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23 Notes on Studs Terkel's oral history of the Depression, "Hard Times"

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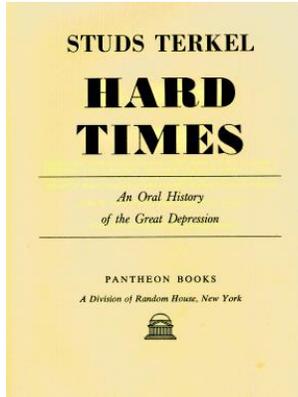


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Notes on Studs Terkel's
oral history of the Depression
Hard Times

by Jim Jones, copyright 2006

===== REFERENCE NOTE =====

[This first section contains a complete reference note for the book.]

Studs Terkel, Hard Times: An Oral History of the Great Depression (New York: Pantheon Books, 1970), 462pp.
Location: WCU#309.173 T318. 4th floor.

To read a brief biography of Studs Terkel,
visit www.studsterkel.org/bio.php.

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===== NOTES ON CONTENT =====

[The third section contains notes on the content of the book, organized within a copy of the table of contents. Material in quotation marks is reproduced exactly as it appears in the original book.]

p3 **A Personal Memoir** (and parenthetical comment)

BOOK ONE

THE MARCH

- Jim Sheridan** p13
- p13 Sheridan was too young to be a WWI veteran, but he participated in the Bonus March on Washington.
- A. Everette McIntyre** p17
- p17 McIntyre became a Federal Trade Commissioner. He described how the 12th Infantry (US Army) dislodged the Bonus Marchers from Washington DC on or about June 26, 1932.
- Edward C. Schalk** p18
- p18 Schalk was a WWI veteran who was part of the Bonus March.

THE SONG

- E. Y. (Yip) Harburg** p19
- p19 Harburg wrote "Brother Can You Spare a Dime" whose lyrics are: "Once in khaki suits, gee we looked swell, full of that Yankee-Doodle-de-dum. Half a million boots went sloggin' through Hell, I was the kid with the drum. Say, don't you remember, they called me Al -- It was Al all the time. Say, don't you remember, I'm your pal -- Brother, can you spare a dime. [Copyright 1932 by Harms, Inc. Owned by Warner Bros. Seven Arts Music.]
- p20 The author had been trying to make a living by writing poetry before the Depression.
- p20 "There was nothing else to do. I was doing light verse at the time, writing a poem here and there for ten bucks a crack. It was an era when kids at college were interested in light verse and ballads and sonnets. This is the early Thirties."
- p20 "I was relieved when the Crash came. I was released. Being in business was something I detested. When I found that I could sell a song or a poem, I became me, I became

alive. Other people didn't see it that way. They were throwing themselves out of windows."

p20 "Someone who lost money found that his life was gone. When I lost my possessions, I found my creativity. I felt I was being born for the first time. So for me the world became beautiful."

p20 "With the Crash, I realized that the greatest fantasy of all was business. The only realistic way of making a living was versifying. Living off your imagination."

p20 "We thought American business was the Rock of Gibraltar. We were the prosperous nation, and nothing could stop us now. A brownstone house was forever. You gave it to your kids and they put marble fronts on it. There was a feeling of continuity. If you made it, it was there forever. Suddenly the big dream exploded. The impact was unbelievable."

p20 "I was walking along the street at that time, and you'd see the bread lines. The biggest one in New York City was owned by William Randolph Hearst. He had a big truck with several people on it, and big cauldrons of hot soup, bread. Fellows with burlap on their shoes were lined up all around Columbus Circle, and went for blocks and blocks around the park, waiting."

p20 "There was a skit in one of the first shows I did, Americana. This was 1930. In the sketch, Mrs. Ogden Reid of the Herald Tribune was very jealous of Hearst's beautiful bread line. It was bigger than her bread line. It was a satiric, volatile show. We needed a song for it."

p20 "On stage, we had men in old soldiers' uniforms, dilapidated, waiting around. And then into the song. We had to have a title. And how do you do a song so it isn't maudlin? Not to say: my wife is sick, I've got six children, the Crash put me out of business, hand me a dime. I hate songs of that kind. I hate songs that are on the nose. I don't like songs that describe a historic moment pitifully."

p20 "The prevailing greeting at that time, on every block you passed, by some poor guy coming up, was: "Can you spare a dime?" Or: "Can you spare something for a cup of coffee?" . . . "Brother, Can You Spare a Dime?" finally hit on every block, on every street. I thought that could be a beautiful title. If I could only work it out by telling people, through the song, it isn't just a man asking for a dime."

p20 "This is the man who says: I built the railroads. I built that tower. I fought your wars. I was the kid with the drum. Why the hell should I be standing in line now? What happened to all this wealth I created?"

p21 "I think that's what made the song. Of course, together with the idea and meaning, a song must have poetry. It must have the phrase that rings a bell. The art of song writing is a craft. Yet, "Brother, Can You Spare a Dime?" opens up a political question. Why should this man be penniless at any time in his life, due to some fantastic thing called a Depression or sickness or whatever it is that makes him so insecure?"

p21 "In the song the man is really saying: I made an investment in this country. Where the hell are my dividends? Is it a dividend to say: "Can you spare a dime?" What the hell is wrong? Let's examine this thing. It's more than just a bit of pathos. It doesn't reduce

him to a beggar. It makes him a dignified human, asking questions -- and a bit outraged, too, as he should be."

- p21 "Everybody picked the song up in '30 and '31. Bands were playing it and records were made. When Roosevelt was a candidate for President, the Republicans got pretty worried about it. Some of the network radio people were told to lay low on the song. In some cases, they tried to ban it from the air. But it was too late. The song had already done its damage."

SGT. PEPPER'S LONELY HEARTS CLUB BAND

[Various baby boomers complain that their parents use stories from the Depression to make them feel guilty about their affluence. I did not take notes on it because it said more about the 1960s "Generation Gap" (a secondary theme of Terkel's book) than it did about the Depression.]

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HARD TRAVELIN'

- | | |
|-------------------|-----|
| Ed Paulsen | p29 |
|-------------------|-----|
- p29 He was from South Dakota, but at age 14, he started "ridin' the freights" in 1926. ...
- p30 ... He ended up in San Francisco by 1931.
- p32 The American Legion organized the resistance to hoboes and other people traveling to look for work. They represented the interests of "Main Street."
- p34 Hoboes acquired a "coyote mentality" which led them to scavenge everything that they could.
- | | |
|---------------------|-----|
| Pauline Kael | p35 |
|---------------------|-----|
- p35 Kael was a film critic who grew up in San Francisco. Her mother got in trouble with the neighbors for feeding hoboes during the Depression.
- | | |
|------------------------|-----|
| Frank Czerwonka | p35 |
|------------------------|-----|
- p35 Czewonka worked as a garbage man for the city of Chicago. ...
- p36 ... He was laid off in 1928 and went to work for his stepfather, who operated a speakeasy. "In our neighborhood, we wouldn't drink moonshine, just refined alcohol. My stepfather would peddle the moonshine on the South Side."
- p36 The gas company men helped by hooking up an unmetered gas line for a price. Everyone in the neighborhood cooperated in order to defraud the utility company.

p36 "Our speakeasy had a candy- front store. That was the come-on. The fuzz wasn't botherin' us. They were just shakin' down the syndicate. They were trying to get money from them because it was a big operation. They'd take out two truckloads of this moonshine. In five-gallon cans that were always a quart short. Even the one-gallon cans were about four ounces short. They never gave you a full measure. That was the standard practice in those days. They were gypers."

Kitty McCulloch

p39

p39 McCulloch was a homemaker during the Depression and remembered hoboos coming to her house to ask for food and work. She described some as smelling of liquor and others as deserving. ["deserving poor" and "undeserving poor"]

Dawn, Kitty's Daughter

p40

p40 Dawn was a young girl during the Depression. She described the marks that hoboos left on houses so others would know where to ask for food.

Louis Banks

p40

p40 He was born on a small family cotton farm near McGehee, Arkansas during the Depression. He came to Chicago as a young boy and by the end of his teen years, he was a prize fighter, worked as a chef, and hopped trains all over the country.

p42 Local employers benefitted from the Depression because the migrants provided nearly free labor and they could be disciplined easily because there were always more people waiting to take their jobs. In many ways, the Depression increased the ability of the rich to exploit the poor.

p43 Banks, a poor black man, said he learned that he could expect no kindness except from other hoboos.

p43 To escape the Depression, Banks joined the army. Other forms of escape included alcohol and jumping a train.

Emma Tiller

p44

p44 Tiller was a black woman who worked as a cook in western Texas during the Depression.

p44 "Negroes would always feed these tramps."

p45 "It's very important to see people as people and not to try and see them through a book. Experience and age give you this. There's an awful lot of people that has outstanding educations, but when it comes down to common sense, especially about people, they don't really don't know."

Peggy Terry and Her Mother, Mary Owsley

p45

p45 Owsley was born in Kentucky and married a boy from Oklahoma after World War I. They moved quite a bit, but lived in Oklahoma from 1929 to 1936.

p45 [Owsley] The oil boom started in Oklahoma in 1929 and it attracted people from all over.

p46 [Owsley] Oklahoma dust storms stained everything because they consisted of a mixture of sand and oil.

- p47 [Terry] "But among the people that I knew, we all had an understanding that it wasn't are fault. It was something that had happened to the machinery. Most people blamed Hoover ..."
- p48 According to the speaker, a white woman from west Texas, most people no longer help each other out (in 1970) like they did back in the Depression.
- p48 The speaker hates Negroes ...
- p49 ... and doesn't like Mexicans either.
- p50 A "Hooverville" was a shanty town constructed by homeless wanderers wherever they could find a place. People lived in "old, rusted-out car bodies, ... shacks made of orange crates, ... a piano box. This wasn't just a little section, this was maybe ten-miles wide and ten-miles long. People living in whatever they could junk together."
- p50 "When I read the Grapes of Wrath ... that was like reliving my life. Particularly the part where they lived in this Government camp. ... And when I was reading Grapes of Wrath this was just like my life. I was never so proud of poor people before, as I was after I read that book."
- p50 "I think that's the worst thing that our system does to people, it is to take away heir pride. It prevents them from being a human being. And wondering why the Harlem and why the Detroit. ... You get law and order in this country when people are allowed to be decent human beings. ..."
- p50 "I don't think people were put on earth to suffer. I think that's a lot of nonsense. I think we are the highest development on the earth, and I think we were put here to live and be happy and to enjoy everything that's here. I don't think its right for a handful of people to get ahold of all the things that make living a joy instead of a sorrow. You wake up in the morning, and it consciously hits you -- it's just like a big hand that takes your heart and squeezes it -- because you don't know what the day is going to bring: hunger or you don't know."
- Kiko Konagamitsu** p51
- p51 He was Japanese-American whose family had a farm in southern California before WWII.
- Country Joe McDonald** p52
- p52 McDonald was the lead singer of a rock band, Country Joe and the Fish. He described what his father told him about the Depression.
- Cesar Chavez** p53
- p53 His father was a farmer in the California Central Valley north of Yuma. They were forced out of their home in 1934.
- p53 The local bank had to approve loans for farmers or else they would lose their land. If the local banker was crooked, he would foreclose on farmers whose land he wanted to acquire. He did that to Chavez' father and took their land.
- p54 After the family lost their land, they became migrants. The kids went to school when they could, but they had to move often to "follow the crops."
- p55 Once an employer promised to pay them to pick grapes, then kept coming up with

excuses why he could not pay, until they got frustrated and left.

p55 "Labor strikes were everywhere. We were one of the strikingest families, I guess. My dad didn't like the conditions, and he began to agitate. ... [Did these strikes ever win?] Never."

p55 In Indio, California, they were refused service in a restaurant because they were Mexican.

p56 "In those days anybody asked questions, you became suspicious. Either a cop or a social worker."

Fran p57

p57 Fran was from an affluent Atlanta family in the 1960s.

Blackie Gold p57

p58 Gold was orphaned during the Depression and wound up serving in the Civilian Conservation Corps and the US Navy.

THE BIG MONEY

William Benton p60

p61 Benton was a US Senator from Connecticut and held important cabinet positions. In 1929, he was the assistant general manager in an advertising agency, Lord and Thomas. He left to form his own agency with Chester Bowles in 1929.

p61 "As the stock market plummeted into oblivion, Benton & Bowles went up into stardom. When I sold the agency in 1935, it was the single biggest office in the world. And the most profitable office."

Arthur A. Robertson p65

p65 He was a businessman who made himself into a millionaire by the time he was 24, before the Depression. He described how the stock market was "strictly a gambling casino with loaded dice" by 1929.

Jimmy McPartland p69

p69 McPartland was a jazz musician who was considered the heir to Bix Beiderbecke.

Sidney J. Weinberg p72

p72 He was a businessman at the time of the stock market crash who went on to become a senior partner with Goldman-Sachs Company.

Martin DeVries p74

p74 DeVries must have been a Chicago businessman, but the book doesn't say.

p74 The author discusses the blame for the Depression. Many of the people on bread lines "hadn't lived properly when they were making it. They hadn't saved anything. ... People were wearing \$20 silk shirts and throwing their money around like crazy. If they had been buying Arrow \$2 shirts and putting the other eighteen in the bank, when the trouble came, they wouldn't have been in the condition they were in. ..."

p74 After Terkel asked if he thought the New Deal was responsible for people in the 1960s

being unwilling to take low-paid work, DeVries answered "Certainly. This huge relief program they began. What do you think brings all of the colored people to Chicago and New York?" Terkel began to say "So when I say F.D.R. ..." and DeVries interrupted him with "... my blood begins to boil. The New Deal immediately attacked Wall Street. As far as the country was concerned, Wall Street was responsible for the upheavals. They set up the Securities and Exchanges Commission. That was all right. I know there were some evils. But these fellas Roosevelt put in the SEC were a bunch of young Harvard theorists. ...

p75 ... Except for old Joe Kennedy. He was a robber baron. These New Dealers felt they had a mission to perform. Roosevelt attacked people -- with some reason. But without justice. All people on Wall Street are not crooks."

p75 "My friends and I often spoke about it. Especially after his hammy fireside chats. Here we were paying taxes and not asking for anything. Everybody else was asking for relief, for our money to help them out. . . . A certain amount of that is O.K., but when they strip you clean and still don't accomplish much, it's unfair."

p75 "They were do-gooders, trying to accomplish something. I give them credit for that. But they didn't listen to anybody who had any sense."

p75 "Hoover happened to be in a bad spot. The Depression came on, and there he was. If Jesus Christ had been there, he'd have had the same problem. It's just too bad for poor old Herbie that he happened to be there. This was a world-wide Depression. It wasn't Hoover's fault. In 1932, a Chinaman or a monkey could have been elected against him, no question about it."

John Hersch

p75

p75 Hersch was a "senior partner in a large brokerage firm in Chicago" from 1924 to 1968.

p77 "The Bank Holiday of 1933 brought a certain kind of joyous devil-may-care mood. People were just gettin' along somehow. It was based on the theory: Good grief, it couldn't get much worse. They bartered things for things. ..."

p77 "Another remarkable thing about the Depression -- it never resulted in revolution. I remember that out in Iowa some place, there was a fellow named Reno [Milo Reno, leader of the Farm Holiday Association] who led a small following. There were some trucks turned over, and sheriffs weren't allowed to foreclose. But when you consider what was going on in the country -- the whole country was orderly: they just sat there and took it. In retrospect, it's amazing, just amazing. Either they were in shock or they thought something would come along and turn it around ... My wife has often discussed this with me. She thinks it's astonishing, the lack of violent protest, especially in 1932 and 1933."

