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Interviewee: Alice Campbell
Interviewer: Dawn Walsh
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Dawn Walsh: Hello, Alice. Thank you for allowing me to come over today.

Alice Campbell: You're welcome.

Dawn Walsh: And I'd like to start just by asking some basic background questions. First of all, where and when you were born.

Alice Campbell: I was born in Missoula, Montana in 1922, before the Great Depression.

Dawn Walsh: So then, did you grow up in Missoula?

Alice Campbell: Yes, I spent most of the time in Missoula, with the exception of about four years that I spent out—one year in Washington and three years in California, when I was just a small child.

Dawn Walsh: So you've had all of your educational experience in Missoula?

Alice Campbell: Yes. It hasn't been really a great deal of educational experience, just what we read and heard. We were a great family, we discussed the issues, and my father and mother both were always very concerned about what was going on in the world. So we understood—that's why I knew who Jeannette Rankin was.

Dawn Walsh: Right. So what types of issues do you remember your family discussing as you were growing up?

Alice Campbell: Well, war and peace always and all sorts of social problems—people should have a decent wage and a decent chance to make a living and have a home. And we were interested in what was going on in Washington, D.C.—what was coming out, because that was where the decisions were to be made about our futures. So we always discussed them, when you got old enough. I didn't do it in the beginning, but I do remember my mother telling us all these different things. I always remember the day that Lindbergh made his over the ocean flight, and then my mother told us that story, and I was about five that year—I was going to say, and I'm forgetting what I was going to say—we didn't have a radio, and it must have been the lady down the block that told him. So then, he told me—she told me, my mother did.

Dawn Walsh: At what age did you start engaging in conversation about the issues with your family?

Alice Campbell: Some always happened, you know, particularly during high school and things like that. Of course, I never usually agreed with the others. I was very outspoken.

Dawn Walsh: So do you remember a particular incident when you did not agree with other family members?

Alice Campbell: With other family members?

Dawn Walsh: Let say when you were in high school, or just your peers at that time—a particular time when you were in high school?

Alice Campbell: Yeah, it would probably be my peers. When I was in high school I did an article on fascism and communism and I praised the nuns. They agreed with the article, so I got quite a few compliments out of it. Of course, I already was hearing about things going on. My oldest sister went to public high, and she'd come home—this one teacher she had, his name was Mr. Kelly, and the conversation over the dinner table was all, "What did Mr. Kelly have to say today?" Oh, Mr. Kelly didn't last too much longer in the high schools, because he was too outspoken. That's a sad story. And I didn't go to university, but we always read a lot and, as I say, the discussions—dad always kept them very high level, what was going on so on. My husband says he was the smartest man he has ever known. He really impressed us all.

Dawn Walsh: So was there a particular event that happened in high school that led you to develop your views about war and peace?

Alice Campbell: Well, the story was that in our family, "War was wrong, that was it." I remember—I wasn't very old when my mother told me that. She said, "Your dad was in the War, and he was injured very badly, and he was gassed, and we don't believe in war." So I grew up not believing in war. I grew and grow. It wasn't until—that I got interested in political things, really interested—we used to attend some things because Dad would buy quite a few tickets, so that he could pass them around to people, so they'd go to their functions and things, parties always. So then we decided to run for precinct committeeman and woman, because Dad said that was the most important job that you could have—would be the precinct committeeman and woman. And that's the very bottom scale, you know. You go to your neighborhood and talk to your neighbors about what should be done. But that's the way we were raised. It was good, because we believed in the truth. And then, as I say, in—what was it—'54? We got involved with that and got to serve as precinct committeeman and woman. And we held that job for years. And we just—when we moved out here, we gave it up. I hated to see it go.

Dawn Walsh: So how many years was that, about?

Alice Campbell: Oh, it was from '54 until just about two years ago. It was quite a long time. We took part in a lot of things that went on at the university. We marched in peace marches. Well, I did most of that. Doug didn't do it until after he retired, and then he did.

Dawn Walsh: Are you talking about the peace marches during the Vietnam War?

Alice Campbell: During the Vietnam War.

Dawn Walsh: Is that the first time that you got involved with peace issues in terms of marches and protests and on a large scale?

