

ORAL HISTORY
BY FIREMAN
OF THE
FEDERAL THEATRE PROJECT

INTERVIEWED BY
PAUL SPORN
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DETROIT, MICHIGAN

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INTERVIEW I

Oral history of Hy Fireman of the Michigan Federal Theatre Project, interviewed by Paul Sporn of Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan, on December 12, 1978.

SPORN: We'll take a test and then we'll know whether we have to set the volume up higher, or the tone differently, and so on and so forth. So, just keep speaking for a little while.

FIREMAN: Yes. Well, in regard to Arthur Miller's They Too Arise, I think it was, my memory's a little bit hazy, but I suspect that the Jewish Community Center financed the production. They were interested in it and I think it was at their instigation that the Federal Theatre got involved in doing Miller's play at the Jewish Community Center. This is the way my memory does it for me. And, Miller attended just about every rehearsal and gave the director direction and assistance on how he felt the play should be done.

SPORN: Oh, Miller participated in it?

FIREMAN: Oh, yes. Yes. And, I played Miller. I played the lead.

SPORN: The young man who comes from . . .

FIREMAN: The young Miller, yes . . .

SPORN: . . . Michigan to visit his parents . . .

FIREMAN: Yes, right.

SPORN: That's why I was interested in the playbill. I just wanted to fortify that, to make sure that, you know, that my memory is correct on that.

(TAPE STOPPED AND RESTARTED. PROBLEM WITH SOUND. SLOW AND DISTORTED SPEECH).

FIREMAN: And, we had many discussions about the play, while we were doing it, the ways it should be done. I remember, particularly, that I had a lot of criticism about the accents. And I, I didn't prevail. They were doing the older family--the father, or the grandfather, rather, with thick accents, for comedy effect. You know, Yiddish accents. And, I objected to that. I didn't feel that that was necessary for color in the play. But they, Miller and the director, both insisted on it, and they had their way. And, I find that even today my opinion of something like that is objectional. You can, as an actor--I'm talking about as an actor--you can give a hint of an accent without using the accent to completely obliterate what you're trying to say.

SPORN: Your objection was that it made it difficult to understand . . .

FIREMAN: Right.

SPORN: . . . The players or . . .

FIREMAN: Yes. No. My objection was not anti-Semitic. It had nothing to do with anti-Semitism at all.

SPORN: Not the stereotype.

FIREMAN: Yes, it had nothing to do with that. My objection was mainly because I feel that whenever I do an ethnic character, I give a hint of the accent just to identify the character. But, I'd never let the accent interfere with the clarity of what the character's trying to say. However, you know, many other people disagree. You've probably seen it, where they do the accents so thick, you know, that it becomes something that you can't understand. You know what I'm saying?

SPORN: Sure, sure.

FIREMAN: But, you know, there are a field of actors who feel that this is the way they dress a character, by using as thick an accent as they possibly can. (Pause). I remember distinctly that it just grated me to hear these older people come up with these thick Yiddish accents, when it wasn't necessary. Once you identify, you know, as a Jew, there's no need to keep on doing it constantly. Get what I'm saying?

SPORN: Yes.

FIREMAN: Yes.

SPORN: It is your feeling that Miller based this play on any personal experience?

FIREMAN: Oh, yes. Yes. It was his . . . It was autobiographical.

SPORN: It was his family . . . This is his father . . .

FIREMAN: Grandfather. I don't think . . . Well, later on . . . Later on, I found out more about Miller's family. His father was a well-to-do businessman. Not the character in the . . . in the play, particularly. But, I still feel that it was autobiographical.

SPORN: His father was richer than this character.

FIREMAN: Yes, right. Yes, and his father was, from what I understand now, a wealthy man. Financed him, sent him to U. of M. where, you know, I guess he . . . The reason these guys come to U. of M. or used to . . . I think I mentioned . . . Didn't I mention it to you? The Avery Hopwood Awards?

SPORN: They Too Arise was based upon a play that he did for the Avery Hopwood Awards and, in fact, won the Minor Drama Award for that particular year.

FIREMAN: Well, you know, this was well known throughout the country. These guys were ringers. They came to the University of Michigan just to win a prize, you know. Because this, you know, was money. In those days, five hundred bucks was a lot of money. And, that was one of the reasons for coming to the University of Michigan, you know? And, it was pretty well ordained that they would win. These guys had more talent than anybody else running, you know, in these contests. Today, the Avery Hopwood Award--the amount of money is worthless. Nobody even bothers to contest for them.

SPORN: Well, they're still quite active though, now.

FIREMAN: Oh, I suppose, yes. But, it's probably still the same amount of money though, isn't it?

SPORN: Well, it was big money in those days, too, by the way. Arthur Miller won the Monor Drama Award for 1935-36 and the play was called No Villian. But, some of them won a considerable amount of money for these Avery Hopwood Awards.

FIREMAN: If you go through the list of winners of the Hopwood Awards through the years, you'll find some national names.

SPORN: Oh, yes.

FIREMAN: Damn right.

SPORN: Now, let me give you one example. Here is a woman, Anne Persov is her name.

FIREMAN: Never heard of her.

SPORN: She won the award for poetry in 1932, and the prize was \$2,500. So, that's no small award.

FIREMAN: No, no.

SPORN: She won the Major Award. Now, Arthur Clifford entered, too, and he won . . .

FIREMAN: For a play.

SPORN: . . . For a play called A Mass Play--1789; A Mass Play in 1932, but it was the Minor Award. He got \$250.00. So, it would vary. There's a woman named Elena Mitcoff, I don't know if you know of her.

FIREMAN: I've heard of her.

SPORN: She wrote a novel called A New Life based on, apparently, her own life. She won the Major Award for Fiction. She got \$700.00. So, it varied. But, it would go as high as \$2,500.

FIREMAN: Alright. But, what I'm saying . . . My point is that some of these

FIREMAN: guys just enrolled into the University of Michigan so they could be eligible to win an award.

SPORN: Some of them.

FIREMAN: Some of them, yes, right. And, I think in Miller's case, this is probably true, though, maybe, he expected to win a Major Award. I don't know.

SPORN: Well, the difference is so funny. He won Minor Drama. He won two awards, one in 1935-36, one in 1936-37. He won the Minor Awards. (Pause). Arthur Clifford won Minor Awards.

FIREMAN: Do you find Clifford anywhere else? Other than that?

SPORN: Oh, yes. I have all sorts of . . .

FIREMAN: Have you run across him?

SPORN: Yes.

FIREMAN: Is he around?

SPORN: Oh, no. He's dead.

FIREMAN: Oh.

SPORN: According to the information I have. A Mass Play, 1931-32, is, to my mind, a very, very good play, by the way.

FIREMAN: Yes.

SPORN: An excellent play.

FIREMAN: Yes, he was a talented guy.

SPORN: It was excellent for any number of reasons. It's excellent from the standpoint of the way he puts the play together; aesthetically; politically it seems like a very dramatic play; and so on. It's a good play. It's never been produced, as far as I know. No reason why it shouldn't be.

FIREMAN: Well, he was involved with the Contemporary Theatre.

SPORN: I know. He was involved with the Contemporary Theatre. He was also a very important member of the Federal Writers' Project and the Federal . . . The administrators of the national program, Federal Writers' Program, speak very highly of him for a whole number of reasons. His ability to write and his responsibility. Apparently, there was a lot of irresponsibility, you know. People would come in and not do very much. He was obviously an extremely responsible guy. If he was given a job to do, he would not only do it, but he would do it very well. So, they praised him for both his responsibility and his technical skills, his writing skills.

FIREMAN: How did you find that he's dead?

SPORN: Some people who . . .

FIREMAN: Have told you?

SPORN: Yes. Now, that may be true, or may not be true, I don't know. That is the word I got through some other people I've interviewed--that he's dead.

FIREMAN: He was an invalid, you know?

SPORN: Right. He was apparently a victim of polio. But, he was very active. He was very active in the union. First, it was the government employees union under the AF of L, and then they ran into a lot of trouble with that and joined the Workers' Alliance.

FIREMAN: Now, first it was the American Federation of Government Employees.

SPORN: American Federation of Government Employees and then their charter for that was cancelled.

FIREMAN: Yes.

SPORN: That included, by the way, the members of the Federal . . .

FIREMAN: Yes. I was involved in that, too.

SPORN : . . . the Federal Art Project, the Federal Theatre Project, the Federal Writers' Project and, also, the Historical Survey people, and a number of other WPA groups, and so on. And, he, at one point, was the president of that union.

FIREMAN: Yes.

SPORN: And then, after he left that, Anteo J. Tarini was made president of that, which Tarini never told me about when I interviewed him.

FIREMAN: You did interview him?

SPORN: Oh, yes.

FIREMAN: Oh, good.

SPORN: He didn't want to remember that, apparently.

FIREMAN: Yes, right.

SPORN : He's a very nice man.

FIREMAN: Yes.

SPORN: He's head of the Detroit office of the State Personnel office.

FIREMAN: Yes, I ran into him one day and he greeted my very cordially, but that was all. He didn't want to have anything else to identify with.

SPORN: I interviewed him. I'm going to get back to him, you see, now I have more information that can help him. Maybe, he forgot.

FIREMAN: I gave you that name, here.

SPORN: You gave it to me and I called. Now I have a lot of information, much more precise than he was able to give me. So, I'll let him know. At any rate, that's the nature of these HOpwood Awards. Yes, I'm sure there were many "ringers" in there.

FIREMAN: Yes, that's my feeling. There were a lot of ringers involved in that thing. Do you know the history of the awards, or anything, or are you interested . . . You know about them?

SPORN: Yes. It's all public record.

FIREMAN: Yes. He was the University of Michigan graduate, alumnus, and wrote a famous play that was a piece of junk, and he made a million dollars out of it.

SPORN: At any rate, I would like now to come back to discuss what you called, a little while ago, the change of attitude and atmosphere among the people in the Federal Theatre Project. Were they more, well, now more interested in doing plays that not only entertained, but educated, as well, and had more social content? Is that a fairly accurate summary of what you said?