Anna Ramsey

p78

p78 Her father was a barber who bought an investment property before the Depression. He didn't lose it, but he was humiliated by the mortgage company. As a result, Anna grew up hating being in debt.

Dr. David J. Rossman

p78

p78 Rossman was a psychiatrist from the upper middle class who had studied with Freud.

He described the effect of the Depression on his clients and his own investments.

MAN AND BOY

Alonso Mosely

p82

p82 He was a VISTA volunteer in a black community in the 1960s. He knew little about the Depression.

Clifford Burke

p82

p82 Burke is "a pensioner" who spends most of his days volunteering in the "black ghetto" on the West Side of Chicago.

p82 "The Negro was born in depression. It didn't mean too much to him, The Great American Depression, as you call it. There was no such thing. The best he could be is a janitor or a porter or a shoeshine boy. It only became official when it hit the white man. If you can tell me the difference between the depression today and the Depression of 1932 for a black man, I'd like to know it."

p82 "We had one big advantage. Our wives, they could go to the store and get a bag of beans or a sack of flour and a piece of fat meat, and they could cook this. And we could eat it. Steak? A steak would kick in my stomach like a mule in a tin stable. Now you take the white fella, he ...

p83 ... couldn't do this. His wife would tell him: Look, if you can't do any better than this, I'm gonna leave you. I seen it happen. He couldn't stand bringing home beans instead of steak and capon. And he couldn't stand the idea of going on relief like a Negro." . . .

p83 "Why did these big wheels kill themselves? They weren't able to live up to the standards they were accustomed to, and they got ashamed in front of their women. . . ."

p83 Burke worked as a teamster in a lumberyard for forty cents an hour, but the work was very uneven. "So I had another little hustle. I used to play pool pretty good. And I'd ride from poolroom to poolroom on this bicycle. ... Sometimes I'd come home with a dollar and a half extra. That was a whole lot of money. Everybody was out trying to beat the other guy, so he could make it. It was pathetic."

p83 "I never applied for FWA or WPA, 'cause as long as I could hustle, there was no point in beating the other guy out of a job, cuttin' some other guy out."

GOD BLESS' THE CHILD

Jane Yoder

p84

p84 Yoder described herself as "middle, middle class" from Evanston, Illinois and said "I am terribly afraid of debt." ...

p85 ... She and her husband got married in 1940. ...

p86 ... She remembered owning only one coat and being very cold. They still spoke Croatian at home. She and her family were preoccupied with what things cost. "Karo syrup was such a treat. ... [I remember] How early we all stayed away from going to the store, because we sensed my father didn't have the money. So we stayed hungry.

And we talked about it."

p87 After she began nurse training, she was angry when other students described the people on WPA as "these lazy people, the shovel leaners." Yoder realized that they all came from privileged backgrounds so they didn't know what it was like to be poor.

Tom Yoder, Jane's Son p87

p87 He gave his ideas about the stories his mother told.

Daisy Singer p88

p88 Singer was six when the Depression started. She was the daughter of a self-made, second- generation, American-born, upper-middle-class, Jewish businessman from New York City.

Robin Langston p89

p89 Langston was a black social worker and jazz musician who grew up in Hot Springs, Arkansas.

p90 "There was a unique thing about this black community. I wasn't like Chicago. There were Caucasians in the community. The police chief lived right in the heart of it. I guess there must have been ten white families within fifty feet of us. I remember feeding snotty-nosed white kids. It was the Depression because no whites and no blacks were working. The whites not working made it official."

p91 "Hot Springs was a unique place. It was a health resort. It depended on rich people coming in. They came to the race track with heir women. ... They came down [to the black neighborhood] and shot dice. They'd come down looking for women, too. The red-light district was always in the black area. The only white prostitutes you'd find would be in the hotels. They would be the high-priced ones. They would go with the Negro bellhop. Say, if the bellhop caught a politician, maybe she'd make a couple of hundred bucks. She'd give him some money, plus she'd go to bed with him."

p91 "The church I knew was controlled by City Hall. `Every Christmas we'll get these niggers some turkeys. We'll send somebody from the white school board to talk to them. We might let one of you come to our church, sing.' To keep us quiet like that. It was easy to control the black community in Hot Springs, because everything was geared towards money. O.K., you don't give us any problems, we'll let your gambling houses stay. We'll let you play policy. We'll let the black racketeer who's in charge of everything, we'll let him get the nigger out of jail on Saturday night. You can fight and whip your woman on Saturday night, just don't bother us over here. We'll give you a break, a suspended thirty- day sentence. We'll let you go home and be a good boy."

p91 "We'd get the *Chicago Defender*. hey had one edition or the North an another for the South. That's how we heard about the Scottsboro case. ... The *Defender* was read openly. It was brought down on a white railroad and thrown off a white boxcar. It was sold in the black community on the newsstands." ...

p92 "Roosevelt touched the temper of the black community. You did not look upon him as being white, black, blue or green. He was President Roosevelt. He had tremendous support through his wife. Yet the immediate image is `Great White Father.'"

p92 "The WPA and other projects introduced black people to handicrafts and trades. It

gave Negroes a chance to have an office to work out of with a typewriter. It made us feel like there was something we could do in the scheme of things. I don't remember any serious black opposition to Roosevelt. When you see a blithe spirit, naturally you're attracted to it."

p92 "I think the powers-that-be missed the boat, during the Depression. There was a kind of integration of poverty. But even though everybody was poor, we still had this stiff-collar, white-shirted Puritanical Wilson thing going. So even though we were all in the same boat, I'm still white and you're still black, and so we don't need to get together." .

..

Dynamite Garland

p92

p92 Garland was from a working class family in Cleveland who was very young during the Depression. Her father worked for the railroad until he lost his job during the Depression.

p93 "I remember all of a sudden we had to move. My father lost his job and we moved into a double-garage. The landlord didn't charge us rent for seven years. We had a coal stove, and we had to each take turns, the three of us kids, to warm our legs. It was awfully cold when you opened those garage doors. We would sleep with rugs and blankets over the top of us. Dress under the sheets."

p93 "In the morning, we'd get out and get some snow and put it on the stove and melt it and wash our faces. ..."

p93 On Sundays, the family used to go house-hunting. "hat was a recreation during the Depression. You'd get in the Model A with the family and go look at the houses. They were all for sale or rent. You'd go look and see where you could put this and where you could put that, and this is gonna be my room."

p94 "My father did the best he could. He used to stuff in the mailboxes those little sheets, 'Pink Sheets for Pale Purses.' I think it was a left-wingish organization. My father disagreed with whatever philosophy was on there. He got \$3 a week for this."

p94 "'Cause he got a job in Akron, delivering carry-out food, we moved there. That was a dandy place: dirt, smoke, my mother scrubbing all the time. We lived right on the railroad tracks. They used to throw us watermelons and things like that. When the trains slowed down, he used to jump on and have us kids pick up the coal."

p94 "I was about fourteen when I joined the NYA [National Youth Administration]. I used to get \$12.50 every two weeks. Making footlockers. I gave half to my mother. This was the first time I could buy some clothes. After I bought some nice clothes, I decided I didn't want to be a nun. [Laughs]"

p94 "My girlfriend's father was in a new movement, Technocracy. I used to wear a badge with her 'cause it was my girlfriend. I remember the circular sort of thing on the badge."

p94 A footnote explains that Technocracy, which was popular before Roosevelt was elected, "was based upon a price system measured in units of energy rather than dollars and cents. The society envisioned was to be run by engineers and scientists. Founded by Howard Scott, a young engineer, it was the subject of much discussion. With the election of Roosevelt, it fell out of public grace and memory."

p95 When she got married, her husband earned \$14 a week and spent half to pay of the debt from the wedding. "From \$14 a week, we jumped to \$65 a week, working in a defense plant. I sort of went to my head. Wow! Boy we were rich. First thing I did was to get me one of those red fur chubbies. I had to have a fur with that amount of money. ..."

p95 "They say if you're raised poor, you'll know how to handle money. We were raised poor as church mice. But when I get it, I blow it. It's a personality thing. I don't regret any of it. But still ... "

Slim Collier

p95

p95 Collier, a bartender, was born in Waterloo, southern Iowa, in 1925, in a house without running water or electricity. His father was a farmer and a tool-and-die maker ...

p96 ... at the John Deere tractor plant until he was laid off in 1931. That had a 160-acre farm planted mostly with corn.

p96 After his father went back to work part-time in 1933, Collier got a dime each week. He could buy a bag of popcorn and a movie ticket on Saturday. But "Cash was extremely rare. I remember having found a dollar and my ...

p97 ... father gravely taking charge of it and doling it out to me a dime at a time."

Dorothe Bernstein

p99

p99 Bernstein, a waitress, went into an orphan home in 1933 when she was about ten. She described how people who had no money could still get foods at stores because the storekeeper would rite down their purchases in an account book and accept payment whenever they got some money.

p99 She also mentioned that unlike today, there was no fear of strangers back then. "Then we didn't have any fear. You'd never think that if you'd walk by people, even strangers: gee, that person I got to be careful of. Nobody was really your enemy. these were guys who didn't have work. Who'd probably work if there was work. I don't know how they got where hey were going or where they ended up. They were nice men. You would never think they would do you bodily harm. they weren't bums. They were hard luck guys."

p99 She also mentioned eating so many sardines during that period that she can no longer stand the smell of them.

Dawn, Kitty McCulloch's Daughter

p100

p100 McCulloch was the daughter of a white-collar family during the Depression. Her mother was a homemaker and her father worked "seventy-two hours, he worked so hard, and he couldn't see that it was necessary for people to strike." She also wrote about the importance of radio broadcasts during the Depression, and how her father agreed with Father Coughlin.

Phyllis Lorimer

p101

p101 Lorimer grew up "in Greenwich, Connecticut, a lovely house. My family was extremely well off, but I always thought I was poor. All my cousins, everybody's father was a millionaire. My best friends had their own island. They each had their boat, and all had their jumping horses."

- p101 She was in boarding school at Glendora, California, when the Depression started and had to withdraw. She had to live with her stepfather whom she disliked.
- p101 "It was rough on me, the Thirties. I wasn't aware of it being with everyone else. I thought it was just personal. I was in no way aware that it was a national thing. Having grown up in some affluence, I was suddenly in a small court in Hollywood with a stepfather who was drunk and ghastly. My brother was still at Dartmouth, where he was fortunate enough not to know what was going on at home. Whatever money there was went to keep brother at Dartmouth. We were living on a form of relief. We had cans of tinned bully beef. And we had the gas turned off. My mother was an engaging lady who made everything a picnic. We cooked everything on an electric corn popper, so it was gay in certain aspects. (Laughs.) My ...
- p102 ... mother had humor and charm, so I didn't know it was a desperate situation."
- p102 "My brother was socially oriented, a tremendous snob. Why we were eating bully beef, he was living extremely well at Dartmouth. Nobody told him how bad things were. He lived magnificently, with a socialite friend, in a house with a manservant. He came back and found the truth, and the truth was ghastly."
- p102 When Lorimer finally decided that she needed to get a job, "Having gone to a proper lady's finishing school, I didn't know how to do anything. I spoke a little bad French, and I knew enough to stand up when an older person came into the room. As far as anything else was concerned, I was unequipped."
- p103 She got a job at Warner Brothers film studio as a swimmer, diver and stunt actor in the first of the Busby Berkeley aquacade motion pictures. She earned \$7.50 a day for risking her life.
- p103 "Always having felt slightly rejected by Westhampton society, Greenwich society, Great Neck society, I had the feeling we weren't 'it,' whatever 'it' was. ... All of a sudden I found another group with whom I belonged. The ex-Olympic stars who were diving and swimming and the chorus girls who were working like mad. Suddenly I didn't care about my brother's friends, the socially important. He kept saying, 'When they ask what you're doing, don't say you're a chorus girl.' I said, 'I'm proud to be a chorus girl.' that used to destroy him."

Bob Leary

p104

- p104 Leary was a part-time cab driver and student in Manhattan who described what he knew of his father's experience during the Depression. "My father spent two years painting his father's house. He painted it twice. It gave him something to do. It prevented him from losing all of his -- well, I wouldn't say self-respect, because there were many, many people who were out of work. He wasn't alone."
- p104 "He belonged to the Steamfitters' Union. They were putting up the old Equitable Building at the time. But I guess they ran out of steam, just around '29."
- p104 "He never forgot it. I guess it does something to somebody to be out of work so long. It can affect your confidence. Not that it destroyed my father's self-confidence. But I could see how it affected his outlook on life, his reaction towards success. He was inordinately impressed by men who had made it in business. It's my feeling the Depression had something to do with this."

BONNIE LABORING BOY

Larry Van Dusen

p105

p105 Van Dusen was a labor organizer most of his life. He left home at age 19 and hitchhiked and rode the rails around Colorado and Texas. By the 1930s, he was a social worker in Kansas City, where he "organized unemployed councils, participated in strikes, was arrested several times . . ."

p106 He described "brutality in the jails, the treatment of the unemployed, especially the Negroes" that led in one case to the death of a Negro prisoner.

p106 The "unemployed councils" laid the basis for much of the New Deal.

Jose Yglesias

p109

p109 Yglesias is an author who grew up speaking Spanish in Ybor City, a Cuban neighborhood in Tampa, Florida that was home to cigar makers. The people in the neighborhood were radically pro-labor and often went on strike, so it was no surprise to him that there were strikes during the Depression.

p109 The 1931 cigar workers strike started when management tried to end the practice of have "readers" provide entertainment to handworkers.

p110 "... hours a day. He would read from newspapers and magazines and a book would be read as a serial. The choice of the book was democratically decided. Some of the readers were marvelous natural actors. They wouldn't just read a book. They'd act out the scenes. Consequently, many cigar makers, who were illiterate, knew the novels of Zola and Dickens and Cervantes and Tolstoy. And the works of the anarchist, Kropotkin. Among the newspapers read were The Daily Worker and the Socialist Call."

p110 "The factory owners decided to put an end to this, though it didn't cost them a penny. Everyone went on strike when they arrived one morning and found the lecture platform torn down. The strike was lost. Every strike in my home town was always lost. The readers never came back."

p110 "The Depression began in 1930, with seasonal unemployment. Factories would close down before Christmas, after having worked very hard to fill orders throughout late summer and fall. Only the cheaper grade cigars would be made. They cut off the more expensive type. Regalia.

[...]

p110 "It was a Latin town. Men didn't sit at home. They went to cafes, on street corners, at the Labor Temple, which they built themselves. It was ...

p111 ... very radical talk. The factory owners acted out of fright. ... During the strike, the KKK would come into the Labor Temple with guns, and break up meetings. Very frequently, they were police in hoods. Though they were called the Citizens' Committee, everybody would call them Los Cuckoo Klan. (Laughs.) The picket lines would hold hands, and the KKK would beat them and cart them off."

[...]

p111 "When the strike was lost, the Tampa paper published a full page, in large type: the names of all the members of the strike committee. They were indicted for conspiracy and spent a year in jail. None of them got their jobs back."

[...]

p111 "There were attempts to organize the CIO. I remember one of my older cousins going around in a very secretive manner. You'd think he was planning the assassination of the czar. He was trying to sign people up for the CIO. The AF of L International was very conservative and always considered as an enemy. They never gave the strike any support. It was considered the work of agitators."

p111 "People began to go off to New York to look for jobs. Almost all my family were in New York by 1937. You'd take that bus far to New York. There, we all stayed together. The only place people didn't sleep in was the kitchen. A bed was even in the foyer. People would show up from Tampa, and you'd put them up. We were the Puerto Rican immigrants of that time. In any cafeteria, in the kitchen, the busboys, the dishwashers, you were bound to find at least two from Ybor City."

p111 "Some would drift back as jobs would open up again in Tampa. Some went on the WPA. People would put off governmental aid as long as ...

p112 "... possible. Aunt Lila and her husband were the first in our family, and the last, to go on WPA. This was considered a terrible tragedy, because it was charity. You did not mention it to them."

p112 "That didn't mean you didn't accept another thing. There was no payday in any cigar factory that there wasn't a collection for anyone in trouble. If a father died, there was a collection for the funeral. When my father went to Havana for an operation, there was a collection. That was all right. You yourself didn't ask. Someone said: 'Listen, so and so's in trouble.' When Havana cigar makers would go on strike, it was a matter of honor: you sent money to them. It has to do with the Spanish-Cuban tradition."

p112 "Neighbors have always helped one another. The community has always been that way. There was a solidarity. There was just something very nice. . . ."