Alice Campbell: Yeah, that's right—that's right. Matter of fact, Doug didn't think it was too good of an idea to go out and march, but I thought well, by golly it looks interesting to me. So I went out by myself and marched with them. But then, we went to some function in Seattle, Washington, because Doug started working with the Montana Senior Citizens Association. And we were at one of their functions, and they did some marching. And he fell into the fight. He liked it after that. He didn't have to worry about losing a job, because, you know, you have to be a little careful and not be too outspoken—unless you happen to be me [laughs].

Dawn Walsh: So before we talk more about the Vietnam Era, I want to go back a little ways to World War II and talk to you about what that was like for you during those years here in Missoula.

Alice Campbell: It was bad and, as I say, we didn't believe in war. We didn't believe in it. And I know when she voted against—that she was out—that she wasn't going to survive it—that Jeannette Rankin wasn't going to, and yet she had the courage to stand up and say: "We're not going to send everyone's son over to be killed. We're going to protect them. We're not going to let them." Because they just take all these young people, and they squish them into the military and promise them great rewards. The circumstances that they exist under are not living, good living conditions at all—it's just wrong. It's not right. So, that's the way we feel about that. So, I say, I started—I was trying to remember how old I was when I made my first peace march, but I can't remember how old I was. When we went back to Washington, D.C. for the installation of the statue—and Women for Peace were really behind that all the way. As a matter of fact, Connie Skousen really pushed for it. And we aided her, abetted her, and went to Washington with her. And we had—you know, they filled that whole bottom part of that capitol building there in Washington, D.C., and it was full. And a woman said they'd never seen as big of crowd for anything as there was there—standing room only.

Dawn Walsh: So we're talking about in 1985 when there was the dedication for the Jeannette Rankin statue in Washington, D.C., and Missoula Women for Peace initiated that.

Alice Campbell: It was 1985. I couldn't remember. I just had angioplasty at that time, and I had hardly bought my ticket and I wasn't going to give it up. So I went, and I made out fine.

Dawn Walsh: So were you part of the discussion that led to this project?

Alice Campbell: Uh, huh.

Dawn Walsh: And how did that idea come about?

Alice Campbell: The statue? Well that was Connie—I think she was the main pusher behind that. And then, the rest of us got behind her. We were the other members of the Women for Peace, in supporting that. Although we were just what Flo Chessin, Connie Skousen, this other gal—I can't think of her name—I can't remember her name. That's another thing that's bothering me these days, is memory.

Dawn Walsh: So, what were some of the first things that you did to get that project off the ground?

Alice Campbell: Go out to the group in Helena—the people that were head of the Arts Department, I guess. I've kind of forgotten the detail for that. I was almost hoping that you'd still be doing this when Connie came back to town, because she'll have it all there for you then. She's a little younger than some of the rest of us, and it makes a world of difference, because you get so can't remember things. But she was the one that instigated the whole thing. And they recognized her there when we were in Washington, D.C. Because Pat Williams' wife, Carol, the one that's running for—she did—worked in Washington, D.C. and got it going from that end. And they were trying to give the administration all the credit—the Reagan administration. Reagan didn't even know who Jeannette Rankin was.

Dawn Walsh: So, what was it like for you to be out there in Washington, D.C. with the Jeannette Rankin statue?

Alice Campbell: Oh, it was great. The whole ceremony was just really good—really good. We got meet people like Ralph Nadar, and it was Baucus that introduced him to our group. And he told—it was Connie and myself, and he said, "These are special ladies." So we got to meet him. And who was that gal from Colorado? She was really pushing behind it. She was a member of the United States Congress. What in the dickens is her name? See, I think these things Connie would remember. And she gave a wonderful speech. I was trying to think of some others. I came ill prepared; I can see that. I should've had some names written down, so I could remember them. But things have changed in my lifestyle since then, so.

Dawn Walsh: So, yeah, let's go back the beginning of the peace□□?

Alice Campbell: Missoula Women for Peace. It was 1970...January 1970 we had our first meeting, you know. At the last meeting, Flo mentioned these other peace groups, but this

didn't develop from these others. She and this Betty—I've forgotten what Betty's name was. They decided to start a peace group.

Dawn Walsh: And how was it that you came to be involved with Missoula Women for Peace? Were you involved in 1970?