FIREMAN: Yes, yes. A good example of that was Bill Beyer, even though his play didn't, wasn't a good example of what we're talking about.

SPORN: I Confess?

FIREMAN: Yes. He, himself, was a guy with some insight, and had a social conscience. And, in our discussions, in my discussions with him, he seemed to be so much more advanced than his play. I couldn't quite understand that because prior to his arrival here in the Detroit area, we did, you know, pop plays, like Liliom and The Road to Rome. I think his play was . . . I'm pretty accurate, I think I'm accurate in saying that his was the third play we did. I felt he was a better guy than the play that represented him. My discussions with him were much more advanced, for instance, than what he was trying to say in his play. I was very critical of the play and I felt that, at the time, we were wasting our time to do his play. And he was . . . I think he was more interested in furthering his own career. He wanted a forum for his play and I think that was the reason why he did it. But, it was at that time that we already started thinking seriously about content. Prior to that, it was more like an imitation of Broadway and an imitation of Hollywood. Even Broadway was more socially conscious at that time than we were. The commercial theatre

FIREMAN: was doing very serious social drama and I'm not even talking about the group theatre, I'm talking about the Broadway theatre, as a whole. George Gershwin at that time was doing social--musical comedies--but with social content, you know, things of that type and we were doing junk. Even though, well, Sherwood's play . . . Sherwood became a social writer, too, you know. But, not The Road to Rome, necessarily. (Pause).

SPORN: I Confess was the second. Liliom was the first, I Confess was second, then Road to Rome was third.

FIREMAN: Oh, then my memory is faulty. I thought it was . . .

SPORN: But, they were done one after the other.

FIREMAN: Yes.

SPORN: In April of 1936, Liliom; in May to June of 1936, Beyer's play, I Confess; and then, in July and August, Road to Rome. So, you see, they were done one month after another.

FIREMAN: Yes, okay.

SPORN: So, you've got those three plays. And, after that . . . Well, actually, after that, there's another play that was done very, very quickly. It was the Macbeth, but that was the New York company.

FIREMAN: Yes, we had nothing to do with it. We just gave them . . . We provided them a house.

SPORN: Right, the New York company.

FIREMAN: Yes.

SPORN: Okay. Now, The Road to Rome, of course, it depends on how you read it, is kind of an anti-war play. It could be read that way, easily.

FIREMAN: Yes, right.

SPORN: In fact, I think it is.

FIREMAN: It is, it is. Yes, you can say that.

SPORN: But it's given this historical dress and, therefore, there's a kind of distance on it.

FIREMAN: We didn't play it for it's anti-war content, really.

SPORN: The thing was that the anti-war content, as far as I remember, in my reading of it, is based around the question, "If man understands the place of love in life . . ."

FIREMAN: Sherwood later became a social writer. Later. Later, he did. He did tremendous things.

SPORN: Anyway, so you remember having discussions with William Beyer . . .

FIREMAN: Yes.

SPORN: . . . in which he seemed to be much more advanced politically and socially than his plays?

FIREMAN: Yes, or than in previous people who were involved in the administration or the running of the theatre.

SPORN: But, did he then change? Did he write any other plays that you know of?

FIREMAN: After that, he disappeared.

SPORN: Disappeared?

FIREMAN: Yes. After his play was produced, that was the end of Beyer. For some reason or other, I can't recall exactly. Maybe, he got involved in some arguments or something. But, in any case . . . Oh, wait a minute. I seem to remember . . .

END OF TAPE. SIDE A.

Interview II

Oral history of Hy Fireman of the Michigan Federal Theatre Project, interviewed by Paul Sporn of Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan, on July 11, 1979.

SPORN: Let's continue doing what we're doing . . .

FIREMAN: Alright.

SPORN: . . . looking through this. Now, here is Arms and the Man. Again, I have quite a bit of information, as you can see. This was . . .

FIREMAN: Cinema Theatre, yes.

SPORN: . . . in 1938 the Cinema Theatre, also Lincoln Theatre, week of June 4, 1938.

FIREMAN: Well, now when you say Lincoln Theatre, now I know what you mean. Not Lincoln Center in New York, but . . .

SPORN: No, no. Lincoln Theatre.

FIREMAN: . . . the Lincoln Theatre on the west side of Detroit.

SPORN: Okay, very good.

FIREMAN: Yes.

SPORN: And then certain specific information.

FIREMAN: Look at the audience--8,735.

SPORN: Twenty-two performances, eight thousand . . .

FIREMAN: Sure.

SPORN: Fantastic.

FIREMAN: That was a hit for us, yes.

SPORN: But, I mean, the idea . . .

FIREMAN: And we sold it on the basis . . .

SPORN: . . . and that's a good play.

FIREMAN: It was a compromise because it was an anti-war play and it was Shaw, you know. And so, we were able to sell it on that basis.

SPORN: Now, look at this. Verner Haldene writes this. This is the Director's Report. "Basic problem in casting: 'to find actors who can read with necessary brilliance.'" Maybe he meant . . . I wonder what he meant by that? It could be, you know, Shaw is a very talky kind of playwright.

FIREMAN: Yes, sure.

SPORN: And, you've got to be able to carry off that conversation.

FIREMAN: Otherwise, it gets boring.

SPORN: It gets boring.

FIREMAN: Right.

SPORN: So, in other words, it's not real conflict, action conflict, it's . . .

FIREMAN: People don't want to sit and listen to ordinary conversation.

SPORN: . . . it's a verbal conflict. So, he found out a problem. "Shaw, as O'Neill, not dated. Necessary to work out everything exactly before rehearsals," he says. "Exactness with proper pacing 'will give STYLE to the finished production,'" and so on. So, you see, he dealt with the kinds of problems that . . .

FIREMAN: Shaw, like O'Neill, is dated.

SPORN: You feel that O'Neill is dated.

FIREMAN: (Laughs). I said that I feel that Shaw and O'Neill both are dated.

SPORN: Well, he didn't think that.

FIREMAN: Yes, I know.

SPORN: So, at any rate, they "worked out movement in a circular pattern and long sweeping crosses. -Provides ease and grace." So now, see, those are the kinds of notes I have.

FIREMAN: Yes.

SPORN: So, does that . . . Anything you want to say about that?

FIREMAN: I think Doll did a beautiful job of costuming that play.

SPORN: Yes, and here is a quote by Doll: "Decorative rather than realistic since play is almost a fantasy."

FIREMAN: It was a Graustark type of performance, you know.

SPORN: What?

FIREMAN: Graustark, you know. The fantasy, you know, the . . .

SPORN: Graustark?

FIREMAN: Graustark. You know the famous . . . I forget who wrote--DuMaurier-- DuMaurier wrote The Graustark, a mythical kingdom, you know. And, do you recall when Nixon had these men dressed, his private bodyguards, dressed up in these fantasy type costumes, they said that was "Graustarkian."

SPORN: Oh, I don't remember that.

FIREMAN: Remember that?

SPORN: No. Okay.

FIREMAN: Yes, sort of, musical comedy, you know, sort of thing.

SPORN: Now, you see, here we have the Technical Report by James Doll. "Decorative rather than realistic since play is almost a fantasy, based on Bulgarian and Victorian detail," the costumes. I wonder where the heck those costumes are?

FIREMAN: Oh, they were fantastic.

SPORN: Now, I know you guys packed them up, because I have a report from Verner Haldene to Hallie Flanagan saying they packed this stuff up.

FIREMAN: Yes, they were fantastic. He really did a beautiful job on those costumes. They were not Bulgarian. I disagree with that, because I worked very closely with Doll.

SPORN: "Bulgarian and Victorian."

FIREMAN: Sure, yes, I know. Bulgarian. Bulgarian because Shaw says "Bulgarian." But, really, he made it mythical. He made it, you know, like The Mouse That Roared. A mythical kingdom. He created a kingdom.

SPORN: Yes.

FIREMAN: Not Bulgarian. (Pause). Did you see the photos?

SPORN: Sure. They were all there.

FIREMAN: Well, do you recall the costumes? They were fantastic costumes.

SPORN: Yes, we'll go back and look at them.

FIREMAN: It was probably the best costumed show we'd ever done.

SPORN: And, here are two sets. Now, you took the photographs here, you see?

FIREMAN: Yes.

SPORN: So, where he took them, I think these are fairly accurate. This is you, took this set of photographs. And, you also took seven photos in costume. Okay, and so on. Now . . .

FIREMAN: Other pieces from the same operatta . . .

SPORN: This is the music . . .

FIREMAN: Oh, yes.

SPORN: . . . that they played. They used the PA system, not an orchestra this time. They took selections of, I guess . . .

FIREMAN: Well, many times, I'm going to interject this, because you won't find this in credits. But, Edith was often involved in picking the music.

SPORN: The music?

FIREMAN: And, you won't find her as a credit, but usually, you would find, you know, with her extensive vocabulary of music, you know, she was always able to reach into somewhere and pick out the appropriate music. And then, of course, Haldene would approve it, you know. That sort of thing.

SPORN: Yes. And, again, here are the press reviews and here are the audience reactions. "Costume designer deserves a lot of credit." Well, that follows what you're saying. "A smooth performance." "A bit disap-

SPORN: pointed in it's content." "Your best performance." A contradictory statement in the audience reaction. "Off stage shots too loud." "Bluntschli and Louka are stealing the show." And then, "Supplementary Data; Photographs of scenes by Hy Fireman. Nineteen photographs." There's a whole photographic file, a separate file on photographs.

FIREMAN: Yes, and there's more than just what you said there.

SPORN: Well, that's each point, at each point. You see, these would be different photographs. They'd be photographs of the production bulletin. Two photographs of the set, seven photographs of the costumes. These were just general photographs of the scenes. Nineteen of them. There's a photographic file in which there are four photographs. And that would be, probably in the photograph file, what they did, these would be small photographs, and then they'd have bigger ones.