[...]

p112 "POSTSCRIPT: My family thought very highly of Roosevelt, except my grandfather ... who thought Roosevelt and Hoover were both bad compared the Jose Marti of Cuba."

Evelyn Finn

p112

p112 Terkel wrote, "*She has worked as a seamstress. It was St. Louis in the early years of the Depression. . . .*"

p112 "You could upset the shop quite a bit. Even when there was no union. You'd get the girls on your side, one by one, until you had a majority. I remember this one straw boss. He wanted us to speed up. In the morning, the girls'd be tired. He'd go through the shop: 'Is everybody happy today?' I'd say: 'I'm not happy.' He says, 'What's the matter with you?' I'd tell him: 'I come here to fight.'"

[...]

p113 "He just kept after me, this one. Nagged me and nagged me to go out with him. So all

right, I said. Boy, he was so excited. We got in his car. He said, 'Where we going? Your house?' 'No,' I said, 'we're goin' to your house. For supper.' You should've seen the look on his face. (Laughs.) I knew his wife, a sweet little woman. I used to sew and fix her clothes. I made him do just that. His wife was glad to see me. (Laughs.) He never asked me again. And he was an old gray-haired man with two grown sons."

p113 "One time I was on piecework. You get paid for the amount you do. But the boss wanted us to ring the time clock. If you're a pieceworker and you're very fast and very apt, which I was, you don't want him to know this, that or the other. I refused to ring the clock. Did they have a time with me! They didn't want to lose me. I was skilled."

[...]

p113 "One day I took out the whole shop. There never was a shop yet I couldn't take out. This is when we had the union. I was the chairlady. They didn't get us what we wanted. I think they were playin' sweethearts with the boss. So we had a sit-in. I said to the girls: Just sit, don't do nothin'. We sat and joked about a lot of things and had a lotta fun. The boss was goin' crazy. The union officials came down. They went crazy, too. It was a hilarious day. They called us a bunch of Communists. The girls didn't know what it meant. I knew what it meant, but I wasn't. So, if that's the way they behave, I said, 'Girls, it's a nice day. Let's all go for a walk.' So we did, the whole shop. They got us what we wanted."

[...]

Hank Oettinger

p114

p114 Terkel wrote, "*A linotype operator. Much of his spare time is devoted to writing 'Letters to the Editor.' ... 'I go to work late in the afternoon, get through at midnight. See my friends at the taverns. Agitate. Get my sleep. I wake up, and it's nice and warm and it's light. I go down and maybe have a couple of arguments before I go to work.'"*

p114 "I came from a very small town in northern Wisconsin. It had been ravaged by the lumber barons. It was cut-over land, a term you hear very often up there. It was a one industry town: tourist business. During the winter, there was nothing."

p114 "A lot of people who suffered from the Depression -- it was new to them. It wasn't new to me. I was number ten in a family of eleven. ... We could have gone on relief, but my father refused. Foolish pride. He would not accept medical care, even.... He was a great admirer of Bob La Follette. He liked the idea of Bob's fighting the railroads and being against our entering the First World War."

[...]

p115 "I was laid off in '31. I was out of work for over two years. I'd get up at six o'clock every morning and make the rounds. I'd go around looking for work until about eight thirty. The library would open at nine. I'd spend maybe five hours in the library."

[...]

p115 "I can remember the first week of the CWA checks [FOOTNOTE: Civil Works Administration. It presaged the WPA.]. It was on a Friday. That night everybody had gotten his check. The first check a lot of them had in three years. Everybody was out celebrating. It was like a festival in some old European city. Prohibition had been

repealed, of course. You'd walk from tavern to tavern and see people buying ponies of beer and sharing it. They had the whole family out. It was a warm night as I remember. Everybody was so happy, you'd think they got a big dividend from Xerox."

p115 "I never saw such a change of attitude. Instead of walking around feeling dreary and looking sorrowful, everybody was joyous. Like a feast day. They were toasting each other. They had money in their pockets for the first time. If Roosevelt had run for President the next day, he'd have gone in by a hundred percent."

p115 "I had it drilled in me: there are no such things as classes in America. I awoke one day. [I saw a newspaper with] a picture of this farm woman, standing in the window of her home and the dust had completely covered everything, and there was a dead cow. And here, at the bottom of the same page, they had a picture of Bernard Baruch on somebody's yacht. I looked at one picture and then the other. No classes in America."

[...]

p116 "During the Depression, the La Follette movement grew, with Bob, Junior, and Phil. When the New Deal came in, they worked with Roosevelt. By this time, my father was getting pretty old and bitter. Being an extreme strict Catholic, he fell for Coughlinism. ... Even in the Depression, he wasn't able to accept the idea that there were different classes in America. The same as I couldn't when I was a child. And he was violently anti-Red. He objected to a lot that was going on: that's why he liked La Follette. But it was still the Great America. So there had to be some other reason for all the injustice."

p116 "He had great respect for the priestly collar [but] I think it was his anti-Communism more than his rigid Catholicism that was the cause."

p116 "When Father Coughlin's silver market manipulations were uncovered, my father felt it was another plot. He just couldn't bring himself to believe that Coughlin was in it for anything except to help the poor people who were at the mercy of Roosevelt and the Jews. He was about eighty-two at the time and never gave up his belief. He followed Coughlin until the end."

p116 "When Coughlin was on, Sunday afternoons, everything in the house had to be absolutely quiet, not a whisper. You could walk down the street and every single Catholic house -- it was Coughlin. To hell with the ball game or going out for a ride. . . ."

p116 "Every time Coughlin would mention the name of a movie actor who ...

p117 ... was of Jewish extraction, and add his real name after his stage name, my father would gloat. And yet, my father was a good and kind man, and suffered along with his neighbors."

[...]

E. D. Nixon

p117

p117 Terkel wrote, "*For twenty-five years, he had been president of the Montgomery (Alabama) branch of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters.*"

p117 According to Nixon, "*A Pullman porter can always get into a conversation anywhere. He walked into a barber shop, somebody'd say, I didn't see you around here,' or maybe they'd notice his pants with the stripe. Everybody listened because they knowd*

the porter been everywhere and they never been anywhere themselves. In cafes where they ate or hotels where they stayed, they'd bring in papers they picked up, white papers, Negro papers. He'd put 'em in his locker and distribute 'em to black communities all over the country. Along the road, where a whole lot of people couldn't get to town, we used to roll up the papers and tie a string around 'em. We'd throw these papers off to these people. We were able to let people know what was happening. He did know a whole lot of things.'

p117 "I worked for the Pullman Company from 1928 to 1964. It was a hard job. We had a rest period: 10 P.M. to 2, for one porter, and 2 to 6, for the other. During that time, one man guarded two cars. From 6 in the morning to 10 at night, he was plenty busy with his one car: touch it up all the time, clean up, call a man at a certain time. You get that man off, you run back and tidy up the place, you run back and bring a new man in. ... "

Joe Morrison

p122

p122 Terkel wrote, "*Half his working life was spent in the coal mines of southwestern Indiana -- 'as poor a part of the country as we could afford.'* He was born there. The remainder of his work days were in steel mills. He quit school at fourteen for his first job *'in the fields.'*"

p122 Morrison said, "*'My father was a farmer and a coal miner, ten kids and I'm the oldest. He wanted me to do something else. Every parent worried about their kids gettin' killed in mine explosions. Just a few miles away, they had gas, where mines exploded and we had one in 1927, killed thirty-seven men. The coal industry was hit in '26 and never did fully recover. Coal and lumber, they was the two things hit pretty hard. There was a dip in 1919, it picked up some. But in '26, there was another one. Coal and lumber never did recover. 1929 is when it hit banking and big business. But we had suffering and starvation long before that. In the early Twenties, mines shut down, nothin' for people to live on. Children fainted in school from hunger. Long before the stock market crash.'*"

[...]

p122 "In '30 and '31, you'd see freight trains, you'd see hundreds of kids, young kids, lots of 'em, just wandering all over the country. Looking for jobs, looking for excitement. . . . The one thing that was unique was to see women riding freight trains. That was unheard of, never had been thought of before. But it happened during the Depression. Women gettin' places by ridin' freight trains. Dressed in slacks or dressed like men, you could hardly tell 'em. Sometimes some man and his wife would get on, no money for fare."

p122 "You'd find political discussions going on in a boxcar. Ridin' a hundred miles or so, guys were all strangers, maybe two or three knew each other, ...

p123 ... pairs. There might be twenty men involved. They would discuss politics, what was happening. What should be done about this, that and so forth ... they was ready for revolution. A lot of businessmen expected it. The Government sent out monitors. They had 'em in these Hoovervilles, outside the town, along the railroads, along the highways. ... You met guys ridin' the freight trains and so forth, talkin' about what they'd like to do with a machine gun."

[...]

p123 "In '34 I got discharged over a hassle we had with the mine company. I was on the union's grievance committee. They had me blacklisted in the fields there. I never got a job until I went to work in the steel mills in '36. I bummed around a little in some temporary jobs, anything I could get. Had ..."

Mary p124

p124 Mary's father, a farmer, went to New York City to look for work during the Depression. Naively, he became a strikebreaker, but he quickly quit after being threatened by people with guns.

Gordon Baxter p124

p124 Baxter was an attorney who graduated from Harvard Law School in 1932. He described his youth as "insulated" and preoccupied with wealth as a measure of success.

THREE STRIKES

Bob Stinson, "The Sit-down" p129

p129 A General Motors worker tells how the Depression brought the union to his company in 1933 following sit-down strikes that prevented the company from bringing in scabs.

Gregory p134

p134 Terkel wrote, "*He was born in Flint in 1946 and has lived in its environs most of his life.*"

p134 "THE SIT-IN strikes? No, it doesn't ring a bell with me. What were they?"

p134 "My grandfather worked for the GM plant in Flint. I had an uncle working for Body by Fisher, another one for Buick. He used to talk about his work, my grandfather. About standing in line, waiting for a job. He did auto work for forty-five years. But he never mentioned the sit-in strikes."

Charles Stewart Mott p134

p134 Terkel wrote, "*A vigorous ninety-four, he's the oldest member of the board of General Motors. In the early part of the century, he served as three-time mayor of Flint. As head of the Mott Foundation, he is responsible for many philanthropies.*"

p134 "Alfred P. Sloan came to GM in 1932 and was made president. He was a master of corporate procedure. He brought order out of chaos. For every one share of stock in 1913, we had 562Y2 shares in 1935. Since that time, it's gone up and up and up."

p134 "I never became involved in the labor matters. Even in companies where I own all the stock, I leave those matters to those better able to handle it. ... At board meetings, labor matters were described but not discussed. We had a vice president in charge of labor relations, a very able chap. ... Sometimes, he'd appear to tell us what the situation was. We'd merely approve."

p135 "I knew Frank Murphy. ... He was Governor during the sit-down strikes, and he didn't do his job. He didn't enforce the law. He kept his hands off. He didn't protect our property. ... They had no right to sit-down there. They were illegally occupying it. The

owners had the right to demand from the Governor to get those people out."

[...]

p135 "Someone said to me: Did you see the picture on those new dimes? It's our new destroyer. It was a picture of Roosevelt. He was the great destroyer. He was the beginner of our downhill slide. Boy, what he did to this country. I don't think we'll ever get over it. Terrible."

[...]

Scott Farwell p136

p126 Farrell was born wealthy and only had it "somewhat rough" during the Depression. "I came from a WASP upper-middle class suburb and was raised on the myth that everybody can make it. In reality, everybody can't make it. If a guy makes a million dollars, he can do so only because another thousand people are making \$3,000 a year."

Mike Widman, "The Battle of Detroit, A Preface" p137

p137 This describes tense labor relations in Ford factories in Michigan in 1940. Mike Widman was "a long-time associate of John L. Lewis ... appointed director of the campaign to organize the Ford Motor Company, the automobile industry's last holdout against the UAWU."

Howard p141

p141 Howard was born in Detroit in 1947 but never heard of the Ford autoworkers strike. He explained this was because his grandfather was "anti-union" and only accepted the union because it kept Negroes from working in the factories.

Dr. Lewis Andreas, "Memorial Day, 1937" p142

p142 Andreas founded the first low-cost clinic in Chicago in 1932. He was sympathetic to labor and became involved. He was an eyewitness to the Memorial Day 1937 Republic Steel strike in Gary, Indiana, that resulted in fifty shot by police, of whom ten died. Most were shot in the back.

p144 Andreas describes other organizing efforts in the 1930s and the problems that resulted when the AMA declared them subversive.

BOOK TWO

OLD FAMILIES

Edward A. Ryerson p151

p151 Retired chairman of the board of the Inland Steel Company in Chicago.

Diana Morgan p153

p153 A "southern belle" from North Carolina whose family lost their home during the Depression.

Mrs. Winston Roberts p159

p159 A Chicago socialite who came from the South in 1906 by marrying a wealthy industrialist.

Noni Saarinen, Mrs. Roberts' Maid p161

p161 Came from Finland and worked for Mrs. Roberts for 32 years. Her husband, a painter, lost his job in 1930.

Julia Walther p162

p163 Walther's husband lost a great deal of money in the Depression after making a fortune by building up a lumber company in the 1920s. [NOTE: Page number is correct. There is no personal information about Walther until the second page.]

p162 Samuel Insull, a wealthy businessman from Chicago, "represented all that was most unattractive about the period that preceded the crash."

p163 Insull built the new Chicago Opera house and was president of Commonwealth Edison, the electric company. He was vulgar, and when he lost everything, people were happy.

MEMBER OF THE CHORUS

Win Stracke p165

p165 Terkel described Stracke as: "*A Chicago balladeer. Founder of the Old Town School of Folk Music.*"

HIGH LIFE

Sally Rand p168

p168 A dancer who turned 26 in 1930. She was born "in the last naive moment America was ever going to enjoy . . . between ...

p169 ... the Spanish-American War and the First World War. Things were S. S. & G. -- Sweet, Simple and Girlish." She was born in rural Missouri, grew up in Kansas City and eventually worked in Hollywood with Mack Sennett and Cecil B. De Mille.

p173 She gained publicity by appearing nude as Lady Godiva at the 1933-24 Chicago World's Fair, and being arrested by the police who were trying to turn attention away from a scandal involving Mayor Kelly.

Tony Soma p174

p174 Soma was a New York restaurateur who emigrated from Italy to Cincinnati before 1908. He was called a "wop" in 1908 by a "tall red American" and was Tony Caruso's waiter in New York. He also ran a speakeasy that catered to literary and theater people in the late'20s and early 1930s, when he was known as "Broadway Tony."

