same type jobs and recommend appropriate, timely adjustments to make the federal compensation for similar jobs more consistent with the private sector. The details of that statute, which imposed certain obligations on the President, were quite unique, and they basically provided that after the compensation study of the independent experts was completed and was submitted to the President, he would have two choices: either to sign his name implementing that precise recommended salary adjustment for all federal

employees, or, if he determined that there was a national emergency or the economic well-being of our country was at stake, he had the authority to submit what was called an "alternative plan." But there were very specific time frames to act established by this law, the most relevant of which was that by no later than September 1st, he'd have to submit the alternative plan if he wasn't going to implement the adjustment effective October 1. September 1 came and went, and there was no alternative plan coming from the President, and he had already announced that he wasn't going to give the salary adjustment effective October 1.

Bob Tobias was on the phone telling me those two things and telling me to draft a complaint to be filed in federal district court on Tuesday the day after Labor Day. We discussed strategy and agreed the lawsuit would include a request for injunctive and mandamus relief against the President of the United States. Thus, what an introduction into the FPCA!

I did enough research to know Bob's description of the Federal Pay Comparability Act was right on, the dates were right on, the responsibility was right on, and here I was sitting there recognizing that the President of the United States was the only official named in FPCA. He had not delegated any responsibility to an executive officer or to a cabinet member. The statute did not authorize him to do that, so the question was, can the NTEU successfully sue the President of the United States for mandamus, to force him against his wishes to take an action –

implement the recommended salary adjustment. I did a quick research and had to advise Bob Tobias on Monday or Tuesday morning when we met again and talked again, we are really swimming upstream. I was looking hard for any support for the proposition you can mandamus the President of the United States to take an action in his official capacity.

Bob's answer was, "I know, George. This is a challenge for Bredhoff and Kaiser, but that's why we use you guys." Because of the time constraints we were under, we were, in fact, assigned on a very expedited basis to Federal District Court Judge Charles Ritchie. What then unfolded in that expedited hearing was precisely what I, of course, in my own cynical way had anticipated. After opening oral argument, government counsel asserted that we were asking the President of the United States to construe a statute which in and of itself generates judgment and discretion. I am aware of decisions that have held there is no way going back to Chief Justice Marshall's landmark ruling in *Marbury versus Madison* that any court is going to entertain a lawsuit trying to override discretionary or judgmental action of anyone in the Executive Office, let alone the President of the United States. I'm aware of the constitutional principle of separation of powers, so wrap up your complaint in the old kit-bag, and go home. And that happened very promptly. Judge Richey granted its motion to dismiss our complaint. The government, to its credit, expected that, and I was not shocked by that.

What do you do under those circumstances, the client, of course, Bob Tobias was with me at counsel table, and Vince Connery, the President of NTEU, who got a dose of medicine that day. We then decided jointly let's give it a shot. Let's appeal on an expedited basis to the United States Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit. So I'm going to fast forward to that.

MR. POLLAK: How much later was that?

MR. COHEN: It was several months later that we were in court. The combination of a briefing and oral argument schedule and their decision, probably an eighteen-month period went by from the time I was originally called in the fall of 1972 until we got a decision in 1974. It was quite expedited, but time went by, and of course nobody received any salary adjustment on October 1st, 1972. That was still an open issue, and nobody had imposed any obligation on the President to do anything.

The panel consisted of Judge Spottswood Robinson, who has been known as not only a very smart judge, but also quite liberal, along with another colleague, Judge Wilkey, who was a Republican presidential appointee and much more conservative, and they were joined by a federal district court judge sitting by designation, Frank Kaufman from the District of Maryland, who I had the honor of being before in a number of cases in that court in the past involving mostly Title VII and the Steelworkers Union. I knew two things about Judge Kaufman. Incredibly

smart, incredibly hard-working, and really tough from the bench. He set a very high standard.