FIREMAN: Well, you see, in 1938, when this production was done, just to give you an example, if you go to Broadway, Burns Mantle did books of all the well known Broadway shows of that year. And, he would have a photograph from each show, and you compare these photographs from Burns Mantle to the photographs of this show, and you see, you know, it's like looking at space photographs of Jupiter.

SPORN: Yes. Here's the cast now. Alma Brock.

FIREMAN: Yes.

SPORN: Do you remember her?

FIREMAN: Sure, I remember her.

SPORN: Is she a local person?

FIREMAN: No, no. No. no. You didn't show me a picture of her. If you do show me a photograph, I'll pick her out for you.

SPORN: Well, if I have it. Helen . . .

FIREMAN: DuBois.

SPORN: But, do you think she's still living in the area, Alma Brock?

FIREMAN: Well. No. I know she's not in the area. She was in New York, the last I heard, a number of years ago, because I inquired about her.

SPORN: Would she be of an age to still be alive?

FIREMAN: She'd be a very old lady.

SPORN: Yes.

FIREMAN: Because she'd have to be fifteen, twenty years older than me.

SPORN: Helen DuBois?

FIREMAN: I'm a little too hazy on her.

SPORN: Ruth Whitworth, you said before, probably Downriver?

FIREMAN: Is possibly Downriver, around Trenton, you know, Riverview, somewhere around in there.

SPORN: Think she's in the book?

FIREMAN: Possibly. That's the first thing I would do is look in the book. Sure.

SPORN: Douglas Wright you said is dead.

FIREMAN: Dead.

SPORN: Ray Rawlings?

FIREMAN: Ray Rawlings, I don't know.

SPORN: David Carnes is dead.

FIREMAN: David Carnes, yes.

SPORN: J. Richard Gamble?

FIREMAN: J. Richard Gamble. Oh, boy. It's possible, but he wouldn't be around here. I don't know.

SPORN: And, Edward Masson?

FIREMAN: Ed Masson was my age, so it's very likely that he's alive.

SPORN: And likely that he's still here?

FIREMAN: Possibly, sure.

SPORN: Anything you know about him? What . . .

FIREMAN: Well, he never had any talent, so he wouldn't go anywhere in the theatre. He was a . . . I'll show you a picture. He was a good looking guy, but no acting ability, whatsoever. And, when the Federal Theatre folded, he probably would try to get into a theatre, but probably never succeeded.

SPORN: But, he was a man your age?

FIREMAN: Yes.

SPORN: Now, this is Pursuit of Happiness.

FIREMAN: Yes.

SPORN: Alright. So, we have this information--directed by Verner Haldene, twelve performances. Even that got 1,702 people. You guys did very well. (Laughs).

FIREMAN: Yes.

SPORN: You did better than the Broadway stage.

FIREMAN: There was something in the paper about them recently. He just died,

FIREMAN: or she just died. (The Langners).

SPORN: Are they local people?

FIREMAN: No. They're the founders of the Theatre Guild in New York.

SPORN: Oh, that's right.

FIREMAN: Sure. They're the famous founders of the Theatre Guild, and then the Group Theatre, you know.

SPORN: Yes. So, now here we have again the reports. Director's Report and he called it a "decorative little comedy." "Needs to be kept light and warm. Biggest headache was with three of his character players-- including person playing Reverend Banks, who was tackling his longest role to date." Let's see who played that part.

FIREMAN: That's a different . . . There it is.

SPORN: ~~"Reverend Banks."~~ Oxley Taylor.

FIREMAN: Oxley Taylor. He was an old man.

SPORN: You see, you were having trouble with him.

FIREMAN: He was an old man, yes. He was a very old man.

SPORN: Now . . .

FIREMAN: Let me see the rest of the people in there.

SPORN: We'll come back to that in a moment.

FIREMAN: Alright.

SPORN: So, anyway, so you see, that's how detailed this gets. So, it's useful. It "was an enjoyable play to produce." So, he liked doing that play. But, he had some problem with the actors. Now, this Technical Report by James Doll. If I don't have too much on it, it means that the information wasn't that significant. It was a fairly standard report, in other words. Then there are ground plans with blueprints, sets, photographs. Three photos which aren't identified, that's why I didn't put a name down. It doesn't say you, it doesn't say Doll, it doesn't say anyone. Just three photographs. Costume Reports by James Doll. Reports "unusually capable wardrobe women." Interesting. It's just simply saying the seamstresses were very good. I wonder if we could ever locate those seamstresses. That would be interesting, if we could do that.

FIREMAN: They were old ladies.

SPORN: Old ladies?

FIREMAN: Yes.

SPORN: Yes. Costume Designs. There were swatches. There were watercolors, et cetera. If we wanted to put this play on again, we could.

FIREMAN: We could almost do it.

SPORN: Yes, because it's all there.

FIREMAN: Sure.

SPORN: Swatches and everything.

FIREMAN: Doll was very methodical about that.

SPORN: If we wanted to put it on the way they did, I mean, we don't have to do that, you could do your own thing, too. But, if we wanted to duplicate the play, we could almost do it from these notes. And then, there's this note, "Music furnished by recently organized Detroit Federal Theatre Orchestra." Then there are Press Notices. Detroit News. "Picture story of sewing women and carpenters working on set." Detroit Times said that Virginia Barrie, David Carnes, Douglas Wright, Oxley Taylor, and J. Richard Gamble made "splendid characterizations." That was their view. And, then there's a poster, a silk screen. In my opinion, not very good. Black and red. Now, I don't know who did the silk. Who do you think did the poster?

FIREMAN: I think the Art Project.

SPORN: The Federal Art Project? That's interesting knowing that, to see how they fit into it.

FIREMAN: Sure, sure. I'm sure they did.

SPORN: That's why I want them all three together.

FIREMAN: In fact, I would have to . . . If we were right now at George Mason, we could find out. Were we rehearsing at the Siegal Building at that time? Do your notes show anything about the Siegal Building?

SPORN: No. I would've put it down if it was there. This is the orchestra, I guess, you see. Or, no. I don't know. These are the . . . This is probably written by . . .

FIREMAN: This is the program.

SPORN: . . . Edith Segal.

FIREMAN: This is the program.

SPORN: Yes. "And included the following selections." She probably wrote this report.

FIREMAN: Maybe.

SPORN: Okay.

FIREMAN: Yes, he did that.

SPORN: . . . for the whole period of time.

FIREMAN: Yes, he was assigned to us.

SPORN: Yes, he did all the publicity for the longest period of time.

FIREMAN: Yes.

SPORN: Okay. Now we go to the next one. (Pause). Dr. Faustus.

FIREMAN: Yes. That was a big one.

SPORN: Earlier. This would be earlier than the ones we've talked about.

FIREMAN: Yes.

SPORN: Now, here we have . . .

FIREMAN: Wasn't it Haldene's first? Might've been one of his first.

SPORN: Well, he's listed as the director.

FIREMAN: Here's a well known name.

SPORN: Kimon Friar adapted this for the stage, this Dr. Faustus.

FIREMAN: Yes, right.

SPORN: Dr. Faustus elsewhere . . .

FIREMAN: Worked with us, worked with us on it, on the production.

SPORN: Yes. Dr. Faustus had been done in other places.

FIREMAN: Yes.

SPORN: But, this was a special adaptation by Kimon Friar.

FIREMAN: An unusual . . . Right.

SPORN: Just for the local area.

FIREMAN: Correct.

SPORN: Stephen Nastfogel, in this case, did the sets, with adaptations by James Doll.

FIREMAN: Yes. The reason for that was, I think, was because that was when Nastfogel left, right in the middle of the production . . .

SPORN: Oh, you think he left in the middle of it?

FIREMAN: . . . and Doll had to come in and pick up, you know.

SPORN: Now, look at this. It was performed from July 1, 1937 to July 1938.

FIREMAN: No, to "one." January 19, 1938.

SPORN: To January 19, 1938. Excuse me.

FIREMAN: That's about six months.

SPORN: During a six month period, but it doesn't mean to say continuous?

FIREMAN: No. It wasn't continuous.

SPORN: Because you only did twenty-eight.

FIREMAN: No, it was a road show for us.

SPORN: Thirty thousand people saw it.

FIREMAN: Yes.

SPORN: When you say road show . . .

FIREMAN: Now, wait a minute now, road show. The audience was provided for us.

SPORN: What do you mean?

FIREMAN: Well, we went to a place . . .

SPORN: For example, what kind of place?

FIREMAN: Well, we went to Ann Arbor. We performed in a church. It was the most beautiful setting for . . .

SPORN: Which church?

FIREMAN: You don't have that?

SPORN: Well, I'll look through it. Maybe so.

FIREMAN: I thought . . .

SPORN: Usually I would have it up here, if I had it.

FIREMAN: I thought I had the, you know, one performance.

SPORN: There?

FIREMAN: Yes, and we did it, right on the pulpit. You know, we did the whole show, using the church as a set. It was the most beautiful performance we had ever done.

SPORN: I don't have that.

FIREMAN: No?

SPORN: Which means it wasn't there, because I would've listed it if I . . . As you saw in the earlier plays, how I listed every one of the places where it would play . . .

FIREMAN: Yes.

SPORN: . . . if that information was there . . .

FIREMAN: We took it around the state. We traveled this show.

SPORN: Where else besides Ann Arbor?

FIREMAN: (Pause). Edith's memory would be better than mine on that.

SPORN: Did you do this at Belle Isle at all?

FIREMAN: Possible.

SPORN: You know, there was the thing called the "Suitcase Theatre," or the . . .

FIREMAN: Yes, yes.

SPORN: . . . "Caravan Theatre," where you went out to the parks when the weather was good . . .

FIREMAN: Yes. Hamtramck, yes.

SPORN: . . . and put on free performances. You did that?

FIREMAN: Yes.

SPORN: You don't remember whether you did it with this one?

FIREMAN: I think that was the show we did it with.

SPORN: Out in the parks?

FIREMAN: I think that was the show, yes.

SPORN: But, thirty thousand people, that's a pretty respectable turn-out.

FIREMAN: Well, I don't know how accurate that is. But . . .