Alec Wilder p176

p176 Wilder is the composer who wrote "The Winter of My Discontent" among many others. He has lived in the Algonquin Hotel in New York off and on since before the Depression.

p177 After losing about \$150,000 worth of stock in the Depression, Wilder would say,

"Don't talk to me about the market.' I would have nothing to do with it. I didn't even take money to a bank. I kept it all in my pocket. I didn't have a bank account for years. The money was driftin' in. Taxes weren't as bad in those days, so you didn't have to keep track of what you spent. So I just kept the money in my pockets. It was crazy. To walk around with three or four thousand dollars and not be able to pay any bills by check. Just crazy. I carried thousand dollar bonds around in my pocket, and whenever I would run out of money, I would cash one." . . .

p177 "I loved speakeasies. If you knew the right ones, you never worried about being poisoned by bad whiskey. I'd kept hearing about a friend of a friend who had been blinded by bad gin. I guess I was lucky. The speakeasies were so romantic. A pretty girl in a speakeasy was the prettiest girl in the world. As soon as you walked in the door, you were a special person, you belonged to a special society. When I'd bring a person in, it was like dispensing largesse. I was a big man. You ...

p178 ... had to know somebody. It was that marvelous movie-like quality, unreality. And the food was great. Although some pretty dreadful things did occur in them. I saw a man at the door pay off a gentleman in thousand dollar bills to keep from being raided."

p178 "I recall the exact day that Prohibition ended. I went into a restaurant that started selling booze. It was a strange feeling 'cause I started drinking in speakeasies. I didn't know about open drinking ... I'd gotten used to being disreputable. A friend of mine took me up to some dump in Rochester and gave me my first glass of beer. I don't think I'd have drunk it if it had been legal." . . .

p178 "Roosevelt came in and that was a cheery moment. ... I'm so sick of hearing how devious he was politically. So was Abraham Lincoln, for heaven's sake. To be a politician in a country like this, you've got to be devious."

Carl Stockholm p178

p179 Stockholm supported himself on the professional bicycle racing circuit in the 1920s, riding for days at a time with a teammate or solo. He describes how the profession died out in the Depression and also writes about gangsters.

Doc Graham p180

p180 Graham was a career criminal -- con man, heist man, etc. -- who described the Depression: "It was a jungle. Survival was the law of the land." His father was a gambler and his mother was a missionary. Both were unsuccessful.

[...]

[The rest of this chapter discusses Prohibition, police corruption, guns and life in Chicago's crime world, which was divided between the Irish and Italian factions.]

Jerome Zerbe p188

[...]

p188 "The thirties? My own poverty. My father allowed me an allowance of \$300 a month. On that I went to Paris and started painting. Suddenly he wrote and said: no more money. And what does a painter do in the Depression without money? I came back to America and was offered a job in Cleveland. Doing the menial task -- but at the time I was grateful -- of art-directing a magazine called *Parade*. \$35 a week. It was 1931."

[...]

p189 "After my father died, and no money, I sold my library books to the Cleveland Museum and the Cleveland Art Library. With that money, I came to New York and started out. *Town and Country* had guaranteed me \$150, which seemed a lot. This is '33."

[...]

p190 "My father was president of the Ohio and Pennsylvania Coal Company. It was on the West Virginia border -- Cadiz, Ohio. Where Clark Gable was born. I went down there, because at the time he offered me the presidency at \$12,000 a year. It was an incredibly large amount of money. I'm talking about 1932 or 1933. I went down there and spent two weeks in the town. The mine was 897 feet, the shaft, underground, and the working ...

p191 ... surface was three and a half miles. I spent two weeks down there and came back and said: `Mother, forgive me, to hell with it.'"

p191 "The men loathed their slovenly wives, and every night they go and play pool or whatever it was. The houses were drab beyond belief. You'd think a woman would at least put up a plant -- a flower or something. And suddenly I flew into town with two or three friends for several weekends. We disrupted the place like nobody's business. (Laughs.) We'd go to the bars, and these guys would say: `Jesus, where did you get your shirts?' Where did you get this or that? and I'd say: `Why don't you go to your houses and make them more attractive?' And they said: `Our wives are so goddam slovenly. We don't even want to go to bed with them.' I'm talking about the miners. They came out at five o'clock at night absolutely filthy. I've got a photograph of myself, I can show you, as a miner. I can show you how filthy I was."

p191 "And they all went through this common shower, got clean. Would they go home? Hah! For food, yes. And their squawling brats. And take right off to a bar. They loathed their life. The manager once said to me, `I never knew what it was to have fun with people until I heard your laughter. . . .'"

p191 "We all had such fun, of course, and he joined in the fun."

[...]

p191 "Listen, dear boy, Franklin Roosevelt in those days we didn't even talk about. [His sons] John Roosevelt and the young Franklin were great friends of mine. I photographed them in my apartment. We never did discuss the old man, ever. Well, I never liked politics. I think all politicians are s**. Franklin -- I admired him very much. I thought the American public was so frightfully gullible to allow this man, he was a dying man, to be elected for that last term. Oh, that voice!"

[...]

p192 Terkels asked "*Did the people you knew in the Thirties ever talk about what happened outside? You know . . . those on relief . . . ?*"

p192 "I don't think we ever mentioned them. They did in private at the breakfast table or the tea table or at cocktail time. But never socially. Because I've always had a theory: when you're out with friends, out socially, everything must be charming, and you don't

allow the ugly."

p192 "We don't even discuss the Negro question. Let's forget they're only one-tenth of this country, and what they're putting on, this act - someday they're going to be stepped on like vermin. There's too much. I'm starting a thing: equal rights for whites. I think they've allowed themselves, with their necklaces and their long hair and nonsense, to go too far."

p192 "Now I've had the same manservant, who's Negro, for thirty-three years, which is quite a record. I suppose he's my closest friend in the world. He's a great guy, Joseph."

[...]

p193 Terkels asked, "*You don't recall bread lines or stuff like that?*"

p193 "I never saw one. Never in New York. If they were, they were in Harlem or down in the Village. They were never in this section of town. There was never any sign of poverty."

p193 Terkels asked, "*What does the phrase 'New Deal' mean to you?*"

p193 "It meant absolutely nothing except higher taxation. And that he did. He obviously didn't help the poverty situation in the country, although, I suppose ... I don't know - New Deal! God! Look at the crap he brought into our country, Jesus!"

[...]

Judy

p193

p193 Terkel wrote, "*She is twenty-five years old and does public relations work.*"

p193 "You get the impression there was this crash, this big explosion, and everything goes down. And all of a sudden one day, the sun comes up, and there's a war. There's all kinds of people making planes and napalm and this kind of thing. Affluence is equated with war. I hate it, I hate everything about it."

p193 "If another Depression came, the first ones out of work would be people...

p194 ... like me. There's a whole sub-society of people like me. We're the ones who open doors and give a little polish on things. We're a luxury. We are not really functional." .

..

AT THE CLINIC

Dr. Nathan Ackerman

p195

p195 This man was a psychiatrist at a time when the profession was new. He started working for \$2.50 an hour and hoped to work his way up to \$10/hour. The most successful psychiatrists earned \$25/hour from their wealthy clients.

p196 All of his customers were middle class, so he heard little about psychological problems that resulted from poverty. He did visit a community of Pennsylvania coal miners once and was disturbed by their poverty. He noted that men who lost jobs for years at a time felt guilty and stayed away from home because they couldn't "bring home the bacon." their wives punished them by withholding sex and by treating their eldest sons like the "man of the family."

SIXTEEN TON

Buddy Blankenship

p198

p198 Blankenship moved from West Virginia to Chicago, but he has never done well economically. "I've been in a Depression ever since I've been in the world. Still, it's better and worse. '31, '32, that's about the worst we've ever seen."

p199 Miners in West Virginia earned \$1.75 per sixteen-hour day.

Mary Owsley

p201

p201 Owsley's husband was "a dynamite man" in Kentucky mines before they went to Oklahoma for the 1929 oil boom.

Aaron Barkham

p202

p202 Barkham was a miner from West Virginia.

p204 After describing how bad the lives of miners were, and how corrupt the union (United Mine Workers) was, Barkham says that the Ku Klux Klan was the only group that stood up for ordinary people. He said it was not racist, it included some black members.

p206 Mingo County, W. Virginia, (near Logan) got its first radio receiver in 1934. There was no electricity so they had to use two car batteries.

Edward Santander

p207

p207 Santander was a coal miner from near Centralia, Pennsylvania.

p207 The people of Pennsylvania coal country were all Republican, but FDR won them over with his programs.

p209 The coal industry was further weakened in the 1930s because cities began to pass laws against coal burning in an effort to reduce pollution.

p209 The Centralia mine disaster of 1947 resulted in 111 dead miners after Mine #5 blew up.

p210 Many pigs were killed to reduce the supply so that the price for pork would rise.

p211 POSTSCRIPT: Santander added, "*We used to talk a great deal about keeping solvent and the morality of not going into debt. I was almost thirty years old before I went into debt.*"

Roger

p211

p211 Roger is a young boy whose parents came from West Virginia to Chicago. He lives with his sister-in-law but runs on the streets. He talks about the stories his parents told him about why they moved to Chicago.

THE FARMER IS THE MAN

Harry Terrell

p213

p213 Terrell's Quaker ancestors worked their way west in the 19th century. He became the secretary of the YMCA in Des Moines but his main occupation was as a farmer during

the Depression.

p214 There was unrest among the farmers in Iowa. Banks would give loans to people who had jobs, but not to farmers who had only equipment, land and crops to put up for collateral. At 8 cents a bushel, corn was cheaper than coal to burn for heat.

p214 To stop the banks from foreclosing, neighbors collaborated at sheriff's sales to purchase a neighbor's farm cheaply and then sell it back to him. On one occasion, a group of farmers nearly lynched a judge for his willingness to foreclose. They also held protest marches.

p215 Farmers called a "Farm Holiday" to keep goods from reaching market in order to force prices up.

p215 "The nearer to the ground you get, the nearer you are to conservative." [farmer politics]

p216 During the Depressions, farmers could get by because they grew their own food, but nowadays, that is no longer true. Small farmers are disappearing.

Oscar Heline

p217

p217 Heline lived his entire life -- seventy-five years -- on a farm in northwestern Iowa near the South Dakota border.

p219 "There were a few who had more credit than others ... [and they] gained at the expense of the poor ... struggle between the haves and the have-nots."

p219 "We did pass some legislation." One measure ended "Deficiency judgements" which made farmers liable for the balance of their mortgages even after their property had been foreclosed upon. Another created "adjudication committees" to stop mortgage foreclosures by working out a repayment schedule. Henry Wallace got the federal government to provide money to raise corn prices from 10 cents to 45 cents. Together, they "saved us, put us back on our feet."

p220 Another action, which the farmers called "Wallace's Folly," required them to kill pigs because once corn prices went up, there was no profit in selling corn-fed pigs at the low pork prices which prevailed in the market. By killing pigs, they intended to drive up the price of pork.

p220 During the Depressions, farmers made underwear from gunny sacks, canned their own food and recycled everything. The federal government had to bail out farmers because they could not do it themselves.

p220 "Poverty creates desperation, and desperation creates violence.

p220 A group of local farmers tared and feathered a judge from Le Mars. [see also page 214]

Frank and Rome Hentges

p221

p221 They owned clothing stores in Le Mars, Iowa, before the Depression.

p221 The local farmers threatened Judge Bradley of Le Mars, Iowa. This account does not mention anything about tar and feathers, but confirms that a rope noose was placed around his neck.

Orrin Kelly

p223

p223 He was a farmer near Le Mars, Iowa in the Depression. He went on to become a salesman for the Plymouth Co-Op in 1940.

p223 Farmers threatened to lynch Judge Bradley, so the state militia was called out. Since Kelly was the "Chairman of the Council for Defense," he was arrested even though he was in Des Moines on the day of the lynching threat.

Emil Loriks p226

p226 Loriks was a South Dakota state senator from Arlington from 1927 to 1934.

p226 The grain elevator in Arlington, South Dakota, went broke in 1924.

p226 After Loriks' brother lost his job at the Minneapolis-Moline tractor factory, he brought his family to live on the farm in South Dakota.

p226 Farmers formed cooperatives as a means to resist the "powers" during the Depression.

Ruth Loriks, His Wife p229

p229 She was a state senator's wife during the Depression. She mentioned the "grasshopper days" when waves of grasshoppers came to South Dakota, darkened the sky and ate the grain.

Clyde T. Ellis p230

p231 Ellis was an Arkansas farmer who ran for Congress in 1932 and defeated the party's machine candidate.

p231 The arrival of electricity to rural areas was like a miracle. "I wanted to be at my parents' house when electricity came. It was in 1940. We'd all go around flipping the switch, to make sure it hadn't come on yet. We didn't want to miss it. When they finally came on, the lights ...

p232 ... just barely glowed. I remember my mother smiling. When they came on full, tears started to run down her cheeks. After a while she said, 'Oh, if we only had it when you children were growing up.' We had lots of illness, Anybody who's never been in a family without electricity -- with illness -- can't imagine the difference."

p232 "From there, I went to my grandmother's house. It was a day of celebration. They had all kinds of parties -- mountain people getting light for the first time."

p232 "There are still areas without electricity. Coal oil lamps are used, with the always dirty chimneys. But there are more and more electric co-ops, which first sprang out of the New Deal. And the power companies are still fighting us . . ."

Emma Tiller p232

p232 Tiller's father had a small farm in west Texas. She recalled a depression that started in 1914 when worms ate most of the cotton crop. By 1929, she and her husband were sharecroppers, but that year the landowner took all of their crop.

p232 She picked cotton for 35 cents per hundred. That was not enough to live, so she, like other Negroes, supplemented that by cleaning people's houses and getting gifts of shoes and clothes from their employers.

p233 In a town in west Texas in 1934, local farmers wondered why people who waited on long lines for government relief food failed to get any. Eventually, three of them

brought guns to the distribution center and forced the officials to reveal what was going on. Three local officials were selling the meat provided by the government on the black market.

p234 Tiller didn't like seeing farmers plough up cotton when there were people who didn't have enough clothes. She was especially disgusted by the sight of cattle killing which she compared to seeing humans slaughtered in battle.

Sumio Nichi

p234

p235 Nichi's family were truck farmers in California in the 1920s, and during the Depression, they were able to buy used trucks. When WWII started, they were forced off their farm and forced to sell \$80,000 worth of equipment for \$6,000. They got none of it back after the war.

EDITOR AND PUBLISHER

Fred Sweet

p236

p237 Sweet was a Democrat who edited a newspaper in a small town (Mt. Gilead, Ohio) and supported union efforts to organize the town's single factory. The local judge was a Republican, so he refused to place any legal advertisements in Sweet's newspaper, and Sweet's largest advertiser, a department store owner, pulled his ads too. Meanwhile, members of the American Legion used violence to intimidate the union organizers, but the union was successful anyhow. Afterwards, when factory workers got higher salaries and were able to buy more in town, the department store owner apologized to Sweet and resumed advertising.

W. D. (Don) Maxwell

p238

p238 Maxwell retired as the editor of the *Chicago Tribune* in the late 1960s. In this interview, he comments on the paper's publisher, Colonel Robert R. McCormick (a good friend of Douglas MacArthur) and his reaction to the Depression.

p239 McCormick "hated Roosevelt's hypocrisy" and used his paper to criticize FDR. Although he was a powerful figure in Illinois politics, and supported Landon, Wilkie and Taft against FDR, he did not have much success against the President.

p240 He criticized the WPA incessantly because he thought it was a boondoggle. He was not opposed to relief itself.

p240 Terkel prodded: "*And those cartoons portraying New Deal professors in mortarboard hats . . .*"

p240 "There's nothing that proved him more right. A lot of people agree with him today. If he was against professors, it was the kind that today join these rebels in destroying these universities. It's about as silly as joining with the rebels in the Civil War when you wanted to protect the north. ... He was against Tugwell, ... Wallace, ... Ickes. Ickes hated him, and he hated Ickes."

p240 Maxwell said that McCormick was not too bothered by the protest marches. Then the interview concluded "All of the Colonel's behavior fits in with the pattern of the patrician. I gave him the title, 'the Duke of Chicago.' As a duke, he was kind to the peasants and fought for their rights. You might say he treated his subjects very well."

p240 McWilliams was an author who became editor of *The Nation*. His interview mentions the bigger economic picture, the role of university professors, the poor conditions in labor camps, California prejudice against "Arkies and Okies," Robert Lafollette's investigation into the exploitation of farm workers. He concluded that the New Deal's best years were 1934 to 1938.

