PREFACE

This manuscript is the product of tape-recorded interviews conducted by Walter Goodman for the Oral History Office during October and November of 1972. Paula Bergschneider transcribed the tapes and Sheila Sears edited the transcript. J. Willard Conlon reviewed the transcript.

J. Willard Conlon was born in Bissell, Illinois on November 11, 1910. His early life was spent on a farm in Montgomery County, Illinois, and he attended school in Nilwood, Illinois. He has lived most of his life in the Springfield area. He was employed by the Illinois Bell Telephone Company from December 20, 1928 until February of 1937. On February 15, 1937 he began his career as a Federal employee with the Division of Disbursments, United States Treasury Department. In June of 1944, he was transferred to the Office of Price Administration as Commodities Investigator. He was later an investigator for the Civil Service Commission and the Justice Department. During the national election of 1964, he was sent to Mississippi to act as a poll watcher to assure that all residents had an equal opportunity to vote.

Mr. Conlon's various positions with the Federal Government have given him a vantage point from which to observe closely many of the major historical events of the twentieth century. He has innate curiosity and the ability of an aware and critical observer of the history of his lifetime. This memoir is rich in Mr. Conlon's reminiscences of of the Prohibition Era, the Depression, and World War II. He also shares with the reader the early days of radio, vaudeville, movies and other forms of entertainment. Mr. Conlon was in Denver, Colorado at the time

that the Japanese relocation centers were being set up nearby; he was in Washington, D.C. during the McCarthy hearings of the 1950's. He has always been near history in the making, and has been interested enough to remember his experiences and share them with the readers of this memoir.

Readers of this oral history memoir should bear in mind that it is a transcript of the spoken word, and that the interviewer, narrator and editor sought to preserve the informal, conversational style that is inherent in such historical sources. Sangamon State University is not responsible for the factual accuracy of the memoir, nor for views expressed therein; these are for the reader to judge.

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J. Willard Conlon, October and November, 1972, Springfield, Illinois. Walter Goodman, Interviewer.

Q. Mr. Conlon, what was your birth date?

A. I was born November 11, in 1910.

Q. And you have had, of course, various occupations. Could you sort of list them more or less chronologically?

A. Well, yes. Of course, as a youngster, you know, in my teens and even before, I had the normal things such as carrying papers and door-to-door selling--once of brooms, I remember, when I was a schoolboy. Then later I worked for about ninety days in the coal mine; I worked with my father in Citizen's Mine B. I remember that on December 20, 1928, I went to work in the accounting department of the Illinois Bell Telephone Company as a mailboy. I worked there from December 20, 1928 until I left to enter Government service, and that occurred in February of 1937. I believe I reported for duty with the Division of Disbursments of the United States Treasury Department on February 15, 1937.

Q. Now let's see, your birthday is Armistice Day. Of course, it wasn't Armistice Day when you were born, but do you have any recollections about World War I? I realize you were very young, but do you remember things such as rationing possibly?

A. As a matter of fact, I do. I was eight years old on the first Armi-

stice Day, November 11 in 1918, and I recall that before that, of course, the war was on and it was the subject of a great deal of conversation. It was shortly after we had moved into Springfield from the farm--we lived on South Eighth Street--and there was a detachment of soldiers that marched down Eighth Street right in front of our house. We were told that they were going to the depot so that they could take the train somewhere. And I was very much afraid. I'd heard of soldiers, but seeing them that close up didn't cheer me up a bit. (laughter)

Later, I recall that there were some shortages, particularly in sugar and a few other things, and I recall that my mother did a lot of baking and she said that it was necessary for her to buy substitutes in an equal amount that she bought flour. She was in the habit of buying flour in 24 pound sacks, or perhaps in some cases in 48 pound sacks. That's the way flour was prepared or packed in those days. But it seems that in order to get flour that way, you were expected to buy an equal amount of weight in other commodities such as bran flour or cornmeal or just any corn product of any kind to establish that you were trying to . . . I think the term at that time was to share the burden and help your country by using things that were not in short supply, so that things that were in short supply would be more available to others.

Q. During World War I, did you ever run across any of the horse steaks or things that the other people tried and so forth?

A. I never did, no. All of my information on that type of food came from conversation, the conversation in the family and in other places.

But I do remember there was a great deal of conversation in our family about the hardships that the Belgians were putting up with. It was never quite clear to me in those days exactly what a Belgian was, really, but it seemed that the Belgian children were denied food and were being harshly mistreated by the Germans. Of course, since that time I learned what they meant by that, but for a long while the term Belgian was almost . . . it always called to my mind cruelty to children, or children having very hard times.

Q. What about public support? Do you remember anything about this? Were there big rallies, or did your parents go in for this stuff?

A. My parents were rather the quiet type; they never really attended very many public functions. Indeed, they didn't have a great deal to say about the affairs of the day although they did have definite views on the war and things of that nature. But even though I was young, I recall that there was some talk in our household about the fact that a couple of parochial schools here in Springfield that had--they were grade schools--they had courses in the German language, and found it advisable to discontinue these German language courses because of public resentment and hostility. In fact, it was said that the pastor of one of these parishes had been so outspoken in his support of the German forces that he had raised serious questions in the minds of his own congregation as to whether or not he was stable enough, or really acceptable to them under these conditions.

Q. You said a few minutes ago that you moved in from the farm. Where was the farm?

A. The last farm we lived on--we were renters, of course--was down by Nilwood, Illinois. That's south of Springfield there, oh, around 25 or 30 miles, or perhaps just a shade further than that. It's located, I believe, in Montgomery County. But we came up, well, we must have come to Springfield in either late 1917 or early in 1918. I remember that I started school in first grade at Nilwood, Illinois, and the name of my teacher was Miss Bloyer. And I recall that she used to read to us every afternoon, and, in fact, she read to us from The Wizard of Oz. I always thought that the name Dorothy was a very beautiful name, and it came to me from The Wizard of Oz. And every day after school, Miss Bloyer would take the interurban car--it's an electric car similar to a street-car--to Carlinville because that's where she lived.

Q. Did you ever know of anyone--not necessarily political--who spoke out against the war, in your family or anybody else, or possible discrimination against people like this?

A. I really never heard of anyone taking any view or having an attitude other than that our country was very well justified in all of its activities, and that everything that the Allied Powers did was great and everything that the other side did was wrong. I do remember my very first political thought, which isn't connected with the war, but I remember when Hughes ran against Wilson, which had to be in 1916 because this goes back to Nilwood when I was in the first grade. And we had a little verse we used to say: "Wilson runs the engine, Hughes rings the bell. Wilson goes to the White House, and Hughes goes to the other place." My father and mother were very distressed when they'd hear us talk like this. (laughter)

Q. After World War I, the boys were coming home and so forth, and they were finding it a little difficult to find jobs. Was your family ever effected by this--I'm sure they didn't come home from the war or anything, but did they . . .

A. They really weren't, because we did not have any real close, like brothers and sisters or even cousins on active duty in the military service. My parents were quite old; they were married late in life, and well, we certainly knew many returning servicemen. I was old enough by then to know that somebody was home, and we heard reports, and there was talk that it was rather difficult for soldiers to find employment again or to, well, to suit themselves or to fit themselves for civilian life again. It seemed that many of the soldiers found readjusting to the normal humdrum way of living that most of us faced, it was not really suitable to them.

There was one thing about the returnees from World War I that I do remember, though, and that is they were in the habit of coming back in a group. In other words, you could go down to the railroad station or other places where a large section of them would get off the train. I don't know if it was a company or a platoon or what it was, but there would be a civic reception to greet the boys coming home. In World War II, that wasn't the case; just all of a sudden you just learned that so-and-so was back again, you see. But to have any civic ceremony while a certain number of them returned home was not common in World War II, but I believe it was rather common in World War I.

Q. What was your father's occupation?

A. He was a coal miner. He had been a farmer and he was born and raised on a farm in Sangamon County, and then he rented farms, as I say, down in Montgomery County and in and around Springfield. Then when he left the farm, he came back to Springfield and he became a coal miner. He had, in his earlier days, been connected with the Bissell Coal Mine out here. At one time, he and his own father had had a hand in the establishment of that coal mine, and he had been the bookkeeper for the original Bissell Coal Company out there. Then the corporate ownership changed and he had worked underground as a miner for a while. So he was no novice at this.

I do know this, that when he was farming, he had some draft horses--that was the power, of course, they had--and some buyers for the British Army or for one of the Allied Powers came through and made him such a fine offer for some of these horses that he had, that he felt that he couldn't afford to not take it, so he sold them. He still had retained enough for the uses that he needed.

Q. Following the more or less slight depression after World War I, came the Twenties, of course, and the Twenties have always been known in the history books as boom time. Everybody was more or less gay and happy and all that stuff. Do you have feelings like this, too?

A. No, I don't. In fact, quite the opposite. It might well be because of the fact that my father was older by then and he was working in the mines. The mines were, of course, not nearly as profitable, or not as good a place to work as they had been during the war, because like everything else, after the war there was slackening in industry generally and

the work in the mines fell off. So there were many periods there, where just because of the season--the summer season--they would not be working at all, and there were other periods when the mines were on strike for long periods of time. I can remember my father being on strike for six months at a time on several occasions.

So that while the Twenties are said by the historians and the economists to be a period of relative affluence and prosperity for the country at large, it really wasn't true for the Conlon family as a unit. Because even when the mines were working, your earnings depended in a large measure on how much you yourself could produce, because in those days, you know, you were paid on a tonnage basis and this varied. There were many factors involved here in addition to your own physical ability to load coal and your own skill at being able to blast coal. There was the amount of coal needed by your employer as to whether you could load all the cars you were capable of or not. And so, put all together, this was not really a very prosperous time. My father married late in life, and this was at the time when his children were at their youngest and in their school age so that they were not able to contribute anything. They were consumers, but they were not able to help out financially in any way. My father did have some resources in addition to his earnings in the coal mine job. He owned some small property in addition to our own home. He owned another house, and he came into a very small inheritance, and in those ways we had some advantages that perhaps we wouldn't have had otherwise, but we were never in the top rank. In other words, other people bought automobiles long before we did and enjoyed a measure of comfort that we didn't have access to.

Q. During the 1920's you were a teenager. Do you remember much about Prohibition, such as the speakeasies?

A. Sure do. Yes, indeed. You know, it's kind of funny. I do not remember when Prohibition came. I do very dimly remember before Prohibition came. In other words, I remember when saloons were open and running. And I know for certain that when we came to Springfield, that there were several corner saloons, as they were called then in our neighborhood because I heard my father refer to them on several occasions. Then later, of course, the prohibition law was passed, and just when that came about escaped my attention as it had no interest for me. I really didn't know a thing about that.

Then still a little later, I became conscious of the fact that the sale of liquor was illegal and all of the saloons and taverns were closed and one thing or another, and that liquor was being sold on, oh, sort of a, well, it's hard to put it--an illegal basis, but that's not it. It was being sold on the sly, I think is the only way you'd say it. And us children and young teenagers, we were pretty well aware of who was doing the selling and who was doing the buying. And it became quite the custom for people to make their own wine and their own beer. And in this, they were, well, they were encouraged, really, by the business interest because it turned out that by the purchase of a product called malt. . . . Now this malt, there was nothing unusual about it except that it was flavored with hops, and it was sold under the . . . it was sold as something one would use in baking, to flavor bread or flavor other baked products. But any recipe will show you that a tablespoon full of that

malt would flavor a large batch of bread, whereas it was sold in about a three-pound can, you see. So that was just really a subterfuge. So it soon became quite the custom that everyone would buy these cans of malt and a package of compressed yeast, and there was a little sugar involved in it, I think. And you put this all in together with water and dissolved it in lukewarm water in a large crock, and that would soon foam up, and then that foam would disapperar and then it would revive and foam up again, after which time you'd bottle it. It made a pretty palatable beer; it was really very good. The point here is that every grocery store at that time, they would have on hand at least a half a dozen, and in all probability twelve different varieties of this malt. I doubt very much if you could buy a can of it in Springfield today.

Q. What about the speakeasies?

A. The speakeasies? As I say, we, as youngsters, well knew where they were. It wasn't until a little later on that I patronized any of them, but I actually frequently did. I have been in speakeasies on a number of occasions. As time went on, you got to know who was in the business and where you might be able to buy something to drink, and this started at a rather young age. We now have a law that says one shouldn't sell to anyone less than 21, I believe, in the State of Illinois. I know that I was only 16 when I bought my first bottle of white mule, which is the same as bootleg whiskey.

Q. Where were some of these at?

A. They were scattered, really, all over the town. I wouldn't say there were very many on the west side of Springfield, just as there really

aren't very many filling stations or grocery stores. But there were plenty of them in the downtown district and the fringe areas downtown. By fringe, I would include anything like east of Ninth Street, or south of Capitol, or north of Madison or perhaps Carpenter. But they were sprinkled in there, largely in these cases on the second floor of downtown buildings. There were none of them that I knew of ever operated on the first floor. Now I have heard that there were some, but I was never in one. The only ones in this particular area would be on the second floor. Then on the east side and on the north side there were really quite a few of them. Some of them sold only a little alcohol that was supposed to be distilled from sugar--it's said that that's a very easy and quick way to make alcohol--and they'd sell you the alcohol and cut it with water for you and sometimes they'd flavor it. By flavor it, I mean they'd make and imitation gin or even put a little peach or blackberry flavoring or something like that. But we had a custom here in Springfield in the sale of this home brew that I have never heard of any place else.

When three or four people would approach a bootlegging joint--say on the north side--you'd go in and all of us would sit at a table, all in one party. And someone would say, "Let's have a beer." The waiter, or sometimes a waitress, would take a large tin bucket, and empty into that bucket two quart bottles of beer and then bring it to us. Then everyone would drink from this bucket and pass it around until it was empty, and then it would be the next man's turn and he, too, would order. In other words, you just emptied these bottles into this bucket, and you drank out of it until it was empty and then you ordered another on. If

you wanted something a little harder like white mule, as I say, you would get a shot and they'd give you a chaser of soda pop or whatever you wanted.

Q. How much actual public support was there, at least in your family?

A. I never heard of any real criticism of this, except of a sort of a social nature. By this I mean that there would be some comment, "Well, so-and-so is sending his son off to be a doctor, and he can well afford to because he's been bootlegging for years." That's an actual quotation. I even know the doctor. (laughter)

Q. How good was the liquor?

A. It was not very good. There were a lot of scare stories in magazines and in the newspapers--there still is, of course--about people drinking inferior alcohol--wood alcohol was the term we all used--where people went blind and one thing or another. And there was also talk that in the manufacture of this white mule that there'd be dead rats and cats and other matter of that kind in the fermentaion vats. And that might well be, but I remember that after Prohibition it came out that a large proportion of this homemade product had been tested and found to be as palatable and as potable as one could expect. In other words, there was not really any great risk to be run from this. It was not as bad as it was painted. It was a good deal cheaper than what we're paying today. I know one place where you could buy alcohol at four dollars a gallon. I don't know the proof of it, but I do know that it was pretty strong.

Q. Did you ever run across anybody you knew who was involved in the

gangster element or the violence which occurred in Springfield?

A. Nobody, as far as being personally acquainted with anyone, not really. I knew a couple of fellows about my own age who it was said were working for the bootleggers and were working for Chicago and Cicero interests, and it might well be. There was supposed to be a tie up between St. Louis and Chicago in those matters. And I believed it, and I still believe it, as a matter of fact. In fact, some of them are still active in Springfield today. I forgot the first part of the question.

Q. Could you relate any incidents of violence that occurred in Springfield?

A. Oh, I well remember when various bootlegging joints were closed down and the gossip was that they had been ordered to close by the syndicate. I don't think we used the word syndicate in those days; I think somebody said, "the gangsters." But at any rate, there was a place out north of town called the Wayside Inn which was pretty notorious for its day because it continued to operate on a little more sophisticated level than the working man's common beer-drinking joint that I talked about. They had a band there, and they had a regular bar, and they had some pretty racy decorations in back of the bar. And it seemed to enjoy a great popularity with the more affluent people in the town, especially those who, oh, liked to swing a little bit, I suppose. At any rate, the word went out they were told to close down, and they didn't do it. They were then burned out; they were definitely bombed, and the place was burned. There were no casualties in that, but the place never did open again.

