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Interview with Mr. John Eubanks at his barbershop on Main Street, Newark, Delaware, on January 4, 1972, by Myron Blackman. Project: Delaware in the Depression.

Q O.K., Mr. Ewbanks, the first question is, "What do you remember first about the Depression?"

A Gradual inability of people to pay for goods and services. They weren't making enough money, and the banks tightened up, I guess because they weren't receiving the payments on loans they had out. And the whole economy gradually started to--I think it frankly--what started the sinking was reading about it in the big cities where it first became evident. And it gradually stepped down here, but this town was dependent upon, you might say, mostly dependent upon two large fiber mills, the Continental Diamond Fiber and the National Vulcanized Fiber. And their business decreased and naturally they started to layoff people. And there was just less spending power, and it gradually worsened. And people who had--in our particular field--had gotten haircuts every two weeks, just didn't come in, or they brought their children in and said, "Well, we need haircuts, but we don't have any money." And we knew they didn't, so we cut it anyhow. You had to do something. And then the little--at that time, I think there might have been five or six individual milk delivery services in Newark. And they stayed in business as long as they could, and some of them had to go out, because they weren't collecting enough money for the milk they were putting out. Then the grocer--there were a lot of smaller groceries in those days, and they held on as well as could be expected. A lot of 'em went in debt, and I know we did. We couldn't pay the rental and make enough. And my mother fortunately had a little money aside and we had to dig into it in order to get by. But the people who were on regular salary--guaranteed salaries, you might say, were the people who featured the best. And I remember very well a discussion--of course, he was just a high school graduate like myself, I'd only had about a year in college and my dad had had about a year--but there were some suggestions to balance this, and I know he didn't have anything against the individuals, but there was a professor here at the university at the time, and he said, "Well, Ben, how we gonna solve it?" He said, "Well, families holding multiple jobs." He said, "The case I have in mind is your secretary. Her husband is a post office employee who receives a pension. Their children are grown, and yet his wife is one of your highest paid secretaries down at the university." He said, "In all fairness, I think [interrupted here by laundry man] . . . and he said, "I think in all fairness, at least for the time being to overcome a crisis like this, that I know right off hand of a hundred men who are really breaking their necks for jobs where any one of these three incomes could see them survive." And the said professor--I won't name him, he's deceased now--it made him furious. But he couldn't see that that was a way of solving the economy. He said, "I believe that single people, the female sex has as much right to a job, or the male, whichever it could be, that was the main support of the family, but I don't see where in a crisis like this that this particular one family with two people should have three sources of income when this man walking by here has none." That was just a suggestion, but it made the professor very mad, I remember at the time. And then as things got worse, your average wage scale wasn't much back in those days

anyhow, and well, people were just suddenly without work. And that's the reason I think led to our unemployment. And although it's been abused, I admit, that suddenly man was out of work and that was it. And this lent, I think, a lot of sympathy to unions. I know of a case where a man and his wife, and he worked at the Continental for thirty years, and they called in efficiency and the young people were bucking for jobs, and they finally told him that his job was over. "You're laid off." And he said, "Am I laid off or fired?" The fellow said, "You're fired." He said, "Well, I've worked here thirty years." He said, "Yes, but you didn't do any work while you were here." He said, "Well, you'd know about the last two years, the other 28 you wouldn't know about 'cause you just came in two years ago." And this gave impetus, I think, to the support of unions, you know. That man sat on his porch and grieved to death. He didn't have any money to get made--had illness, lost a son, and he just suddenly had no source of income at all. And I don't think that can happen today. So I think although they're often criticized and discussed quite a bit, some things like social security and unemployment, I think the Depression directly--and bank insurance included--brought these about as necessary legislation to the survival of the country. But the one point that made me reflect more yesterday, in the cities, oh the breakfast missions, the Salvation Army, and all of 'em, they helped a lot. Like different sections of the city had their own ways of taking care of the people who were actually hungry. And naturally, they missed a lot of 'em, but I never remember of any welfare system, and neighbors tried to look after each other. I know we worked for nothing and never sent a bill. And I know that others--of course, a merchant that had to buy something and then resell it, he had to try to collect his money. Ours is just a service, but we had to pay the overhead and for the materials we used, but all in all, I think the people kind of pulled together. And if one guy saw another one--I know one time--I don't like to keep putting "I" in there, but there was a friend of mine that lived up there in the colored section, we used to swim together up at the creek here, and they always talk about this--people didn't fraternize, and he was a much bigger guy than I, and I was in Wilmington riding a bus and I saw him down near the commission houses on 4th Street, below French. And I had my bus ticket back and I had seventy cents, and I said--he was a colored fellow, great big fellow, and I said, "How you makin' out, Snowball?"--that's what we always called him, and he'd always laugh. And he said, "Oh, pretty good, Bub, pretty good." And there was a little restaurant there. And I said, "Well, how about comin' in for a cup of coffee?" He was a proud fellow. He said, "I get some jobs around the commission house here when they're real busy," but this fellow had become almost blind with cataracts, and he said, "I do pretty good, I do pretty good." And I get in there, and I think it was hamburger platter with mashed potatoes and peas, 30¢, and a big platter, with all the bread you wanted. And I said, "How about a platter?" He said, "Oh, Bub, I don't need it." And the girl that worked in there, she knew him. She said, "He hasn't eaten for a couple of days." I said, "Well, give him a platter." And so she set it up, and he made it disappear in a hurry. He was a big man, he weighed about 220. So I shoved over the rest of my money, I said, "Give him another platter and keep the change." I road home on the bus, I didn't have a nickel. But I felt a little better. But I think that's how it was accomplished, without welfare or anything--people were helping each other.