[...]

p241 "After the stock market crash, some New York editors suggested that hearings be held: what had really caused the Depression? They were held in Washington. In retrospect, they make the finest comic reading. The leading industrialists and bankers testified. They hadn't the foggiest notion what had gone bad. You read a transcript of that record today with amazement: that they could be so unaware. This was their business, yet they didn't understand the operation of the economy. The only good witnesses were the college professors, who enjoyed a bad reputation in those years. No professor was supposed to know anything practical about the economy."

[...]

p241 "As a result of my father's experience in Colorado in 1919, and my own during the Great Depression, my confidence was destroyed in the operation of this economy. I've tried -- unsuccessfully -- not to acquire any property. I didn't have confidence in stocks and bonds. The whole thing was put together in a way that didn't inspire my confidence. And it doesn't now. This may be an unreasonable attitude on my part, nonetheless. . . ."

p241 "There was a delayed reaction to the events of October, 1929. I was practicing law in Los Angeles. In a year or two, I saw the impact on clients -- the kind of widows who are legion in southern California. Who had brought money out from the Middle West and had invested it in fly-by-night real estate promotions. They began to lose their property. I was bugged when I saw what was happening."

p242 "When I got out of law school in 1927, I was not a political person. ... My interests became increasingly social and political as the Thirties began to unfold."

p242 "My first reaction to Roosevelt was very adverse. I remember particularly my great disappointment in a 1932 speech he made at the Hollywood Bowl. ... He didn't have a ghost of an idea... He, too, was an innocent. He had no program. He was pressured into doing the fine things he did."

p242 "The labor movement, the sit-ins, were responsible for the labor legislation. The Farm Holiday movement was responsible for the farm program. Dr. Townsend, Coughlin, Huey Long and company were responsible for the pressures that brought about social security. Roosevelt was responsive, sympathetic. In later years, I became a great admirer."

[...]

p242 "Going around the state in those years, you saw California as synonymous with abundance. It's so enormously rich, especially in agriculture. Yet you saw all kinds of crops being destroyed. There were dumps in southern California, where they would throw citrus fruits and spray them ..."

p243 "... with tar and chemicals. At a time when thousands of people were in real distress. [FOOTNOTE: Dorothy Comingore, a former film actress (Citizen Kane), recalls, 'I saw heaps of oranges covered with gasoline and set on fire and men who tried to take one orange shot to death.']

p243 "You could easily romanticize the Thirties. The racial attitudes were not very good. I was intimately involved with these issues, and the attitudes were incredible. Though there was no categorization of the poor as there is today -- the former doctor, the man who lost his law practice, the businessman, everybody was in on it -- there was no feeling that there was a national race problem."

[...]

p243 "In the second half of the Thirties, about 350,000 Dust Bowl refugees flooded the state. They were promptly stereotyped, exactly like a racial minority. They were called Okies and Arkies: they were shiftless and lazy and irresponsible and had too many children, and if we improve the labor camps and put a table in, they would chop it up and use it for kindling. Once I went into the foyer of this third-rate motion picture house in Bakersfield and I saw a sign: Negroes and Okies upstairs."

[...]

p243 "I inspected labor camps. The conditions were not to be believed. There were no programs of aid for these people. The camps were filthy. We had a labor camp population of 175,000 in August and September, the harvest season. In the spring, they'd force people off relief rolls to take jobs at twenty cents an hour. I induced Governor Olson to let me hold some hearings. We recommended they not be cut off relief unless they were paid ...

p244 "... twenty-seven and a half cents an hour. The reaction [from farmowners] could hardly have been more violent had we bombed San Joaquin Valley. Outrageous, that they should pay twenty-seven and a half cents an hour."

[...]

p244 "I think the New Deal saved American capitalism. It was a bridge. But it never really solved the problems."

BOOK THREE

CONCERNING THE NEW DEAL

Gardiner C. Means

p247

p247 Means was a coauthor with A. A. Berle of The Modern Corporation and Private Property.

p247 At the beginning of the New Deal, [its critics] called it a "revolution." But it wasn't really a revolution. It turned out to be a "revolution in point of view." The US economy fit not classical theories because it consisted of a number of large corporations which provided highly centralized control. "What Roosevelt and the New

Deal did was to turn about and face the realities. ... People agreed that ...

p248 ... old things didn't work. What ran through the whole New Deal was finding a way to make things work."

p248 During the New Deal, the author worked in the White House, answering mail for Henry Wallace (among other duties).

p249 "The NRA [National Recovery Act] was one of the most successful things the New Deal did. It was killed when it should have been killed. But when it was created, American business was completely demoralized. Violent price cutting and wage cutting . . . nobody could make any plans for tomorrow." ... "More important, laissez faire in the Nineteenth Century manner was ended. The Government had a role to play in industrial society. We didn't move into a fascist kind of governmental control, because we continued to use the market mechanism. In the two years of the NRA, the index of industrial productivity went up remarkably."

p249 "Had the NRA continued, it would have meant dangerously diminishing the role of the market in limiting prices. You see, there was little Governmental regulation of the NRA. The Government handed industry over to industry to run, and offered some minor protection to others in the form of the Labor and Consumer Advisory Boards. ... You might say, NRA's greatest contribution to our society is that it proved self-regulation by industry doesn't work."

Raymond Moley

p250

p250 Moley was "one of Roosevelt's original Brain Trust" whose focus was on restoring American confidence.

p250 "The bank rescue" of 1933 was probably the turning point of the Depression." After they got over the shock of seeing the banks all closed, they were reassured when the banks reopened one by one, with their deposits intact and insured. ...

p251 ... it revived hope.

p251 Tugwell [Rex Tugwell, head of the Farm Security Administration] thought the government should have gone further in taking over the economy, but Moley was satisfied.

p251 The "First New Deal" was a radical change that put more power in the hands of the central government. That was necessary, especially in the farm economy. He disagreed with the "Second New Deal" in 1936 and resigned after that. It brought about economic decline that continued until 1940.

p251 "We had a slight recession in 1937, which was occasioned by his [Roosevelt's] attack on copper prices, specifically, and on business, generally." The attempt to pack the Supreme Court shocked people, and FDR failed to defeat his congressional opponents in 1938 by supporting their challengers. ...

p252 ... But if it had not been for World War II, FDR would not have been reelected in 1940.

p252 Moley came to disagree with FDR in 1935 over on unemployment insurance, which Moley felt was not funded on a sound basis. "Welfare is a narcotic, because it will never end."

C. B. (Beanie) Baldwin

p254

p254 Baldwin arrived in Washington before 1933 as an assistant to Secretary of Agriculture Henry Wallace. He remained in the federal government until FDR died in 1945.

p255 Under the Roosevelt/Wallace administration, the government enacted price subsidies for tobacco, hogs, and cotton, and paid farmers to destroy their hogs and cotton.

p258 Rex Tugwell was the head of the Farm Security Administration until he resigned in 1937.

p261 Baldwin was in charge of the FSA photography project, but he had to keep it hidden for fear that a reactionary congressman would complain that tax dollars were being wasted on photography. Later, he and Archibald MacLeish (later Librarian of Congress) conspired to preserve the negatives from destruction.

p262 "The Depression lessened, but it really never ended until the war. The New Deal was never enough. Looking back, it was a pretty conservative effort. Rex Tugwell once said to me, 'Beanie, we were pikers.' I'd ask for \$800 million, we'd get a couple of hundred million, and we thought we did pretty well. Today, with our war budget . . . "

p262 "When Roosevelt's death came, the New Deal was dead as far as I was concerned. I have nothing against Truman, but he simply wasn't up to it. Morgenthau [Sec. Treasury Henry] was forced out, Ickes was forced out, Wallace was fired. It was a whole new game of cards. At this point, my fascination with Government was gone."

James A. Parley

p262

p262 Farley was Postmaster General during the first two Roosevelt administrations and FDR's campaign manager during the 1932 and 1936 elections.

Joe Marcus

p265

p265 Marcus was an economist who conducted a study for Harry Hopkins on how industrialization affected reemployment or, as Marcus put it, "why the stickiness of unemployment."

Burton K. Wheeler

p269

p269 Wheeler was a Senator from Montana who became Bob LaFollette's running mate for the Progressive Party in 1924. he won nearly five million votes.

David Kennedy

p272

p272 Kennedy came to Washington to study law in 1929 and got a job with the Federal Reserve in 1930. Later, he became an important banker and Secretary of the Treasury under President Nixon.

p272 When FDR declared a bank holiday, Kennedy and his department had to work quickly to determine which were solvent and to license them.

John Beecher

p277

p277 Beecher was a poet whose father was the head of a southern subsidiary of the US Steel Corporation. He lost everything in 1929 and took a long time to recover psychologically.

AN UNRECONSTRUCTED POPULIST

Congressman C. Wright Patman

p282

p282 Patman was from Texas. He was first elected to Congress in 1928. In the early years, he introduced legislation to help the poor.

PERORATION

Colonel Hamilton Fish

p287

p287 Fish was a football star at Harvard in 1908 who went on to Congress by 1920. He led a committee to investigate Communists in 1930-1931 and later helped to found the Un-American Activities Committee. He cited HR2290 as "the best report on Communism in America" and praised Congressman [Martin] Dies of Texas and Joe McCarthy. He rejected FDR as a "Socialist."

SCARLET BANNERS AND NOVENAS

William L. Patterson

p293

p293 Patterson was the son of a woman who was born a slave in 1850. He graduated from a California law school and founded "the leading Negro law firm" in New York City. In the 1920s, during the Sacco & Vanzetti case, he became acquainted with American communists like Ella "Mother" Bloor and went on to study for three years at the "University for Toiling People of the Far East" in the Soviet Union. He returned to the USA in 1930.

p294 "For a short time, I was an organizer in Harlem." He was arrested many times.

p295 Roosevelt saved American capitalism with his WPAs and PWAs. Also, the CIO could not have been founded without the organizational help of the Communist Party.

p295 Terkel asked, "*Wasn't the idea of black nationhood suggested, for a time, by the Communist Party . . . ?*"

p295 "'During the late Twenties, the concept of self-determination arose, as a means of sharpening the struggle. The rights of Negroes to have a part of the United States in which they constituted a majority. There were separatist movements at the time. They were sharply challenged by DuBois. Black Americans were not Africans. To consider themselves so would be to surrender their heritage to the very forces which have been their greatest oppressors. Black power today is self-determination in a new form, autonomy of the black ghetto. It must be a positive force. When it creates the idea of separatism, it must be combatted.'"

p296 After the arrest of the "Scottsboro boys" in 1931, he agreed to become the acting secretary of the International Labor Defense which tried to mobilize international sympathy on their behalf. He hired a New York criminal lawyer, Samuel Liebovitz, who eventually won an acquittal on appeal, although the last "boy" (Heywood Patterson) was not released from prison until 1947.

p296 He praised one of the accusers, a white girl named Ruby Bates, for recanting her testimony and for testifying to the way that she was used by white leaders in Alabama as part of a plot to keep Negroes under control.

Max Shachtman

p297

- p297 Shachtman was a former Trotskyite and is currently "a leading theoretician of the American Socialist Party."
- p297 Shachtman said that until the Crash took place, American capitalism was thought to be special in some way. Ford paid his workers \$5/day, and the Radicals were disheartened because it seemed that there was no way to convince the workers that they were oppressed.
- p298 The 1929 Crash invigorated the Communist Party, which went through three stages. For the first five years (1929-1934), it purged itself of Trotskyites and others, following the lead of the party in the Soviet Union. The result was a party divided into numerous factions. On the other hand, mass unemployment gave them an opportunity to organize workers. Then, after Roosevelt was arrested, the party became more militant and increased its attacks on the right and left. It considered the socialists to be "social fascists" and derided Congress as the "fascist Grand Council."
- p298 At the same time that the Communists gained influence with unemployed workers, they alienated every other radical group. When the Communists created their own "red unions," they angered other labor unions by dividing the movement, and they failed to get many members.
- p299 The American Socialist Party wound up splitting into moderate and radical wings.
- p299 All of this was influenced by events in Europe, particularly the German Communist capitulation to the triumph of fascism in Germany, and the apparent success of the Soviet Five-Year Plan at a time when American factories were idle.
- p299 The American Left changed dramatically in the second half of the 1930s thanks to the New Deal, the entry of labor into politics with the formation of the CIO, and the creation of a "united front" with socialists in the face of the Spanish Civil War. They began to support Roosevelt and the New Deal, ...
- p300 ... and eventually became supportive of working within the Democratic Party.
- p300 The American Communist Party was destroyed by its dependency on Moscow which led it to accept the Hitler-Stalin Pact of 1939. Members withdrew in shock and by the end of the decade the Party was inconsequential. It never recovered.
- p300 The Socialist Party also foundered because it failed to understand the revolution caused by the New Deal. It created "a new political coalition: labor, with all its ethnic minorities and Negroes."

Dorothy Day

p301

- p302 During the Depression, Day was a reporter for a Catholic newspaper. She eventually became a writer for *The Catholic Worker*, founded in late 1932 by Peter Maurin of France.
- p304 She and her colleagues opposed the New Deal out of a belief that government should not carry out activities that people should do themselves. The New Deal was an admission of failure of American society.

Fred Thompson

p306

- p306 Thompson joined the IWW ("Wobblies" or International Workers of the World") in 1922. He worked construction all over the place. He contrasted the myth of the Wobblies as "a bunch of nuts" with the reality of "a very serious bunch of men with understanding." Despite repression after World War I, the Wobblies ...
- p307 ... reached their largest numbers in 1923 and survived a factional dispute in 1924. They were strengthened again by the "Colorado Coal Strike of '27."
- p307 During the Depression, "we hammered away at one theme: people who didn't have a job would do far more for themselves by going to every worker who still had a job, and saying, `If you strike, we won't take your job away from you. We'll come here and beef up your picket line.'" They put out a pamphlet whose theme was "bread lines lead to despair and picket lines lead to hope."
- p307 The introduction of the automobile weakened their ability to organize because migrant workers, instead of riding trains to follow the wheat harvest, travelled in Model Ts. [cheap Ford automobiles]
- p308 The Communists and Wobblies competed for members and for influence among workers.
- p308 There was some talk of revolution in the 1930s, but the Wobblies never tried to promote it because they did not feel that the working class was organized enough to run things.
- p309 Thompson did not like Roosevelt. "I don't know as he hurt it. He changed the situation. He did cause most people to feel if you could only find a good man and put him in office, he'll fix everything for you, and you can go back to sleep now. He certainly didn't help radicalism."