Interesting to me, and I was thrilled by this, that argument instead of the half hour schedule per party, lasted two hours or more. The questions from the bench came fast and furious. Everyone understood that the case implicated the original 1803 *Marbury versus Madison* as well as *Mississippi versus Johnson* in 1866 – the latter actually left open the question whether mandamus against the President could lie. The bottom line was instead of getting short shrift, as we had received in the district court, it became quite apparent to anybody who was in court that day that this panel of three judges was taking this case very seriously. This was a big plus in my mind.

That turned out to be an accurate omen. Six months or so later, a unanimous ninety-nine page opinion was issued by the D.C. Circuit panel, authored by none other than Federal District Court Judge Kaufman. Now, whether or not he was selected because he was known to have a firm grasp of constitutional law and what our founders intended, I do not know. But it certainly turned out to anyone reading this opinion, it was brilliantly written, amazingly comprehensive, and addressed every possible nuance of the case presented.

If you don't have any specific question at this point, I will go through with you the opinion and what he was addressing and how he was responding.

MR. POLLAK: Yes. I think this is a good moment to do that.

MR. COHEN: I don't want to diminish the importance of his words, so on a few occasions, I'm going to quote them. His opinion begins describing *Marbury versus Madison* 1803 and the choice before the Secretary of State as to whether or not a commission had to be awarded to a particular officer and should mandamus issue in the unique circumstances where he refused to do so. Not the president, but a cabinet-level officer was the defendant. In essence, Judge Kaufman explained the same three issues that were presented in *Marbury versus Madison* existed here, in albeit a slightly different form, and those questions could be phrased this way: Number one, do the plaintiffs have a legal right? Number two, is there a mechanism for enforcing the legal right if the right has been violated? And number three, assuming the answer to the first two questions are both "yes," is nevertheless mandamus a correct, appropriate, valid, legal remedy against anyone in the executive branch of government, let alone the President of the United States?

In a very comprehensive, detailed way, Judge Kaufman disposed of the first two issues. He kept emphasizing that, "I realize when I get to number three that nothing here has ever been applicable because there's never been a case like you've presented, Mr. Cohen, where the President of the United States is there in his naked glory with no one else that you could have named in your complaint, and we appreciate you didn't, but

rest assured, you would have had those parties dismissed as a matter of law because there was no role for them to play under this statute."

At least the initial advice we had given to our client proved to be correct. Then the judge opined, "I've looked very carefully at this law. There is no doubt that this law left the President with only the two choices that the NTEU is arguing for. They had this obligation to make a pay adjustment unless only if a timely alternative plan was presented, and it wasn't presented." "Now I know," said Judge Kaufman, "that the district court had held that one of the reasons to dismiss the complaint was the President had discretion in constructing the statute, but we don't agree with that. If the right existed and the right was being violated, then the fact that the President had to look at the words of the statute and then say yes, here's my signature, that is not enough to constitute discretion, and we accept your threshold argument that all the President of the United States under this law was left to was the ministerial act of signing the piece of legislation or submitting the alternative plan."

This is a very short-winded way of getting you to the nuts and bolts at the end of the opinion. Now, in the interim, let me say a few other things. The government had suggested one other defense – we know mandamus against the President is unprecedented, extraordinary – so instead just move to impeach the President? The Court responded: impeachment is a political solution having nothing to do with the rights of NTEU members for a pay adjustment at this point in time. And here is the

Court's famous line that I want to read to you. "Making available only the impeachment process in a case such as this resembles making available a nuclear bomb as the sole weapon to bring down a pheasant." Wow.

The Court was left to consider what it determined to be a constitutional dilemma. Here is a short form explanation. Namely, this is a case that would clearly be appropriate for mandamus against the President. However, the fact that is available doesn't mean we feel we should be bound to in fact implement a mandamus, and quite frankly, this court is very concerned about doing that. Thus, we believe that out of respect to the Office of the President, rather than now invoking this extraordinary relief of mandamus, we're going to issue a declaratory judgment. We're going to tell the President of the United States what this court believes were his obligations with the expectation that the President will take that declaratory judgment and in fact go forward and either implement it or file a cert petition with the United States Supreme Court. And that's how Judge Kaufman ended his opinion. I would ask everyone to read his precise words!