I remember the first gangster killing that I ever heard of was down on Ninth and Reynolds Street. There was a grocery store and another store

there, and apparently two fellows were walking east on Reynolds Street, and as they cornered Ninth Street there were some fellows there waiting for them and they had machine guns, and they killed them right on the spot. Then some time later, there was another killing at a place called the Bluebird Cafe down on Jefferson Street. It was between Seventh and Eighth Street on Jefferson. And it was on the south side of the street, and it was the sort of a place of questionable repute. At any rate, some fellows were sitting in there one afternoon at a table and the place was invaded by other people with machine guns who killed two fellows there. That, by the way, is only a block away from the police station.

Q. I think you told me a story about a fellow who ran a shoeshine shop or something where Horace Mann is today, and went to lunch and was shot and didn't come back from lunch or something.

A. Oh, no. There used to be an establishment on the corner--it wasn't a shoeshine place. There used to be an establishment on the corner, I think it was Eighth and Washington streets, and it was run by a man who was known as a gambler. This was rather well-known and accepted as though he were a shoe man or something of that kind. And he had the reputation of being scrupulously honest. If he lost a bet, he paid it. If you were known to him and you needed money, he'd loan it to you. And apparently he operated in defiance of the demands of some element of our society, because he did go to lunch one day and as he left the place, why, they let him have it. It was in the middle of the afternoon or the early afternoon, about lunch time. Charlie Dawson, I think, was his name.

Q. How did the police react to the violence or the speakeasies or to any of this stuff that was actually illegal? Were there actually any great moves to eliminate crime?

A. As far as I know, their attitude was this: they did not condone any of this. This was illegal, and therefore they were against it. But their basic attitude was that this was a Federal law and it's up to the Federal Government to do their own enforcing. They themselves, of course, would enforce it where they could. And mind you now, in saying this, I certainly was not close enough to know any of the police or any of the authorities in charge of the police. But my attitude, or my impressions--and I was quite young at the time, although, by now, I was in my twenties--was that they felt that the enforcement of the prohibition law, itself, was really not their first responsibility. In an advisory or other capacity, they would help where necessary, but in ferreting out or trying to collect evidence, I don't believe they spent much time on it at all. Now then, there were many, many individual policemen who took the attitude that, well, they didn't approve of prohibition anyway, and they themselves liked to drink a little, and it was not really uncommon to run across an off-duty policeman either in a place of that kind or attending a social function where a good deal of liquor was served.

I wouldn't say that they went out of their way to make an example, but I had one story related to me by a relative of mine who went to Chicago to testify as an expert witness in a lawsuit there. It was in a Federal court and one of the sides had hired him to come in as an expert witness on this case involving the coal mine. So he went up there, and he left the Union Station and he felt a little thirst and he asked the first Chicago policeman he met where a man could buy a drink. The policeman cheerfully obliged and told him.

Q. Everybody knows 1929 is the year that was the boom and then the bust, the stock market crash. What were your impressions of the stock market crash? Did it effect you or anybody you knew?

A. Yes, it did. It's kind of funny, by effect. Little did I really know how much it was going to effect me. At that time, I was working for the telephone company and I was working in the accounting department. Now, in the area in which I worked, there were also other officers of the company because this was a division office set up. I recall that the AT and T [American Telephone and Telegraph] stock at that time was selling for $310 [a share].

Q. What was that again?

A. [It was] $310 a share. That's AT and T. Now they had an employees' plan whereby an employee could buy it first at $120, and then just before the crash, at $150 a share. Now, part of the agreement was that if the stock went down and the employee didn't want it, he could get his money back. In other words, you couldn't possibly lose on the thing. If, before your last payment was made, the stock went down below what you wanted to pay for it, they would give you back everything that you had paid into it. Naturally, a good many employees had subscribed to this. I was the proud buyer of one share myself. (laughter) I remember one division head of the traffic department--I believe his name was . . . well, I don't believe his name is too pertinent anyway, it's so long ago now--but he used to talk very elouqently about this stock. I very much recall that he said just before the crash when it was $310, "I'm not going to sell until it gets to $1000." One thousand dollars. And

after the crash it went down to $200, came back to $220, and it went down to $180, it came back to maybe $200 and then it went down again. I think, eventually, that stock went down to $69, although I would have to check that myself. But I know one thing, the company was good enough to give me back my money that I had paid out on my share. I think I bought at $120 and it hadn't paid $120, so they gave me back my money. But of course, I do remember other people with more than AT and T stock, with other kinds of stock.

This was really at the time of the Insull scandal when Samuel Insull's stock--which had also been selling at inflated prices, and which covered a great many different companies. It would be incorrect to say that there was a share of Insull stock. It was rather a number of electric utility companies and other public utility companies which were owned and controlled by the Insull interests through holding companies or one thing or another. In fact, the C&IM [Chicago and Illinois Midland] Railroad is still an Insull Company. These stocks were selling at wildly inflated prices and the bottom fell out of them, you know. And there was a great public clamor that the laws that we then had had been unenforced and the people had been cheated out of their money. And as a result, Samuel Insull, himself, he left the country and took refuge over in England. He later returned and was tried, and I believe he was acquitted. I don't believe there was ever any conviction on malfeasance of any kind, but there was certainly one heck of a lot of money lost. Many of these shares went down to nothing or less, where they lost every cent that they had, because to an extent--it was pyramiding, you know--one company was in turn the creation of another company. I read a book

by John Kenneth Galbraith about this part of the great crash one time, which he deals with at great length this type of interlocking thing, you know, and this pyramiding of relatively no assets to giant obligations.

Q. Of course, the stock market crash now is just a very minor event, really, to what was going to happen later to the whole country. Of course, the banks closed in . . . what was it, 1932 or 1933?

A. Well, they started a little before that. The crash itself was in 1929. I don't think the practical effects began to be felt by normal, average working men and women certainly for six months, and the full force not for a year or more. Up until then, I think, the greatest impact was on the investing class, the people with money who really knew that this is going to result in great hardship. But then, all of a sudden the employment fell off and the factories closed and a good many financial institutions did go bankrupt, and well, there was just no practical steps taken to change it. There were a lot of claims made as to the responsibility for it and there was a lot of sort of silly type things suggested as to how to cure it. What I'm trying to say is this on that stock business: the leaders of the country didn't seem to know what the score was.

Coolidge is quoted as saying that when people get laid off, unemployment results. The banking interests generally seemed to think that everything would be fine if the government would loan them money at little or no interest rates and let them do with it whatever they wanted to. There was no uniformity in banking or the government circles as to where government responsibility started or stopped there. And there seemed

to be a sort of a desperate feeling on the part of the financial interest to protect themselves without any acknowledgement of any responsibility to the welfare of citizens as such. There was a lot of talk about the Wall Street bankers and there was a Congressional inquiry into banking practices at the time, none of which, as far as I can tell, bore any fruit at all.

Hoover was President when all of a sudden, the party in power backed a nationwide movement to popularize the song, "Pack up Your Troubles in Your Old Kit Bag." And there was another one like that, an inspirational type of song: nothing is wrong, just smile, smile, smile, and everything is going to be fine. This is the silliness. It didn't answer anybody's questions or help anybody at all. And looking back on it, you'd almost think it never happened, but it did.

Q. In Springfield, the Ridgely Bank [Ridgely-Farmers State Bank] closed. That was in 1933, 1932?

A. It must be 1933, because it hadn't yet closed when Roosevelt was elected in 1932. Now, wait a minute. Roosevelt was elected in 1932. He was inaugurated in March of 1933. In those days, inauguration day was March 4. On his inauguration day, he published the edict which closed all the banks--the moratorium. He closed every bank in the country, just closed them down on the very day he took the oath of office. Now then, to look back on it, I believe the Ridgely Bank had already closed. I can't be certain. I believe it had. But you got to remember, at that time Springfield only had . . . let's see, what did it have? It had the Illinois National, it had the First National, it had the Ridgely Bank, and it had the Marine, and that's all. And it also had a rather ques-

tionable bank here, in that the First National was really two banks. This is not known to many people, but the First National operated as the First National and also as the State Trust and Savings Bank. And I never did understand that one. I know that they weren't allowed to reopen until they changed it. (laughter)

Q. Do you know anybody that lost their life savings in the Ridgely Bank?

A. Yes, I did. Yes, there was a lady across the street who had worked at the watch factory which was in its death struggle at the time. But she had worked there probably forty, or maybe longer, years. And at that time there was no unemployment compensation, and there was certainly no social security. And she got laid off at the watch company, and during that week or perhaps even the next day, the Ridgely Bank closed its doors and she did away with herself--committed suicide. And there were a number of similar cases, not triggered by exactly the same thing, but there were a number of old people who had saved their money and who thought they had made some reasonable provision for their old age, and found all of a sudden that the bank or the building and loan or whichever they had trusted, that their savings were gone and they had no place to go.

It's kind of funny to talk about that now, but you see, there was no such thing as ADC [Aid to Dependent Children], there was no such thing as social security, there was no such thing as unemployment compensation. What there was consisted of only one word; there was charity. Churches

had charity, some civic organizations had charity, some politicians had charity. Al Capone had soup kitchens that he personally financed in Chicago for destitute persons who wanted a bowl of soup. Otherwise, if you didn't have anything, you did without. It's hard to explain that now, because one of the biggest conversational topics of the current scene is the cost of welfare and the cost of taking care of various minorities of one kind or another. By minorities, I don't mean racial or otherwise, but I mean underpriviledged or hardship cases such as the lame, the blind or the inept.

END OF SIDE ONE

Q. We were talking about the Depression, but I noticed there are a couple of places we didn't hit during the 1920's. One of these I'm a little interested about. I know you were rather young, but do you remember anything about the scandals under the Warren G. Harding regime?

A. I don't remember anything, really, first hand. I well remember when President Harding died, and well, the public reaction to it, which was one of shock and surprise. But it wasn't until several years later that any information or even thought reached me that there was anything other than a perfectly natural explanation to that. In my family, and in the people that I knew, it was simply a regrettable loss of a man who died unexpectedly, and no thought of criticism that I ever heard of for a number of years after that. I recall I was spending a summer with a relative in the country at the time. They lived quite a way from the road where the mailbox was, and after the normal time for mail delivery, my aunt asked to me go get the mail, which I did. And I could read, and in the paper was word that President Harding had died and everybody

seemed very saddened by it. So I remember the day quite well.

Q. During the early 1920's there was what was called the Red Scare in the history books. It was led by Mitchell Palmer and some of the fellows. They were ferretting out communism thoughout the world, or throughout the United States. They were trying to make sure that the Bolsheviks didn't take over in the United States. Did you have any inkling that this was going on, or did you know anyone that was actually kicked out of the country?

A. No, the answer to that is no. When this was going on, I had no inkling of it. I don't recall hearing anybody discuss it and I don't recall ever reading about it or having any information on that at all. A good many years later, an attorney friend of mine who was then as old man, discussed this feature with me, and at that time said that the A. Mitchell Palmer tactics in handling this so-called Red Scare were the most effective that could be used, in that they did not charge them with a specific violation of law, but rather charged them with a conspiracy, which, according to him, was the easiest thing to prove.

Q. Then, in 1928 . . . (tape shut off for a minute and then turned back on) against Herbert Hoover, and of course, the history books are full of the anti-Catholic propaganda and so forth which existed. You, being a Catholic, were you ever subjected to anything like this?

A. Well, I was subjected to it in that you knew what was going on. There was a whispering campaign. It was never that anyone would say to you, right to your face, or to anyone close to you that was also a Cath-

olic, that this was not advisable. But there was a little crude humor, for example, about it. One of them was that after the election, Al Smith would send a one-word telegram to the Pope: "Unpack." And there were several others, because while his principal deficiency as a candidate was his religion, also his stand on the prohibition issue was of great importance to many people. And while probably, emotionally, religion figures more prominently than other things, his direct and his unequivocable stand on prohibition--in other words, he was against it--also was a great objection to Al Smith.

I remember hearing him make a speech one time. It was, indeed, after he lost the election and there was a convention to be held of people who were in favor of repealing the Eighteenth Amendment. And he said--this was on the radio which was comparatively new--"It's not sufficient for you to vote dry in November and then to hold protest meetings in January saying that you're wet. If you're in favor of repealing the prohibition amendment, you have to vote it in November. Don't hold a protest meeting in January; that won't help you."

Q. Let's go back to the Depression now. In 1932, late 1932 or 1933, the Ridgely Bank in Springfield closed. Did you know anyone who had money in this bank that lost money?

A. Well, yes, of course I did. I knew a great many people who had money on deposit. My sister-in-law, Olive Fisher--my wife's sister--had some money on deposit there and she lost a portion of it. How much she had on deposit and how much she regained, I do not know, but I believe she got paid close to 80 per cent of it. Probably she didn't

have more than a hundred or two hundred dollars at the most, but she had a little money in it. And I knew others who also had some. They perhaps didn't say exactly how much, but they had money.

At that time I was working in an office that was in the Ridgely-Farmer's Bank building, and all of us cashed our checks there and many of us had some money in savings accounts there. In those days, checking accounts were not so prominent, we didn't have that kind of funds. But I knew a lot of people that did have some money in the Ridgely Bank. I was acquainted, in a sort of distant way, but I knew who the president of the bank was and I knew who the cashier was and this that and the other, and I recall full well that . . . I believe the president of the bank was George Keyes, and after the bank was liquidated and put into receivership, he then went to Havana, Illinois where he became the president of a bank there and remained in the banking business for 30, 35 years after that.

Q. During the Depression, of course, things were very bad for people. Most people didn't have much. But the ones who had jobs--you, yourself had a job during the Depression--could you live well during the Depression?

A. Well, you lived well in this way: credit was available if you had a steady job, like with the State, or with the utility like the Illinois Bell, or with the railroad or with insurance companies. At the same time, your earnings were not great, so I would say that you lived better than those who were at the mercy of the economic forces and were working either temporarily or on short hours or not at all and were depending upon the various relief agencies. You didn't really live richly, but you could survive with a certain amount of satisfaction by the very circumstance

that you were not dependent upon a public agency.

Q. How did the prices and wages compare to each other? Could you give an example of anything you bought?

A. There was really no great break in prices, although to look back at them and compare them with prices now it might seem so, but prices were just not really increasing. You could about depend that if you bought a gallon of paint this month, next month it would be the same price. The price of shoes--there were chain stores, for example, that advertised nationwide, "Our shoes are $3.50 per pair"--this kind of thing. Now then, in relation to the average wage, that was not exhorbitant, but it was just normal or usual. There was not what I would call distress pricing, like, "Please come take this off our hands." There might have been such, but the merchants carefully avoided the flavor or the thought that, "We've got to sell this at any cost." There was a stability to prices that might be just a little surprising when you look back at the economic figures on what was going on.

Q. Of course, in 1932 Franklin Roosevelt was elected and he promised everyone a new deal, and he immediately began putting everybody to work. How effective were these government jobs?

A. Well, I suppose it's an opinioned matter. In my opinion, they were very, very effective. To start with, they restored some confidence, in that people thought that, "Well, no matter how bad it is, no matter how scarce the employment is, there are agencies on which we can rely for the bare necessities." No one that I knew of thought for a minute of

these agencies as anything except a temporary stopgap to supply them with the necessities, to see to it that the lights were not turned off or that their children did have shoes and enough to eat--maybe not enough to wear, unless they could make a big case of it, because no one that I knew of tried to exploit this. But I did know of a lot of people who were skilled tradesmen who couldn't find any work at their trade at all. They'd spent a lifetime.

I knew one man that had been a blacksmith in a coal mine for many years--but he was a skilled blacksmith--and he couldn't find any work at all for years. As a result, he had to take two daughters out of high school. He just couldn't afford to keep them in there. I was close to this family, and I thought that it was a very regrettable thing. I still do, as a matter of fact.