Q What was the story you told me yesterday about what your father said to

you, in the shop here, about people who couldn't pay?

A I hinted at that before. He said, "Don't try to collect from anybody that doesn't have it. They spent their money when they had it, and now, coming out of this thing, if we ever can," he said, "they're gonna have to pay the grocer and the milkman and the rent." So he said, "If you try to collect it, you're just gonna make an enemy." And he said they were willing to pay, they just didn't have it. So, "Don't send any bills. Don't try to collect any of it." He said, "Maybe we can all get through." And that was the policy we used." But as we were coming out and Roosevelt went in, I know I talked to Mr. Norris Wright, who was in, and I shaved him the day after the bank holidays, and Mr. Wright was a millionaire, and I said, "Well, Mr. Wright, what's gonna happen?" I said, "He's declared a bank holiday." He said, "Well, Bubs, I don't know," he said, "I've been a life-long Republican, but I think he's got the right idea, and we sure hope he's right." He pulled out his pocketbook and handed me a dollar bill, and he said, "I'll tell you one thing, I didn't run to the bank for a cent." He said, "I've got just \$19.00 in my pocket." That was Norris Wright, a brother of J. T., where the president's home is now. He said, "I didn't run for a penny. I just hope--we're 100% behind us, all of us, regardless of politics, just to bring us out of this thing."

Q Could you tell that story you told me about going into Wilmington, when you saw the DuPont, Mr. DuPont?

A Oh, yes. Sometime, I think it was '28 or '29, I went in on the Pennsylvania Railroad, which--the station still is at Front and French, that's First Street or Lancaster Avenue, and French, and as custom was, I always walked from French up to Market, and then up Market Street. But at this time, I think it was at 3rd and Market, was a whole gang of people on either side of the street and around the corners, on 3rd, and I talked to a man there, a merchant, who was out in front of his store. And I said, "What's up?" He said, "Oh, they're getting ready to make a run on this bank." And about that time, he looked up Market, and he said, "Look coming." And there were nine or ten Brinks armored trucks coming down Market Street, and in the front truck was Mr. Vic DuPont, and the people were gathered around, and he got out and stood on the running board of the first truck, and he said, "I'm not a stockholder in this bank; I don't have a penny in it. But I went over the books last night and this bank is just as sound as my bank up at 9th and Market. And if you people want your money, you can come and get it, because I'll put the money in there." And he got out, held up bags of money, and then he threw the back doors of the things open, and he says, "And I'll put plenty in." And in ten minutes the crowd practically dispersed. None of them went in the bank, only a very few for ordinary business. But they took his word for it. They knew he was honest, and it averted a run on the bank.

Q This was after the stock market crash?

A Just about the time it was crashing, I guess. And for the size city, with the DuPont Company and Coca-Cola Company having their main offices there and several other huge corporations, Wilmington was a stock-conscious small city. You know, a lot of people invested in stocks. And I know of several friends that I'd even caddied for up at the golf club were sudden suicides, you know.

They were worth a million dollars one day and broke the next. They couldn't take it.