Alice Campbell: Yeah. I was involved in 1970. We were involved in the beginning of the War in Vietnam—yeah, we'd been really interested. We had a tape that a man had done, and we sent it all over the state, and they listened to that. He was telling about the circumstances that existed in Vietnam and how hard the situation was here. We were—they were our allies during World War II, and instead we turned around and declared war on them. That was a sinful thing, I'm telling you. People can't be—whole world is at war now. But that Vietnam War, that was terrible and destructive. Those people were just—they didn't have anything. We destroyed their homes, whole fields, bombed them day after day, after day. The story was that if Kennedy had stayed in office—hadn't been assassinated—that he was ready to see that we withdrew from there. And I'm not speaking up enough yet. But so, we just continued and when other things come up, we try to keep up and keep alert and speak out. And then there's Jean Pfeiffer—her husband, he was deeply involved. And, just a group of women that decided they wanted to do something, the men too, so it came about.

Dawn Walsh: And so, what was it that you wanted to do at that time, in 1971 when Missoula Women for Peace started?

Alice Campbell: We wanted to speak out and get as many members as we could and really speak out so that something could be done—could be really investigated and find out what was going on. Why was it continuing to be fought and those people being bombed? That was it. We had to do something to stop that. It hasn't helped. They did stop finally on that Vietnam War, but they continued other places. We spend more money funding the military than anything else.

Dawn Walsh: So what do you think it will take for that to change, to turn around?

Alice Campbell: I'd like to say that I hope that it would, but I'm not sure—I'm not sure at all on that issue. I don't know what, how it would progress—we haven't. And we stand there with Korea again and China, and the war is going on over in the Balkans, or wherever it is—constant problems. I don't know why the world has to stay at war forever. I don't understand, because they deny children—they're the ones that are hurt the worst. I don't know what else to say.

Dawn Walsh: What are some of the activities that you did as a member of Women for Peace in the '70s?

Alice Campbell: Just whatever they had, marches and things. We'd take part in money-raisers to put money into things, to do something. If an issue comes up, you have some money to put

in on it. That's what we've done. And to speak out, to spend that money, don't sit on it. As soon as you earn one bunch, why start on another. That Flo Chessin, she's the best salesperson we got. And she really is the one that was really behind the starting it. And we always try to attend all the different things out at the university that are going on and the issues. Our main concern now is that we have so much poverty right in this country. I've worked on the nursing home concerns, of reform. And that's a bad one. And we all, in turn, if we have an issue that we're working on, go to the group to get them behind it, to push us, to help us out. It's a constant struggle to try to keep people alert to the idea that things are not in that good of condition, and we need to concern ourselves with the needs of the people, not how big of a car you're driving, or whatever.

Dawn Walsh: So, I want to ask you about your own family—you as a mother and raising your children and how you incorporated your ideas of peace into your family as your children were growing up?

Alice Campbell: I think Doug and I went the wrong way, I don't know. We overly impressed our kids with it. Maybe we gave them too much, because our oldest boys both were businessmen, and some of the younger kids have been—the youngest daughter. And then, of course, the one daughter she also—we just had the two girls—she is but they never spoke out or took part in any function for peace. I think they voted against—but to be really outspoken with the rest of the kids, they weren't. Doug and I were so tickled when one of our grandsons was in that parade out there in Seattle on the World—what's it called?

Dawn Walsh: The WTO protests?

Alice Campbell: Yeah. And she said, my daughter-in-law, "I told him if you'd have been there, you'd have laid right down there on the street right next to him." So that's the way that went. But they're just not deeply involved. It has always been a disappointment. Mary, the youngest daughter, she did at one time get involved in some of the peace marching—that was long time ago. But none of the boys have, I don't think—except my grandson, he and his girlfriend. And I know I'm not raising my voice. I don't think I've got as strong as voice as used to have. I'm not as forceful as I used to be. The article, I noticed, didn't say that—they said I was stubborn and wouldn't give in.

Dawn Walsh: So, what is an issue that you remember being forceful about?