Saul Alinsky

p310

- p311 During the 1920s he studied criminology at the University of Chicago and got close enough to Al Capone's mob to study them.
- p311 "I found organized crime to be a large, quasi-public utility. This was during the last years of Prohibition. People wanted beer, they wanted whiskey, they wanted broads, they wanted gambling and all the other stuff. It was a corporation. Everybody owned stock in it: City Hall, Democrats, Republicans, the world."
- p311 As he lost interest in criminology, his interest in "anti-fascist and CIO activities" grew. Once that led him to an area called "Back of the Yards" that he described as "worse than Harlem is today. You had this dingy, gray, mile-by-two-miles of track, south of the big slaughterhouses. Clapboard frame houses, one behind the other. Many of them with outhouses. The neighborhood was practically all Catholic. You never saw so many churches. It made Rome look like a Protestant Gothic town."
- p311 "At this point, I decided to get the hell out of academic work and go in ...
- p312 ... for mass organization. I had certain concepts I couldn't follow through on as a professional. If you're an academic and you're controversial, you're in trouble. You had to organize around issues, and all issues were controversial."
- p312 He decided to try out his ideas by organizing Back of the Yards. "At the end of three months, I had the Catholic Church, the CIO and the Communist Party working

together. It involved the Packinghouse Workers Union. I even got the American Legion involved, because they didn't have a goddamn thing to do. They all had one thing in common: misery. Powerlessness."

p313 After describing some of the tactics he used to get different groups to work together, Alinsky said that he turned down an organizing job from the CIO, after its leader John L. Lewis came to accept that Alinsky, and not the CIO, would lead the effort in Back of the Yards.

p313 Three weeks after turning down the CIO job, Alinsky received an invitation from the White House to become assistant director of the NYA. He turned that one down too.

p313 He turned down both offers because "The secret of the Back of the Yards Council -- and all the other organizations I worked at since -- was: The people weren' fronting for anyone. It was *their own* program."

p313 "In the Thirties, I learned what is to me the big idea: providing people with a sense of power. Not just the poor. There is nothing especially noble about the poor. Everybody. That time may have been our most creative period. It was a decade of involvement. It's a cold world now. It was a hot world then."

THE DOCTOR, HUEY AND MR. SMITH

George Murray

p314

p314 Murray is a journalist in Chicago. From 1938 to 1945, he was "associated with the Townsend Movement as editor of its newspaper and, subsequently, as its general manager."

p314 The Townsend Movement was started by a "country doctor out of Nebraska" named Townsend who was the Health Commissioner of Long Beach, California in 1933. His followers organized clubs that heard speakers, raffled off cakes and kept minutes which were forwarded to Murray. Murray's job was to convert the minutes into stories.

p314 Townsend's idea was "A gross income tax of two percent on everybody in the country, no exceptions. Proceeds to be divided among all people over sixty, the blind and disabled, and mothers of dependent children. ...

p315 ... they had to spend it within thirty days. He wasn't a great economist, but he had something figured out in his mind."

p315 "It was strictly a grassroots movement, but it served its purpose. It brought the Social Security plan into being. When he signed the bill, late in 1935, Franklin D. Roosevelt was apologetic ... he had to enact it to forestall the Townsend Plan. People were just screaming. They wanted pensions."

p315 Townsend "was never strong in the cities. His strength was always in the rural areas and small towns. That's where the twelve thousand clubs were. Men like Father Coughlin and Gerald L. k. Smith sensed if they could get these people, they could put over any program they wanted."

p316 "The movement was at its height just before the war and went downhill after that. It lost momentum."

Senator Russell Long

p316

- p316 Russell Long was a US Senator from Louisiana. He was the son of Huey Long. He grew up in a working class area and was 17 when Carl Austin Weiss assassinated his father in the state capital building in Baton Rouge.
- p316 Huey Long started out as a salesman and he used the same techniques in politics.
- p317 Long made radio speeches "about all the stealing and corruption he'd found in Washington."
- p317 Long's plan was modeled after the old Populist program of redistributing wealth that had become concentrated in too few hands. His "share-the-wealth" program would divide one-third of the money in the country among everybody and leave two-thirds to be captured by the rich.
- p317 Long had a big impact on Washington. According to Russell Long, Dr. Arthur J. Altmeyer, a "Commissioner of Social Security for a number of years," said Huey Long "was one of the people who put together the Social Security program." Russell Long concluded that Huey Long pushed Roosevelt to the left.
- p318 Long's critics said that LSU students supported him because they were all on Long's payroll. Actually, about a third of them were on scholarship, and Long wanted to provide college scholarships for everyone.

Evelyn Finn

p318

- p318 Finn lived in Baton Rouge at the time Huey Long was shot. Although she and her brother often went to watch the sessions, which were held at night because it was cooler, she wasn't there that night. Her brother was, but he didn't know that Long had been shot until he got home. Evelyn and her mother heard it on the radio.
- p319 Finn said that politicians like Long used WPA workers to get votes by doing favors for their supporters. She also said that the food given to Negroes was half useless because it was full of "worms and weevils." The Negroes took it anyway because otherwise they would get nothing.

Gerald L. K. Smith

p319

- p319 Smith was a great orator during the Depression. Nowadays, he and his wife operate "a religious enterprise in Eureka Springs, Arkansas" which offers a rendition of the Passion Play to tourists, ...
- p320 ... plus "a gallery of sacred art, and The Christ of the Ozarks," a 70-foot statue on top of Magnetic Mountain, visible from four states. He also publishes right-wing magazines including *the Cross and the Flag*, founded in 1942 and known for its attacks on "'the Jewish establishment' and recalcitrant blacks."
- p320 Smith first encountered the Depression while he was a pastor of a church in Shreveport, Louisiana. ...
- p321 ... When the bank began to foreclose on mortgages, he discovered that the leaders of his church were in a position to make money from the foreclosures, and they told him not to try and stop it or he would lose his position. Smith called Huey Long who told the head of the savings & loan association to stop the foreclosures. The foreclosures ended, but Smith lost his job as the pastor of the King's Highway Christian Church."
- p322 Smith became an ally of Long and planned to support him for President of the US in

1936.

- p323 "Huey Long died in my arms. We were walking through the hall, and this little man shot Huey. the boys killed the killer, before he turned loose on the others. He missed me."
- p323 Smith gave the eulogy at Long's funeral and tried to use it to name himself as Long's successor. Nut the rest of "the Long machine" preferred to sell out to Roosevelt in order to obtain millions in federal money.
- p324 Later, Smith became an ally of Henry Ford.
- p325 By 1936, there were three mass groups: followers of Huey Long, Doctor Townsend and Father Coughlin. When Congress tried to ruin Townsend, Smith supported him. ...
- p326 ... Later, they quarreled, but Smith "respected him to the very hour of his death."
- p326 Smith also got along with Coughlin and told how Coughlin was silenced on order from the Vatican in exchange for Roosevelt's decision to send a "Fraternal Delegate" (less than an ambassador) to Rome.

THE CIRCUIT RIDER

Claude Williams

p328

- p328 Williams was an evangelist from rural western Tennessee. He tried to organize poor black and white in the rural south (Tennessee, Arkansas).
- p329 He was defrocked in 1934, but the Presbyterian Church still sent him to the automobile plants in Michigan to serve as a chaplain for workers from the South.

THE GENTLEMAN FROM KANSAS

Alf M. Landon

p333

- p333 Landon was elected governor of Kansas in 1932 an 1934, and was an unsuccessful Republican candidate for President of the US in 1936 (with Colonel Frank Knox for vice-president).
- p334 In addition to the Depression, Kansas experienced a drought from 1930 to 1937.
- p335 Terkel asked, "*Did you express much disagreement with the New Deal program?*"
- p335 "Not too much. . . . If you take Mr. Roosevelt's program today in light of what both Republicans ...
- p336 ... and Democrats are standing for, he'd be pretty conservative. I've never condemned Roosevelt's objectives, just his Administration."
- p336 Terkel asked, "*Do you feel the New Deal saved our society?*"
- p336 "By and large? (Pause) Yes."

A VIEW OF THE WOODS

Christopher Lasch

p338

- p338 Lasch is an American historian and author of The New Radicalism in

America and The Agony of the American Left. In this piece, he discusses the extent to which the Depression created the potential for revolution in America.

p338 There was a fear of revolution that made the reforms of 1934 and 1935 possible.

p338 The NRA was a good example of New Deal legislation. It was created by a group that included both business and labor representatives, ...

p339 ... and ended in a compromise that favored business by exempting price-fixing from anti-trust laws. Later the Supreme Court ruled it unconstitutional, although Lasch thought that Congress would not have renewed it anyway because small business and "old-line progressives" objected to it. Its main purpose was to raise prices and stimulate investment while keeping labor from becoming too radical.

p339 There's a whole school of historiography that talks of two New Deals. The first, represented by the NRA and the AAA, a kind of economy of scarcity, and the second, aimed at raising production and recognizing the rights of labor. But there were no clear lines of policy followed. The whole New Deal, as far as I can see, was really chaotic. All kinds of experiments were being tried constantly. The immediate aim of all the reforms was simply to end the Depression by whatever means came to hand. It's a case study of what can happen if you don't have a clear policy."

p339 Throughout the New Deal, there was a "shared body of assumptions about American society." First, America would remain capitalist. Beyond that, some progressive businessmen believed in regulation and admitting labor as a junior partner "in the industrial enterprise" as a means to head off greater disturbances. They were opposed by "laissez faire" people who resented all government measures ...

p340 ... because they worked against small business to the favor of large corporations. Socialism was completely ruled out as a possible solution.

Robert A. Baird p341

p341 Baird owns a large conglomerate in the northwest part of the country, gives much to charity, and is one of the most powerful men in the region. His father was a salesman who lost everything during the Depression. ...

p342 ... He graduated from college and went to work at the Packard automobile factory in 1937.

Tom, His Younger Son p343

p343 Tom Baird left the country for Canada to avoid the military draft during the Vietnam War.

p344 He criticizes "welfare capitalism" which his father supports.

Peter, His Older Son p344

p344 Peter Baird is an organizer for the Students for a Democratic Society. He says his father is a good man, and believes that welfare capitalism will benefit all of society.

CAMPUS LIFE

Pauline Kael p346

p346 Kael attended Berkeley in 1936. There was a divide between the rich kids who joined

fraternities and sororities, and the scholarship kids like Kael. She worked to raise the minimum wage on campus to 40 cents per hour.

p347 "The fraternity boys often acted as strikebreakers in San Francisco -- the athletes and the engineering students. And the poor boys were trying to get their forty cents an hour. The college administration could always count on the frat boys to put down any student movement. It's different today, the fraternities and sororities having so much less power . . ."

Robert Gard

p347

p347 Gard was a professor of drama at the University of Wisconsin. He described going to the University of Kansas during the Depression with \$30 in his pocket, several cases of food preserves from his mother and a beat-up 1915 Buick that his lawyer father had received in lieu of legal fees.

p347 Treats consisted of having a cookout next to the Union Pacific tracks with a five-cent pound of hamburger. "and some excellent conversation. And maybe swim in the Kaw River."

p347 One of his friends came to college in a 1919 Model T which he outfitted as a home. "He cooked and slept and studied inside that Model T Ford Sedan. How he managed, I will never know. I once went there for dinner. He cooked a pretty good one on a little stove h had in this thing. He was a brilliant student/ I don't know where he is now, but I wouldn't be surprised if he's the head of some big corporation. (Laughs) Survival . . ."

p348 "The weak ones, I don't suppose, really survived. There were many breakdowns. From malnutrition very likely. I know there were students actually starving. Some of them were engaged in strange occupations. There was a biological company that would pay a penny a piece for cockroaches."

p348 "We were mostly farm boys and, to some extent, these ideas were alien to us. ... It brought us face to face with these economic problems and the rest . . . All in all, a painful time, but a glorious time."

Chance Stoner

p348

p348 Stoner, a Wall Street financial consultant, grew up in a poor Virginia town and thought that there was little difference between the Twenties and the Thirties. His father was a typewriter salesman.

p348 He got a \$100 scholarship to the University of Virginia in 1931 and \$100 from his mother. During his first year, he organized a Marxist study class. The student body was divided into three groups, "About nine hundred of them had automobiles. About nine hundred had jobs or scholarships. The other nine hundred fell in between. We had real class warfare. The automobile boys and the fraternities -- we had thirty-three little Greek palaces on fraternity row -- they had charge of the student government. So I organized the other nine hundred, and we took student government away from them and rewrote the constitution."

p348 "I spent my time on radical activities. I was trying to organize a union in Charlottesville -- and bringing Negroes to speak on campus. ...

p349 ... We had the first black man to speak there since Reconstruction. He was an old

Socialist. This threw the dean into a fit. He still believed in slavery. He forbade the use of any university building. I was writing a weekly column for the campus paper. So I attacked the dean. . . . It was reprinted all over the eastern seaboard. On the front pages of newspapers, including the *New York Times*."

p349 "In 1935, we had the first official shutdown of all university classes for a peace demonstration. Guess who the featured speaker was? J. B. Matthews. He later ran the Un-American Activities Committee, as staff director for Martin Dies."

BOOK FOUR

MERELY PASSING THROUGH

Edward Burgess p353

p353 During the Depression, he had steady work as a printer at Donnelly's in Chicago.

Billy Green p354

p354 Green was a bookmaker in the 1930s. "I didn't get hurt too bad. I didn't own any stocks. I didn't believe in the market then, I'm not too crazy about it now, if you know what I mean. (Laughs.) The stock market is like shooting craps or playing horses. You hear about the ones that win, but you never hear about the ones that lose. There's more losers than winners, I promise you."

Scoop Lankford p355

p355 He spent thirty-one years of a life term in prison from 1919 to 1950 in the Illinois State Penitentiary.

p355 The Depression hit the prison pretty hard. The food became worse -- one time they tried to feed baby shark to the prisoners and called it halibut. "It wasn't starvation. They called it malnutrition. It woulda been starvation if they died quick from malnutrition. They just barely gave you enough to kept you alive. You lost weight. They made you lose weight until the doctor got after them and said they have to get at least one meal a day. A thousand men woulda died if it hadn't been for that doctor."

p355 The guards were living nearly as badly as the prisoners. "We at least had a place to eat and sleep. The prison itself was a protection from the outside. The people outside, they had to hustle. We were just down almost as low as we could get."

p355 "We fared lots better when the war was on. Food and more food, during the war. Yeah, the fellas talked about it.

THREE O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING

Wilbur Kane p356

p356 Kane, a journalist, was born about 1930 and spent part of the Depression living with his grandmother in a suburb of Allentown, Pennsylvania.

p357 He described how the second fight between Joe Louis and Max Schmeling in 1938

was viewed as a contest between Nazi Germany and America. [Note: Blacks viewed it in different terms, and there were probably many other perspectives. Schmeling beat Louis in the 12th round on June 19, 1936, while Louis beat Schmeling in the 1st round on June 22, 1938.]

p357 He hated FDR because instead of stopping Hitler, he let Hitler and the Communists fight it out and when that didn't work, the whole world was dragged into a war.

A CABLE

Myrna Loy

p359

p359 Loy was an actress. She described her reaction to the Munich Pact of 1938 -- she was "upset by the sell-out of Czechoslovakia." She sent a telegram from Malibu to the Czech leader, Jan Masaryk, and it was the first he received. Later, it was reprinted in newspapers all over Europe, and her movies were banned in Germany as a result.

p359 During the Depression, she was at the beginning of her career and she had plenty of work at MGM Studios.

p360 She learned that FDR liked her work, but despite several attempts, she never got to meet him. She did meet Eleanor Roosevelt, however, and liked her a great deal.

BOOK FIVE

THE FINE AND LIVELY ARTS

Hiram (Chub) Sherman

p363

p363 Sherman, an established Broadway actor, was starting out in New York during the Depression. "It was rock-bottom living in New York then, it really was. Cars were left on the streets [because no one could afford the gasoline for driving]. ...

p364 ... You didn't count your possessions in terms of money in the bank. You counted on the fact that you had a row of empty milk bottles. Because those were cash, they could be turned in for a nickel deposit, and that would get you on the subway. If you took any stock in yourself, you looked to see how many milk bottles you had, because that counted. Two bottles: one could get you uptown, the other could get you back."

p364 Sherman described a variety of odd jobs such as counting white hats and black patent leather purses for a fashion house, pretending to be a passenger on a sight-seeing bus in order to attract real passengers, plus summer theater opportunities.

p364 In 1936, he joined the Federal Theater. It was good because it was not bound by commercial concerns, but on the other hand, everything had to be okayed by higher authority.

p365 They performed "Cradle Will Rock" by Marc Blitzstein, a revolutionary piece that attacked big business. Someone in Washington tried to prevent them from opening, so they moved to the Jolson Theatre at 59th St. and 7th Ave., but then the Actors Equity got in the way.

p367 Sherman became a member of the Council of the Actors Equity. He was accused of being a Communist, but he volunteered for the navy in World War II.