Q Was Newark hit very hard by the Depression?

A No. Oh, of course, the mill people were out of work. But there was enough people with regular jobs that were stable that friend helped friend, is the best way I could say it. And if somebody came along, the few restaurants that were still in--that were in existence here at that time, if he went in a restaurant and asked for something to eat, the people that owned them would give them something to eat, or somebody in there would say, "Well, sit down, have something." The only ones that might have suffered were people at home, or children. But it seemed to be one person aiding the other. And it was even worse, of course, in our neighboring town of Elkton, where two banks crashed and never could make restitution. I think the most paid by any bank was something like--one of them absolutely folded up. And the other paid off later, much later, at about something like 17%. So we were pretty lucky. And it was often quoted that Delaware was the only state of the then 48 that didn't have a single bank failure. And I think it was stabilized by the DuPont family and Company--if they found out, unbeknownst to the public, they would go and do something to stabilize that bank. They didn't want that . . . and we people in Delaware, I've never had any direct benefits from them except from doing business with their employees. The DuPonts have been always pretty conscious with the people of Delaware--they're good rich, and that's--I think I express the opinion of most of the people. We're always a little envious, but if you gotta have rich, you might as well have good ones.

Q I was reading a book and the title of the first chapter, or one of the chapters, was "The Gloomy Depression of Herbert Hoover," and the next chapter was "The Exhilarating Depression of Franklin Roosevelt." Was there a change?

A Absolutely. People--after all, except those banks who had previously failed, after he took office, things--people had a better attitude. He was pressing for legislation to prevent anything like this. Some jobs were restored, and the majority of people had a--that is, not politically, one party or another, I think both parties had a little different outlook. He had a power of speech, or persuasion, or whatever you may care to call it, that he exuded some confidence to the people. And then he started changing these laws and tunes of things. I remember in his campaign for his second term of office, and the man who was running for Vice President on the Republican ticket was a former banker from the Chicago area--I'm trying to think of his name--Knox, Landon and Knox--Alfalfa Bill Landon from Kansas and Knox. And Knox made a speech, one of a series planned, on a Friday night, in Chicago, about the unstable conditions of the financial institutions. And following that Friday speech, on the next Monday night, Roosevelt made a speech, and it just so happened by coincidence that it was the first anniversary of the real institution of the federal banking insurance in Pittsburgh, and he opened his speech, which I remember well by the old radio medium, he said, "Tonight we celebrate the first anniversary in American history where there hasn't been a single bank failure." Knox cancelled the rest of his speeches. And he said, "I enjoy being in this plan 100% and I can't continue my speeches to attack the financial condition of the country when a man in one paragraph

blasts me off the air." And he said, "It's unanswerable." He said, "I enjoy it." And what happened? After his second term, Knox was in Roosevelt's cabinet, as either Secretary of Army or Navy, I've forgotten which. That was one thing some of the Democrats criticized Roosevelt for, was that he didn't care. If he--he was elected by the majority of the American people, a resounding majority, and if he thought the person merited it, regardless of party, they got the job.

Q Some people have complained about programs like the W.P.A., that it tended towards goldbricking. Do you think . . .

A Well, I think there were a lot of mistakes, but it was the idea that something now--illustrations I have was maybe 100 families around here, they had sons that there weren't any jobs available too. One in particular, I know, had four sons. Three of those boys went to these--not Works Progress, but these C.C.C. camps. Well, I didn't think about it so much, but except for minor things, that pay was sent to their mothers. And once in a while I'd cash one of these checks. And it wasn't a whole lot, but it was a whole lot to a family that needed it. And later in life, I know I was almost 38 years old when I hit Omaha Beach, and I went in the service in '42, and they were reconverting old C.C.C. camps to military camps, temporary camps. And you know, I lectured at O.C.S. at Camp Lee, Virginia, in '43, and you know, the boys with the basic knowledge gained through its military approach in C.C.C. were some of our top guys in the service? I mean, it didn't appear that way when it was started, but it later followed that they knew their way around. They were far more experienced than I. They knew how to go out and build something, or how to tear it down. They knew how to do things. So the program had its faults and could be criticized--I wouldn't blame anybody for criticizing, it's the fact that parts of it became valuable later. Regimentation is one--they were under regimentation when they were in these camps. And when they went in the service, it was just like stepping over a bridge to them, it wasn't anything. To me, it was a heck of a jump.