Q. Were people actually thrown out of their homes for non-payment of rent?

A. Almost never. I don't know of a case, really, where that happened. I think some were, perhaps, inspired to move--double up with relatives, or go elsewhere. I just don't think the average American wanted to occupy the property of somebody else when he wasn't entitled to or didn't have the permission to. And when he couldn't meet the rent or the other charges, he would find some way of doubling up with his family or some friends, or making some type of arrangement. There were some dispossessions where furniture was actually set out on the street in foul weather, but these cases, I think, were really the kind that we would see even today, where people were perhaps not well adjusted, not properly adjusted

to society of today and might not recognize the fact that they are in real peril.

Q. What about the banks making loans? Of course, everyone knows the story that banks lent money too freely and all this. They made loans, I understand, but they didn't make a long-term mortgage loan like they do today. They were short-term and you had to refinance every couple of years.

A. Yes. The whole philosophy of banking at that time, I think, was a good deal different than what we have now. For example, we have what we call consumer type loans. In those days, banks would not engage in that type of transaction. By that I mean these so-called borrow-till-payday, or finance-a-car, or finance-the-purchase-of-a-major-appliance, or something like that--these are the type of loans with a monthly interest rate of 2½ per cent to perhaps 3 per cent a month on an amount of four hundred dollars or less. In those days, the banks, actually, did not engage in that type of thing at all. Another thing, for the most part, the banks were not really interested in real estate loans as far as homes were concerned. Now they might have been [interested] for industrial properties or for farm properties or something like that, but not for homes, they were not. Now this has changed, because almost all banks now loan for car purchases and they loan for other things--these so-called consumer type loans. And while the interest rate is inflated over the old-line 6 per cent per annum rate, it's nothing like some of these nationally known agencies that specialize in this type of thing. I don't recall the other half of the question there, except that the banks gradually

changed their emphasis, or rather acknowledged that there was a place and a market for loans on an individual basis--a personal basis rather than a business basis.

Q. So where did people go to get a loan? Suppose they wanted to buy a new car, where would they get their loan?

A. There was two ways about it. The dealer financed it, or he had a tie-up with what I would call, to be polite, a small loan agency that specialized in this type of thing. And he would refer you to that, where you did pay this 2½ per cent or 3 per cent per month interest. And most cars were bought on a time payment basis. But there was a great breakthrough on the part of several nationally known lending institutions then in the financing of cars, but I can remember when this was regarded as a very tricky, and a very chancy type of loan. It was not common at all. If you wanted the money, you went and paid an exorbitant interest rate to get the car.

Q. How effective was the Government program, the HOLC--the Homeowners Loan Corporation?

A. Well, it was, I would say, probably 90 per cent effective for the very reason it was forced into it. It's almost to the effect of saying, "How effective is a bridge to get from one side of a river to the other?" Because you see, it was either avail yourself of this agency or lose your dwelling place. And for the lender, it was either avail yourself of this agency or lose your loan. So it was quite effective, really. And you see, it didn't solicit business or anything. It was simply there as a haven for those who were forced into a situation that they couldn't

otherwise handle. But it was very effective as far as it went.

Q. I've heard stories that in Springfield there were certain real estate men who made a fortune during this period of time by selling houses to people and then booting them out. Maybe it was just the miners and so forth, but how common was this? Do you know anybody who actually did lose their house because the mine was laid off for six months and they didn't make a payment?

A. I do not know of a single individual instance where this happened. I do know that there were a number of prominent real estate men who were said to have made a great deal of money by reselling the same house time after time after time, and repossessing it. But it's a curious thing about Springfield to this extent, that this was never repeated with any animosity, but rather as sort of an objective report as to how tough times were.

These men--and some of them are still active--were reported to have probably charged more than the normal market in the first place in order to let these people get into the houses. And then when the time came when the people could not keep up their payments, /these men/ went perhaps a little further than some more conservative lending agencies would, and yet, as a result, people would see that this was beyond their means and beyond their scope and surrendered, and the house would be sold again and again repossessed. But there were never, ever any reports that they capitalized on this, but rather that they understood the practicalities of the market at the time and simply used it.

Q. You said your father was a farmer for years. How did the farmers survive during the Depression?

A. This is a very, very interesting thing. After the stock market crash in 1929, and during 1930 and 1931, there was a gradual but continuous decline in the price of farm commodities. Now a very heavy percentage of the farm land in the better farm states, such as Illinois, Iowa and Ohio and Indiana, had been purchased by small farm operators with heavy loans, and these were financed to a very large extent by your larger insurance companies--Metropolitan Life, Purdential Life--and other rich financial interests.

Q. You mean they went to the insurance companies to get a loan for a farm?

A. Yes, they **did.** Most of these insurance companies had loan agencies and loan offices located all throughtout the farm belt, and money to finance the purchase of farms was very easily available. But you've got to remember, to do this, first you had to have a farm of your own so you pledged it to buy another farm, and then you pledged your interest in both of these to buy another farm. And in Iowa and Illinois, especially, as a result, the farm that you once owned was now the collateral for loans on other farms, so that when you defaulted or when the income of these farms could not possibly pay much less the payments, but also the interest, the whole thing had to be foreclosed. It was foreclosed. The homestead was also up for sale, that's what I'm trying to say. Now then, the bottom dropped out of the market for farm commodities in 1930 and 1931, and at one time, corn actually reached the price of ten cents

per bushel. And when corn reached the price of ten cents per bushel, it was cheaper for a farmer to burn in his stove or his furnace corn, than it was to buy coal to heat his house.

Q. Do you know of anybody that did this?

A. Not actually, but by report I do. I don't know of anybody that did, but I do know this: the insurance companies and other financial institutions--banks, insurance companies and others--then began, because the interest was not being paid either . . . Most of them, if you paid the interest would be happy. But the interest was not being paid either, and by the way, when corn reached ten cents a bushel, the price per pound of hogs or cattle was also very low, you see. It was almost nothing. But at any rate, then they started the foreclosure sales. And the foreclosure sales were held in, for the most part that I remember, in Iowa and in South Dakota. And this resulted in something that very closely resembled a revolution, because the farmers of these areas were . . . they would attend a sale because this would be an auction sale under the jurisdiction of the court, the bankrupt court.

So the farmers would get together and the word would go out that no one would bid more than X price per acre for this farm--X price being something like sometimes as low as fifty cents--and if anybody had the courage to bid more than that, he risked his personal safety. So a man might owe, technically, let's say twenty thousand dollars, and the forced sale would come up five hundred dollars. And someone would surreptitiously furnish that to the successful bidder who would then deed it back to the farmer. And while at the moment this might sound farfetched, actually there were some instances of violence where people did go higher

than this and did not obey this local edict, and there were instances where courts threatened to call out the local guard and other law enforcement agencies to protect the freedom of the bidder to bid something more closely representing the true value of the thing.

The only name that I can remember of a national scale on that--there was a man by the name of Milo Reno. I really don't recall ever hearing that name since these sales, but he had a lot to say about it in those days. But another one that had a very great deal to say about this type of thing and who was unequivocally opposed to auctioning off the farms of these delinquent farmers, was Governor Langer of North Dakota. Langer later became senator and he served two and perhaps three terms in the Senate, and he had the nickname of Wild Bill Langer. And he was most outspoken about the injustice--what to him certainly was the injustice--of this way of treating the American farmer under these conditions. And after he got into the Senate he also had some unorthodox ideas in other areas that I can't recall at the monent. (laughter)

Q. Did you know anybody personally who actually worked for the PWA or the WPA?[1]

A. Oh, yes! Do you want relatives or other people?

Q. There were many, then?

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[1]Public Works Administration and Works Progress Administration.

A. There really were, on both sides. My cousin, John Williamson, was a face boss and later a mine superintendent for the United Mine Workers, both in the Capitol Coal Mine and the Peerless Mine, and then in one of the mines down near Taylorville. My uncle, my mother's brother, Uncle Jake Williamson, he was a mine superintendent for many years at the Sangamon Mine No. 2, which was owned by a local financier, at that time associated with the Marine Bank, by the name of Jay Wilcoxen. And this same uncle was the superintendent of a couple of mines in Harlan, Kentucky, which is sometimes known as Bloody Harlan. And I've got, oh, I'd have to stop and count it up, but I wouldn't have any difficulty counting up two dozen relatives on one side or the other. By relatives I mean cousins or uncles.

Q. My question was did you know anybody who worked for the Government organizations, the WPA or the PWA? Not the Progressives but . . .

A. Oh, I thought you meant the mine workers.

Q. No, we'll get to that in a few minutes.

A. Oh, that's funny.

Q. Well, since we started this, let's talk about the Progressive Mine Workers. The Progressives, of course, were the splinter group of the United Mine Workers.

A. Exactly. That's what they were.

Q. Springfield, of course, if it wasn't a center, it was right in the thick of things--the violence and so forth.

A. That's very true, it was.

Q. Can you cite some instances of things that occurred in Springfield that shows the brouble?

A. Well, in sort of a mild way. I remember, oh, gosh, it must have been in about 1929 or 1930, the miners had a mass meeting. It was on South Sixth Street. It was right down by the Elks Club, and I'm not sure whether or not that was the technical site of the meeting or whether they held it at the KC [Knights of Columbus] Club, but it was a mass meeting of miners who had a lot of problems they wanted to talk about, and it had to do with accepting a contract at a reduced wage. The street was crowded and it was . . . the feeling ran pretty high. John L. Lewis undertook to explain his policies and pacify the meeting, and he was very unsuccessful and it looked like his personal safety was in jeopardy and he took refuge in the Leland Hotel. The Leland Hotel was surrounded by this mass of miners and their friends who were demanding to see him again and wanted to know what had happened. And it was said that he got himself ushered out of the Leland Hotel in a laundry basket. I can't guarantee that. But as I remember now, at that time, and on that very day, a very well-known and highly regarded police officer by the name of Porter Williams was killed. They worked as a team--Porter Williams and a man by the name of Jesberg. They were Springfield police officers.

Q. How do you spell Jesberg?

A. J-E-S-B-E-R-G. And it's been a long while ago and I just can't recall all of the details, but there was some violence and there was

some shooting, and as I remember it, Porter Williams was killed. Jesberg, of course, survived. I know this: it was a shock to the community, and the Springfield Police Department began a practice then, which still endures, of making an award for meritorious police service which is called the Porter Williams Award. It's based on that particular incident.

Q. Was he killed by the miners?

A. Nobody seems to know. They were all miners, but which faction? Nobody seems to know. See, this kind of ties in with the later Easter Sunday thing that I once mentioned, I think, that happened on the day that my oldest son was born, which was April 21, 1935, where the Propressive Miners were holding a meeting of their own on the northwest corner of Sixth and Washington streets. And there, too, the hall was crowded and couldn't accomodate all the people, and there was a great crowd down there on Sixth Street and on Washington Street. And this man named Ed Mabie and a man named Arthur Gramlich exited from addressing this meeting in behalf of the Progressive Miners. There was a car that pulled up in front--a Graham-Paige, which is a little-known make of car--and there were some shots and one of these men was fatally wounded.

I was just coming around the corner at Sixth and Jefferson by the police station at that time, and I heard the shots but I didn't know what was going on, and I ran up there and there was a great crowd. And as I kind of pushed my way into the crowd, I looked down and all of a sudden I noticed that my shoes were in blood--I had blood on my feet--because in addition to these that were killed, there were a number of bystanders and others that were wounded. And they took some of them across the

street into Hogan's Tavern, and I went into Hogan's Tavern and there was one man with a beard--beards were more uncommon then than now--and he was on a stretcher already and he was waiting for an ambulance to take him to the hospital. And the next day the papers said that this man was an attorney from Pennsylvania who represented the United Mine Workers. And as I remember, the paper said his name was Joe Tumulty. I wondered what an attorney from Pennsylvania was doing in Springfield on Easter Sunday in 1935 at Sixth and Washington streets, but nobody seemed to make that inquiry.

Q. Did they ever catch the fellows?

A. As far as I know, there were never any charges brought against anybody in that particular thing. And there were two men killed. Later they had sort of a memorial service and even a parade in Springfield in recognition of the death of these men.

Q. I suppose the Progressives did that?

A. The Progressives, excuse me, yes.

Q. What about any other violent bombings and so forth that you've heard stories about?

A. There were stories, of course, about bombings of the railroad bridges or the destruction or bridges, and even a little sniper fire now and then and that sort of thing. And I guess on several occassions, in the county and nearby Springfield, were picket lines set up by the Progressives to stop the United Mine Workers from working. But they were kind of on thin ice, because you see, here's the question of two different

unions claiming jurisdiction. In all of my life, I have never yet heard of a mine that was operated or that anyone attempted to operate with nonunion labor, except in Herron where they had the Herron Massacre.

Q. How did Springfield react to this violence--the killings and so forth? What was the general opinion of the people?

A. Sort of a boys-will-be-boys attitude. [Their attitude] was, "These miners are the lowest part of the economic scale; they always are rough and there's not much you can do with them. Anyway, as long as they confine their hostility to each other, no use in us getting worried about it."

Q. What about the police? Were they duly upset about the violence?

A. I would say that the police were probably more concerned for their own safety than anything else, but I can understand that very well. But they also came from working-class families, and in many cases, you know, from miners' families. And I think they did a very good job at doing their duty when they had to do it, but I don't think they brought any particular enthusiasm to it. In other words, all right, you have to go out there now. The men are are going to work at New North [Mine], and you've got to let them get in and you got to let them get out safely, and they did that. But they'd just as soon that they were doing something else.

Q. You mentioned to me that Art Gramlich's father was killed?

A. Oh, yes. The older Gramlich, he ran . . . really, it could only be

described as a neighborhood tavern, out at approximately Eighteenth and Ash streets. It was a quiet place, and one night, closing time came and he locked the door and he turned out all the lights. And apparently, he went to the cash register and he took out whatever money was there and put it in a canvas sack. And all he had was a night light burning above the cash register. And, as was his custom--he lived in a building that was attached to this tavern--he went to the bar and he drew a beer for himself. He always had a glass of beer before he went on to the door and locked up. As he was drinking that beer, he was shot--through the window. The police reports say it was either a .36 or a .30-30. There were never any arrests.

Q. Was this also involved with the mine business, too?

A. Well, we thought so, because of the name, you see, and the family. Incidentally, this family is still rather prominent and active in Springfield. But there he was. He was all alone and the place was closed. He had taken the cash out, and he went and drew a beer and was standing there drinking it, and bang! Somebody took him with a gun.

Q. Did you have any recollections about the big march the Progressives made on southern Illinois?

A. Sure do. Yes, I can't place the exact year, but the Progressive Miners decided that since the United Mine Workers were sort of in the majority in the bigger shipping mines, as we called them, in southern Illinois, that they would go down there and picket them. And they organized a mass march down there with the view to picketing these miners

and trying to encourage them to discontinue working. The miners down there were, for the most part, or perhaps even 100 per cent, United Mine Workers. So when this caravan, which was said to amount to as many as 25,000 individuals, reached the southern part of the state at Pinckneyville and in that area, they were met by these southern Illinois miners who were armed and who were very aggressive in resisting this march. And this was called the Battle of Pinckneyville or the Battle of Mulkeytown. Now, this had to be in about 1932, somewhere in there--I can't remember for sure--because it wasn't 1928, it wasn't 1929. It might have been a little earlier than 1932. It might have been 1930 or 1931, but Ross Randolph, who was later the director of the Department of Public Safety, and who was later an FBI man and who was very active in the law inforcement circles, was either the sheriff of that county where Pinckneyville is located, or chief deputy at that time.

Q. Did they ever call out the National Guard to help quell some of the violence?

A. They often did. I recall on one occasion where they called out the National Guard to protect the right of miners who were going to work at the Old Jones and Adams it was called, and later called the Peerless, which is a Peabody Mine, actually on what would be called the old bypass or Thirty First Street, just north of Sangamon Avenue. And most of the miners would take the streetcar and get off at the fairground and walk the mile and a half or so to the mine. And I recall at one time, they had National Guard troops stationed at every corner all the way out there. This was only one occasion, but they had them in many other occasions where they

did. Both sides of the miners, you've got to remember, affected a great scorn of the National Guard. They had many scurrilous terms about them, and they described them in most uncomplimentary ways. Their favorite term for them was "scab herders." (laughter) It's true, though.