Neil Schaffner

p368

p368 Schaffner and his wife operated their own theater troupe which gave performances in rural areas during the Depression.

p369 They used to spend a week in each town and perform a different show, mostly comedy, each night. For them, everything was fine until the week of July 6, 1930, when suddenly nearly no one came to their show. Schaffner could not explain why it changed so suddenly or why he change came at that precise moment.

p370 To restore their business, they tried many different things including renaming plays to give them more provocative names, hiring an aerial balloonist to perform at their show, and giving away tickets to local merchants.

p371 "The Depression ended for us in 1936. We did a Tobie-Suzie act on the radio, five times a week, fifteen minutes. Then went on the 'National Barn Dance' for Alka-Seltzer over NBC, 550 stations. We got thousands of letters. Stores wouldn't wait on customers when the show was on. They had loudspeakers where the men were pitching horseshoes. Farmers would come out of the fields to listen."

p372 POSTSCRIPT: Schaffner added; *"The Federal Theater had no connection with us. It was an idea of Mrs. Roosevelt. She thought it would alleviate unemployment among actors. Instead of putting William A. Brady in charge or some other recognized theatrical man, they chose Hallie Flanagan, who had gone to Vassar. It became a haven for all the short-haired girls and long-haired boys and weirdies of all kinds. And legitimate actors were walking the streets. ... They could have solved the actors' unemployment at very little cost. All they had to do was make a survey. If they said to each manager of each show: Add one more actor to your company. Uncle Sam will pay his salary. That would have been the easiest way. But no, they couldn' do that. That's the practical way. . . ."*

Paul Draper

p371

p371 Draper was a "solo dancer" who had no money either before or during the Depression.

p372 His first awareness of politics came as a result of the Spanish Civil War when he danced to raise money for the Spanish Loyalists. By then, he had developed a successful act by tap dancing to classical music, and got to play long-term gigs at places like the Persian Room at the Plaza Hotel.

p372 "We thought of the poor, at that time, as quite divorced from us, who were not poor. By the exercise of one's charity, life could be made all right. You would always have the poor with you, they were the unfortunate, and you made donations. You could handle them. It was mildly unpleasant, but not fundamentally upsetting."

p372 "No, for the first time, we faced the dreadful reality that we are not separated. They are us. They are something we have made. There is no conceivable way today to say: Fish, and you'll be all right. In hurt, in anguish, in shock, we are becoming aware that it is ourselves, who have to be found wanting, not the poor."

Robert Gwathmey

p373

- p373 Gwathmey was born in Richmond, Virginia, poor, but with rich relatives. After he left art school in 1930, he got a job teaching two days a week at Beaver College near Philadelphia in 1932.
- p373 The economy of Richmond, Virginia depended on tobacco, so it did not really experience the Depression because people kept on smoking.
- p373 The Federal Arts Project was a good investment, despite what its critics said about "boondoggles." For \$23 million, it produced about \$100 million worth of art. ...
- p374 ... Someone on the project earned \$94 a month and if he had a "sweetheart on the project," they could earn nearly \$200 a month, which was plenty to live on. "But the most important thing was: the artist had a patron who made no aesthetic judgements. Occasionally, you'd find a director in a given neighborhood who played favorites. . . . So artists for the first time, I dare say, had a patron -- the Government -- who made no aesthetic judgements at all."
- p375 He lost his job at Beaver College after taking students to a show in New York and receiving a complaint from the college president because they went to a restaurant where alcohol was served. He got another job at Carnegie Tech. Eventually he came to New York City in 1942 and stayed there for the rest of his life.
- p375 He discounts the danger of Government censorship of art because "We live in a democracy . . . why should I be fearful of my Government. I am part of it, am I not?"
- p375 During the Depression, people had to deal with poverty because they were "engulfed," but nowadays, people "turn their head."
- p376 "There was a little more Godlike acceptance of the unemployed guy, because you could be he."

Knud Andersen

p376

- p376 Andersen, a Norwegian painter and sculptor, emigrated to Chicago in the late 1920s.
- p376 "You see, to me the Depression was a blessing. When the shock of losing what you had worked for comes, I found refuge in my art. . . . The pain that came with economic loss, I felt would pass. . . . I felt quite prayerful, and so I was at peace. Of course, the knock on the door of economics . . . disturbed."
- p376 He did not join the Federal Arts project because "It was so disappointing, I couldn't participate. If it is done in the right way, the gifted artist benefits from the state and contributes: thus, body and soul are nourished. Then I would have participated. But the program went against my grain. I did not recognize true artistry in evidence."
- p376 He also went periods without food, but didn't let anyone know out of a sense of self-respect. "I had quite a duplex studio. I had Bach and Beethoven. Nothing else mattered. I worked in the cathedral of the spirit. My body may have needed food, but I was unaware."
- p377 "Once in the studio, a rat ran across my arm and bit me. Luckily, a visitor had left a bottle of whiskey, without my knowing about it. The bottle came of good use, I told him afterwards. I poured the whiskey over the wound. These are accidents, like the Depression. I avoid bringing accidents to mind."

Little Brother Montgomery and Red Saunders

p377

- p377 "The first is a jazz pianist and the other a band leader, who devotes much of his time to finding jobs for black musicians."
- p377 "MONTGOMERY: I was making a dollar a night on Sunday nights. And a spaghetti dinner. Playing house rent parties. On a Saturday night, I was playing for \$3. No supper there. Weekends is when the stockyards workers would go. Tuesday night, I was playing for \$2. My weeks were filled up with two, three dollars a night."
- p377 "Monday night, that was the biggest night I had. \$4. They had Blue Monday parties, the sporting people. Everybody who'd been out all Saturday and Sunday night, gamblers and hustlers. If they'd been hustlin' anything, they'd be poppin', buying moonshine, having fun, on Monday. From five o'clock in the morning until the wee, wee hours, way through the night."
- p377 "SAUNDERS: Those Blue Monday parties had a meaning. The night life, the gambling, the prostitution and the pimps -- they weren't just something that happened. They were a necessity. Survival. Women had to sell their bodies for twenty-five cents, fifteen cents. You find fewer black pimps today, because the black woman is more independent."
- p377 "In a flat, everything would go. In one room, they were playing a piano and drinking whiskey. In another room, they would have Georgia skin, poker or whatever game. In another room, they'd have whores, hustlers. Everything went. A person had to have some kind of life.
- p377 MONTGOMERY: They were houses where people lived. With a piano in the front room, where people danced. And moonshine, twenty-five cents a half pint. Pulverized alcohol. No admission. The money came from the sale of moonshine and supper. Spaghetti and chili . . . The house'd be packed, all kinds a ways. Six, five, sometimes four rooms, a hundred, eighty people would be in it. They were givin' a party to get their rent together."
- p377 "Lots of times we were raided by the police. Catch moonshine or catch ...
- p378 ... 'em gamblin'. They had some bad policemen around at that time. They had Jesse James, Big Six, Callahan's Squad. . . ."
- [...]
- p378 "MONTGOMERY: I left around the early Thirties and organized a band around Jackson, Mississippi. Sometimes we'd play at a dance and make fifteen cents apiece. (Laughs.) You'd travel maybe two, three hundred miles in a secondhand Cadillac, and a beat-up Lincoln. The whole band. We'd get to a place and couldn't make gas money. Places like Meridian, Hattiesburg, Vicksburg, all up in the Delta. 1935, '36 and up to around '38."
- p378 "The main times is when they're pickin' cotton. They got a dollar a hundred for pickin'. (Laughs.) Some people could pick two, three hundred pounds a day. We played in tobacco barns down through the South. I remember one band was burned up in one of those warehouses. We played a white dance tonight and a colored dance tomorrow. But we didn't mix."
- p378 "SAUNDERS: In those days, the black artist was at the mercy of the promoters. ... White musicians were having a field day, making all kinds of money in studios, in

concerts and legitimate theaters. Big money. The poor black musicians just had the beat-up Lincoln. They were what you called starvation bands. Did you know black musicians created the one-nighters?"

[...]

p378 "MONTGOMERY: Even their music was taken from them. Clarence Williams ...

p379 ... wrote "Sugar Blues" and that was called Clyde McCoy's. "Dorsey Boogie" is Pine Top's, which he played at house rent parties. . . ."

Jack Kirkland

p379

p379 "Writer-producer. His play, Tobacco Road, based upon Erskine Caldwell's novel, ran "almost eight years."

p379 "IN THE SPRING of '32, I woke up with a violent hangover. An agent gave me this book to read for that afternoon: "You're a southerner, you'll dig this." I went home with my hangover and read it and said: this is a play. So I took the book under my arm and went to live in Majorca for three, four months. I was quite broke at the time."

p379 "He completed the play in Hollywood, where he wrote films at "very big salaries." One was a highly successful Shirley Temple movie. "Shirley Temple's responsible for Tobacco Road, really." (Laughs.)"

p379 "It opened December 4, 1933. I couldn't get anyone else to produce it. They all were afraid of it. They thought it wouldn't run. So I put up all the money myself. No one else had a nickel in it. ... The reviews in the dailies were not too good for the play, except the raves for Henry Hull's performance. I just had to get up another five or six hundred dollars a week to carry the play. Until the Daily News ... fell for it and wrote an editorial. And the next day we were in. Later on, the monthlies came out -- George Jean Nathan, Bob Benchley, Dorothy Parker, all came out for it."

[...]

p379 "Mrs. Roosevelt helped. She loved the play, because it was about social ...

p380 ... conditions. When it opened in Atlanta, she went down there in case any trouble happened. But there was none whatsoever."

[...]

p380 "From then on, the Depression was a swinging time for me. Everything was so reasonable, and my income was so big. (Laughs.) I never had it so good. ...

p380 "Heaven knows I saw Hooverilles -- out of train windows. It was appalling to look at, even through train windows. But it didn't touch me."

p380 "A great many people felt it, especially the young. That's why so many at that time joined the Party. It wasn't a lack of love for the United States so much as thinking some other system would correct this blasting horror of hunger. They were soon disillusioned. . . ."

p380 "But it was a more generous time then. There wasn't this miasmic fear of unnamed things out there. Then it was specific: hunger. We had a more specific enemy to overcome. We were all in such a mess. When you're in trouble, you never go to rich friends to help you, you go to poor friends. I was more fortunate, so I was able to help

out friends."

p380 "Don't forget, we were all younger. There was a spirit of adventure then, too. When you're thirty years old, you don't have much fear. You don't have the same kind of fear I would have now after thirty, forty years. As I'm talking to you now, I'm seeing it with the eyes of a young man. Oh, it was a magnificent time for me. There was certainly no lack of girls. (Laughs.) I'm awful glad I was young at that time."

Herman Shumlin

p381

p381 "Theater producer-director. Among his works: *Grand Hotel*, *The Little Foxes*, *Male Animal*, *Watch on the Rhine*, *The Children's Hour*, *Inherit the Wind*, *The Deputy*."

p381 "Two or three blocks along Times Square, you'd see these men, silent, shuffling along in line. Getting this handout of coffee and doughnuts, dealt out from great trucks, Hearst's *New York Evening Journal*, in large letters, painted on the sides. Shabby clothes, but you could see they had been pretty good clothes. ... On every corner, there'd be a man selling apples. Men in the theater, whom I'd known, who had responsible positions. Who had lost their jobs, lost their homes, lost their families. And worse than anything else, lost belief in themselves. They were destroyed men."

p381 "One man I had known lived in New Rochelle. Proud of his nice family, his wife and three children. He had been a treasurer in the theater, which housed a play I had managed in 1926. He was very worldly, knew everything -- that wonderful kind of knowledge you often find in people of the theater. A completely capable man."

p381 "It was in 1931 that I ran into him on the street. After I had passed him, I realized who it was. I turned and ran after him. He had averted his eyes as he went by me. I grabbed hold of him. There was a deadness in his eyes. He just muttered: Good to see you. He didn't want to talk to me. I followed him and made him come in with me and sit down."

p381 "He told me that his wife had kicked him out. His children had had such contempt for him 'cause he couldn't pay the rent, he just had to leave, to get out of the house. He lived in perpetual shame. This was, to me, the most cruel thing of the Depression. Almost worse than not having food. Accepting the idea that you were just no good. No matter what you'd been before."

p381 "The Depression didn't affect me financially. On the contrary. I was successful almost the moment things crashed. But it did affect me in everything I saw. Making money while all this was going on."

[...]

p382 "It wasn't really until well into 1930 that [the Depression] became visible. The theater, for some reason, kept on going much as it had been. It was a slower descent. Plays were still being produced, great numbers of them, people were working."

[...]

p382 "I became very conscious of the effects of the Depression, of the yellowing that seemed to take place on the streets of Broadway, of the stores that were closed, of the shops that had been turned into one or another kind of cheap food places, of shops which had gone bankrupt and were being turned into little gaming parlors with

automatic machines."

p382 "Broadway was still alive every night, crowded with people as it had always been. But there was a change. Their clothes were shabbier, they stood around more, they walked aimlessly up and down the streets, rather than going somewhere. And those long lines of silent men, accepting the coffee and doughnuts and moving away. . . . It was disturbing to me. Here I was, making money and what did I do about it?"

[...]

PUBLIC SERVANT -- THE CITY

Elizabeth Wood

p383

p383 "She is Chief of Social Services, Housing Assistance Administration. In the late Thirties, through the late Forties, she was head of the Chicago Housing Authority."

p383 "In '33, I'd just been hired as a social worker by the United Charities. Social work at that time was beginning to get psychiatric. ... Sit, be passive, and let your client tell you what's wrong. It was my first contact with poverty. I found out the hard way."

p383 "I saw the impact on one family. There were nine children and two parents living in three rooms. I found them a great, big, sunny apartment, with enough bedrooms for a decent sleeping arrangement. And a dining room table for the first time. And enough chairs for the first time. I saw the magic that house performed. The family bloomed. I learned my first lesson about the meaning of a house."

[...]

pp384-6 This interview goes on to talk about the successes and failures of relief programs and how they led to the welfare state of the 1960s.

Mick Shufro

p386

p386 He was the Assistant Director of the Chicago Housing Authority during the 1930s and 1940s.

Elsa Ponselle

p388

p388 Ponselle was a teacher in the 1930s and is currently "the principal of one largest elementary schools in Chicago." [This interview talks about discrimination against the children of Mexican and Negro families, how teachers were paid with "warrants" instead of money in the Depression, how shocked everyone was when teachers started to unionize, her respect for both FDR and his wife, and how the quality of liquor improved after the end of the Depression.]

Sergeant Vincent Murray

p391

p391 Murray was a police officer who worked for the Railway Express Agency in the 1930s. He was laid off in 1933 and rehired in 1934, then went to work for the Chicago police in 1935.

p392 At the tail end of the Depression, "we had an epidemic of con games" in which people preyed on out-of-work men by getting them to give money for a uniform in exchange for a job that started the following day.

p392 Murray respected the CIO for organizing workers who were having a bad time. He

thought that the American Federation of Labor (AFL) did nothing for them, so he understood why they joined the CIO.

Earl B. Dickerson p393

p393 Dickerson was the president of a life insurance company that started out by selling to Negroes. He was also a member of the Chicago City Council from 1939 to 1941.

p394 He challenged Mayor Kelly on several things including relief for the South Side ghettos, and described several examples where relief and assistance was rationed according to race.