SPORN: Well, listen, you never know . . .

FIREMAN: But, like I say, we didn't draw the audience in. Like, when we went to a place, they provided the audience and we performed.

SPORN: But, they were on the basis that this was going to play. I understand. But, in other words, you went around and played . . .

FIREMAN: Yes. Correct. I'm not trying to belittle it, but I want to put it in it's proper perspective, that's all.

SPORN: Oh, I understand. In other words, that would be called community service. You said, "We'll provide you with a play . . ."

FIREMAN: Yes, correct.

SPORN: ". . . for your people." So, they got the people, right?

FIREMAN: Yes.

SPORN: But . . .

FIREMAN: That thing, that performance in Ann Arbor was eerie, because it was almost as if Marlowe wrote Faustus for that set.

SPORN: For that church?

FIREMAN: For a church setting, for a church setting.

SPORN: Oh, yes. I can see that.

FIREMAN: In fact, you know, I want to go through those photographs because I can give . . .

SPORN: Let's see what I have. Let's see what I have in the way of photographs.

FIREMAN: Alright.

SPORN: So, then here's the . . .

FIREMAN: I think you've got one photograph only of Faustus.

SPORN: Maybe. But, no, there may be more here. You see, what they gave me from the . . . What they gave me, these photographs that I've got, are all the photographs they have negatives for. They have many more

SPORN: photographs, many of which they . . .

FIREMAN: They have many more negatives, too. They haven't unearthed them.

SPORN: I know they haven't unearthed them. They gave me all the negatives
The prints of all the negatives they could locate.

FIREMAN: Oh, I thought you said they copied the photographs.

SPORN: No. Well, I can ask them again.

FIREMAN: Alright.

SPORN: I'll double check. But, my impression is . . .

FIREMAN: Well, this is something that I am, this is one of the things that I
would like to, when I'm there.

SPORN: We'll have to double check them.

FIREMAN: When I'm there, I want to, you know, especially if it's something that
they haven't unearthed yet. I want to go through that.

SPORN: Well, you see, they have lots of prints . . .

FIREMAN: Because I . . .

SPORN: . . . but they may not have negatives.

FIREMAN: The negatives are very important and I packed them for the, you know,
for the files . . .

SPORN: At the end?

FIREMAN: At the end, right.

SPORN: You see, these things were . . .

FIREMAN: Like a damn fool, I should have kept the negatives.

SPORN: But, these things were submitted play by play. These Production
Bulletins which contained the photographs and other things . . .

FIREMAN: Oh, but the photographs were submitted for each play.

SPORN: Right.

FIREMAN: Right.

SPORN: So, you see, when you packed up the negatives, that was the end . . .

FIREMAN: They were at the end.

SPORN: . . . but these photographs were going in as the . . .

FIREMAN: True.

SPORN: . . . over the years, play by play, which is a different story, you see.

FIREMAN: Well, let me tell you something, then, in passing. If I had not
packed those photographs, if I had just kept them, I would have them
today because I have every negative I have ever used, except that.

SPORN: Well, we have to find out where that stuff is. Now, I know, I have a

SPORN: note that says you packed the costumes. Verner Haldene wrote a note telling them, the National Headquarters, what had been done. This had been packed, that had been packed, the other thing had been packed, sent here, there, or the other place. Where is that stuff? If we could get a hold of those negatives, if we get hold of whatever, stage sets, it would be marvelous. It'd be a valuable find.

FIREMAN: Yes, sure.

SPORN: Now, obviously it was packed up, because the note confirms it. What happened to that stuff? Where is it? George Mason doesn't have it.

FIREMAN: You're sure of that?

SPORN: Well, absolutely, because I asked them. You see, George Mason is trying to track down costumes, and whatever they can.

FIREMAN: Well, costumes, maybe, they don't have, but negatives--they would have because they would be with the file.

SPORN: What negatives they have, they do have. They have a special person assigned to sorting out those negatives. But, I'm not sure they have all the negatives. Maybe they do, but it's not clear. So, that's a question.

FIREMAN: Well, maybe they didn't get all the material from the Library of Congress.

SPORN: They might've done that, but not all of the material may have, indeed, gone to the Library of Congress. See, when I went out to the West Coast last year, I was passing through Santa Barbara. On the coast I interviewed some people in La Jolla, San Diego, and in Los Angeles and San Francisco. I was coming back from San Francisco, and I said, "Let's stop here overnight." and we were passing through Santa Barbara, my wife and I. We pick up a newspaper, and lo and behold, the Santa Barbara Museum of Art is having an exhibition of Federal Art Project graphics. I said, "Well, tomorrow, in the morning before we leave here, when the museum opens, we'll go over there." We went over there, and I thought it would be, you know, California artists. They have the material from California artists, and that's what it would be.

FIREMAN: When was this?

SPORN: Last year. They had an exhibition of . . .

FIREMAN: Well, I just missed the same show in New York.

SPORN: Yes, okay. No, it was not that show. It was a different show altogether.

FIREMAN: But, there was a show in New York.

SPORN: There was a show in New York, yes, but this was a different show. So, I figured it would be the graphics of California artists who had been in WPA. Well, when I got there, artists from New York, artists from Boston, artists from Indiana, artists from Ohio, artists from Chicago. So, I said to the curator, "Tell me, how did you get . . . What did you do? Did you send around the country and collect this stuff? Did they send it to you and you put on the exhibition?" He said, "No, no, no." He said one day he was down in the basement of the museum, and this stuff was there. So, I said, "What's the Santa Barbara Museum doing with graphics by WPA artists from the Midwest?" He said, "I don't know. They were there." Your negatives might be who knows where, in Oshkosh. We don't know.

FIREMAN: Well, as a matter of fact, you know, you've just given me an idea, that it's quite possible that some of our records might still be here in the Detroit area.

SPORN: Where?

FIREMAN: Somewhere . . .

SPORN: But, it's finding them.

FIREMAN: . . . in governmental agency.

SPORN: That's what we're trying to find out.

FIREMAN: In a governmental agency, somewhere here. What we've got to do . . . You see, what we've got to do now is go back and figure out . . . Because some of these projects, federal projects, when they were stopped by the federal government, they were picked up and taken over by the State of Michigan.

SPORN: By the WPA of Michigan?

FIREMAN: I don't know that.

SPORN: Well, whoever.

FIREMAN: I don't know that, yet, see. And, when they were . . . And when that did happen, what happened to the records? Were the records then transferred? This is what we've got to do.

SPORN: See, that's why I say, it's not a guarantee that they have everything.

FIREMAN: No, it's not a guarantee, you're right, but what it means is that some detecting has to be done.

SPORN: Well, that's what I'm trying to find out. That's what I've been trying to do. I've been calling all over trying to find out. You see,

SPORN: there's another thing.

FIREMAN: Yes?

SPORN: The Federal Theatre Project, and the whole WPA art support was organized not only on a state basis, but also on a regional basis. There was a regional office in Chicago.

FIREMAN: Chicago, right.

SPORN: It might've gone there.

FIREMAN: Well, you know, the key name here is Fred Morrow.

SPORN: : Right.

FIREMAN: That's the guy to find. He would still be living somewhere.

SPORN: If we could find him.

FIREMAN: If we could find him.

SPORN: I know, I know.

FIREMAN: Yes, yes. I don't know if he's still living. I say, it's a possibility that he's still living.

SPORN: Well . . . Don Farran.

FIREMAN: Who?

SPORN: Don Farran is another guy who was at the regional office.

FIREMAN: I don't recall that name. Fred Morrow and, now what was his wife's name? The two of them worked as a team. Fred and Lois?

SPORN: Fred and Lois Morrow?

FIREMAN: I haven't got it right yet. But, anyway, he and his wife both were administrators.

SPORN: On the Federal Theatre Project?

FIREMAN: On the Federal Theatre Project.

SPORN: Well, maybe we'll come across those names.

FIREMAN: Yes, we'll come across the name, right.

SPORN: Okay. So, anyway . . .

FIREMAN: She was involved in it, too.

SPORN: Now, on this, here's what Verner Haldene had to say about Dr. Faustus. "Written after the original opening . . ." He wrote this report after the original opening in July.

FIREMAN: "Cites People's Theatre."

SPORN: Must've been at the People's Theatre.

FIREMAN: Oh, yes, that's where . . . Yes, at the People's Theatre, yes.

SPORN: "Choice of Kimon Friar version credited to Michigan State Director.

SPORN: Kimon Friar version trimmed the original 25 pages to 16 and this further trimmed by Haldene to 14. Play ran 1 hour, 40 minutes, without intermission. Considerable doubling by players." So, he didn't have enough to do the thing.

FIREMAN: Oh, I know, yes.

SPORN: So, the "Project did not . . ."

FIREMAN: We had three, four roles.

SPORN: The "Project did not have the lighting equipment or the stage facilities of New York company, but still did not do a realistic version."

FIREMAN: Right.

SPORN: "Describes set and music. Choreography speeded up to enhance continuous patterns of action. Cites changes to be made for spot bookings and tour. Spot bookings brought production out of red." Okay. Then this is the Technical Report. "Cites changes from Nastfogel sets for spot bookings." Costume Report and so on. Now we get to Music and Choreography. "See Edith Segal report." I have those reports. I have them. Choreography. This is Edith Segal's report. There are Press Notices, which are down here. Audience Reaction. Photographs. "Six by Hy Fireman." So, we have six photographs there. See how they . . . It's more than you have in that one, you see?

FIREMAN: Yes, yes.

SPORN: And they're better. Better resolution in the photographs. Okay? Well, obviously, you played it up near Michigan State University.

FIREMAN: Yes.

SPORN: Okay? Played out in Grand River?

FIREMAN: No.

SPORN: You must have.

FIREMAN: No, The Grand River Star. That's a Detroit paper.

SPORN: Oh, The Grand River Star is a Detroit paper?

FIREMAN: Probably. Well, Grand River, there's no Grand River. You mean Grand Rapids.

SPORN: Grand Rapids, pardon me, you're right. Grand River Star, okay.