Q. After the business about the stolen ballot boxes and so forth with John L. Lewis, of course, the Progressives broke away and there was the fight and so forth, but how did the United Mine Workers feel about John L. Lewis? It seems like they certainly didn't particularly like the business of him signing this contract without their approval.

A. As a matter of fact, they actually did seem to like it. There was a feeling in the United Mine Workers--that's the John L. Lewis faction--that they were part of the future, that the mines that they worked in and the methods that they were using were the modern and the coming thing, so that they could expect more work per individual than the members of the other union.

While it wasn't 100 per cent true, it was really true to some extent that they were in the so-called mechanized mines, where people were working by the day instead of by the ton, and the other mines were the hand-loading type mines. And the fact of the matter is, they were right about it. Because mining, as we know it today, is highly mechanized and it's highly specialized. And those are the mines, and those were the big producers that stayed in the Lewis orgainization. The hand-loaded and the hand-operated type mines were the ones that lasted a long while and they died a slow death, but each day was a little less beneficial to them than the day before, even though they lasted thirty years. They

reached their apex in about 1930, 1931 or 1932, whereas the other mines that you can see now that are operating in this state were just a handful of mines and were producing more coal than all of these dozens of mines did before--the mechanized mines, the modern mines.

There's one thing, of course, that I guess you ought to mention, and that is these mines are adapted to the modern techniques. In other words, the coal vein is thicker, the coal itself is more workable and more accessible. Some of the old-type hand mines that you went to, the vein itself would be from, oh, four feet six inches to six feet, which meant that if you were in one of the four feet six inch mines, you were working in a crouch or stoop position all day, and this type of mine doesn't adapt itself very well to the mechanization process.

Q. Did you ever hear of Mother Jones?

A. Oh, yes. . . .

Q. What did you hear about Mother Jones?

A. . . . yes, I have. It's funny, though. They still celebrate Mother Jones' Day in Mt. Olive. And Mother Jones was the patron saint, really, of Illinois coal miners, without a flavor of factionalism, long before there were Progressives and there were only United Mine Workers. In fact, long before there was a John L. Lewis. I think John Mitchell was president of the miners' union when Mother Jones was most active. I think Mother Jones probably became most famous or notorious back in the days of the Virden riot, when they were bringing up to Virden, Illinois nonunion miners from the Deep South. It's called the Virden riot because that's where it happened. Apparently, at the time of the incident when

they brought in a trainload of potential strikebreakers, the miners were lined up on both sides of the railroad and they had their guns and started shooting, and the train never actually stopped but it kept moving because it wasn't safe to stop. But there were a number of deaths. But I once read, a good deal later, that it was sort of an ironic thing, because the Mt. Olive and the Virden miners were taking turns standing guard, and at the time this happened in Virden, it was the Mt. Olive miners that did the shooting. But at any rate, Mother Jones is still sort of revered by the mining people.

Q. What did the Civil Works Administration do in Springfield? Were there actually jobs in the Civil Works Administration?

A. Actually, the Civil Works Administration was simply a means of recognizing the need of people who had no work and no income and putting them on a payroll so that they would get a little income, a little salary, but then assigning them to any particular minor job that didn't call for any planning or any investment and capital improvement. They were put to cleaning streets and, literally, raking leaves and painting fences--that sort of thing. They gave them something to do, and they paid them for doing it.

Q. Was this until they could find another job, or was it pretty much permanent?

A. They didn't promise them to find another job, but it was known that this was not going to last and . . . (tape ends abruptly)

END OF TAPE

Q. We were talking about the Civil Works Administration. Did the Works Progress Administration [WPA] or the Public Works Administration [PWA] have much effect in the Springfield area?

A. Well, yes it did. It's hard to measure out what it did, but it took up the slack from people that couldn't find work at their occupation--their trade or other jobs which had run out--and when they would register for employment, the heads of families and others who really had need of it were given a chance to make at least a subsistence level income, and they worked for it which most of them wanted to do. So it had a very important place in the economic scheme, there's no question about it.

Q. For some reason, I've always had trouble determining which one was which.

A. Well, I would say you'd have to do it this way: the WPA was for work of an impermanent nature such as repairing a highway or repairing a bridge or installing a drainage dam or levee or something of the kind, but PWA I would classify as a capital improvement--building a library or building a brand new bridge or constructing a new civic building of some kind, or adding something that could be described as a capital improvement. I think that is the best way to get to that. Not that WPA was engaged altogether in repairing things, it did build things but they were not on the same scale or require the same planning or the same financing as the PWA jobs.

Q. How did the government operate these PWA projects?

A. Well, it's my understanding that they came under the overall direc-

tion of the Secretary of the Interior, Harold Ickes. And the Government supplied, I think in many cases, perhaps all of the financing, and in every case, the majority of the financing, but limited itself to the selection and the design of them to the direction of local authorities who determined what they wanted and how much they wanted to spend and then submitted their plans and requests to the national authorities for approval, who upon approval would finance as much as was agreed upon. But they left the direction of it to the local authorities.

Q. Did anybody in your family work for these Government agencies?

A. No. No, it's a peculiar thing about that. None did. Of course, my father was deceased then and in my own immediate family nobody did. I was working, of course, for The Bell /Illinois Bell Telephone Company/, my sister was working for The Bell, my younger brother was not yet old enough to work. So it's a peculiar thing. I got to reflecting about that, and from December 20 of 1928 to June 1 of 1950 I never missed a payday (laughter).

Q. What about kids getting out of school? I'm certain, of course, they had probably more trouble than anybody else finding jobs. What did the Government do for them?

A. Well, those that had been assisted during their school career by the NYA /National Youth Administration/ had an idea of what they wanted to do. Some of them wanted to be clerks like in utility or insurance company offices or other places. Some had a knowledge of the operation os office machines or equipment or office prodecures anyway, so that they had an idea of where to look for work and had something to offer to an

employer. Those who did not have that, of course, were right on the job market the same as everybody else. And a great many of them, of course, took jobs that were far below their potential or their abilities. In other words, it was not at all uncommon to find someone with a bachelor's degree being a gasoline pump jockey in a filling station or operating as a carhop at a hamburger stand. Matter of fact, that lasted well into World War II and even beyond as a moonlight-type job where people with bachelor's degrees would sometimes moonlight as carhops or soda jerks or things like that.

Q. Was there any social stigma to having worked for the Government?

A. Not for the Government directly. Matter of fact, if anything, it was a prestige type thing, because at that time the government jobs had the fringe benefits. They had more fringe benefits than anybody else ever had. This changed shortly after World War II so that the Government employment fell behind the procession. But take in the 1930's, the Government had its own retirement plan which was far superior to any government plan of any industry, and it also had very liberal annual and sick-leave privileges as well as a little better supervision of working conditions and environment, although this is not to say that there was not a lot of room for improvement, particularly in the working conditions and environment. (laughter)

Q. I've noticed in whatever reading I've done that once there were other jobs available, people seemed to leave these PWA and WPA as soon as they could. Were the jobs that bad, or were they ashamed of them, or what was the reason for it?

A. Well, I think that it was twofold. I think, for the most part, they earned more money in the industry, the jobs in private industry. It's true they worked more hours, but they had an opportunity to make more money. Then, too, while perhaps it was not considered a disgrace to be on WPA or PWA or NYA or any of those, it was something that you weren't really too proud of. I think that you had the pressure of social acceptance, but the prime condition, I would say, was more money because by then the wages and hours bill had been passed which guaranteed you time and a half for over forty hours. And, especially during the war, this made a very great difference.

Q. When could the common man actually tell that things were getting better?

A. Oh, well, I think everybody could tell with just a sort of feeling that late in 1940 that things were getting a little better. In other words, people began to think that if you went to a private employer or factory or construction site and asked for work, they'd listen to you. They might not hire you, but at least you weren't met by a guard or some discouraging sign like Applications accepted every New Year, every Leap Year Day or some other crude wit. (laughter) So that actually developed there in the 1940's --the early 1940's, late 1930's--particularly 1940 to 1941, somewhere in there, that you had a possible chance of being hired. When you'd go to the hiring gate they'd talk to you and at least look at your qualifications and could tell you what type of jobs might be available, that sort of thing. I think that up to then, for probably seven or eight years, that no one seriously entertained a job application.

Q. Was there very much support amongst the people in and around this area for the New Deal program as a whole?

A. The New Deal program as a whole, after all, I left Springfield in the early part of 1937 and didn't really return until 1944, in January. But I think my experience in Washington and Denver would be common to Springfield. There was always an element that criticized any government activity for various reasons. They believed in the old theory of everybody has to be responsible for themselves. They didn't want Uncle Sam taking over their economic responsibilities, and they were quite vocal and they would often criticize people taking jobs in the public area like PWA and so forth, and WPA. But I think on the average, you'd find that the great majority of the people were convinced that this was a necessary thing, and when I say that, I don't mean just the people that were on these jobs, but rather those who did have steady jobs in the private sector. They knew that this was important because without it, what would these people do?

And you got to remember this, that even at the bottom of the Depression, as hard as it might have been, the great majority of the people who were working were not really on a government payroll or a relief or public assistance type of thing. You know, the railroads still run, the insurance companies still operated, the telephone company still hired some people. And while this acted to depress the benefits from these jobs, yet nevertheless, the jobs still existed, see. Now, some companies resorted to reducing work rates and deductions from pay rather than laying anyone off. A good example might be The Bell. The Bell is well-known as not having laid anyone off, but one thing they did do, they

started requiring that their employees each take a half a day off per week, and then deducting two days pay each month from them, which was really . . . . Nobody really resented this; they got the time, but this did reduce their earnings some.

Q. The United States, during the Depression and, well, clear up until the war, was mainly an isolationist country. I fail to understand how they could be that way. Maybe they were more interested in their own problems, but how did you or people like you actually feel about the aggression going on the Europe, from Mussolini and from Hitler and from Japan?

A. Most of us, I think, didn't really comprehend the extent of the repression in Germany under Hitler. I recall seeing in the movies--they had newsreels; in those days we didn't have TV or anything--pictures of what they called the political prisoners in concentration camps. And the pictures they showed were apparently normal male individuals in back of barbed wire fences. And the captions to the pictures said that these were political activists that were not in agreement with the people in power at that time, and thus had been segregated for the good of the Government. There was no indication, that I saw or heard or knew of at that time, of the wholesale exterminations that were reported later in the concentration camps.

As to Mussolini, he was regarded with sort of a mixture of approval and disapproval. A great many people sort of admired Mussolini. He made a pretty impressive picture in the newsreels. There was this cliche that he made the trains run on time, and he seemed to have solved the

unemployment problem in Italy. And while every now and then a feature writer in the newspaper or a little something in a magazine might criticize his methods, there was certainly nothing that I would classify as a public disapproval of him. There were some who did, but in the main, they didn't. And Hitler is a little different.

Even though nobody, really, that I knew of understood or knew about his concentration camp things, Hitler's very approach to most every subject was controversial, so that you were almost bound to be a partisan--either for or against him. In his speeches and his general attitude in attacking the rest of the world, particularly the provisions of the Versailles Treaty and the conditions in the Ruhr, he was very aggressive. And the people that I knew were anti-Hitler, but not on the grounds that perhaps they would be now, as to the deprecations that he committed. They didn't approve of him; in fact, they thoroughly disliked him and they disapproved, really, of the French and the English in catering to him the way they did, particularly at Munich and before that. But at the same time, I think the average or the prevailing thing here was, "That's, after all, a European problem and we may not approve of it, but it's not up to us to try to settle it."

Q. Did the people actually disapprove? Did they believe Neville Chamberlain when he came back waving his papers, saying that this is peace in our time, or did they more or less agree with Churchill saying just the opposite?

A. I'll put it this way: I think the magazines claimed to believe it. That was my only source, The Saturday Evening Post and others.

Q. What were your own reactions?

A. That this is a sellout, and you can't appease people and make anything out of it. And this was not just my own, but some friends of mine that I knew pretty well, and we talked about it, agreed that this will be. We'll live to regret this in the very quick future.

Q. Hoover was considered a nonviolent person, and he didn't believe in war and whatever. Did the people actually believe in the United States--the sanctions we were performing upon Japan for their invasion of China, and upon these other expansionist fascist countries--did they really think that something like this was going to do any good?

A. Well, I don't really know exactly what you mean, because, you see, at that time we were still selling scrap to Japan and every magazine was screaming its head off about it, you see. And then there was some difficulties we had in mainland China at the hands of the Japanese--the Panay Incident was one of them. And the people resented this a great deal, because the American spirit is not to be pushed around. But they didn't seem to feel that this was especially Hoover's fault. In other words, he was not denounced for anything in the international area like he was in the local or economic area. Hoover was not popular, but none of the criticism of him that I ever heard had anything to do, whatever, with international affairs.
(phone rings, tape turned off)

Q. During the Spanish Civil War, how did you feel, or how did the people of the Springfield area feel about the choice of either supporting

the fascists--at least verbally--or the communists, on the other hand.

A. Well, I think most of us sort of regretted the violence of the whole thing, but I believe that basically our attitudes were determined on religious lines. I believe, for the most part, the Catholics thought that Franco was probably justified as a temporary expedient to adopt the restrictive measures that he did, and that the other sides were the tools, either wittingly or unwittingly, of international communism. At least in my own associations, in my own circle, that's about the way we looked at it. We didn't think that it was, oh . . . while it was important, we didn't think that it had the effect on the international situation that later developments showed that it did have.

Q. Didn't you say the Catholics supported, more or less, the fascist side?

A. I would say they supported Franco, but they would never have dignigied it or acknowledged that that was especially fascist. They looked at it, really, as an objection to the radical element that opposed Godless communism.

Q. I guess you just answered the question I was going to ask about the German business with the Catholics and with all the Christian religions trying to . . .

A. Well, there, too, of course, was a problem, you know. Hitler, as far as he could, I guess, tried to play down any anti-religious or anti-Catholic or any anti-Lutheran thing, but he insisted on having his own way.

Q. In America, there was a fascist movement--the German-American Bund, or however you pronounce it. Was there a local organization of that around here?

A. Not that I know of. I guess the national or international leader of the German-American Bund was Fritz Kuhn. He managed to make the news pretty often and made quite a few statements about the supremacy of the German race and the whole German idea. And there was a lot of hints and innuendos that certain people were either active in it or sympathetic to it, but I never really knew anyone that I thought was a Bundist.

Q. By this time you were working for the Government.

A. Yes.

Q. Were you ever involved in seeking out or investigating anybody in that was supposed to be a member of this Bund?

A. No, never was.

Q. You were not living in Springfield at the time of the beginning of World War II.

A. No, I was not. I was living in Denver at that time. Of course, I remember so very well the invasion of Poland and the beginning of hostilities in 1939. And actually, after the first rush and the first conquest of Poland took over in late in the fall of 1939, things sort of came to a state of suspended animation. And all the newspapers and on the radio and even the magazines, sometimes, referred to it as a phony war because nothing was going on.

Q. What was the general public opinion of the phony war, or the Blitzkrieg or whatever it was they called it?

A. Well, a lot of people thought, "Well, it's not going to go any further than this, and they're going to negotiate some sort of a settlement." They wouldn't let themselves come to the point of believing that there would actually be bloodshed, and actually be the kind of hardships and the kind of war that quite a few at that time remembered from World War I. After all, at that time, there were still a large segment of the population who were hale and hearty veterans of World War I. They thought of themselves as good Army timber and many of them were very much disappointed and even insulted to find out that in the plans of the Government they were regarded as obsolete old men who couldn't be used again.

Q. During the war, of course, Russia was one of our allies. Exactly how did people feel about Russia? Were they buddy-buddy, or did they rather distrust them?

A. Well, when it was first announced that the treaty that had been negotiated by Von Ribbentrop--and I can't recall his Russian counterpart--had been made, a lot of people just took the attitude and sort of felt like this is never going to work, but at the same time it was still not any of our business. Then after the war was started and after it was very evident that the Germans were about to try to invade and conquer the eastern European countries, and this was countered by an invasion from the Russian side of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, they began to take a little more notice of it. And all of a sudden there actually was, I would say, a pronounced approval of Russia. They thought, "Well,

we hate Russia, we hate communism, but anybody that's fighting Hitler is not necessarily bad."