Alice Campbell: Oh well, I think that my concern over—and I went over to Helena and testified during the legislature—it was on the nursing home situation, because some of the nursing homes are terrible, the shape they're in. I mean, they just do not take care of those people, and so much of the public money goes to support those nursing homes, because most of those people don't have enough money, income, that they can pay for that—because it's right around \$3000-\$4000—is that a year or a month? So that shows you how my mind is going. No,

I think it's about \$3000 a month for a nursing home. We've done things like that. We've gone and testified on issues like that.

Dawn Walsh: And what about when you were younger in the '70s or '80s, and you considered yourself quite outspoken at that time? Do you remember a particular event when you were ?

Alice Campbell: No, I don't—other than going over there and testifying. And the lady from the nursing home where my mother had been in, she came up to me and said, "When was your mother in Hillside?" And I said, "Well, if you don't know when she was in there, then you don't know anything about her." I was kind of snotty. But dog gone it, they don't take care of those people properly, and they charge way too much. And now, there are some that are good. There are some that are good, but there are others that are—they're real orderly, and they're big business, and they can't help them. They can't do that to people. You got to treat them right. But what other issue on the world? I ran a new reform party for the constitutional convention, and that was in 1970 '68, '70, right in there.

Dawn Walsh: And what was that?

Alice Campbell: I ran for new reform for a constitutional convention. Montana had a new constitution, and I think it was '72 that they voted it in. And they had all these—that's the only time I ever got elected for anything. I got elected for the head—what was it called? You studied it. It was a study commission, and you studied the different issues for the constitution, and I was on that for Missoula County. I did make that.

Dawn Walsh: And what were the issues that you were studying at that time?

Alice Campbell: At that time? I think it was still the Vietnam War was involved in there, at that time—and I don't know, I can't remember anymore. I should've said, "Don't call me."

Dawn Walsh: What about the Easter Peace Protest that happened in the late '70s, say 1978 when Reverend Lemnitzer led some protesters at Malmstrom Air Force Base?

Alice Campbell: May MacDonald was really involved with that?

Dawn Walsh: Were you involved in those at all?

Alice Campbell: I went—we went over to Helena. We went to go to Great Falls, to the Air Force base over there and spoke out against it—oh, what day was that? It had a connection with a certain day. For the life of me, I can't remember what day it was.

Dawn Walsh: On Easter?

Alice Campbell: Yeah, it was Easter. Yeah, that's right. And I had that peace symbol on my neck, and I got up and told them what war was—war wasn't good for children or any human or living thing, and they cheered me. My husband didn't want me to do that. I did it. And my son lives over there. He said, "I was ready to come and bail you out, Mom."

Dawn Walsh: So you spoke out at that point?

Alice Campbell: Yeah. And they came from quite—areas around the state. It wasn't just Missoula. This group came from Missoula, but, as I say, they were from other areas too. I don't know if I went again to another one of those or not. I don't remember. It was interesting, but I would hope for a different world.

Dawn Walsh: So, what is your ideal when you hope for a different world?

Alice Campbell: A world of peace. People keep saying, you know, the *Bible* says you will always have war, rumors of war. I just can't conceive that—that we could continue to do that. I think we're just working ourselves into a complete—oh, things are just not going to go good at all if we don't get back up and stop our pursuit of the almighty dollar. It's—people have just got to stop fighting, and Ireland is one of the main places we have got to stop. I tell you, they don't seem to be getting that settled either, do they?

Dawn Walsh: No.

[End of Side 1]

[Side 2]

Alice Campbell: Instances of that goes on out there in Ireland.

Dawn Walsh: So in your mind, what propels and starts to start war?

Alice Campbell: I think it's that pursuit, this greed. That lady that just got in Washington, D.C. that'd—what's her name? Grandma Dee, or something. And she was going for campaign reform. She just arrived last weekend in Washington, D.C. She had quite a few people following her too. They've got to get on issues, and they've got to work for them. That's all there is to it. They can't keep being so greedy—that's what it is all about. It really is hard. I'm glad that you talked to May.

Dawn Walsh: Uh, huh—I did.

Alice Campbell: Isn't she a doll?

Dawn Walsh: Yes. So I'd like to ask how you have incorporated your ideals and goals of peace into your own personal life as you've lived it?