Q But I think most people would agree with you about the C.C.C., but not the W.P.A.

A No, but it's doing something that they're suggesting now, and on this comment today, here the 4th of January, these people--they had to do one of two things: some kind of welfare would have had to been created, or give a man something to do. Now, a lot of the Works Progress Administration things were flops. But some of 'em did do some valuable work, in road work. Some of these parks things and so forth, they were just loafers, we all know. But it did keep 'em doing something for the little bit they were getting. And it's like Peterson today has come out that the state's gonna save over a million dollars annually for people who are able-bodied, from 18 to 54, who are just collecting this without doing anything. And to the average person who wants to do something, I think these people will receive a little more than welfare, and they can hold their heads a little higher. Instead of sitting back, taking this dole. And I think that was more or less why these people may go out on the state highway. Some of 'em will do some good and some of 'em will fiddle the time away. But they're gonna be doing something, at least. And now, I think every American's the same as I, if a person's old or sick, we want to help them--all of us. But to the guy who's

healthy as--now in this business, today, which you well know, we used to be so busy we couldn't--now we don't do anything. I mean, the youth of today aren't getting haircuts. So I'm working for nothing, practically. And of course if I was younger, I'd be out of the business, you know, that's my fault, I've barbered for 50 years. But I haven't gone for any welfare or anything. I'm trying to struggle along as long as I can. And I don't intend--now, boys come out of the service. They got the 52-40 club, for 40 weeks they get so much money, you know. I never drew a penny, I never drew anything from the service at all. They talk about things--now if you were young, you could apply for the G.I. Bill and go to college. I got out of the service, I was 39, two children, and I'm just not a very hot suspect for going back to college. But in my age bracket there weren't too many. But we were the forgotten gang. There were no provisions for us at all. The real young and the real old, yes, but I mean for the real young and the ones who still wanted to learn trades and go to college, the program was fixed up. Well, for the older guy, he didn't get a darn thing. If he did, I can't find it--never have. Course as I say, we were in the minority and there was nobody to holler much. At the same time, you take three years out of your life, that . . .

Q Well, what was your feeling about President Hoover?

A Well, I don't think it was a political thing. I think everybody felt very sorry that Hoover had to answer to so many people. He was elected by a party, and I think that Hoover was a great man and things had just gradually deteriorated until this big thing came. And this was when the super-giant mowed down the next giant and swallowed him and so on down the line. And I think everybody felt sorry for Hoover, but they wanted action. And I think Hoover could only do so much--he was answerable to a lot of people--and I think Roosevelt benefited from the fact that the great majority that swept him in, he knew they weren't all Democrats, so he could take a more firm hold, you know, and go ahead. And Hoover, more or less, had his hands tied. Which had been the old custom of American government, you know. His government had to be filled with Republicans that had worked for it, and if he saw a more capable man on the other side, he didn't dare appoint him. Well, Roosevelt didn't have this disadvantage when he went in. If the man was capable, he said, the heck with you. I remember--of course he had done more for labor than any President--I think due more to circumstances. But--oh, John L. Lewis, the great labor union chief, worked for Roosevelt in his second term. As he was preparing for his second-term campaign, John L. Lewis said, "Mr. Roosevelt, I'm going to be your next Secretary of Labor." He says, "No, Mr. Wilson [sic], you're not." He says, "You're too biased on the labor side, and so-and-so (I forget the name now)--he would be too biased on the capital side." He said, "I want to place a man as Secretary of Labor who can see both sides." So John L. Lewis said, "Then you'll not make me Secretary of Labor." He said, "Under no circumstances." He said, "Then I'll lick you at the polls." Roosevelt says, "Mr. Lewis, crack your whip." And that was the end, politically, of John L. Lewis, because labor knew what Roosevelt had done for 'em, and they wouldn't reject--they didn't pay any attention to Lewis. He said, "Mr. Lewis, crack your whip." And he had that advantage, where in a lot of ways, Hoover didn't have that advantage. I think Hoover was brilliant, but you know, sometimes your hands are tied.

Q Did you ever see any bread lines, in Wilmington, or . . .