As you would expect, when I read that on a Friday night, I know I was overwhelmed by the brilliance of the underlying analysis. Indeed, there was not a word in it that I didn't think I wished that we had inserted in our brief. I realized that he had totally focused on the word "ministerial" to provide the court the reason for answering the open question in *Mississippi versus Johnson* in the affirmative.

So, what then happened is the next question. First, a prominent article on the front page of *The Washington Post* the next day and a lot of calls from lawyers who it turns out had been thinking about issues like this in the past. Thus, even as a neophyte constitutional lawyer, I did understand that this decision was quite extraordinary.

Now what then took place has nothing to do with the law and has everything to do with politics and current events 1974 vintage. It turned out, what did the United States Justice Department not do? They did not file a petition for en banc review, nor did they file a cert petition with the United States Supreme Court. In other words, they did not pursue any of the normal legal remedies that would be expected. A complete surprise! How could I have possibly imagined that they were not going to seek certiorari review? Indeed, I thought they'd go for en banc because it was only two court of appeals judges who actually participated in this opinion out of at that point probably ten or twelve circuit court of appeals judges. So the thought that no legal response was forthcoming was a real shocker!

And then all of my colleagues as knowledgeable or more knowledgeable than I about the world of politics chimed in. The combined wisdom seemed to be as follows. At that point in time, the President, Richard M. Nixon, was deeply enmeshed in the Watergate investigation, and perhaps the thought was he did not need yet another arrow in the bow of people trying to shoot him down for what he had done to the entire federal workforce maybe wasn't worth his while vis-a-vis

what, a piddly $530 million of a special appropriation to Congress to make whole every federal worker who were now entitled to a small adjustment in pay for the three-month period from the time beginning in October 1972 until he finally got around to implementing it at the beginning of the following year. In any event, that's what happened. The supplemental appropriation was submitted. Congress, Republicans and Democrats alike, all basically approved it as a remedy, and every federal government employee was made whole with small back payments.

That then, of course, triggered another bizarre circumstance. How many law firms in America have been singularly responsible for generating a $500 million recovery without receiving any attorney's fees for doing that other than the minimal hourly rate that Bredhoff and Kaiser was charging the NTEU. So Bob Weinberg joined me. I think Michael also had something to say, and Bob and I started with a very simple premise. There was no way we were going to try to take a few dollars out of every federal worker's pockets through some "common fund" theory. After a lot of research and a lot of soul searching, we concluded that the only thing we could do was to ascertain if the Justice Department had any special funds that could be used to pay attorney's fees to prevailing counsel. And to make a long story very short, the answer is there was only one such fund, with a $100,000 limit per case. Yes, DOJ offered us $99,900 as an attorney's fee for having generated a $530 million success, and we, of course, said yes. We reimbursed our clients for what they had

paid us, and I would say of any law firm in the history of American jurisprudence, we received the least compensation for that type of victory or success, but everybody lived happily ever after!

MR. POLLAK: Thank you. That's an extraordinary story. Not much has changed in terms of compensation [laughter].

MR. COHEN: Interestingly, when you reflect, I would have expected there would have been more post-*NTEU versus Nixon* situations, but it may well be because of the uniqueness of this statute with only the President being named and no one else that has eliminated the need to address what we had to address in *NTEU versus Nixon*.

And you would not be surprised to know on my memorabilia table, right behind you, is a lovely picture of myself and Bob Tobias and Vince Connery with a very funny endorsement from Vince Connery about we may be only a bunch of small little guys, but we did pretty well against the President of the United States. And that was a wonderful memorabilia for me.

MR. POLLAK: That was great. I think we're at the tail end here. I know you want to talk a little bit about your two families.