Q. World War II was supposed to be a war to end dictatorships and so forth. How could people actually approve of Stalin, who was probably one of the biggest dictators we had ever had?

A. Well, actually it wasn't really a very big job. And the reason is, always before that--during the war until the present time--the United States of America has approved dictatorships in many, many countries without any outcry from anybody. Many of the governments in South America were then, and are still, dictatorships and always have been. People generally--the rank and file, the tax payer, the guy that goes to work every day--are technically against dictatorships but can't help what's going on in Chile or Peru or Argentina, and not really concerned with what goes on in the Near East or the Middle East. And there was a tendency to say, "Well, those people probably don't mind this too much anyway."

Q. When did you actually notice a lessening of friendship between the United States and Russia?

A. Oh, I feel very sure about this one. I personally couldn't see any indication of a lessening of friendship between the United States and Russia until Winston Churchill made his speech in Fulton, Missouri, in, I think it was April or March of 1946, in which he first used the term Iron Curtain. Up to then, we had said, "The Russians think one way, we think another way, but they have been our friends in the fight against

Hitler." And just before the victory over Japan, probably only ten days or a couple of weeks, they had joined us in declaring war on Japan and we had sent shipload after shipload of supplies and munitions of every kind to Murmansk, way up, almost to the Arctic Circle to hit the northern part of Russia.

Our interests had always been represented to us as being to keep Russia supplied because they are fighting the Nazi threat from the east, and no matter what their views are and no matter what their ideas of government are, it's up to us to help them and keep Hitler from becoming victorious, because when and if he does, he would then turn himself to us. Now this doesn't suggest for a minute that we would buy or participate in, oh, the communist ethic or the communist belief as far as economics are concerned, and certainly not as far as their beliefs, especially with reference to religion are concerned. But we did spend, oh, so much of our goods and money to send things to Russia by way of Murmansk, and we lost so much of it in those cold waters.

Q. Of course, the war lasted for several years, but how could you actually tell when the tide was turning, that the Allies were actually winning the war? What event or what series of events actually showed to the common man that we were at least winning, whether we would win or not?

A. I think this was first indicated to an average person after the Battle of the Bulge, or even during the Battle of the Bulge in December of 1944. This was when Von Rundstedt made his great breakthrough. This was right at Christmastime in December of 1944. And it was touch and go

there for a while. Although the news and the radio and the papers were, well, I wouldn't say censored, but perhaps guided in what they told us, I think that the average person knew that this is a crucial thing. If we do not succeed in holding Von Rundstedt, we've got problems. Once we've held him, I think that there was sort of a surge of confidence that said, "We're going to make it."

Q. History books, of course, tell you that Hitler was, or Germany was, about gone by the time we invaded in 1944. Was there no inkling that we were actually winning the war before this time?

A. The fact of the matter is, I don't believe it, even now. (laughter) We weren't.

Q. What about the Pacific Theater in Japan?

A. Well, in Japan, I don't know. You know, everybody, I guess, is an expert about things he doesn't understand. But after Pearl Harbor, and after the news began to leak out that instead of just losing, you know, a few naval vessels, we had suffered a very grievous wound, and we had begun to send a lot of people into the Pacific Theater, and particularly when they were down at Guadalcanal. And at about this time, the Battle of the Midway was fought, and I think it was then that the newspapers and the radio told us some of the truth, and it went like this: when they said the Battle of the Midway is such a great victory, it was only then did we realize that without this victory we was in much worse shape than they told us we were. You know, in other words, we wouldn't have thought of Midway as a great victory unless somebody told us without it,

you really got problems.

Q. How could you actually tell? When could you tell the tide was turning in the Pacific?

A. Oh, gosh . . . it was awful hard to do. You know, there was this succession of reversals in the Pacific, you know. There was the Philippines and Corregidor, Bataan, there was Guadalcanal itself; times were really tough, and we lost Guam, I believe. And we knew that we were in a very desperate situation, but we still had the expanse of the Pacific Ocean between us. There was almost a desperate feeling as far as I can tell.

I was living in Denver at the time, but there was a great feeling on the West Coast that everyone should be prepared for even a possible invasion of troops from Japan. I think that the confidence that that could not be or would not be came probably after the Battle of Midway and the Battle of Guam, and our victories at Wake Island when they began the island-hopping technique to get closer to Japan. And all of a sudden, while we might lose one here or there, we were not vulnerable anymore.

I remember so very clearly when we began to take some Japanese-held islands out there. The names of them escape me now. There's one I think was called Truk, and it was a Japanese stronghold and everybody seemed to be very much afraid of that. And then I remember Iwo Jima. That's the one where the pictures are still celebrated, where they're raising the flag on Iwo Jima. I had a very, very close friend lost on Iwo Jima, and I always will remember that. He was a Mexican boy, Balvino

Martinez. And I remember so much that . . . well, the last night, he worked with us and we gave him a going away party and several of us ended up the evening in the wee hours of the morning.

Q. On August 6, 1945, the United States dropped its first atomic bomb. Had you ever heard anything about this before, about us having an atomic bomb?

A. Never had, even one word. Once it was dropped, some things began to settle into place that seemed to have a place there or a right there that was hard to believe. When I was in Denver, I was interviewed by the head of my office as to whether or not I'd be interested in taking an administrative office, a clerical-type job, down in New Mexico. He told me that the War Department had talked to him and asked that he help them in setting up an office organization in a defense establishment that was being arranged there. And he couldn't tell me anything about it, except that it would be in one of two or three locations in New Mexico. I can't recall the locations, any of them, but after the bomb was dropped and the news came out that Los Alamos was quite a thing, I felt that that might have been the objective there.

Q. What was your immediate reaction to the dropping of the atomic bomb? Were you pleased or were you shocked, or what?

A. My own reaction was one of great pleasure. This is the way to get the job done! (laughter) Then I talked to my brother, and he had a much more reserved thought about this and inquired of me--this was the very same day the news came out--did I fully comprehend what's going on

here, see. And after talking it over, I began to go backwards a little bit. I wasn't nearly as happy about it as I had been at the first thought. My first thought was, of course, the quicker we get Japan out of the way, the better off we are. But the concept, the thought of an atomic bomb had never entered my head.

Q. Did the papers tell you that there were seventy thousand or eighty thousand people killed in one instant, or what did they actually say?

A. Oh, I can't remember exactly, except they said that there had been complete devastation of the target. I don't believe that they even attempted to estimate the casualties on the first announcement. I think that the next day that they did, and even began to break the news that without being within the radius of the explosive force that the radioactivity was very deadly. That came the second day. I think for most of us, that was sort of the sobering thought of an atomic bomb, really.

Q. Did you think any differently after the second bomb was dropped, on August 9, on Nagasaki?

A. Yes, yes, I did. Because--and I think everyone else did--by then we had at least thought of it, and there had begun to be a feeling to sort of weigh the circumstances. I know that I was still in favor of it, because I had heard and believed and still believe that it would cost us a million men to storm the beaches of Japan, and it seemed to me that the atomic bomb, as horrible as it was, would avoid the necessity of losing that many American men. I felt that we were in a just cause; we were fighting a just war, and I didn't want to kill unnecessarily even

one Japanese, or any other individual, but if it came to a choice between our own soldiers and our own people and those that I thought were responsible for having us in this war then, we'd have to take the way that protected our own people.

Q. How accurate was the reporting during World War II? Take, for instance, the atomic bombs or anything else.

A. Well, I would say this: once they reported something, they reported it very accurately. But I would say that the reporting was often just no reporting at all. They didn't tell you anything. I can't really remember anything that I would think was of a major nature where they told us an untruth. Any inaccuracies that were told to us, I think, could be readily explained as a conflict in information, or interpretation. But once they told us something I think it was so, but I think there were many, many, many times where they just didn't tell us anything.

Q. Was there, what was called in Vietnam, a credibility gap?

A. No, not that I know of. I think most of us realized that when we read the paper that this is what they want us to know, this is what they're telling us. Now, there may be other things that they don't want us to know, but I think most of us felt that if they made a direct definitive statement that it was true.

Q. What was your reaction to the announcement in March of 1945 of Franklin Roosevelt's death?

A. Oh, I was so very surprised and so very sad, I remember it so well.

I think, actually, it was in April. Well, whatever time it was, I know this, that I was on my way down to Newton, Illinois, and I left Springfield about, oh, three or four o'clock in the afternoon, and my wife was with me. I had an assignment down there and she has relatives there--that's where she's from--and we stopped in Vandalia, Illinois to have our supper that evening at perhaps six or seven o'clock. I had not heard about the President's death. The waitress who served us said, "It's a very sad day for all of us. President Roosevelt passed away." I was so scandalized that I couldn't finish my dinner. I hadn't even started it, but I couldn't eat any of it.

Q. Did you have any fears that we might then lose the war by this time?

A. No, no, I did not. After I learned that he had passed away and found out a little bit about the surroundings, or the curcumstances, I felt that we were in good hands with President Truman and that the situation or the activities of the country would go along without any major change or without any problems. I had never detected any local resisistance to the war or any feeling that we shouldn't proceed to a victory, and I thought that we really would, and this was all right. I wondered, of course, what kind of a leader President Truman would make. He really wasn't very well-known. After all, he followed Henry Wallace into the office. He was known, of course, to have come from Kansas City where it was alleged he was part of the Pendergast machine. And he was known also to have been a senator from Missouri, and like most vice-presidents was not too well-known, but somehow or another, it was not too great a worry. I know that I went on down to Newton like I had intended and, eventually,

ended up in Metropolis, Illinois. And it was in Metropolis, Illinois, a day or two or perhaps three later on, when President Truman made a nationwide radio address in which he talked to all the people and said a little something about his feelings on the occasion and his plans. And I thought he made a very lucid, a very remarkable talk. He didn't get flowery about anything, but just reassured everybody that things nationally were going fine, we would bear the loss of our President and he would do his best to carry on. It was sort of a reassuring talk.

Q. What was your opinion of Douglas MacArthur?

A. I always disliked Douglas MacArthur. I disliked Douglas MacArthur during the Bonus March. I disliked Douglas MacArthur when they took him to the Philippines to reorganize or to organize the Philippine Defense Command. I disliked Douglas MacArthur as a man on a newsreel or someone who was quoted in the newspaper. There was something about Douglas MacArthur that I could not abide by.

Q. Did you ever hear of any of his nicknames that his soldiers gave him, "dugout Doug," or something like that?

A. No, I did not. I do know that I was sort of in a temporary doghouse with my co-workers when I heard his spirited defense of his conduct after the President had removed him from office. My comment was, "This man should be shot for treason." It wasn't exactly a popular remark. (laughter)

Q. What did you think of when all was lost in Bataan and Corregidor? It was just a matter of time until the Japanese took it away from us, a matter of time until we had to surrender. What did you think of when

all of a sudden Franklin Roosevelt got him and his wife and kids out and left that many more soldiers here?

A. Actually, I didn't think anything adverse to Douglas MacArthur in that case. I thought he had conducted himself at Corregidor and at Bataan and in Japan in a soldierly way. I had no thought that Douglas MacArthur was not a patriotic or a brave man. It was not that. But I did think that Douglas MacArthur sort of thought of himself as sort of a , oh . . . an omnipotent person, who could do no wrong under any circumstances.

Q. When did you first hear about the Bataan Death March of the soldiers who surrendered on the Philippines?

A. Hard to say when. We knew, of course, that the American soldiers and the Philippine soldiers who were trying to defend the Philippines against Japan had been, oh, forced into Corregidor which at one time had been represented as being superior to . . . what is it? Gibralter. It had been represented as being impregnable, and then the news changed, finally, and this was sort of a gradual thing. First, it cannot be taken; then it will not be taken; then it will probably survive another few days or exit. Eventually, the news reached us that it had fallen. Then the news reached us that as a result of that, that the defenders had been assembled and forced to marched on what is called the Bataan Death March. Even then, it was not too clear, I do not believe, where they started the march from and where they ended the march at. But it was represented that it was under great personal hardship and cruelty where the men, you know, where they died and were cruelly treated and they lost.

END OF SIDE ONE

Q. You were working for the Federal Government during World War II, is that right?

A. Yes, it is. See, I actually began working for them in 1937, in February, so that, of course, I was a Federal employee when the war started in 1942. It was in 1942 that we became--"we" being the country--became quite involved in the thing. A lot of the war prices and rations and controls were instituted and began to be a very important factor in the lives of all of us. I was living in Denver at the time.

Q. What department of the Government did you work for then?

A. I worked for the Division of Disbursments of the Treasury Department.

Q. What did that do?

A. Well, actually what it did, it reviewed before payment the various bills that had been incurred by other governmental departments, and then issued--or authorized the issuance and then issued--the checks in payment. In this capacity, it was our responsibility to review the vouchers that had been submitted for payment, both for personal services such as payrolls and that sort of thing, and also then for payment for supplies or services--that sort of thing--from any Government agency.

Q. Military?

A. No, no, just the civilians. The military did their own. But we had the others, and we would also, at that point, charge the proper appropriations and it was our responsibility to make sure that they were not spending more money than their appropriation authorized.

Q. Did you approve or disapprove of these vouchers?

A. We didn't approve or disapprove of them in the sense that they were wise or unwise expenditures, but we certainly approved or disapproved of them in the sense that they were submitted in accordance with established rules: A, that they were charged against the right appropriation; B, that they were not exceeding the money to their credit; and C, that it was very clear what the checks were in payment for. So they had a procedure there in which when these vouchers were submitted they were signed by what was called an authorized certifying officer. It was up to us to be very sure that it was submitted over the signature of an authorized certifying officer, against the right appropriation, and exactly to whom the money was to be paid and for what it was to be paid.

Q. Did the Government pay for these services after they had been rendered or before they would be rendered?

A. No. In all cases, after. The truth of the matter is if a voucher would come in that would look like it was a payment, a prepayment, it would be rejected.

Q. Were there ever any instances in which people did not get paid for service to the Government?

A. Well, if so, of course, that would be between the agency for which they performed the service and them, not against the Treasury Department. You wouldn't hardly know about that. It's important, I think, to say this, though, that there was a procedure set up which was called an agent-

cash-error procedure, in which an individual would be provided with the cash money--sometimes in rather large amounts--to pay on the spot for certain services or supplies needed by the Government. He would then submit a voucher in his own name showing what he had used the money for, and a check would be sent to him.

A case to show what goes on here, it was about at this time that we brought up, or it was legalized to bring up, a good many day laborers for crops and other purposes from Mexico. They wanted their money; they didn't want a check and they didn't want to wait. And the agent cashier in these instances was authorized to pay them daily. He would then send in a voucher and he would get his money back. Occasionally, there might be a question arise. I remember very vividly in one case where an infant child of a couple that had been brought to this country to work, passed away. The parents were without funds, and the agent cashier paid for the funeral or the burial expenses of the infant, and submitted a voucher. The voucher was originally rejected, and after considerable correspondence and negotiation it was finally determined that it was within the scope of the labor agreement to defray this cost, so no one lost out.

Q. You the, I believe, went with or transferred to the Office of Price Administration?

A. Yes, I did.

Q. When was this?

A. That was in June of 1944, perhaps July, but it was either late in

June or in early July. At that time I became . . . my payroll title was Commodities Investigator for the Office of Price Administration. My headquarters was Springfield, Illinois.

Q. You were transferred back here from Denver?

A. As a matter of fact, that's true. I had left Denver six months before that and brought my family back to Springfield and taken a job in Chicago for the Division of Disbursments, because at that time there was a probability that I might accept an offer as an agent cashier in either Chungking or Rio de Janéiro or in Egypt in Cairo.

Q. You were actually offered a job to go to Chungking in China with the Japanese invasion and all this?

A. That's right. This was where Chiang Kai-shek's headquarters was at that time.

Q. What about the Office of Price Administration? Just exactly what did the OPA do during the war? What were the duties of the OPA?