FIREMAN: "Attacks local reviewer for calling it a . . ."

SPORN: . . . museum piece. Praises imagination of production and the acting of Mephisto and Faust." Okay. Detroit Times. "Cites high schools to be played at." Oh, yes. Now, here's what I picked up

SPORN: from The Detroit Times. It played at Southeastern, Royal Oak High School, Cass, Michigan State College. There it is. Truth Lutheran Church, Dodge Community House, Grosse Pointe High School, Northwestern High School, Cranbrook School for Boys, and so on. "Already played at last two and first one." I don't know what that means. Oh, I guess they were criticizing the . . . This is criticizing Ralph Holmes who said, "Proved interesting only as an antique." So, you see, he's criticizing Ralph Holmes for calling it a museum peice, right?

FIREMAN: Yes.

SPORN: "Prefers more dramatic version based on Marguerite episode." I guess that was cut out. Then, Audience Reaction. Now here, I actually have some names. "Lillian Jackson to Monica Weadock Porter. Praises all the productions from Liliom to Faustus." Now, "Elizabeth P. Hart to Porter. Impressed by entire production." I have their addresses.

FIREMAN: Addresses, yes.

SPORN: When . . . At that time. Because these were letters they wrote.

FIREMAN: Yes.

SPORN: But, who knows? I'll try to get in touch with them.

FIREMAN: Be interesting to, yes.

SPORN: "William R. Stocking to Porter," again. I guess he was the principal of Southeastern High School. "Teachers and pupils delighted. Every seat taken and many standing. Attendance: 950." How about that?

FIREMAN: Yes.

SPORN: And, if I could find those people, those kids . . .

FIREMAN: Yes.

SPORN: . . . nineteen, sixteen, seventeen, they would be still fairly young, you see.

FIREMAN: Sure, sure.

SPORN: That'd be great. I'm going to look into that. Now, here, see, here's the playbill.

FIREMAN: Yes.

SPORN: Jay Michael. He should be still alive.

FIREMAN: Oh, possibly, possibly.

SPORN: He's not that old.

FIREMAN: No, he's older than I am, but not that old.

SPORN: Robert Lowes.

FIREMAN: Now, that's the guy whose photograph you have. Want to identify it while you're on it?

SPORN: Alright. (Pause). That's not Faustus. (Pause), We'll come to those, too. I think I have something on them.

FIREMAN: Alright. (PAUSE). There. This is Robert Lowes.

SPORN: Robert Lowes is . . . I'll put it on the back. We can always get more copies.

FIREMAN: That's Stuart MacIntosh.

SPORN: So, this is Robert Lowes. Stuart . . . M-A-C?

FIREMAN: Yes, I think so.

SPORN: I can get the correct spelling on it.

FIREMAN: Well, he may not have been in this playbill, is he?

SPORN: ~~Well, there's so many. We'll see. Chester Adams.~~

FIREMAN: No, he's not in this because "Mephistopheles" was played by Courtney White.

SPORN: So, is that A. Courtney White?

FIREMAN: Yes. No. This is not Courtney White. That's Stuart MacIntosh.

SPORN: So, he may be in some other, in another presentation? This might have been one . . .

FIREMAN: This was the original. Courtney White created it, And then later on . . .

SPORN: Now, let's see. Louise Huntington.

FIREMAN: An old lady, old lady. Oxley Taylor, I . . .

SPORN: John Watkins.

FIREMAN: I recognize the name, but I can't put a person to it yet.

SPORN: Theodora . . .

FIREMAN: Yes, Theodora Peck.

SPORN: . . . Peck.

FIREMAN: Theodora Peck is still living in New York. I know her. She is still alive. She's got a good mind. You should interview her.

SPORN: Hold on one second,

FIREMAN: Okay.

SPORN: It might take me weeks before I get it off.

FIREMAN: I can even give you her address.

SPORN: Oh, great.

FIREMAN: Almost the phone number.

SPORN: You have it at home?

FIREMAN: No, I have . . . Wait a minute. Well . . .

SPORN: Theodora . . .

FIREMAN: Peck.

SPORN: Peck.

FIREMAN: Well, her name is Theodora Peck Emery. You'd find it either way, you know. Because she always went under her professional name of Theodora Peck.

SPORN: She had a career later on? Theodora . . .

FIREMAN: Only as a political career, not as an actress, as far as I know.

SPORN: Alright. Theodora Peck what?

FIREMAN: Emery. E-M-E-R-Y.

SPORN: What do you mean "political career?"

FIREMAN: Well, she was very active in the Henry Wallace campaign of forty-eight.

SPORN: Oh, I might've met her.

FIREMAN: And . . .

SPORN: Because I was active in that campaign.

FIREMAN: In New York?

SPORN: My wife . . . Yes. Where else?

FIREMAN: Well, then you would've met her. Oh, sure. She was in charge of all the speakers and everything. She was the one who, the one who arranged all the speakers.

SPORN: But, she was in this Federal Theatre Project?

FIREMAN: Here's this woman, here in Detroit.

SPORN: Yes, we'll get to her. New York, I'll put down Wallace campaign.

FIREMAN: West Tenth Street.

SPORN: Now she's on West Tenth Street?

FIREMAN: Yes, or West . . . Wait a minute. East or . . .

SPORN: Well, you check it out.

FIREMAN: Yes.

SPORN: Wallace campaign.

FIREMAN: She lives in that apartment on the corner of Tenth Street and University Place.

SPORN: Really? My daughter was in that. (Laughs).

FIREMAN: You know that apartment building?

SPORN: Well, there's . . .

FIREMAN: Alright.

SPORN: Now, Edith Segal we know. Masson. Samuel Chagy?

FIREMAN: Chagy. (Corrects using Yiddish pronunciation of name).

SPORN: Okay. (Repeats using Yiddish pronunciation).

FIREMAN: In the Yiddish Theatre, Chagy.

SPORN: Old man, or . . .

FIREMAN: Very old man, long dead. In fact, this is . . . He had only one name, you know, like Topol.

SPORN: Yes.

FIREMAN: You know?

SPORN: They called him Chagy.

FIREMAN: In the tradition . . . Yes. Chagy. Right.

SPORN: Okay.

FIREMAN: Yes.

SPORN: Madge Maitland?

FIREMAN: Madge Maitland, an old lady. George Marinucci. Here he is right there.

SPORN: Oh, you see, now you remember him.

FIREMAN: Yes.

SPORN: Now, is George Marinucci the same as Albert Oriucci?

FIREMAN: No, no, no, no, no.

SPORN: George Marinucci.

FIREMAN: That's the exact spelling. That's the correct spelling. Okay.

SPORN: George Mari--

FIREMAN: -I-N-U-C-C-I.

SPORN: Now, what does he look like? He might be alive, do you . . .

FIREMAN: This guy?

SPORN: Yes.

FIREMAN: Possibly, yes. Yes. It's a good possibility.

SPORN: Now these. Lester Powell? Did you talk about him before?

FIREMAN: I've never mentioned him. He was just a hanger-on. He never really was much around here. That's about the only thing he ever . . .

SPORN: Liliias . . .

FIREMAN: Yes, Liliias Shipley. She was one of the ingenues around there at that time. She might still be alive. Both of these two might still be alive in the local area, in the Detroit area.

SPORN: Lester Powell?

FIREMAN: Yes, yes.

SPORN: (Pause). I wish I knew how to find these people. They weren't married? I don't mean to each other, but . . .

FIREMAN: No, no. No, no.

SPORN: That wouldn't be their married name?

FIREMAN: They weren't married at that time, either. No. They weren't married at that time, either. They were young kids.

SPORN: So, they might be married and have a different name?

FIREMAN: Oh, possible. Not him, but her, maybe.

SPORN: John Stinson?

FIREMAN: Old man. I can give you . . . You want an anecdote?

SPORN: If it's related, sure.

FIREMAN: Fine. He was an old, what do they call them? A "banana" in the vaudeville theatre. Not a top banana, but one of the bananas.

SPORN: Okay.

FIREMAN: You know? And, he was this big. He was like, he was built like Teddy Hart, you know, or . . .

SPORN: So, "this big" means about five feet?

FIREMAN: Yes.

SPORN: Or shorter?

FIREMAN: Shorter even than five feet. That's exactly what he was and we rarely found things for him to do because, you know, he always wanted to do dirty stuff, you know. And, in those days, that was taboo. I was single at the time, so one day--not one day, but through a period of working with this guy, he was always promoting his daughter to me. "You gotta come and meet my daughter. You gotta come and meet my daughter." So, one day, finally, I couldn't resist any longer. He says, "Let's take off." We were through with rehearsals or something, and I had the time. We were downtown and he says, "It's just a short block. I want you to come and meet my daughter." "Okay." So, I went along. And he and I are walking down the street, on Woodward Avenue, and we turn into an alley, and I don't know where the hell he's taking me, you know. And, I thought he was . . . Maybe, in the back of my mind, I thought we were going to go to some bar or somewhere. And, we go into a building, turns out to be backstage of the Avenue Theatre. Do you remember the Avenue Theatre?

SPORN: I wouldn't. I came here after.

FIREMAN: Oh. Well, the Avenue Theatre was the burlesque theatre.

SPORN: Oh, that's right.

FIREMAN: Backstage, you know. And here these, you know, property men are running back and forth, stage hands are doing all sorts of things, and here this girl comes off the stage, completely naked, and Billy grabs here, and he says, "Here. I want you to meet . . ." (Laughing).

SPORN: It's his daughter. (Laughing).

FIREMAN: It's his daughter. (Laughter).

SPORN: Was he in burlesque before he got into the Federal Theatre?

FIREMAN: Yes, yes. And, here's this woman standing there, naked as a jay bird, and she's shaking hands with me, and I don't know where to go. I don't know what to do.

SPORN: That's great. (Laughing).

FIREMAN: And, you know . . .

SPORN: Good story.

FIREMAN: Yes. Today I could handle it.

SPORN: Yes, but not then. You were too young. (Laughing).