MR. COHEN: Yes. I've gone through these seven or eight interviews, Roger, making it clear, which of all people you understand this, but everything I did at Bredhoff and Kaiser from 1966 to 2005 was a team effort. I don't think I ever did anything in which there wasn't at least one of my colleagues engaged with me. I'm pretty positive the answer to that is yes, except in

the very early stages of public sector bargaining, but then as I thought about it, maybe Mady Gilson, Jeff Gibbs, Penny Clark, or Trish Pollack joined me. So I did want to make sure that anybody who would labor through this interview would understand that Bredhoff and Kaiser was a law firm in which collegiality and collective intellect was continually at work, never ending. I do acknowledge that because of the time constraints I was regularly under with the variety of my clients and the high-level problems and projects that were mine, I tended probably to rely upon more senior lawyers, whether it was Michael Gottesman originally then Bob Weinberg, Jeff Freund, Penny Clark, Jeremiah Collins, Andy Roth, Jeff Gibbs, Trish Pollack, and others, more people who were partners than associates, although I did use associates as well. There was never a moment in that 40 years that I didn't feel I was sharing with them what I had to offer and was getting back from them what they had to offer. And that included sitting in rooms drafting briefs, drafting memos, talking about memos and strategizing. You know we always prided ourselves in saying Bredhoff and Kaiser lawyers were not "yes" men. We were going to give our clients, and we had some pretty important clients with a lot of people who were ultimately respecting us, I think, because they knew we were going to lay it out to them the way we thought it was. And even though those days were not the happiest days of my life when you had to confront a president of a union and say I think we're going in the wrong direction and here's why, I am confident that the reputation of our law

firm in large measure was a response to those people saying yes, that's what we're going to get from this firm.

And I should also say one of the beautiful things about my life is my professional relationships spilled over to personal ones. I've had long-standing, very close, personal relationships with Mike Gottesman, Bob Weinberg, Gary Kohlman, Penny Clark, just to name a few. All of those were very important in my life, and I to this day am delighted to get little news reports. Virtually all of my contemporaries are no longer partners at the firm. You know that very well, and you know that Bruce Lerner, Andy Roth, Roger Pollak, Mady Gilson, Anne Mayerson, Leon Dayan, Devki Virk have carried on. I don't want to leave any names out. I will also say that Penny Clark was the first woman we hired. I believe that was around 1975, so about seven or eight years after I joined the law firm, and now, I'm sure if I looked at the letterhead, I'd see a significant number of women who are partners, women who are associates. I feel delighted about that – and by the way all stars! And on top of it all, I don't recall any specific incidents that ever generated the kind of internal disputes that a lot of law firms have experienced. I wanted to be on record for all those things.

And then last, of course, but far from least, I was a strong, strong, strong believer that my family came first. I wasn't Joe Biden. I didn't have to get on a train and go to Delaware. I just had to get in a car and drive to lovely Lake Barcroft for summertime swimming and kayaking.

Whatever additional work I had to do after 7:00 or 8:00 at night was fine with me or early in the morning, 6:00, also fine with me. I felt Phyllis had enough of a workload just being with the children as many hours as she spent with Bruce and Julie. So dinner time was a time for reflection, for discussion, for my showing my interest in them, and they're looking up and saying what do you dad, and I would try as best I knew how to explain that. That became an integral part of my life. Also, I felt it was really important to interrelate with my children's friends. I had a convertible. I had the Baskin-Robbins, top-down ice cream run probably three days a week. All I had to do was get in the car, and next thing I knew, there were five or six children. No seat belts at that time. We didn't think twice about that. But the ice cream was really good, and I was a very popular father in that regard, and other fathers tried to emulate what I was doing as well. Plus, every summer vacation, being together in the national parks hiking, eating, adventures. I don't think I can say more about Phyllis without being emotional. I don't want to do that. But to repeat, she was amazingly talented, a world-class color wood block printer, smart beyond belief, and a best friend to all her buddies.

I was the luckiest person in the world, and I want to stop by just saying I loved her every day of our incredible life together.

MR. POLLAK: Thank you, George. It's really been a pleasure. That brings us to the end of the oral history presented by George Cohen.

MR. COHEN: Yes. Done.