A. The duties of the OPA, actually, were to enforce the rationing and price control laws. This was the first time in the history of this country, really, that commodities were rationed, that they were assigned to people on an individual basis so that everyone had the right to the same amount of rationed commodities at a predetermined ceiling price level. In other words, everyone got the same amount of sugar, same amount of tires, same amount of gasoline, same amount of shoes, or whatever was determined to be in short supply. It was a new idea, or at

least the idea might not have been new, but it was a new experience for the Government to try to handle things on that level down to the daily lives of everyone. It was a national thing, of course, and it had recruited some experts and accomplished professionals in almost every type of commerce or industry to help with the job. I was in the enforcement and investigation side of the thing.

Q. You were in investigations. How did you know to go out and investigate somebody? Would a complaint have to be made against this person, or did the Government just go out looking for someone to investigate?

A. It was two ways, or perhaps even more ways than that. First of all, there were complaints that certain individuals, apparently--it's sometimes more than apparently--without question, had acquired scarce commodities to which it did not appear they were entitled. A specific case, of course, is tires. If so, after going through a local level office, called the Local War Price and Rationing Board, if they couldn't satisfactorily adjust or solve this thing, it would be referred to the district office. It then became the job of the district office to undertake to ascertain how this could be, or if it was, in fact, the truth.

Then there was also a plan in which spot checks were made of various processors of food and commodities. This was mostly a check of what were called the primary distributors. That would be those who were in the meat packing business or the canning business or the manufacturing business of clothing that was in short supply.

Then there was, let's see, there was a third one here that was a reason

for us to do this . . . oh, where citizens would complain they had been overcharged, or spot checks by members of local price boards would indicate that they had a feeling that--not necessarily a feeling--where they had some information that the price ceilings were not being observed or the posting of ceiling prices were not being observed, or having been posted, were not adhered to.

Q. Do you have any information on how much the Government said a person could have in the way of tires or something like this?

A. It's kind of sketchy, but when tire rationing first started, the regulation or government rule was issued, was stated that one could only have five tires per vehicle. This was actually observed in the breach rather than the observance. There were many people that had tires in the basement or in the attic or wherever, because you couldn't hardly ferret it out.

Q. What did you do when, say, your tire wore out and you had to buy another one?

A. This is a very good question. What you did in a case like that, you had to go to your War Price and Ration Board who had a committee who would inquire of you. You'd be required or requested to fill out an application stating your need and giving other information like the size tire and for what type of vehicle, truck, pickup or whatever. Then they would consider it and if they decided that this tire and your need of this tire were in the national interest, they would issue a certificate which would authorize you to go buy a tire. And you'd pay for it,

and if you had a certificate, the tire dealer could sell it to you.

Q. What about if you had just a family automobile? Did they actually issue these things for people who just needed a tire for their family car?

A. Well, if their family car was not used for transportation to and from work, or was used only for social or family business such as shopping or going to church, they would be last on the priority list. And in many cases, they would not find it feasible to issue them a certificate, but wherever possible, depending upon the size of the tire and depending upon the availability of tires, they would issue them. They were not really arbitrary about it. You might have to wait a little while if you had such a need, but if it was at all possible they would get you a tire. You could even at that time buy tires that were off quota, meaning retreaded carcasses, and things of that kind. If you wanted a new tire and had no real need of it, such as to get you to a job and back--one thing or another--you faced a pretty tough situation, really.

Q. They didn't issue ration stamps for tires, then?

A. No, they did not. No, you had to make a claim or make a request each time when you needed one.

Q. What about ammunition or something like this? Could you buy that? For instance, if you were a duck hunter, could you buy ammunition?

A. Sure could. If the man had it and wanted to sell it. It was not on ration.

Q. Were the munitions factories making ammunition for hunters?

A. No, they were not. No. Any ammunition available was simply what was in the pipeline and on the shelves.

Q. How much did they offer a person in the way of sugar?

A. Well, of course, this also varied according to the sugar supply. And the way they did it, they had sugar coupons--or we used to have a dignified title for it, called ration evidences--that authorized you to buy so many pounds of sugar per person, that is, how many in your family there was. But the way the rationing worked, there was sugar coupons marked X, for example. If the supply seemed to be pretty good, [these coupons] would be good for six weeks. If the supply was pretty bad, it would be good for three months, and there wouldn't be anything else authorized until that ninety days was over.

Q. My parents have got some of these old ration books that they saved. I see they've got some for shoes. They issued a book for each person in the family?

A. That's right, they did.

Q. Did it take one stamp for a pair of shoes, or a page of stamps for a pair of shoes; or what was it?

A. Well, you see, this thing went through several phases. First, they issued you ration books. There was a book for coffee, a book for gasoline, a book for processed foods--meaning canned or other preserved foods--

and a book for meats. Then as time went on, changes occurred. They eliminated, or rather they converted, for example, the stamps in the books for processed foods to a plastic coin-type of blue piece that looked about like a dime, or perhaps a little bigger than a dime, which represented so many ration points. And for meat, they issued a red one which could be redeemed by the stamps in the book, you see. That's right. Now then, for the sugar, they stayed with the stamps, because they had expiration dates, or they had a code on them where they could be validated for certain particular periods of time. For gasoline, they issued stamps, also, and that, too, they retained because gasoline was issued in varying amounts, according to the need. Everyone was given a basic issue of gasoline of four gallons a week.

Q. Everybody, regardless of age?

A. No, no. Everybody with a car. Only those with a car could get four gallons per week for the family car. Now then, if you drove to work, it depended on how many miles you drove, see. And he might go way above that--he would never go less--but he might not go very much above that, he might go to six gallons a week. And this was authenticated by the type of book what was issued to him in the first place. But you had a basic thing, I think they called it a C-ration; I think there was a letter C on the basic four gallons book. You got four gallons, no matter what, then you could get more depending on, you know, if you were working or needing it in your business and, of course, if you were working in a defense plant or something like that. Now, if you were a salesman, especially if you were a salesman in a non-essential line like perhaps trying

to sell candy or, oh, anything that's not connected with the war effort, you wouldn't get anything except the original four gallons. (laughter) That's the way it worked on that.

Q. I've heard stories that people, you know, of course, their tires wore out in the three years they had the war, and even though they did get these certificates or they were allowed to buy a tire, they couldn't find one.

A. Well, this was very true. You see, the certificate authorizes you to buy a tire if you found a dealer that had one at a price you wanted to pay. It didn't order anybody to sell you a tire, it just permitted you to buy one. However, in my own experience, whenever anyone got a certificate, there might be a delay of, oh, a week or ten days, but usually you could find a dealer that would sell you a tire, be able to sell you a tire. And there always was these retreads and recap tires that would get you over a temporary problem in almost every case, although these were not an ideal solution. Many times the treading was not a good job, and the carcass was not real sound; you had to be careful. But we did have a national speed limit at that time of 35 miles per hour!

Q. I'm sure there was a black market. Was there a thriving black market around Central Illinois?

A. Well, I guess there was really a thriving black market in scarce commodities everyplace. Now, a thriving black market is really just that. Percentagewise, how much of an effect it had on the distribution

and availability of scarce items is a little difficult to say, because as far as I've ever been able to find out, in even the most tightly controlled economy in the dictator countries, there was and still is, a black market. It was there. I think, however, in this country, the end of the war probably came at a time that choked off the very large and perhaps a disastrous black market.

The syndicate had sort of moved in on that and had begun to counterfeit ration evidences, both the plastic disks that I talked about as well as the stamps. I know that we had ultraviolet lamps to examine some of these things with, and there were a good many scare stories as to if you needed meat stamps, well, they could be had at a certain place for certain conditions. And I think this is probably true. Now, I think it's important to mention that the war ended when this was beginning to be felt. I think, no doubt, that some people made a great deal of money already. But there was a movement on foot to have included in the law the right to confiscation of any motor vehicle involved in handling black market commodities. That exists right now, of course, with the Treasury Department in handling illicit alcohol or other contraband. When you pick it up, you also confiscate the car. And it was thought that this might be a pretty sharp turn for those who were just casually transporting, oh, sugar, meat, any other rationed commodities in the back of the family car.

Q. What did you do about automotive repairs? I'm sure that General Motors wasn't putting out automotive parts for older cars. How did somebody get their car worked on?

A. Well, you know, as a matter of fact, they actually weren't. They weren't permitted, you know, to introduce new models. And most of their production, of course, was taken up in building tanks and other war machines. But, all of the big motor companies did a rather thorough job of producing replacement parts for older cars. There, too, they weren't necessarily on hand the day you drove in, but in most cases they could be acquired.

Q. How many children did you have by this time?

A. Well, that's pretty easy. I had four. Our fourth child was born the New Year's Day following Pearl Harbor, which was December 7, 1942. So I had four during all of the war, because my fifth child was born in 1948, after the war.

Q. How did the rationing effect your family? Did you have enough of everything?

A. Well, it was kind of a peculiar thing in our case. For example, when they rationed coffee they naturally did not authenticate the rationing for children under . . . I don't know, ten or twelve years of age. It was no problem in our household. Our children didn't then, and still don't drink coffee. But sugar was something else. Now, they got a full measure of sugar in their rationing. But we were then, and still are quite a bit users [of] sugar in heavy volume and we was always out of sugar. We never did have enough sugar. (laughter) I don't think it's possible for us to have enough sugar, but nevertheless . . .

Then they rationed shoes. Now, shoes were also a problem to us because

little children go through shoes very quickly. It was soon found, perhaps within six months, certainly within the year, that the rationing of women and children's shoes was not productive, and they took shoes off rationing. So that was no longer a problem. Then we had the rationing of meat. Children got the full ration of meat. Now, in this case we were winners because we had more ration stamps for meat than we actually wanted.

Q. Could you trade stamps with somebody else, or did you have to use them?

A. Technically, you were not supposed to.

Q. You had to keep your own book for each person?

A. That's right. However, if you bought a steak with rations stamps and made a birthday present of it to someone, why that was not necessarily a violation of anything.

Q. With the price control going on in the country, did the quality of the goods go down even though the price stayed the same?

A. Well, not necessarily. There were many things where the quality or ability was never controlling, such as little children's shoes. They were stamped out of plastics or reclaimed materials and one thing or another. And they still are. Under price control, the greatest inequity occurred, perhaps, in the failure of the manufacturers to observe their traditional practices in the manufacture and the distribution of the garments.

For example, in children's garments, with many manufacturers it had been historic for 50 per cent of their line to be very inexpensive garments, then the other 50 per cent--perhaps 10 to 20 per cent--would be a little more expensive or a little more stylish line. Another 20 per cent were a little more expensive and a little more stylish, and the last 10 per cent something superlative.

When price control came, what most of the manufacturers in the garment business did--and this was not confined to children's garments, but it can be best demonstrated here--was they discontinued their cheaper items and manufactured only their most expensive. What had been 10 per cent of their line turned into be 90 per cent of their line. The enforcement of price control was very difficult there, because you were in a sort of never-never land that involved such things as style and such things as fit. It involved a great many things other than just durability, and for this reason, and in this way, manufacturers of garments of all kinds, and other things besides, discontinued their bargain and cheaper prices and just used all of their commodities to manufacture their most expensive line. And this was an imposition in more ways than one, because many times they were being issued scarce commodities in the amounts that they had used before when the major part of their production was for popular priced items. Now, they were using these same scarce commodities to manufacture only the very expensive items.

Q. You say you were in the investigating department of the OPA?

A. OPA, yes, that's right.

Q. Was the investigating department also the arresting department, or did

you have to go to the local authorities, then, to arrest the fellow for violation of various laws?

A. Well, actually, we did not have the power of arrest and we didn't want it. But this is not to say that we did not handle criminal cases. In many areas, it particularly had to do with violations of meat rationing and of tire and gasoline rationing criminal cases. Usually when we had a serious case, a major case, we would refer to the United States Attorney, who would review it and who then made the decision as to whether or not this should be presented to the grand jury for possible indictment, or whether he would move on his own motion on what they call file and information. In other words, we did not do the arresting, but we often instigated an arrest. The criminal side of the thing was a minor side of our enforcement activities.

We were empowered under the Price Action to institute action and to settle without action if the subject and his counsel were agreeable--up to three times the amount of the violation. In other words, we would determine that, perhaps, a dealer in a certain commodity such as meat had disposed of a quanity of meat at over ceiling prices in the net amount of $800. We could then agree with him to settle that upon the payment of $2,400 as a penalty. This applied even in such things as restaurant meals. They also had ceilings in the processed foods as well as meat and things of that nature.

Now our only relief in ration cases, really, was an injunction. There was no money relief there. If we determined someone was disregarding the ration laws and were also convinced that we could not persuade him to stop, we would have to go to the United States Attorney who would ask the court for an injunction. Now, if he violated the injunction, he would

then be liable for criminal penalties, or sanctions, as they say.

Now on the price side of it, if we determined someone was overcharging on the price, we did not go to the United States Attorney, but rather our own attorneys filed a civil suit for the amount of damages if we couldn't adjust it or settle it outside of the court. But for ration, we had to get an injunction and then if there is a violation of the injunction, we would have to go to the United States Attorney again, who would take it up as a criminal thing.

Q. What about the farmers? How in the world could you ration a farmer's pig crop?

A. We didn't even try.

Q. You didn't go out and count his pigs?

A. No, no. This is one thing about it: any farmer that raised pigs, chickens, or whatever, and used them for his own use--which they historically did--there was no attempt to govern that. Perhaps he might slaughter a few extra pigs for his relatives or friends, but they were not in the channels of commerce. We did not concern ourselves with that. It was an educational program; we tried to convince them that it was a patriotic duty to help out as much as they could. But where they first came to our attention would be when they entered what we called a primary distributor thing, which is where they went to a slaughterhouse or an auction sale where they handled them in commercial quantities and numbers of them.

They were required to make out reports and send to us. So at that point they became our responsibility, and also it became possible to exercise some control, because they would send in a report which was right or it was wrong. If they kept sending in reports that were light, you could go make a check of it. And if they didn't send any report at all, they were in violation, don't you see. And once they had sent in reports, then tracing it through the normal channels of processing and distribution, while it was difficult, it was not impossible because we had a good many people who had been raised in the meat production and marketing, sales and processing. While it was complicated, just like a lot of jobs, it was certainly possible.

Q. Were there any ceilings placed on farm commodity prices?

A. Yes, there was, especially on corn. I do not recall now whether or not there was a ceiling price on wheat, but there was very, very definitely a ceiling price on corn, and this caused a great deal of unrest and a great deal of criticism.

Q. What was the ceiling price?

A. Well, see, the ceiling prices were figured in such a way that it was almost impossible to tell because there was an add-on price. A farmer would take a base price which was at the farm, and he was then permitted to add a certain markup for hauling it to the elevator, which in turn was governed by the moisture content and the quality--whether it was graded--the quality and grade. So it was impossible to say of any load of corn, without certain other information, the ceiling price as such.

But to get to the point, the overall average ceiling price at a barge loading point--which also had something to do with it, whether it was loaded onto rail or by barge along the Illinois or Mississippi River--it seldom went above $1.07 a bushel.

Q. What about meat? Was there a ceiling price placed on meat?

A. Oh, indeed there was. Now this was a very tricky thing. There was a ceiling price on meat, but of course, meat can only be priced according to grade, also, so that we had a ceiling price on every different grade of meat. Now, that doesn't seem too tough, but then we also had a ceiling price on live animals. So we had to put a ceiling price on live beef animals, for example. To do that, then, one had to be expert enough to know that the dressed carcass would be a grade A, B, C or D. This could turn into a never-never land. It got pretty tough. But the remarkable thing about it is it can be done.

Q. If a person was known to have acquired a certain number of ration books, or maybe he wasn't short anything--maybe he was rather affluent and he might have bought certain things from other people, was this person liable to be prosecuted?

A. Yes, he was liable to, but the element of proof was such that it would be almost impossible to do anything about it without a confession.

Q. I mean, suppose he went into the store to buy something and someone was standing there and saw him and he had a whole pocketful of ration books. You couldn't prove this? What would the penalties be for something like this?

A. Oh, there were criminal penalites for it if you could prove it, but just seeing it in his possession. . . . First of all, you would have to prove that he got them illegally and that they hadn't been given to him or loaned to him by friends or employees to shop in their name. The element of proof was very tough, and even though it was wartime, and even though maybe a few liberties were taken with people's rights, the element of proof as interpreted by the courts was very difficult. It made these kind of violations almost impossible to do much about it. But you have got to remember now, after all, in the big picture, that much of a violation was not going to effect the overall supply and demand too big, you know. If it had gotten widespread, then they would have had to approach the thing differently--perhaps the Government take title to all the slaughterable animals. That's been done in other countries, but here they have tried not to do that.