FIREMAN: I was too young. Not then, no.

SPORN: Very good. Helen Budd?

FIREMAN: No, she's an old lady.

SPORN: Carl Nelson?

FIREMAN: Carl Nelson, I can, yes, I can tell you about Carl Nelson. Poor guy. That's why I . . . Do you remember you showed me the other Nelson, and I said that has to be Carl Nelson?

SPORN: Yes.

FIREMAN: But, this other guy named Nelson was in the business end somewhere.

SPORN: Yes, well, we'll . . .

FIREMAN: Alright. Carl Nelson, yes, was a tremendous talent and drank himself to death; became a folk singer when, you know, the Weavers and Pete Seeger became famous and all that, too, and he capitalized on it. Went around the country as a . . .

SPORN: You mean he became a singer with them?

FIREMAN: No, no..

SPORN: No, on his own?

FIREMAN: On his own, no. He had an operatic voice. This guy was an opera

FIREMAN: singer, and ruined his whole life and career and everything. And, a few years ago, would you believe, called me up, out of the clear blue sky, and told me he's in town. And he said, "Wayne University." So, I came down, and here he is. You know, he's aged, but I recognized him immediately, And he was sent here on some grant to study at Wayne University during the summer. In fact, he roomed, you know, on the campus in one of those subsidized housing, you know, the . . .

SPORN: The apartment?

FIREMAN: I can show you where it is.

SPORN: The dormitory?

FIREMAN: Yes, dormitory. Well, but he had his own private room, you know?

SPORN: Yes.

FIREMAN: And he was here, the whole summer. And, he was really a problem because he was still drinking every night. And I had to nurse him. He'd call me up and he'd be on a bender, you know. Finally, one night, he called me up, he's committing suicide. So, I came running down, and there was nothing I could do, you see. I just . . . As a matter of fact, I was fed up by that time. I just turned it over to the police. He didn't commit suicide. And, he's still alive somewhere, I imagine.

SPORN: Oh, he still is?

FIREMAN: I imagine he's still alive. Yes. But, he's a derelict.

SPORN: But, you don't know where?

FIREMAN: Yes. He's a complete derelict.

SPORN: Charles Schnitzer?

FIREMAN: Yes, he was Arthur Miller's father in They Too Arise. The grandfather, he was the grandfather.

SPORN: Oh, yes. There was a grandfather.

FIREMAN: Grandfather, yes, the grandfather.

SPORN: So, he's an old man, or what?

FIREMAN: Oh, yes. Yes.

SPORN: Mary--what did you say about her before?--L'Herminier.

FIREMAN: L'Herminier. I don't . . . Maybe, but she'd have to be a very old woman, you know. Now, Carl Dahl is James Doll,

SPORN: James D-O-L-L.

FIREMAN: Yes, right.

SPORN: That was just a stage name?

FIREMAN: Yes, he was in, you know. He did a walk on.

SPORN: Yes, okay.

FIREMAN: It's James Doll, yes.

SPORN: Now, these you've talked about.

FIREMAN: The ones I remember.

SPORN: Charlotte Christie?

FIREMAN: Charlotte Christie was the . . .

SPORN: Wardrobe?

FIREMAN: Oh, where are the pictures. I'll point her out to you. Yes. Here. Here she is. This is Charlotte Christie.

SPORN: She doesn't look too old then.

FIREMAN: Yes, she was an old lady. She also came from burlesque.

SPORN: Oh, I see. Some of these had been per- . . . They just wanted people who could sew. They were actually in the theatre before . . .

FIREMAN: No, I mean, she came . . . She was a wardrobe mistress in burlesque.

SPORN: I say, she was in the ward- . . . She wasn't just a sewer or a . . . She was really . . .

FIREMAN: No, she was in from the theatre. Oh, yes.

SPORN: What's her name now, again?

FIREMAN: Charlotte Christie.

SPORN: Charlotte Christie. Wardrobe mistress in burlesque. (Pause). Okay. Did we miss any here? Oh, yes. Samuel Woronow down at the box office.

FIREMAN: Yes, I don't . . .

SPORN: Oh, there's Monica Porter.

FIREMAN: Yes.

SPORN: Okay. Now, do you think she's alive? She was publicity director, at this point.

FIREMAN: I can't picture her.

SPORN: See, Peter Cubra came in before. Came in after, I mean.

FIREMAN: After, oh. I see.

SPORN: After.

FIREMAN: Well, I recognize the names, but that's all. You know, I'd have to see . . .

SPORN: Well, now, obviously, look here . . .

FIREMAN: Jacques LaPere, I remember that name, too.

SPORN: I see he did . . . He was in the publicity department, Peter Cubra.

FIREMAN: Yes.

SPORN: He, was not the director, though. He worked under her, and he did the . . . He did this report.

FIREMAN: Yes, it's also quite possible that some of these people were from another project, transferred, you know, assigned to us.

SPORN: Sure, I know.

FIREMAN: Paid by the other project even, you know.

SPORN: Listen. "The Federal Theatre Magazine is on sale in the Detroit area at The Modern Book Shop."

FIREMAN: The Modern Book Shop was a . . .

SPORN: Was a left wing book shop?

FIREMAN: Sure.

SPORN: "Grand Rapids at The West Side News Agency."

FIREMAN: Well, that one I don't know, but The Modern Book Shop at 3537 Woodward. I can tell you where that is today. You know where the Fine Arts Theatre . . . ? You know where the old Greenfield Restaurant is?

SPORN: Yes, yes.

FIREMAN: It's right across the street.

SPORN: Yes, okay.

FIREMAN: Right across the street from there.

SPORN: So, now this is . . . Now, you see, this is the cast that played at Northwestern High School.

FIREMAN: Yes. Alright.

SPORN: So, we can run through that. Some of the people will still be the same as that. Carl Dahl.

FIREMAN: Carl Dahl, yes.

SPORN: Louise Huntington, we spoke about.

FIREMAN: Yes.

SPORN: Hy Fireman, you were the "First Scholar" in this one. Willard Capen?

FIREMAN: I recognize the name, but I . . .

SPORN: Martha Crowell?

FIREMAN: Wait a minute. Come to think of it, I'm looking for one particular name and her name would be . . .

SPORN: Well, look through this, maybe you'll find it.

FIREMAN: You know who I'm thinking of? Leonard Woodcock's ex-wife.

SPORN: Loula . . .

FIREMAN: Loula Martin.

SPORN: Yes.

FIREMAN: Loula Martin, right. Is she in here?

SPORN: She was in the Contemporary Theatre, I think.

FIREMAN: Yes, but she was also one . . . I got her in here in one . . . He's in one playbill, somewhere. And, I'm wondering if this might not be it.

SPORN: Here's Fred Morrow.

FIREMAN: Yes. Lois. No, no. I said Lois again, didn't I?

SPORN: Yes.

FIREMAN: I thought that might be it.

SPORN: Well, it might come up.

FIREMAN: Yes.

SPORN: See, her name is Weadcock. Look at this.

FIREMAN: Yes.

SPORN: Monica Weadcock.

FIREMAN: Weadock. Weadock.

SPORN: Weadock. Weadock, pardon me. So, we've covered all these names.

FIREMAN: Yes. Wait a minute. Let me quickly go through that.

(TAPE STOPPED. TWO MINUTE GAP IN TAPE).

SPORN: Well, she thought, but she couldn't remember the name of this young fellow, and it was her impression that he then later went to the Spanish Civil War and was killed there.

FIREMAN: Well, it was that period that I worked in that book shop. He never worked in a book shop.

SPORN: Not . . . Not this other one?

FIREMAN: Not Moran, not Moran, no.

SPORN: But, it may have been somebody else.

FIREMAN: No, not Moran, I'm trying to think of . . . (Pause). I also seem to think that she's talking about me.

SPORN: Well, maybe so. Maybe that's who.

FIREMAN: Maybe she's got it confused. Maybe she's thinking of, you know, two different people, but it's actually me. I think so, I'm not, you know, I don't want to . . .

SPORN: Could be. At any rate, as I say, I know she . . . It wasn't an important point, but it was interesting.

FIREMAN: Yes, because I used to . . . Yes, right.

SPORN: So, anyway The Cradle Song . . .

FIREMAN: She used to spend a lot of time in the book shop. They way I remember it.

SPORN: Yes. When she first came back here.

FIREMAN: Yes.

SPORN: No, you see. Eight performances. 1,113 people. The Cradle Song. This was a religious play?

FIREMAN: Well, that was an all woman play.

SPORN: Yes . . .

FIREMAN: That's the reason we did that.

SPORN: Right, right.

FIREMAN: Right.

SPORN: Well, the . . .

FIREMAN: Because the women, you know, in those days, all that they had . . .

SPORN: Now here are the, here are the names. Peggy Fenn, Virginia Barrie, Elynor Hill, Helen . . .

FIREMAN: Mary L'Herminier.

SPORN: Helen . . .

FIREMAN: DuBois.

SPORN: DuBois. Mary L'Herminier.

FIREMAN: Alma Brock.

SPORN: Okay. They're all the people we spoke about already. There's one man in it. That's the doctor.

FIREMAN: Robert Lowes. Robert Lowes.

SPORN: And there were two men, that's right. The young fellow who was married . . .

FIREMAN: That's Chester Adams. Yes. And, oh, and Fairclough. Fairclough, that's the only performance . . . The only time he ever . . .

SPORN: Yes.

FIREMAN: . . . was in a play. He was the business manager.

SPORN: Right. Now, here we come to Let Freedom Ring by Albert Bein. It was based on the Grace Lumpkin novel, To Make My Bread. Cinema Theatre?

FIREMAN: Yes.

SPORN: Verner Haldene, director. The number of performances . . .

FIREMAN: What's this second season? What's this?

SPORN: Well . . .

FIREMAN: Played two . . . Played two seasons.

SPORN: Yes. See, 5-22-37 to 6-6-37, that was the first season.

FIREMAN: Yes, I remember that.

SPORN: Now, in November . . .

FIREMAN: Yes, right.