- A I didn't travel much during the Depression. No, I understand that--like places like--very old places like the Sunday Breakfast Mission and these places, that they served soups and stuff. There weren't any in Newark. Philadelphia I saw 'em selling apples on the street corners, and I guess they had a lot of institutions where you could get a bowl of soup and a sandwich, but it's remarkable to me now that they have so much welfare when the American way in those days was to work out of it yourself, and help each other a little and get going. And now it seems like all these things that have been created--and if they were for the ones who justly deserved them it'd be all right--but every time we kick about taxes, we're kicking about ourselves, because you create these charitable things, then you have to pay for 'em.
- Q I've been told by several people who were young--who were children during the Depression--that their parents would do anything but go on relief.
- A I know. This man happened to be a brother of a friend of mine here, and his younger brother is a retired accountant with the DuPont Company--he lived in Elkton, Maryland. And I've often heard the story, he had a pretty high position, but it was one of those ones that they could cut, and he was dropped. And the man who now has the Glasgow Arms, Gus Schlovos [sp], had the Elk Restaurant, in Elkton. And this man came down, and he said, "Gus, I have a wife and child, and I'm out of work." And Gus said what kind, he said, "Cleaning up. I don't know anything about cooking or waiting." He said, "Well, that comes at a difficult time. I keep open 'til twelve or one." He said, "I don't care what time it is." And he said, "The pay is, . . ." and he said, "I don't care what the pay is. You tell me when to come and what to do and I'll do it." And he worked and worked and worked down on his hands and knees, a man that sat at a desk all his life.
- Q Well, what was this--oh, I don't know, this fear or dislike of going on welfare?
- A I don't think they had any welfare at that time, that amounted to anything.
- Q Well when Roosevelt came in, there was some relief.
- A Oh, yes.
- Q Unemployment.
- A Yeah. But unemployment, you first had to establish that by being employed.
- Q Yeah, right. But people are people . . .
- A See, this was made as just a transfer to hold you over from one job to another. That's the reason it had a very abrupt ending. You only got it for so many weeks. Now, this extension of unemployment benefits that irked Nixon so much wasn't the intent of Roosevelt. They're aborting his law there. This was to tide you over so that this Great Depression thing couldn't happen again until you were in the transition of going from one job to another. That's what it was originally passed as. Now, of course,

when they do things like this with those laws, they're not sticking with the very fundamental idea of the thing, at all.

Q Was your family hurt by the Depression much?

A Oh, yeah. My mother went into her savings for several thousand dollars, and I want to tell you something. I was out for a year with diptheria, my freshman year in high school, I didn't graduate until a year later, in '27, and I worked--in those days we worked 14, 15 hours a day, and of course it was a family effort, the money wasn't coming in, and many, many Saturday nights I walked out with a dollar for all week's work. And I rolled cigarettes--Boots Mixture and Bull Durham. People don't believe that. Of course, I was young. Things don't worry you as much when you're young, you know. I know my father and mother were worried to beat the dickens. And I had a sister in the telegraph office down here, and I guess she got the fabulous sum of about \$15.00 a week. But, well, that's the way things went. My youngest sister, she graduated in '31, so she was about a sophomore in college at the time. You just did the best you could, that's all, and kept on smiling. Of course, food, comparatively, got very cheap. You know, it had to, if they wanted to retail it, it just by necessity had to.

Q Did the Depression change any plans that you had made for your life?

A Oh, yeah, you'd always plan for things that just never got off the ground after. But I think you could satisfy yourself that you were still one of the more fortunate, because--I don't know, and I've never seen the figures of the suicides back at that time, but they say that at some sections around Wall Street, it'd sound like another war on, popping their brains out. I remember these two men--I won't mention their names--had a brokerage firm in Wilmington and they both belonged to the Newark Country Club and I had caddied for them both. And within one week, one sat in his garage and let his Packard run, committed suicide, and a short time later the other took a 38 and blew his brains out. And they were very likable men. But I guess they were on--they bought on the margin in those days, you know. Now that marginal method of purchases has been practically eliminated. And one day, on paper, they were worth a million or so, and the next day, suddenly, they looked, and they were flat broke. That's a pretty big comedown. But I think it was the fortitude and the American way that they just kept fighting 'til they pulled out of it.

Q Did the attitude towards Roosevelt change as the '30's . . .