Q. How much public support was there among the people? Did the people gripe about it and complain about it, or did they just try to do it?

A. For the most part, there was great support and people believed in it and lived up to it and were happy to obey it with the usual reservation that there was great suspicion that somebody else was getting by with something. Everybody helped enforce the act. (chuckles)

Q. Were there a lot of complaints?

A. Expecially on tires there were. Nobody could understand how come their neighbor got a new tire and they was having trouble. (laughter) That's true. Good God, I've seen more letters, "You'd never believe how

so-and-so got tires," and, "His son-in-law got a tire," and they knew that he got a tire and took it up to Aunt Minnie up at Galesburg, you know.

Q. Now, you were with the Division of Disbursments in Denver. How big was the area that the Denver office had jurisdiction over?

A. About twelve states.

Q. If you covered twelve states in this office, did you run across some of the vouchers that were from the Japanese concentration camps, or I guess they were called relocation camps?

A. Relocation centers they were called. I want to clarify a little something. See, I was in a regional disbursing office and we did have the jurisdiction over the states that I mentioned. But we also had subordinate offices called state offices. But the state offices were mostly for specialized purposes, and we handled the overall general picture. But in especially those states that had heavy salary payments for relief cases, that sort of thing, they opened up branches or state offices. But in the regional offices we had the supervision of the payments for these Japanese relocation centers that were set up right after Pearl Harbor.

I recall very, very vividly . . . well, I can recall the one at Amache, Colorado. I was in Denver at the time, and that was the closest to us. Then there was one in Montana and I'm not really sure if it was at Helena or where it was. There was at least one other in our immediate region where these camps were set up for the people to live--the relocated

Japanese people. Now, there was one at Tule Lake in California, but that was not paid out of our office, but we were cognizant of the thing. Tule Lake was said to be the Japanese relocation center for those who were aggressive and hostile and that might possibly be violent. Now the others, in Amache and up in Montana, they were mostly just the ordinary Japanese who had been living on the West Coast and were moved out of there because of war conditions. They were housed in barracks, and in many cases, the families were separated. Some of the family would be in one camp and some in another.

Now, as we knew the thing at the time, the vouchers would go through there and we would see the expenditures for their maintenance. For example, many things had sort of exotic names and titles for us. They used to buy bundles of dried seaweed and things of that nature that we weren't used to. The Denver Post newspaper at that time made a big fuss over the fact that we were buying creamery butter--which was a rationed commodity--or that these camps were buying it, and we knew it was true because the vouchers were coming through our office and were being paid.

So as far as I could tell, when they relocated the Japanese, the shock of being dislocated and of even families being separated was very, very real. I feel that they were fed and housed and clothed adequately without question on that score.

I believe the name of the national administrator was Dillon Myer. He had charge of this and it was indirectly under the supervision of the Secretary of the Interior, which was Harold Ickes. Ickes, of course, was

famous and had been for many years as a great progressive minded type person, but it was under the Department of Interior that this function was placed.

And after these people were relocated, a determined effort was made to adapt them to the world that was, and a number of them entered the United States Army, and others were recruited to work in the east. I believe there were, oh, quite a few hundred of them that ended up working in Chicago in the various hotels and that sort of thing. So they weren't prisoners except that while they were in the relocation centers, that's where they had to live and they had rules, but if jobs were available to them and they were interested in accepting them, they were given the opportunity to do so.

Q. Were there guards at these prisons?

A. I think there were. I'm not positive. I think there actually were armed guards at these prisons to prevent . . . . well, let's say to maintain order.

Q. What was the public sentiment toward this? Was it well-known that they were living in these camps?

A. Oh, yes, it was very well-known. Public sentiment was "Good enough for them. If we leave them on the Coast the Emperor of Japan will be here tomorrow."

Q. You say The Denver Post was pretty upset with their eating creamery butter.

A. That's right, and even getting the shoes without rationing coupons--this sort of thing.

Q. But you say they were fed and housed adequately.

A. I feel sure they were. I never did hear any complaints.

Q. What did the people think ought to be done with them?

A. Of course, people, generally, were frightened. Nobody seemed to be concerned that these people had been taken from their own homes and their own property, and many, of course, had been forced to sell.

END OF TAPE

Q. In the earlier times, what did the people actually do for entertainment?

A. Well, the thing I remember mostly that adults did--by adults, I mean sixteen or over--they played cards. There was an awful lot of card playing in almost every household, especially in the fall and winter months when you'd stay inside. Everybody played cards. They played pinochle, they played rum, and there were some variations of that--different card games. But these card games I am talking about were really not, oh, like anything like gambling games or anything where you'd get into any trouble, for the most part. Naturally, there was considerable poker and other games played amongst people who liked that, just as there is now. But the ordinary househole--in the evening after the evening meal was finished and everything--people gathered around, and a good many of them would read,

some might, perhaps, play a musical instrument for their own satisfaction, but for the most part, they would play cards.

Oh, I remember one family I was good friends to about the time I was in high school. We would go over there and the mother of the family was such a much better card player than her husband. He was a very enthusiastic card player, but he had a very short temper. And she would almost always win and he would always complain and denounce her tactics and claim she wasn't playing fair, and that it was just a matter of luck, not skill, and he should have won. And we would be in another room and we'd take this all down. They'd play rum, for example, and as you know, you fill in different suits, you make combinations. And he'd always say, "Now, Mag, you knew I was holding hearts. Why didn't you give them? It just isn't right for you not to give me those cards!" That's just one of those things.

And then, of course, people would go to the movies, people read--that kind of thing. Women would do handiwork or needlework or crocheting; fellows would do, oh, small jobs around the place in the evening. But the hand tools, the electric tools, were not as easily available then as they are now. It's not to say we didn't have electricity, but an electric drill or an electric saw, or something of that kind costs a great deal more money. They just were not as easily obtained. You surely didn't get them in any drugstore or supermarket like you can now.

Q. What about the movies? What movies did they have in town at that time?

A. These are all silent movies I am talking about, you know. At one time they had in this town what they called a W.W. Watts Theaters. That consisted of three theaters. They were named the Gaity, the Princess and the Vaudette. The Gaity is now the Senate; the Princess is now the Lincoln; and the Vaudette has been torn down and a new building is on the site.

Q. Where is that?

A. It was, actually, almost on the corner of Fifth and Monroe. It would be about where Sandy's restaurant is there now. Now across the street from that, on Fifth Street, was a theater called the Lyric. Now the Lyric came close to being the first air-conditioned theater that we had. It didn't have true airconditioning, but it had a real strong electric fan system that they used, and they stayed open in the summertime. Many of the other theaters that I have just mentioned to you, they would close in the summer months.

But in addition to the Lyric and these I have mentioned, we have down-street, what is now the Roxy was the Majestic. The Majestic was the home base for all the vaudeville shows that came to town. They were very popular. They had matinees almost every day, as well as one program, at least, in the evening. And all the vaudeville headliners of the day came there. The Majestic was very important in the theatrical scheme of things in Springfield at that time. Even as a small boy, I remember my parents taking me to see the shows there, and I was greatly impressed because there were live people on the stage.

Then, in addition to that, we had over on Sixth Street a lineup of theaters. About where Herndon's store is now, was a theater that called itself the Royal. And then further on down the street, towards the Marine Bank, just on the south side of that alley--no, it was really on the north side of that alley--in fact, it was part of what is now the Marine Bank parking lot, was a theater called the Savoy. And right on the very corner--it was within twenty feet of that--was a much larger building then, called the Strand. That building remained there until within the last ten years.

Then on down Sixth Street--that is, across Washington Street on the north side of Washington and on the west side of Sixth Street, at the first alley intersection--was a theater called the Amuse-U. Then on Washington Street, to the east of Sixth Street, what is now . . . it has a different name now; I think it's called the New Arts or something like that. It was for many years known as the State, but in those days it had even another name, it was still another theater. It is still operated there now, as one of these modern . . . oh, one of these flesh flicks, that's what it is.

Q. I think it's the Cinema Arts, isn't it?

A. Cinema Arts, that's right. That's correct. Then we had a couple of neighborhood theaters on North Grand Avenue between Eighth and Ninth. We had the Pantheon, and at approximately Eleventh and South Grand avenues, we had . . . I think in those days it was called the Empress. It was later changed to the Southtown. These are all silent movies I am talking about. Without exception, they later became talking movies, excepting for the Amuse-U and the Savoy and the Royal. I believe they

closed down at about the time talking movies came into being.

The first talking movie I have any recollection of was down at the Lyric Theater there, on Fifth Street just north of Monroe. And Al Jolson was the star of it, and I think the name of the show was The Jazz Singer. I know that that was the first show, the first theater, to show a talking movie, and I know that they had two, another one later by Al Jolson, but I can't remember the name of the thing. But they had the first two talking movies shown in town. And I'm pretty sure that this was in 1928, because at that time, the job that I was working on called for me to ride the streetcar through town, and I would go by the Lyric and look at their billboard to see what was playing and wondered just how those talking movies were. I remember very vividly, it was Al Jolson. I remember the song of one of those first two shows was one called, "Sonny Boy" that he sang, and had a great deal of success with it at that time.

Q. About how often did people go to the show or go to the movies?

A. That, of course, varied greatly by family. There were many people who made it a point to go to the movies at least once a week. I would think that that was probably the custom of a lot of people, if not the majority. Then there were others who would go twice a week, more or less on a schedule, but then, of course, there were fanatics like there are now, who would try to see every change all the time.

I know the Orpheum Theater was being built in 1925. I think it actually opened for business in about April of 1927 and, of course . . . the fact of the matter is, it was, and it is still the grandest theater this town

ever did have. It was designed and built to be a theater. It seated 3,800 people. It was concrete and steel construction. It had a very elaborate lobby with mirrors, and the lobby was about four stories tall. There were big chandeliers and the floors were carpeted, the ushers were uniformed. Having been an usher there myself, I remember a good deal about this. The fact of the matter is, I worked there as an usher from September of 1927 until just after the Christmas season, or just after New Year's of 1928. I remember so very well; the theater, of course, at that time was still very new, and that was the first place in Springfield that had a combination of vaudeville and movies.

When it opened up, the movies were still silent, too. They would open at 1:20 in the afternoon. The doors opened sooner than that, and they had short features and things, but your main feature came on at 1:20 in the afternoon. It played, and then they repeated that feature. And then the first of the vaudeville shows--they had two each evening--the first of the vaudeville shows would then come on, so that if you came in any time during those first two shows, you remained and saw the vaudeville show, at which time you left. And the last vaudeville show came on later, about 8:00 p.m., so that they had a movie before and after each vaudeville show.

They had some very good acts there, and, oh, some people who later became very famous played the Orpheum Theater. Paul Whiteman was there . . . gosh, I wish I could remember more of them. Ken Murray was there. Later, he made some . . . in the first days of television, in fact, he got to be pretty famous with a show originating on the West Coast called "Ken

Murray's Blackouts." Blackout--that's theatrical talk for real great jokes that take the place by storm. (laughter) I can't remember just offhand exactly who else headlined either at the Orpheum or at the Majestic, because the Majestic also had some vaudeville shows during that time. But those were the big deals, and the big nights were Saturday and Sunday nights in both those theaters.

Q. What about radio? When did radio first come around here, and when did people start listening to it with any great enthusiasm?

A. Well, let's see. You have to kind of put it together this way: I can remember, after World War I, hearing some talk of the wireless. And, of course, we all knew and had read and [were] even taught in school of ships at sea and armies and governments that could communicate by using the Morse Code by wireless as though it were telegraph, but without the wires. I can also remember, as a small boy, having various houses pointed out to me by others who said that in that house was a person who had his own wireless, and he could send and receive messages. I guess we call them what we call hams.

But the first radio that I remember hearing myself--I remember this very clearly--it was during the Democratic convention in the summer of 1924. It was down on Seventh and Washington streets in the sales room portion of a tire sales and repair shop. The door was always open and they had a radio on that you could hear, and people would gather at the open door just to hear it. I was carrying newspapers at the time, and on my way down to the newspaper office in the afternoon, I would stop by there and join the half-circle of people around the door, just to hear this. I

thought it was the greatest thing going.

I happen to know that it was the Democratic convention because as a newsboy at the time, I would be met in the evening by a great many of my subscribers, to ask had they chosen anybody at the convention. No one could have cared less than I did if they never chose anybody, but I was very glad when they finally did so that my customers would not be waiting for me to bring them the paper.

But I do know that it was during the convention of 1924 when Al Smith and William Gibbs McAdoo deadlocked the convention. At that time, the rule to secure the nomination of the Democratic Party called for a two-thirds vote, and neither Al Smith, who was Governor of New York, or McAdoo could get the two-thirds vote, and they therefore deadlocked the convention. The result was the convention lasted, oh, I don't know, a week or more, and it took at least 105 ballots, and it might have taken more. They eventually nominated John W. Davis for President, but he was nominated, well, simply to get the convention closed and out of the way. He was a Coolidge opponent at that time. Calvin Coolidge had succeeded Harding when Harding died, so this was when Coolidge ran. And Davis, of course, he was from West Virginia, and he was said to be a very astute and a very intellectual corporation lawyer, and a good solid Democrat, but he had never any chance of winning the election in 1924 because of this very serious split in the Democratic Party.

Now that is the first time I know of a radio. It was not long after this, because this was in 1924, that my Uncle Jake got a radio at home. This

was the first home radio I ever saw. And this radio, the name of the company, or the name of the brand, was Atwater Kent. The Atwater Kent Company, I guess, had manufactured various things. I don't know if it was musical instruments or appliances or what, but it was not an unknown name in products because I know they made other things besides radios. But the radio they put out was not encased in any cabinet; it was sort of on a board, perhaps eight inches wide by about four feet long. Now, all of the working parts, including the tubes, were open to view there, see. Thus, when you turned the knobs on the thing, you could see what was happening in the back. And with the set came a silken cover that was used as a dust cover that you put over this thing.

Now the radio, it had a loudspeaker, which was quite a giant step forward, because prior to that--although I had never used them, I understand other people had--they were compelled to listen through earphones. This Atwater Kent also had earphones so that you could listen to it either way--either through the speaker or that [earphones].

Another thing I think important to mention is that these were battery operated. There was no such thing as what we call an electrically operated set. They got their power from batteries rather than from the current. It called for both dry batteries, which were rather large A and B batteries, and they also called for wet batteries, just exactly like a six-volt battery in a car. This caused some complications, because they run tidy in appearance, and there was a certain risk of the battery acid from the wet battery. Many holes in rugs, and in furniture, and in clothing came about because of this. And more than that, the dry batteries would last

for several weeks, but the wet batteries, if you were playing your radio very much, would only last a couple of days and you were up against a problem of taking it down and having it recharged.

Q. Where did you get it recharged at?

A. Well, you could go to most any service station and have it recharged. It was nothing more than a automobile battery. However, this condition didn't last real long, although it was long enough to be recognized. Then they came up with a charger that you could plug in and connect right to the battery, thus avoiding hauling it down to the service station. But this was not too satisfactory, because it still called for disconnection from the set while the charging was in process. But then, they came up with what they call a trickle charger, which you attached to a light plug and attached to the battery, in which then continued to resupply the battery as the juice was being used out of it, you see. Now, this turned into a great success. Also, this whole battery system was the subject of a good deal of imagination and work by people. People built fancy cases to put the battery in; some housewives concealed them as planters with ferns and things of that kind on them, or, oh, draperies of one kind or another just to try to conceal the fact that they were batteries. Some of them had them on tables with a shelf under the table, and all of this collection of junk collected under there. Nevertheless, that's how the thing worked, and it was satisfactory.

I can remember that in those days, it was before network television as we know it now, and the big subject of conversation in the 1920's was what

programs did you get. Most everyone who had a radio would talk to their friends and say, "Oh, I got Indianapolis last night," or "I got Shreveport, Louisiana," or "Kansas City came in clear," and "St. Louis was very fine."