SPORN: . . . of that year, second season.

FIREMAN: Yes, yes.

SPORN: It was directed by . . .

FIREMAN: Austin Coghlan, yes.

SPORN: That would be the first season, I'll bet. See, that's why they have two directors. Project Number . . . Well, at any rate. Performances: ~~18~~ First Season, People's Theatre. Attendance: 7,141. Now, that's not clear, whether that was for the first season, or for the combined.

FIREMAN: Well, I'm a little confused now, too, because I thought People's Theatre came after Cinema Theatre, not before. See. "First Season People's Theatre." I think it's reversed. I think the Cinema was the first season, and then the . . .

SPORN: Could be, could be.

FIREMAN: . . . then the second season was . . .

SPORN: Could be. Then, obviously, it had a performance as a matinee at the Dodge Community Center.

FIREMAN: Yes, yes.

SPORN: And it had a matinee . . .

FIREMAN: The Masonic.

SPORN: . . . at the Masonic Temple in Ann Arbor. And, I wondered . . . No, the Masonic Temple wouldn't be the church where they did . . .

FIREMAN: No.

SPORN: . . . Faustus.

FIREMAN: No.

SPORN: So, then here, we have a Synopsis of the play, the Director's Report. "Two difficulties: 1). length of play, 2). number of scenes. Solved by use of a simultaneous set and doubling with players. Cites kind of actors needed for various parts. 144 hours spent in reading, casting, and rehearsal. Rehearsed at same time as working on Dr. Faustus,

SPORN: Boy Meets Girl, They Too Arise." You guys were working hard then.

FIREMAN: Yes.

SPORN: Okay, so . . . Then, James Doll spoke of the need to simplify the set to allow for fast tempo. Okay, he wanted fast tempo. Photographs. Four. It doesn't name . . . There was an Eleanor Roosevelt letter to Porter, to Monica Porter. Here, the Music Report by Verner Haldene. "Music used to abet continuous performance technique. Music used also to make transition from scene to scene. The "Ballad of Kirk McClure" used not only for one singer, but workers take up song, sing it in militant manner and at end of play entire cast sings last two . . ."

(END OF TAPE. SIDE B).

INTERVIEW II, PART II

Oral history of Hy Fireman of the Michigan Federal Theatre Project, interviewed by Paul Sporn of Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan, on July 11, 1979.

SPORN: . . . Since we're doing it. We only have about two more. This one and another one, and then we'll go right back.

FIREMAN: Alright.

SPORN: So, here we have Road to Rome, this is by Robert Sherwood.

FIREMAN: Yes.

SPORN: Okay, and you're batting the figure of 11,011. Okay, now, let's see. We don't have . . . Well, this is what I've got. That's what I got from them, though, I xeroxed it myself. So, did you look through the names here.

FIREMAN: Yes, yes.

SPORN: And, names that we've already been through.

FIREMAN: Yes, but I thought that Gramercy was in this show . . .

SPORN: Well, that's what I have.

FIREMAN: . . . and he's not shown here.

SPORN: Alright.

FIREMAN: In fact, you don't have any record of Gramercy, and Gramercy was one of our, you know, more . . .

SPORN: We'll go back. We'll go back. Now, you see, this is all kind of sketchy stuff that I've copied from there.

FIREMAN: Then the material's been lost.

SPORN: So, whatever. Now, this is Macbeth, and there wasn't much on it, you see. Performances: 12. No record on attendance.

FIREMAN: Well, wait a minute, now. This is something else. We didn't do Macbeth. Macbeth came into town.

SPORN: That's right. This was an out-of-town company.

FIREMAN: Yes.

SPORN: Okay. It was arranged and staged by Orson Welles.

FIREMAN: It was a black Macbeth.

SPORN: Right. Exactly the same. So, that was that one. And now, It Can't Happen Here.

FIREMAN: Yes, that we did.

SPORN: Now, I haven't finished doing research on It Can't Happen Here. Okay?

FIREMAN: That opened simultaneously everyplace in the country on the same night.

SPORN: In a whole bunch of places. Here. Eighteen performances, 6,388 people. Sets by Nastfogel. That's again early, 1936.

FIREMAN: Yes, William Beyer directed it.

SPORN: That's all I have on it. Now, there's Around the Corner.

FIREMAN: Yes.

SPORN: That's a sort of a . . .

FIREMAN: Also known as The Good Old Summer Time. I remember the play.

SPORN: Yes.

FIREMAN: Directed by Herschell Mayall. Now there's a name that hasn't appeared before.

(PHONE RINGS. TAPE STOPPED AND RESTARTED).

FIREMAN: . . . more than just this. He was a factor in the Federal Theatre. (Referring to Joe or Edwin Gramercy).

SPORN: Here in Detroit.

FIREMAN: Yes. He was probably one of the top actors in the Detroit area and . . .

SPORN: Do you think young enough to be alive?

FIREMAN: I doubt it. No, I don't think so. But, you know, you never know about these things.

SPORN: Well, it's the only place his name appears. Does his name appear . . . ?

FIREMAN: Not at all. Go back to Help Yourself. I'm sure he played in that.

SPORN: I will in a moment, I will in a moment. Here's I Confess.

FIREMAN: Yes.

SPORN: Now, we have some . . . "Two photographs, 7" x 9", are included in Production Bulletin. Names given for . . . the first photograph."

FIREMAN: And, here's a name that appears now, Klock Ryder, that didn't appear before.

SPORN: Oh, but that's in this play.

FIREMAN: Yes, right.

SPORN: Harriet Russell, Jay Michael.

FIREMAN: Klock Ryder was . . .

SPORN: More of these you identified.

FIREMAN: Yes. Klock Ryder in later . . .

SPORN: The photographs are followed by press notices, okay. We've got that.

FIREMAN: No playbill?

SPORN: Now, we have a folder that contains nothing but--a file folder of photographs and I describe the photographs in them. They were probably done by you.

FIREMAN: No, maybe . . . I don't think this one was done by me.

SPORN: Here's Klock Ryder.

FIREMAN: Yes, yes.

SPORN: Helen Ulmer is a new name.

FIREMAN: Yes, right. Klock Ryder later became a well-known Detroit actor. He was involved in, you know, these national syndicated things like Green Hornet, you know.

SPORN: Radio.

FIREMAN: Yes, radio. Right.

SPORN: Did the Federal Theatre Project here have a Radio Division?

FIREMAN: (Pause). We did some. No, we didn't have a regular Radio Division.

SPORN: You did some radio shows?

FIREMAN: We did some radio.

SPORN: Who did that?

FIREMAN: We did.

SPORN: A regular group?

FIREMAN: We did, yes.

SPORN: What kind of radio plays?

FIREMAN: I'm trying to think of . . . I remember we did a dramatic script in a radio station on the corner of Grand Boulevard and Woodward.

SPORN: Do you remember the radio station? Was it a big one? A network station?

FIREMAN: No, it was not a network station. It was a local station. It was not a big station. It was the station that Danny Thomas was well-involved in, at that time. Danny Thomas.

SPORN: Was he a local man, Danny Thomas?

FIREMAN: Yes.

SPORN: And you did a dramatic script by . . .

FIREMAN: One script.

SPORN: Who did it? Who wrote the script?

FIREMAN: I can't think of who.

SPORN: Norman Rosten?

FIREMAN: Norman Rosten was involved with us in some things at that time. That was during the Arthur Miller period.

SPORN: Yes, from the University of Michigan, I believe.

FIREMAN: Yes, right.

SPORN: But, then he went on to do all sorts of radio scripts.

FIREMAN: Yes, big things, yes.

SPORN: Okay.

FIREMAN: Now, look. See. Here's John Chagy. That's Chagy again, you know.
It was Samuel Chagy, but now it's John.

SPORN: It's the same one.

FIREMAN: It's the same guy. "Mr. Gildersleeve."

SPORN: What about Helen Ulmer?

FIREMAN: I can't remember her.

SPORN: John Langley. Did we talk about him?

FIREMAN: John. Yes, we did talk about him. He's an old man.

SPORN: Don Clarke.

FIREMAN: No. Him I don't recognize. Nelda Lamb is a new name.

SPORN: Yes, we came across it before.

FIREMAN: Did we?

SPORN: Yes.

FIREMAN: Oh, okay.

SPORN: But you didn't remember her.

FIREMAN: Yes. Well, I remember the name, but . . .

SPORN: But you don't know much about her.

FIREMAN: . . . I have to see the . . . Florence Gard, here's a new name.

SPORN: Yes. Nothing. You don't know her?

FIREMAN: Yes. I remember the young actress, but . . .

SPORN: But, you can't tell me . . .

FIREMAN: No. Wait a minute. Let me . . . Doug Wright. Emil Dondero.

(Pause). This is the play that Beyer wrote, you know, and that he later took to Hollywood. He said he was going to make a movie out of it.

SPORN: Okay. You want to go back to . . . You wanted . . .

FIREMAN: Yes. Help Yourself, just because of the Gramercy thing. It's surprising what little information you have.

SPORN: But, you see, I don't have. I don't think. You see, Help Yourself I don't have it for. They don't have it. You see, their records are not all that complete either, but they have a lot of stuff, as you can see.

FIREMAN: Yes.

SPORN: Okay, we went through this pile. Now, I will come back from there

SPORN: with a complete record of the . . .

FIREMAN: Who's the director of Help Yourself?

SPORN: It doesn't say.

FIREMAN: "No info, on production." You know why? See, I tried before the . . .
I tried to get the Contemporary Theatre to do this show and they put it
in rehearsal and then . . .

SPORN: Help Yourself is by E.P. Conkle.

FIREMAN: No, it isn't.

SPORN: Oh. You know, there's another.

FIREMAN: This is this farce. This is this comedy.

SPORN: Why don't I have that E.P. Conkle one because I took that too?

FIREMAN: Well, that's the one, 200 Were Chosen.

SPORN: Yes, I have . . . Did you see it here?

FIREMAN: Yes, it's at the back. It's way in the back.

SPORN: Okay, okay.