A Well, then Roosevelt helped create some jobs, too--some that were legitimate. The bootlegger, he was a very small minority, and helped a few, but he brought beer and stuff back, and it wasn't so much whether it was good or bad bringing it back, it created employment. And tax has since been quadrupled many times on it, you know. It has been a big source of revenue for the government. And it opened new places of business and created a few jobs that way. You can't see how far that goes, it goes all the way back to the people growing grain, the fellow who makes the tractors, and it just keeps on going.

Q But did--there was a great surge, at least in 1936, behind Roosevelt, a

tremendous vote for him, and then gradually it seemed, from what I've read, that it dwindled slightly, as the thirties got on.

A Oh, yes. I think that a man should be limited in terms in office, especially in a great democracy like this. Because Roosevelt, through all his greatness, I think, the tax of being in office changed him somewhat from an amiable to a man who could take criticism and smile back at you, and he was wearing pretty thin on some of it, he didn't like to be crossed. And he was to me the greatest of all the Presidents I've known, and some of his laws still stand up real well that he was behind the creation of. But towards the end I think his way of going, that if you crossed him--you are never so great that you can't have critics, and he didn't like to be criticized toward the end. He's like all other human beings--I think criticism is good. And if you can't take it, you don't belong there.

Q Did you--in the late thirties--well, you've been into the middle thirties, were you following, were people following the European situation? Or the Asian situation much?

A Well, yes, back in those times we were following it pretty wholeheartedly. The Japanese, you know, went into Manchuria and I remember this one fellow, who was a graduate of Old Goldie business school in Wilmington, he couldn't find anything to do and he had the family car and he'd go over here and buy up eggs and sell eggs. I think he used to sell a little whiskey on the side, too. I didn't know it--he never attempted to sell it to me. But we used to have a Chinese laundry down there, and they were his biggest customers. There were six Chinese in there, and they ate eggs to boot, and they would frequently get six or seven dozen. And this one fellow, the older one, who I guess was very well educated in Chinese but had pretty broken English, he'd say, "Hey, Barney, you give me only this week five dozen chicken balls." And he made an expression. And Barney said, "If you don't buy more than that, how are we gonna help you beat the Japanese?" And he said, "Barney," he said, "you know have to help Chinaman beat Japanses." He says, "You shoot Chinaman, Chinaman come." In other words, there were too many of 'em. That was his way of putting it. He says, "We don't need help to beat Japanses [sic]." He says, "You shoot Chinaman, Chinaman come." That was his way of expressing it. I often laughed about it. It was basically true.

Q Was there much worry about the war in Europe as the '30's . . .

A Well, as the '30's--you had men like a fellow who gained his citizenship, he was a stowaway on a boat, an old character here in town, George Walker, everybody loved old George, he'd stowed away as a boy. And he got his American citizenship for serving in the United States Army in World War I. And he worked at the Deer Park Hotel in his later years, and in '36 he went back to--his first and only visit to his native Sheffield in England, and somebody was telling him about it, and George expressed it in his own way. George I guess was drinking a little bit too much at that time, and his palate had become accustomed to American whiskey. And he went back to England and somebody asked him about his visit over there. And about the time he got there, the British government had deemed it necessary for all citizens and visitors to wear gas masks. And George was very short of stature, and George told somebody, he says, "Well, George, how'd you like--

wasn't it nice to go back to your jolly old England? How is it?" George says, "The same as when I left there, and that's why I left--terrible. The whiskey's bad and that doggone gas mask keeps hitting me in me ass every time I walk down the road." So I think the gas mask bothered George more than anything.

Q Was there much concern about the chance that the United States would get involved in the European war?

A I think yes, we were even--practically involved then. You see, at that time Russia and Finland were having their conflict, and all the sympathy in this country was for Finland. I wore a pin that I gave \$5.00 for, "Friends of Finland." But then when Hitler started--he entered the Sude-tenland, Austria, finally Poland, and when he went into Poland, that was when the British stuck to their commitment, they would fight to defend Poland, integrity. By then people knew that Hitler was a madman running wild. And naturally, Russia had only shown her inferior troops against Finland, and Hitler had based his assumption that he could walk through them. And to keep the ports open up there--we didn't take Russia as an ally by choice, we took them as the lesser of two evils. We never did take them the right way. And of course I was in the Fourth Armored Division during the war, and there was only one man that had hindsight and that was Churchill. I know that they've often said, "Why did we let the Russians go into Berlin?" Well, I was with the Fourth Armored, and we realized--we were right up south of Berlin. And we could have gone into Berlin. There wasn't anything in the world that could have stopped us. And they said, "Well, they've done the bulk of the land fighting, let the Russians go in." As I say, they were our allies, like it or not. And our guys said, "If they want that dubious honor, let 'em go ahead, brother." Because when you go into a nation's own capital, you pay for it, and don't forget they did pay for it. But the result of our not going in--there was only one man that foresaw it, and that was Churchill, about their bargaining power after being the occupant, you know. The rest of the great world heads, none of them came close to it--Churchill was the only man. Of course it later proved costly to us, but . . .