Alice Campbell: Oh, dear. Well, I'd like to see education—opportunities for education, for all of them—for every—children coming along to have an opportunity from the cradle to the grave today. I think it could be done if they would just cut back on that military. I think it's the military that causes us more trouble than anything, because we're constantly building—why, because it's the economy. Why, because they've got to build more big bombers to get up there and bomb them. Oh, and it has got to stop. Where it's going to stop, God knows—I don't. I don't understand. Sacrifice everything, so we can just get on the moon, I guess. And that's why I don't think it ever happened—I can't see it. Yet they spend billions and now it's trillions that they're spending. My husband can quote figures, and he does it all the time.

Dawn Walsh: So I understand the Jeannette Rankin Center came from some peace consortium dinners that the Missoula Women for Peace were a part of. And were you a part of those early dinners and conversations that led to the Peace Center being created?

Alice Campbell: Well, I think I was. Yeah, I think I went to some of that stuff.

Dawn Walsh: And how did that idea come about?

Alice Campbell: I think a lot of people that were involved because, as I say, go back again to Connie and you go to Flo Chessin, and they stuck right with it. That's where it came from, yeah. They started it down there in the church—in that University Congregational Church, they had a little tiny room. Oh, it wasn't nearly as big as this part. It was really little. The people would just kind of volunteer some time, and they worked at it. I think Nancy Erickson is another

person that has been a real strong worker in those areas too. I'm sure that I'm leaving out other names that should be there, but those are the ones that I can think of right now. And May she has her—I mean Flo has her rummage sales and her dinners and potlucks.

Dawn Walsh: So I know that you're still an active member of Missoula Women for Peace and you still go to the bimonthly meetings that they have. So what is that keeps you going and active and involved in this women's group for peace?

Alice Campbell: Oh, just having something to work for—to change things. And we are still concerned about the world being at war, and so we can always find issues that we can work on. The issue of the books that they were talking about—that's behind the thing, because you want to stop this alienating people, you know, that belong to this race or they're different. They're Blacks, so they're not the same as we are, and that's never really changed since slavery—and that's the worst thing that mankind ever did was to go into those countries and take those men and put in those ships and take them over to the United States so that they could have them for servants. And oh, that's evil. But I don't know what else to say.

Dawn Walsh: So you mentioned some books—so what is that program?

Alice Campbell: Well, on the front of that book they've got...So all of us took one home to look at it and read it. I just started reading this one, and it's Women's International Group for Peace and Freedom. We're also allied with them—did anyone tell you that? That little label's on there.

Dawn Walsh: So Missoula Women for Peace purchases children's books and then donates them to public schools?

Alice Campbell: We did that in the past, and I think that was mostly done under Connie's supervision. It's really interesting, those people have gone through so much. And so, as I told you, now we have a little dark-haired granddaughter that's half African American. And I wanted to show you her picture—she's so cute. She was over here just the other day—

[Break in audio]

—triumphant that we were really doing something to help some of these situations that exist out there. We didn't want to just sit back and say, "Well, I'm sorry I can't do anything about it," you know. I think that we can feel justified in that. I remember when they wanted to start shooting out of those—oh, they're testing those missiles and stuff—Montana's quite a place to have those. And so, we protesting against this, and some of the big brass was there at the hotel in Missoula, the Riverside Motel. And so we were all protesting against it. It was snowing, and we were marching back and forth protesting. We went in to talk to them and told them—that no way should that be allowed to go over there, because what they would really hurt the environment to let that stuff loose, and you didn't know what it was going to do to people's

lives and all that stuff like that. But they were going to shoot them off. So I thought we had some impact. So, I guess, that's the only one I could think off. I just have to remember, because I always marching back and forth, and it so snowing and we had our signs.

Dawn Walsh: So for you a big motivation to do this peace work is just because simply you can't do nothing, you have to something?

Alice Campbell: That's right.

Dawn Walsh: And that seems very important to you?

Alice Campbell: Absolutely. I agree that it is important to us, very important. I'm pretty proud of the fact that we stayed together, as few of us as there are, this long. I think we can say we done things. And some of those gals, like Nancy Erickson—always working out there on that environment thing, going along and picking up papers and stuff left out by people – you know. And people are so careless. They think it's funny to throw things around. And that's it.

Dawn Walsh: Okay, well thank you very much, Alice.

[End of Interview]