FIREMAN: No, Help Yourself is the Orson Welles thing.

SPORN: Oh, yes.

FIREMAN: You know, about the guy who goes into the bank and just moves in
and sits down at the desk and . . .

SPORN: Yes, I remember. It was a funny play.

FIREMAN: Yes, yes.

SPORN: It was interesting. I read, I don't know, I read a lot of those plays.
Now, let's see, over here you say this was . . .

FIREMAN: That's Cosgrove. What's his name? Bob Cosgrove?

SPORN: (Pause). Cosgrove. Well, at any rate.

FIREMAN: Yes, Bob Cosgrove.

SPORN: (Pause). That's the only one?

FIREMAN: No, I can get some more.

SPORN: Okay.

FIREMAN: This is Charlie Bell.

SPORN: Charlie Bell. What's the play?

FIREMAN: I'm trying to think. Isn't it . . . ? Oh. It's One-Third of a Nation.

SPORN: This is One-Third of a Nation?

FIREMAN: Yes. You know, the Peter Stuyvesant scenes. The beginning, you know.
Am I saying it right? Yes. Peter Stuyvesant. Sure. Mayor of New
York, of New Amsterdam.

SPORN: A long time ago.

FIREMAN: Right.

SPORN: That's right.

FIREMAN: That's. Well, you know, wait a minute now. I'm wondering if this isn't the montage?

SPORN: The photograph is a montage.

FIREMAN: I'm wondering if this guy isn't the same guy, if this guy isn't the same guy.

SPORN: Oh, I see what you mean.

FIREMAN: If this woman isn't the same woman. Now, you know, I may be wrong.

SPORN: I see what you mean.

FIREMAN: I may be wrong.

SPORN: Although they could have been wearing the same costume.

FIREMAN: Yes. I may be wrong. I don't know. See, don't these two guys look similar?

SPORN: Well.

FIREMAN: In a different costume, though.

SPORN: Yes.

FIREMAN: Alright, maybe not. Maybe not. But, it's One-Third of a Nation. This is Chester Adams, right here. This guy in the derby hat.

SPORN: Chester Adams.

FIREMAN: Yes. (Pause). You know the script of One-Third of a Nation?

SPORN: Oh, yes.

FIREMAN: Have you read it? Do you remember where they subdivide the property, you know, and all these things? That's what these scenes are.

SPORN: Okay. So you can't . . . ?

FIREMAN: Yes, I can get some more. Elynor Hill. Right there.

SPORN: In the back?

FIREMAN: Yes.

SPORN: This one.

FIREMAN: Yes, that's right.

SPORN: It doesn't matter if I mess these up because they can always be reprinted.

FIREMAN: Yes, reprinted. That's Mayor Linsky then, if it ain't the same guy. This is Doug Wright. This is Doug Wright.

SPORN: They would just love you to sit there and identify those other photographs.

FIREMAN: Yes.

SPORN: I think we'll get you some tickets. Is that alright?

FIREMAN: Sure. I'd have to bring my wife. She wouldn't let me go by myself. This is Edith right here, I think.

SPORN: Edith.

FIREMAN: This is Edith Segal right here. This is also a play that, you know, each person did five or six roles.

SPORN: I know. Yes, well, the idea is that it doesn't matter what roles they did, if we can identify the faces, you see. Can you identify that one?

FIREMAN: Which one? This one?

SPORN: Yes.

FIREMAN: I think that's Shipley.

SPORN: Liliias?

FIREMAN: But, don't put it down yet.

SPORN: What about this one? It looks like the "Wicked Witch of the . . ."

FIREMAN: Alma Brock, I think.

SPORN: Alma Brock.

FIREMAN: Don't put it down, I want to make sure. No.

SPORN: I think we got them all. We have this one, we have this one.

FIREMAN: Yes.

SPORN: What about?

FIREMAN: That's not enough yet.

SPORN: Not enough.

FIREMAN: Yes.

SPORN: This one.

FIREMAN: No, no. I have to see some more there. This is Edith. This is L'Herminier and, let me see.

SPORN: What play is this?

FIREMAN: It's One-Third of a Nation, again. I outdid myself of One-Third of a Nation, by the way. I used to have to have Haldene or somebody stand in for me. You know, while I was taking the pictures because I couldn't photograph myself.

SPORN: Listen, when I go to New York, I've got to take all these photographs and show them to Edith.

FIREMAN: Oh, yes. Well, you saw the ones she has.

SPORN: Yes. This is?

FIREMAN: L'Herminier. Mary L'Herminier?

SPORN: Well, I'll get it, the rest of it.

FIREMAN: Yes. And, I think that's . . . No, that's Shipley, that's Shipley. Liliias Shipley. (Pause). And this . . . (Pause). No.

SPORN: That's One-Third of a Nation?

FIREMAN: Yes, that's also One-Third of a Nation.

SPORN: (Pause). See, these photographs might be all One-Third of a Nation.

FIREMAN: Wait a minute. Wait a minute. Wait a minute. I said this too fast on One-Third of a Nation, didn't I? Let me see this. (Pause). No, that's One-Third of a Nation. Yes, they are One-Third of a Nation.

SPORN: But you don't know the one in here?

FIREMAN: No, Let me see. Wait just a minute.

SPORN: This is . . . We've got this all set. These are wardrobe people, we've got that. You're not going to be able to identify this other fellow?

FIREMAN: Well, it may be Haldene. I'll show you a picture of Haldene, you don't have to help me with that one.

SPORN: Alright. Well, I'll put a question mark.

FIREMAN: Because it doesn't look like him. It doesn't look like Haldene.

SPORN: Okay, I'll just put a question mark.

FIREMAN: It doesn't look like him, but . . . This is Adams. Chester Adams in One-Third of a Nation. Isn't that the same derby he's wearing in this scene, right here?

SPORN: Yes.

FIREMAN: (Pause). Yes. Wait a minute. I want to get another picture of Edith, here. (Leafing through photographs). No. This is Charlie Bell. See, I'm trying to identify costume here with Edith, you know? That's why . . .

SPORN: Is that Edith there?

FIREMAN: This is Edith here, and this is Edith here.

SPORN: Well, you know what happened, in One-Third of a Nation they did all sorts of different parts.

FIREMAN: Oh, I know. I know that. In fact, Edith and I played together.

SPORN: They could be different costumes, easily.

FIREMAN: Sure, sure. But I was hoping that if the costume was identical, then

FIREMAN: that was . . . Knight. Evelyn Knight? Am I saying the first name right? No. It's Eleanor Knight.

SPORN: What?

FIREMAN: Knight. Knight. Knight, and that's Edith and Cosgrove. Cosgrove is the guy opposite her and the bottom guy is, Foley?

SPORN: This guy is Cosgrove.

FIREMAN: That's Cosgrove here and this guy, I think, is Foley. I think his name was Foley. Was there a Foley?

SPORN: It doesn't say.

FIREMAN: You got a list of, you know, of everybody in the company? I think his name was . . . Don't put it down, don't put it down, yet. Don't put it down. I think that's Whitworth. Ruth Whitworth. (Pause). This is my . . . I think this is One-Third of a Nation, too. These are two kids that we brought in. There was a black scene in it.

SPORN: This is One-Third of a Nation?

FIREMAN: Yes. All these, or most of these, are.

SPORN: I think these are mostly.

FIREMAN: Yes. (Pause). I'm sitting here narcissistically admiring my photographs here.

SPORN: They're nice photographs.

FIREMAN: Yes. There's Edith right here. See Edith? This is Edith, right there.

SPORN: (Pause). She told me that she used to sell The Daily Worker on the set.

FIREMAN: Yes, right. (Pause). I wish you could give me one of these to take home and study, you know, look at it and have those things . . . No, not that one.

SPORN: Take them all home.

FIREMAN: Not that one. No. Why don't . . . You know, you can have copies made, can't you?

SPORN: Well, I'll go down there and I'll get you copies, okay.

FIREMAN: Alright, we'll do it then. No point in doing it now.

SPORN: No. Alright.

FIREMAN: Do you have a playbill of One-Third of a Nation? Sure you do.

SPORN: Wait a minute. I'll get you the One-Third of a Nation.

FIREMAN: Alright, then I'll come up with this . . . The one with the two

FIREMAN: black kids.

SPORN: Now, wait. Let me see what I did with that. I know I have it here somewhere.

FIREMAN: I showed you my Anna Christie pictures, didn't I? You saw them when you were at my house. I wonder if Mason has those?

SPORN: Listen, they have things . . .

FIREMAN: They didn't give you every photograph.

SPORN: No, they gave me the ones they . . . They're in different files and when you come down there you'll see what I'm talking about.

FIREMAN: Alright. Alright.

SPORN: You know what you'll have to do? You'll have to give me an idea of what dates you could . . . (Pause).

FIREMAN: I'd like to be down there with you.

SPORN: Yes, that's what I'm trying to say, so we can work it out together.

FIREMAN: Yes, yes.

SPORN: If you can give me an idea of what dates. See, I have to know, I have to fit it up with my . . .

FIREMAN: Yes, why don't you call them or write to them and ask them, and we can get together. I'm flexible on the dates.

SPORN: I'm going to see them Monday?

SPORN: I'm leaving for Washington Sunday.

FIREMAN: Oh, then talk to them.

SPORN: Monday I'm going to George Mason.

FIREMAN: Talk to them about it.

SPORN: Monday I'm going to George Mason . . .

FIREMAN: Okay, talk to them.

SPORN: . . . and, let's see what I have here.

FIREMAN: I've got to get home. It's almost five o'clock and I'm almost an hour late.

SPORN: You get so wrapped up in this you don't notice the time.

FIREMAN: Yes, I know. No, no. That's why I say . . .

SPORN: I'd like to get together again, anyway.

FIREMAN: Oh, yes.

SPORN: I'll tell you what I'll do. Alright, it's kind of late. What time is it?

FIREMAN: It's almost five o'clock.

SPORN: Alright, so let's stop here.

FIREMAN; Yes.

END OF TAPE. SIDE B.