Q Let's just finish this up.

A Yeah, all right.

Q Did you listen to the radio much during the '30's?

A That was all there was to do. Frankly, even pulling it out of it--that was your--it was a Sunday night and every night thing. Sunday nights was Eddie Cantor, and you got so you knew every song and every word. And don't forget there was another big one during the Depression, and they must have sold billions and billions of 'em, was crossword puzzles. There was more reading done, and these gigantic crossword--not crossword puzzles, jigsaw puzzles. Whole families would get on a floor and start putting jigsaw puzzles together. It was about the only form of entertainment, you know--it and your radio.

Q What else did you listen to?

A Oh, back in those days, I'm trying to remember. I remember Eddie Cantor

'cause he was on Sunday nights. All the--one company promoted the big symphony orchestra program. And there were quite . . .

Q People mention Amos and Andy.

A Amos and Andy, yeah, that was on a week night, you know, and that was always very popular. And, oh, I'm trying to think. There were so many good programs--that we considered good. And the Phillip Morris program with Johnny, "Call for Phillip Morris." You knew everything that came out. Edgar Bergen with his Charlie McCarthy Show, that was big.

Q Did you by any chance listen to the Orson Welles . . .

A No, I wasn't listening to that that night, but gee, right over here in Jersey, some of 'em that tuned in late, there was a farmer out in the road with his shotgun, ready to shoot Martians. No, I think I had listened to his pretty upsetting things, and if you tuned in late and didn't know it was a program, the way he could dramatize so realistically, that I think that I would have know, because I'd listened to a couple of others and had been briefed to some extent on this one. I think I would have just sat down and enjoyed it. But a lot of people that tuned in late, you know, maybe coming in from doing something, he made it so realistic that boy, he really upset people. Of course everybody laughed like fools the next day, you know, after it was revealed. But it proves one thing: America, I think, today and before every great war, they just sort of accept things and smile. But when trouble really hits, the quickest to mobilize--Hitler said, "They're sitting on their cans over there, they can't do anything." Roosevelt made the prediction when Lindbergh came back after surveying the great air force of Germany, and he said, "No one will ever catch them or even compare to them--their air force can crush anything anybody can foresee." And Roosevelt came out, and he said, "Huh uh. If necessary, we in a year can have air superiority numerically, and gradually, technically. If necessary, we can build a thousand planes a month, yes we can build a thousand planes a week." And Mr. Lindbergh laughed at that, but that became a fact. That became a fact. And I went into England in '43, I believe it was, and England--they just didn't have many planes. But you know, before we went over that ditch, those air raids were down pretty well from planes. Now after we went into Omaha and invaded, there in southern England where I had been, they were hit by those other things, you know.

Q The rockets.

A Yeah, a form of rocket. But we had--we were in France at that time. And if Hitler--we overran several of those sites. Frankly, I didn't know what they were. I knew they were some kind of a launching pad, but they had been knocked out by advance stuff when we went by them, and we knew there was some creation there, and I guess if he'd of had a little more start on those stuff, he'd have been a real tough thing. They had some of the greatest engineers--and contrary to most people, I think it was the fortitude of the American people that could overcome something like this. And other countries do it, and still are doing it. It's just something you gotta fight.

Q Uh huh. Do you think the Depression taught us a lesson about the country?