I think at that time, Springfield only had one radio broadcasting station, and that was a good deal later than the time that I'm talking about. But the first such broadcasting station in Springfield was WCBS. WCBS, those call letters are still used by the flagship station of either the National [Broadcasting Company] or Columbia Broadcasting System in New York City. The Federal Communications Commission found it expedient to ask Springfield to give up these call letters of WCBS, so they could be reassigned on the eastern seaboard, for technical reasons, I suppose. And they came as close to making that all right as they could by substituting instead WCVS. One reason I remember this so clearly is the radio station had a slogan going at that time which wouldn't match up with its present letters, and the slogan was, "Who can beat Springfield?" That's what WCBS was suppose to stand for.

The first all electric radio that I recall, which means there was no batteries involved at all--it was just like the radios are today; you brought it home and you plugged it in and played it--that must have been along about in 1930, or perhaps even a little later. I'd say probably 1930. The brand name of the first one I ever heard of was Steinite. I know in those days, if you had a Steinite radio, you were looked up to, or envied a little bit.

Q. What kind of programs did you get on these radios?

A. Well, for the most part, just about what you get now, really. You got a lot of dance music in the evening and in the late night. I fact, the big deal was--as far back as the battery operated radios--was Coon Sanders and his Kansas City Night Hawks. This had to come direct from Kansas City, too, this wasn't on any chain, you know. If you got Coon Sanders and the Kansas City Night Hawks, you got Kansas City! (laughter)

Down south in Shreveport, Louisiana, there was a man, I think he called himself Colonel Henderson, and he was the first airwave propagandist, or evangelist, that I would recall. When I say evangelist, I don't mean religious. His cause was, "Down with the chain stores." He would ramble by the hour in the late night hours against the effect on our economy of chain stores. And he would name them. He was against the A&P chain, and he was against any of the other great chains. He accused them of being bad for business, and of being dishonest in their competitive tactics, and thought that it was a very bad thing for the country and that anybody who patronized a chain store was being disloyal to his own community and his own fellow people.

Of course, the broadcasting of sporting events came right along with radio. The broadcasting of prizefighting, for example. The championship fights, everybody would listen to that, and the broadcasting of baseball games--it caught on immediately. Baseball games could actually be heard down there at that Eighth and Washington tire store during the summer of 1924 when I was talking about the Democratic convention. The first announcer I ever heard whose name I remember, who broadcast baseball games, was a man who broadcast from St. Louis at that time. His

name was Franz Laux. I think he's still living. I saw reference to him in a Sunday paper not too many years ago, and I always thought he did an excellent job of broadcasting the baseball game, really.

The first newscasters that I remember, and I don't know in what order, but I know at one time the biggest name in newscasting was a man by the name of Graham McNamee. He was easily the biggest name in newscasting there in the early 1930's and late 1920's. Then, I think, even before him we had a man by the name of Floyd Gibbons. Now, Floyd Gibbons, I think, was the very first newscaster that was nationally recognized. Then later on, there was another one--he talked with a clipped British accent--and that was a man by the name of Boake Carter. There was Graham McNamee and Boake Carter and Floyd Gibbons and, well, of course, a good deal later, during World War II, was Gabriel Heater, that would always start off every broadcast with, "There is good news tonight. We have just learned that there is going to be enough orange juice for the rest of the winter, but I have also just learned that we have lost three ships and fifteen thousand men off the coast of Iceland." (laughter) You've got some good news, and you've got some bad news. But he always started out with, "There's good news tonight." Everybody would listen to him. I think he passed away just a couple of years ago. They called him the Great Gabbo or something like that.

Q. What about the entertainment programs? When did they start off with some of the entertainment programs we have all heard of?

A. They were so gradual, I can't tell. I know the first ones that I

recall getting really interested in--Jack Benny is one, one of the very first ones. At the same time was Fred Allen. I always, and I still do think that Fred Allen was probably the greatest comedian that was ever on the air. I recall one time he introduced a guest over the air. He introduced him, and he said, "This is so-and-so. He's the star of stage, screen and telephone." (laughter) That never did leave me. At any rate, then after Jack Benny . . . well, at about the same time . . . no, it was a good deal later than that before Bob Hope came along, but he did come along afterwards and became a weekly feature. Then on the comedy side, or the non-musical side, also, was Fibber McGee and Molly. They were great favorites of mine for many a year.

Then, of course, there was Bob Burns, who played what he called a bazooka contraption made from a bathroom plunger and a section of pipe, something like that. He came from Pine Ridge, Arkansas, I think. Or maybe he said Pine Bluff, Arkansas. He used to always talk about his home town down there in Arkansas. Besides that, there were so many of them, of course. There was Lum and Abner, of course. And, of course, Kate Smith had a weekly program. And there was Singing Sam the Barbarsol man. I remember him so very, very well. And, of course, there were some of these adventure shows like The Lone Ranger. Some of these mystery programs, like . . . I can't remember the name of them now. The Shadow, I think, was one. And I think they had a couple of others, like . . . oh, I can't remember the names of them, but they were detective-type shows, you know.

Of course, the broadcast of things like we already said--sports, like the World Series, football games, baseball games, and all that stuff. I

remember very vividly the World Series in Chicago in 1932 when Babe Ruth made his great home run after telling the crowd in advance that's what he was going to do. I know that was in the World Series in 1932.

Q. About when did they start these programs? Can you give me a rough guess? For instance, Fibber McGee?

A. Yes, I can. Eddie Canter was one the first nationally syndicated shows, and I would say that must have been in 1930. It might have been a shade before. In addition to Eddie Canter, that very same year. . . . Well, of course, Will Rogers had a one-man show every Sunday night for a couple of years at about the same time. So, on Sunday night you could hear Eddie Canter and you could hear Will Rogers. I don't know exactly what others there were. They began to really mushroom around 1928. I can't remember the names of all of them, but I feel sure that Canter and Will Rogers and some of the others were in the late 1920's [when they] really started. But some of them, of course, started as one thing and changed to another.

"The Amos and Andy Show" that ran for so many years actually started out as a local show in Chicago under the name of "Sam and Henry". They fell out with the owner of the show, which I think was the Chicago Tribune Company which owned and operated the radio station WGN. So when they wouldn't get together on terms, it developed that the title name of the show, "Sam and Henry", was the property of the station. So they just fell out and then renamed the show "Amos and Andy" and went on.

It was at this time that the change began to develop. I think it was in

1928 when the networks, really . . . no, it was a little earlier than that, perhaps as early as 1927. At any rate, let's say in the middle 1920's. At first they were called Blue and Red networks. They were all under the same ownership. I think the Federal Communications Commission published an edict, or brought some sort of authority to bear so that they became divorced, and out of them developed what I suppose is now the National and Columbia Broadcasting systems.[1] There are a lot of technicalities involved in that. All I really know is the first networks I ever heard of was the Blue Network and the Red Network. And, of course, these various shows were carried on according to which kind, like they'd say Bob Hope was on the Blue Network on Mondays, or Fibber McGee's on the Red Network on Tuesdays, or whatever that would be.

Q. Now, you've mentioned already that card playing was home entertainment, and, of course, radio was, too. Was there anything else that people did when they'd get together?

A. Yes, there was. The fact of the matter is, it still survives to a very limited degree, but when I was a youngster it was very popular. Maybe it was because I came from a large family, but playing a musical instrument in the home, or gathering at the home of relatives on a Sunday evening where people would bring their own musical instruments and play was a very big thing, especially in the fall and winter when it was more livable in the house. It was comfortable there. It wasn't too hot. I know my relatives--some uncles and aunts that I had--on Sunday nights, most any Sunday night there would be a gathering there of people. Some

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[1]National Broadcasting Company and the Columbia Broadcasting System

would bring a violin, some would bring a mandolin, even, and some would play the piano, some even [would play] just a french harp.

These were just pretty much regular gatherings, and everyone . . . oh, I wouldn't say everyone by any means, but in every group there were a number of people who could and were willing to play a musical instrument. And, of course, a lot of singing went on as well. That was really pretty much of a staple for fall and winter entertainment, especially before radio, because after that it began to diminish. If you wanted music, there was a dance band you could turn on, and it just lost its importance.

In the summertime, of course, there was always sort of outdoors things--not so much at night, because at night you can't hardly do so many things outdoors. Oh, I am thinking of all kinds of things--croquet, or there are a lot of outdoor games, pitching horseshoes. You can just play around. Sometimes the oldsters would do tricks of one kind or another, or they'd demonstrate that they could jump higher than someone else or something of that kind, or encourage the youngsters to put on the boxing gloves. Sometimes the gloves weighed about as much as the kids, you know--that kind of thing. It was just more socializing, more person-to-person involvement there. It was really true. And incidentally, these gatherings I'm talking about were not sparked by any alcoholic fuel. If you wanted a drink, you got lemonade or a glass of milk and that was it.

Q. What's the most memorable thing you can remember from your radio programs--the early ones and so forth?

A. Well, I don't know. Over the years I've had a great many. I was

listening to the radio when the German derigable caught on fire and exploded, and I can remember the horror in the voice of the announcer. He had been going along smoothly describing the docking of the giant airship as it came in, when all of a sudden, it took fire and burned right before his eyes. And he was really unable to tell you about it. It was right there in front of him, you know, and this was certainly such a great shock and surprise to him. And it made such a very definite impression.

Q. Was this the Hindenburg disaster?

A. That's right, that's the one, yes. I remember it so well. At that time I was living out in Virginia, well, actually not far from . . . well, I had an Alexandria, [Virginia] mail route, but I was closer to Falls Church [Virginia]. Not that that makes any difference. (laughter)

But then, of course, the news of the attack of Pearl Harbor, I remember that so very clearly. But even with all of that, and there were some others, too, besides the attack on Pearl Harbor, and certainly Roosevelt's speech when he announced we were at war was very, very moving and made a tremendous impression on me. And, oh, various election victories and some sporting events. But the thing, probably, that impressed me the most that I ever heard by radio, was long after radio had passed out as the leading form of communication. It had been superceded by television. I'm talking about the announcement that John F. Kennedy had been assassinated. Where I was, there was no television, and the announcement came by radio. And for the next two hours, every bit of information that I had on this event came to me by radio.

I was sitting in the outer office of the general offices of the Steak and Shake in Bloomington, waiting for the person that I wanted to see return from lunch. It was a rainy day--by the way, that will be just about nine years ago--and I didn't want to go and get my own lunch until I had concluded this talk I had lined up. It really wasn't an appointment, I just had to get some information from this individual. While I was waiting there--I guess it must have been shortly before one o'clock--a young lady ran through the office, and I was the only occupant, and she shouted, "Kennedy has been assassinated!" Well, I couldn't believe my ears. She kept on going, and she went on upstairs to the other offices of the company--this was a large place. So I followed her. And the place had been like a morgue, just no activity, not even phones ringing, no sound at all. And much to my surprise, all of a sudden there must have been at least a dozen radios made their appearance.

I've always been interested in that; they had them in their desks or in their lockers or something, when all of a sudden, it seemed like everyone had a radio. And everyone, they gathered around in little knots at these radios to keep up with what was going on. Of course, everyone was quite shocked, and more than that, the first news that came was fragmentary and it was largely rumor, and it suggested a lot of things and caused a lot of worries as to whether this was a local, or part of a planned nationwide movement, or whether he had actually lost his life--all these things. I must have stayed there, probably, two hours or two hours and a half. I stayed there well after the official announcement came through that Mr. Kennedy had died. I remember that so well. I

suppose that that's, by far, the thing that was the most newsworthy, or the most memorable event that I ever had back on radio.

Q. How about television? When did you see your first television?

A. You know, I'm pretty sure that I first saw it in 1947. I was working in Springfield, and it was right after the war. I better change that, I think it was in 1946, and I had to go to Chicago to a meeting. And the meeting was held in what was called the War Industries Building, which was located on the corner of Franklin and Jackson boulevards. And downstairs, and across the street--no, it was on the same side of the street--right near that building, was a restaurant called The Jolly Chef, and we would go out for coffee to that place, and they had a television set in there. To me, that just seemed like a wonder of wonders. To actually sit there, especially when I saw my first ball game, I would sit there and just marvel. You could see that pitcher wind up, and you could see that ball go all the way to the plate and see the man either hit it or not. I thought that was the greatest thing ever. You know, that just really sent me. I thought, "Man, this is really going."

Q. What did that look like, the set itself?

A. Oh, the set itself? It was up on the wall on a big shelf that had been constructed for it. When the set was turned off, it didn't look much different than my own does now. There wasn't much difference to it; you couldn't see anything in the way of paraphenalia, like it didn't have rabbit ears, antennas or anything like that that I remember. It was just up on that high shelf that had been built for it. Any antenna

or something like that was either not in view or it was outside coming in on a wire.

Q. What station did they pick up there?

A. I don't have any idea. It was a local Chicago station, I know that. I know also that the audio part was very good, you could hear the announcer and follow the play very well. The actual picture was good. I thought that was really great entertainment. I still do. (chuckles)

Q. Now talking again about family entertainment. You were talking a few minutes ago about the possibility of alcohol at family get togethers. Of course, if the men get together it might be a little different than a family function, and certainly there may well be some alcohol. Say there was a party going on, was there any actual danger of a police raid--just a few men having a card party or something and drinking a few beers?

A. No, there was not. And what I said about the Sunday evening or weekend family gatherings and alcohol stands; it's really true. But this might not be exactly accurate as far as the drinking habits of the men were concerned. For the most part, they did drink, and in almost every case during the prohibition years, they went ahead and made their own home brew and made their own wine, and none of them that I know of ever tried to make anything distilled because you could buy it pretty easily, and, well, cheap enough. You could buy a gallon of white mule--that would be bootleg whiskey--for four dollars. So it was not a scarce item. And the men, when left to themselves or when they were segregated from the women, even if it was a family gathering, they might take over the

kitchen or another room and play a little poker and drink some beer, or drink something else as far as that's concerned.

There was never any thought that you'd be bothered by the police or the law or anyone else, unless--it would be just like now--unless you were a nuisance. In other words, if people got to quarreling and fighting and there was loud and boisterous talk, or you were offensive to passersby or someone else, the police would certainly put a stop to it. But just for the circumstance that you were drinking some liqueur on the premises, you'd never be bothered. On more than one occasion, I've played poker with and sat around the table in company with police officers who were not on duty--however, on one or two occasions they were in uniform. (chuckles)

But the whole thrust of enforcement of the prohibition law was for the law to be enforced by the Federal Government through it's prohibition agents. Now this is not to say, really, that the police departments encouraged or ignored violations of that law, but they did not go out of their way to develop any arrests on it. In other words, unless it was a nuisance, even though it was strongly suspected that a business establishment was selling liquor, the local police, for the most part, were never bothered. They might stay out of it; they wouldn't want to compromise themselves by being in there where the public could see them, but they wouldn't bother it. Yet if complaints were made by the neighbors or perhaps by members of families of those who did patronize the place, like the wife of a man who came home intoxicated, the police would make arrests and would make a raid. But they didn't go out of their way to

do it at all.

Q. Suppose the police did arrest a man. Do you have any stories or any rememberances of anybody you knew that got arrested and was treated a little differently than they are treated today by the police?

A. Oh, gosh, it's hard to say. When we were much younger there were some reports that I personally believe to be true, about a local character who had been sentenced by a Federal court to a jail term in the Federal section of the city jail for several months, and who was said to have been released each evening by the local authorities to go out and operate his place of business and then report in after he closed up for the night. I can't vouch for it, but that's the type of story that went around. Then it was also said that if one was arrested for transporting alcohol, that it was possible to get out without much trouble by simply mentioning . . . (tape ends abruptly)

END OF SIDE ONE

Q. You were saying he could get out by doing what?

A. Oh, by simply mentioning the name of some well-known local politicians and underworld characters who would immediately get you out on bail. In many cases, that seemed to be the last one ever heard of it. In other words, for the most part, it seemed that being busted for violating the prohibition law was not as serious as being arrested for speeding. There were some celebrated cases where bootlegging--the manufacture and sale of liquor on a large scale--where cases were brought to trial and some pretty severe sentences were handed out. But the violations always seemed to be if you were manufacturing and selling on a commerical scale. If