- A Well, yeah, it taught us, I think, a lot of things. That you can tighten your belt, you can do things that you didn't think it was gonna be necessary to do. And I think every individual--he's never really tested himself on if he had to, what he can do, to survive. And it could have gotten a lot worse.
- Q Do you think we could have another depression like the one we had in the '30's?
- A I don't think. I think banking insurance, which was the old people's social security in those years--they were secure by what they had saved; I think social security, bank insurance--that there will always be some money in the hands of people who have to spend it, therefore your economy might drop low, but there's always gonna be business being done, of a nature. And there's gonna be money circulating. But of course things could get real tough, but. . . . And I know I just sent off my last tax payment, and I guess I growl I'm about broke now, but if you got a great nation to support and many far-flung things and so forth, you try to economize and we need some sort of stabilization now. And I think Nixon's attempting it. But you just got to keep on trying, and that's all there is to it. And one of the ways is, that you know and I know, is this welfare stuff. Now, I believe in the person who's entitled to it should have it. But I see able-bodied people I know have been drawing it for years. And they wouldn't take a job for--they wouldn't work in a pie factory, which is an old expression we used to use. They just don't want a job, and that's all there is to it.
- Q Just sort of . . .
- A Oh, I think the government has spoiled people, that certain segment there.
- Q If by any chance there was a depression like that one, how do you think that the young people, the people who were just--let's say college age, high school age, maybe even after college, the 20-year-old, 25-year-olds. How would they react, compared to your generation?
- A Well, see, I was 20 when this thing started. I don't know. You just sort of--I had great aspirations and so forth and so on. Suddenly, there just wasn't anything moving, like. Instead of--I used to go to the movies before that. And when in high school, I made pretty good money because I worked after school and Saturdays, nights, in those days. And suddenly I didn't have that kind of money. Even when I was out of school. So, what the heck, I wanted to go someplace, a gang of us would get on the corner, "Oh, the heck with it," do this and that. The people who were regularly employed, they were going to the movies and so forth. And we'd hang around, gossip, and shoot the bull and go home about nine or ten o'clock, listen to the radio, work a jigsaw puzzle or something, and forget about it. That and hope the next day would be better, that was about all you could do about it.
- Q What about kids today? Do you think they could--some people say that they, you know, they wouldn't make it in a . . .
- A Oh, they would too. Sure they would. I think that youth stuff's been overstated. Yeah, they've been spoiled to some extent, but by golly, we were

too, you know. There was a great boom right before that depression, and people that wanted things almost went and got 'em. And you'd be surprised, people just--we know they're very knowledgeable, they're sensible, and they realize the economy just doesn't permit it. And we've got to face it, they face it, that's all. I think that's the American way. You don't like it, but you face up to it. I think they're all--as a general rule, are well educated and knowledgeable, and they just realize, "Well, as of now, there's nothing we can do about it, we'll just have to go along and fight it," and that's the way they would approach it. I don't think it'd make any difference. There was a lot of petty thievery going on in those days--people who had families and they didn't--some of them possibly didn't have friends, they'd smash a grocery's glass, and the way bread was delivered in those days was each door had a box outside with the bread company's name on it--Freihoffer's, Huber's, so forth, and they'd put the bread and rolls and so forth, and just ordinarily put a little thing to it, the grocer got up early, too, and he'd bring it on in the store. Well, some people were desperate for their children and their family, they'd wait until that bread man, or milkman left his products, and they'd gather 'em up before the grocer. And by golly, if a guy's got hungry children, you can almost justify it, you know. That's the way I felt about it. Of course it didn't help the grocer any. Well, that's about all the things . . .

Q I'm about finished with my questions. Thank you very much.

A About all of the things that I visualize is that--other things dropped in price, too, you know, when your bottom falls out. And you didn't need too much. Now, I could buy--I think it was 5¢ for a bag of Bull Durham or something like that, and you could roll many a cigarette, maybe forty cigarettes out of that. And now today with the boys using weed, we could have really shown 'em how to do it now--I don't think I could roll one, but . . . some of them fellows'd get so adept, you know, they could just go like that. The next time I saw was over in Europe--sometimes you get a little too far ahead of your supplies, you'd run low on cigarettes, and I always had several bags of that stuff, and I want to tell you, cold and so forth in the Bulge, I've seen guys roll 'em and boy those were really creations. They'd fall apart after two puffs. But you know, you got the smell of tobacco, anyhow.

Q Where did you sell the cigarettes? When you rolled the cigarettes, who did you sell them to?

A I used 'em myself. I didn't make them to sell. No. A bag of Bull Durham was a nickel. I think cigarettes were 10¢ for some brands and 11, 12 for others, and the standard brands, I think, were two for a quarter.

Q That saves you an awful lot of money.

A Oh, yeah. But anything's high when you don't have any money.

Q Even a nickel. O.K. Thank you very much.

[END OF INTERVIEW]