Dr. Martin Bickham p395

p395 He was a social worker who assisted disabled workers prior to the Depression, so he knew it was coming when his clients started getting laid off. He claimed that there was little "shirking" by recipients of government relief and that men took those jobs because they preferred to work than to simply receive money from the government.

EVICTIONS, ARRESTS AND OTHER RUNNING SORES

Mrs. Willye Jeffries p397

p397 She was a black woman who organized poor people in Chicago during the Depression. They operated as "Workers Alliance, Local 45."

Harry Hartman p403

p403 Hartman was a bailiff during the Depression and one of his responsibilities was to repossess goods purchased on installments. Occasionally he did evictions from housing as well.

p404 Harman described ways that a bailiff could give breaks to the people who had lost in court.

p406 One of the most significant results of repossession was a sense of shame that caused psychological problems.

p407 He concludes that in the 1930s, he had little trouble because people respected a uniform. Nowadays, he could never do what he did as a young bailiff because he would be killed.

Max R. Naiman p407

p407 Naiman wandered around the center and west of the country as a young man just after World War I. While doing farm labor, he discovered how exploited farmers were, and ...

p408 ... went to law school, graduating in 1932. He joined the "International Labor Defense" to defend workers. He defended black people, ...

p409 ... was assaulted by the "director of Relief, Raymond Hilliard" ...

p410 ... and lived with the people he defended for significant periods.

p411 "I'm looking forward to Social Security that I may be entitled to. This is one of the programs that always appeared on leaflets raised by people in the struggle for better conditions. There was a slogan among the people: Pass Social Security Legislation.

Today thousands of people, when they walk to their mail boxes and pick up their Social Security checks, owe it to these pioneers, who were called every bad name you can think of.

p411 NOTE: According to Terkel, "*He was the original, after whom Richard Wright created the lawyer, Max, in his novel of the Thirties, Native Son.*"

Judge Samuel A. Heller p411

p411 Heller described his experience as a judge in "Morals Court" and ...

p412 ... other courts during the Depression. Mondays were the busiest because the police locked up folks on Saturday night and held them over to Monday for a court hearing. Heller observed police arrogance and even brutality.

p413 In "Landlord and Tenants Court," he heard an average of 400 cases per day. "The defendants all had five-day notices: if you don't pay rent in five days, suit to dispossess is started. There is no legal defense. Out of a job means nothing, sickness means nothing. I couldn't throw these people out. So I interpreted the law my way -- five days was the minimum. No maximum was set. I gave everybody ten days. Of course, I offended the real estate brokers. I made them still more angry by allowing an extra day for each child in the family. Finally, I was giving them thirty days."

p413 He resisted efforts by "real estate men" to influence his decisions, but he refused ...

p414 ... and even told them there were other ways to resist eviction, such as everyone asking for a jury trial to clog the courts. They supported his opponent who won, so he did not get to serve as a judge for life.

A Young Man From Detroit and Two Girl Companions p414

p414 All three work as collection agents for a bank in the 1960s. They comment on crooked salesmen and ...

p415 ... surmise that a Depression might cleanse the system of merchandising to poor people.

p415 One girl says "To me, the Depression's a story told. Just like World War II. To me, it means nothing, except I'd hate to experience it. I'm not used to low-class living." ...

p416 ... When asked, she describes herself as "Middle class. (Laughs.) I'm on my own now and it's rough. (Laughs.)"

HONOR AND HUMILIATION

Eileen Barth p419

p419 Barth received a university degree in social service administration in 1933 and became a case worker. She described the pressures that case workers felt, from dependence by their clients to guilt about their own, relatively well-off circumstances.

Ward James p421

p421 James was born in Wisconsin and worked for "a small publishing house in New York" before the Depression. He was active in union organization and was fired in 1935.

Ben Isaacs p423

- p423 Before the Depression, he worked for himself by selling clothing door-to-door.
Howard Worthington p427
- p423 Before the Depression, he worked in a bond house on LaSalle Street in Chicago, dealing with foreign securities.
Stanley Kell p429
- p429 Kell was a boy during the Depression. He lived with his family above his father's machine shop. His mother was from Poland. Nowadays, he leads a neighborhood organization whose goal is to keep Negroes from buying houses in their neighborhood.
Horace Cayton p434
- p434 Cayton was a black sociologist and writer who moved to Chicago from Seattle with his family at the beginning of the Depression.
W. L. Gleason p438
- p438 Gleason was doing well before the Depression, but lost everything in a divorce settlement.

STRIVE AND SUCCEED

- Harry Norgard** p439
- p439 Norgard was a commercial artist who was laid off in 1933
- General Robert E. Wood** p441
- p441 Wood was a World War I army officer who served with MacArthur. During the Depression, he was the head of Sears Roebuck and he founded All-State Insurance in 1931.
- A. A. Eraser** p443
- p443 He was the bookkeeper for a lumber company during the Depression.
- p444 "... our offices, beautiful. Like old plantation mansions. Our money was made with cheap wages. A dollar a day. Mostly Negroes. We sold it en bloc to speculators."
- p444 "People would fight for those jobs. A case of supply and demand. Why didn't we pay more? That was the going wage. You had to make money. You see, without money, we would never have been able to build those mills. We were capitalists. It was free enterprise. We employed a lot of men, so you certainly can't blame us."
- p444 Terkel asked, "*What did these people do when the homes were sold?*"
- p444 "What did who do?"
- p444 Terkel continued, "*The people who lived there.*"
- p444 "Oh. Some of them got jobs with other companies. Some of them lost their jobs. That was a tragedy."
- p444 "Then I realized my life-long ambition to be on the board of directors of several companies. First thing I know, I'm sixty-eight and in good health. So I quit. I finally made it to the Gold Coast. So I just follow my own investments. Got rid of all the cats and dogs. I only buy blue chip stocks. All I do is study stocks and give advice to

widows, who live in my building. They stop me in the lobby every day: "What's good today?" I give 'em free advice."

Tom Sutton

p444

p444 "A lawyer, with offices in a suburb, west of Chicago. His wife, a physician, shares the quarters. He heads Operation Crescent, an organization of white property owners."

p444 ""The wealthy have a place to run. My people are caught in a trap. They're lower middle class, the forgotten ones. Every member on our board is a former liberal. Our best ideas come from the skilled laborers. They have the pulse of the people. They feel abandoned by their priests and their schools. They are hurting, hurting, hurting. . . . They have no place to go but themselves. They don't hate Negroes. They may prefer whites, but that doesn't mean they hate Negroes. And nobody really wants to admit hate. . . ."

p444 "THE REASON a man works is not because he enjoys work. The only reason any of us work is because if we don't work, we don't eat. ... Those who went through the Depression have a little more pride in their possessions, have a little more pride in the amount of possessions they have. They know that it was a fortunate person in the Thirties who have as much as they have today. They're much more money conscious."

[...]

p445 "I hate people to know how much money I have. I would never want to admit it if I was broke. I would never want to admit I was a millionaire. One thing the Depression did was to make us secretive. It was ours. During the Depression, nobody would admit that they were broke. My friends who went through the Depression with me, I'll never know how much money they have, because they won't talk about it. Whether they're broke or wealthy."

[...]

p445 "People blamed Hoover for the Depression. He had no control over it. If the Depression hits now, they'll blame the Government. You always have one danger when you blame Government: disturbances tend to create chaos. Chaos will create a demand for a strong man. A strong man will be most repressive. The greater the Depression, the greater the chaos."

p445 "I don't think we're basically a revolutionary country. We have too large a middle class. The middle class tends to be apathetic. An apathetic middle class gives stability to a system. They never get carried away strongly, one way or the other. Maybe we'll have riots, maybe we'll have shootings. Maybe we'll have uprisings as the farmers did in Iowa. But you won't have revolution."

[...]

p446 "... [I remember] listening to Father Coughlin about money changers in the temple. I lived in a Protestant neighborhood. It seemed there were more Protestants listening to Father Coughlin than there were Catholics. My father listened to him. He was like everybody else: anybody that had a solution, they'd grab onto it."

p446 "But he was a liberal and a Democrat and a strong supporter of Roosevelt. One of my favorite pastimes, during the campaign, was sitting across the front room, watching

him repeat after Roosevelt as Roosevelt talked. You know, telling off the other side. Since most of his brothers-in-law were conservative Republicans, he enjoyed that particularly."

[...]

p446 "The income tax changed me. I was making some money. It burned me up thinking now I had to file it with the Government. It was the fact that I had to sit down and report to somebody what I made. I had to keep records. And I'm so tired of keeping records."

[...]

p446 "Of course, we had social problems thrown in with the Depression. We had the beginning of the liberal movement in which Communists were in the forefront. They made use of labor with strikes, sit-ins, the many problems we had at that time. A free economy would have straightened out these problems."

p446 "Looking back, many individuals would have been hurt, etc. But as a result of the programs, many more are now hurt than would have been hurt at the time. In an attempt to alleviate a temporary situation, they've created a monstrosity."

[...]

p446 "POSTSCRIPT: "And there's the added feature: I am somewhat of a snob. My children are going to know some of the best of society. Not the best ...

p447 ... necessarily. Though money is an indication. They're going to know the best who are working a little harder, applying themselves with greater effort, and will be going further. We work a great deal for our children. It's nice to think there are wonderful ditchdiggers in the world, but that's for somebody else's daughter."

Emma Tiller

p447

p447 "In the mid-Thirties, she found herself "on my own, and the world was sorta new to me. I wasn't no longer where I had to take orders. I'm grown, I can do as I please, go where I want to, come back when I want to. . . ."

p447 "I trained my own self to cook. I always been a listener and a long memory. I could listen to one of Betty Crocker's whole programs and memorize for years afterwards. Cook it. I never doubted myself in nobody's kitchen. Which always means I had a job. You felt this independent because you knew they needed you. That's why I studied to be a good cook."

p447 "If it was an ordinarily rich family, you had the whole house under your control. So I ordered the food and I cooked somethin' and it didn't turn out the way I want it, I dumped it out and cooked somethin' else. 'Cause I'm tryin' to learn how to be a good cook. Rich people could afford me. 'Cause when you make mistakes, if I got money, I ain't gonna cry about you wasted sugar, you wasted this, you wasted that. I quit those jobs."

[...]

W. Clement Stone

p450

[...]

p450 "There are numerous ... inspirational messages in the corridors and elevators of the Combined Insurance Company of America Building. Happy, fox-trotty string music is heard through the halls, a soft background."

p450 "Behind a huge desk, sits the ebullient president. He has a pencil-thin mustache ("in those days, movie stars, Ronald Colman, John Gilbert and others did it"); he wears a wide bow tie ("it's an indication of an extrovert, someone with a high energy level, someone who has drive, who gets things done"); he smokes long, thick Cuban cigars ("when we had our Castro troubles, I bought up the equivalent of three warehouses"). He offers me a couple. "When you take the label off, you'll see it's '59." His laugh is unique; it has a five-note rise. He happily concedes these phenomena are carefully planned. It's a matter of image."

p450 "He is a celebrated philanthropist and was listed in Fortune as one of America's new centi-millionaires. His companies employ at least four thousand, with sales representatives in many other countries. Some are welfare states, where he sells "supplementary coverage."

p450 "'I started selling newspapers at the age of six on the South Side of Chicago. I found if I tried to sell at a busy corner, the larger kids would beat me up. So I found out that if I'd go in a restaurant, and even if the owner would push me out a few times, sooner or later I'd sell my pile of papers. Actually, that's what started me on cold canvassing -- calling on people unannounced."

p450 "Many of us learned in the Depression how to turn a disadvantage into an advantage. First of all, we have what is known as PMA, positive mental attitude. It's based on the premise that God is always a good God, that with every adversity there's a seed of greater benefit."

p450 "During the Depression, there were tremendous advantages to a sales manager. A man was willing to accept any kind of job. All I needed to do was to take a man out and show him how to make twenty, thirty, forty dollars a day, and I had a salesman. We -- I use the editorial we -- know how to make supermen out of ordinary men."

[...]

p451 "Actually, in the Depression years, many men who were successful in the Twenties became has-beens. They had a negative mental attitude. They were men making \$30,000 a year and didn't have the courage to start at the bottom and work up. Others realized opportunities were unlimited, if they were willing to think and willing to pay the price. A person doesn't have to be poor. Anyone in the United States could acquire great wealth today."

p451 "I said to myself: Why shouldn't I earn in a day what others earn in a week? Why shouldn't I earn in a week, what others earn in a month? Why shouldn't I earn in a month, what others earn in a year? How can I do it? The answer was simple. Work scientifically."

p451 "First of all, I'd always thank God for my blessings. Then I'd use a very simple prayer: Please, God, help me sell. This did many things, the mystic power of prayer. It got me keyed up. I threw all the energy I had into it. Immediately

afterward, I'd unwind and relax."

[...]

p451 "When the Depression hit, I had over a thousand licensed salesmen in the United States. I soon found out they weren't selling. So I traveled the country and wound up with 235. I trained these men. And we sold more insurance than in the boom days when we had a thousand men."

[...]

p452 "The reason I'd call on the head of a company, you find a man who has worked his way up from the bottom is much more generous than one who hasn't. What I really wanted was his permission, and I made it easy for him to give it to me. If he didn't take the policy, I'd say: (enthusiastically) "Well, thanks just the same. I'll see you again next year!" Then, as I would leave, I'd say, "Oh, by the way, would it be all right to see the others? If they're not too busy, I'll show it to them. If they want it, all right. If not, all right." I'd be on my way out and the answer would always be yes. Because it's a reflex action."

p452 "I would certainly not be in the sight of the president too frequently. I'd ...

p453 ... go from department to department. If it were an office, I'd go from desk to desk. ... I wouldn't even tell 'em my name. Every man, every woman, every child needs protection. In a Depression, they need it more than any other time. If a person had enough money for a ton of coal, it was more advantageous for him to have a half a ton of coal and my policy than just a ton of coal without the policy. The system worked."

[...]

Ray Wax

p454

p454 "He is a stockbroker, living in a middle-class suburb, just outside New York City. It is a recent endeavor. Previously, he had been a builder and a real estate broker. Though his words come easily, he feels he has little of worth to recount. He is restless, a fever possesses him. . . ."

p454 "My old man in 1928 had a million dollars in cash. Between the market, the races and the numbers racket, he lost everything.

[...]

p454 "I showed up at Everybody's Florist, that's what it was called. ... Roses and carnations, three cents for this and five cents for that. These guys were buying the glut of the New York flower market. They had the concession to put men out on any station of the IRT system, for which they gave a cut to the IRT. This is the way I became a flower vendor."

p455 "In the early Thirties, guys made a living by buying a batch of flowers and working for themselves. The IRT bull [transit police officer] would come along and chase them. But if they worked for Everybody's Florist, they had a set spot. These guys would say: Look, you poor bastards, don't go hustling for yourself. Come in with us and you'll be able to make a living."

[...]

p455 "I think the first day maybe I sold \$8. My pay working for Everybody's Florist was \$2 a day. Later when I became top drawer, my top pay was like \$3."

[...]

p456 "Every day I took back more money and took out more flowers. By the time I came in after the third or fourth day, they were kinda glad to see me. I worked for Everybody's Florist for twenty-three days without a break. In the course of those twenty-three days, something happened to me."

p456 "Wherever I worked, I made more money than anybody else. In my ignorance, I thought I was a better hustler than anybody else. The reason I made more money than any of the other guys was that they stole. I used to work and bring them all the money, for a lousy \$2 a day. But these other guys, the hustlers, were making a lot of money and every day, depending on what their gross take was, stole a proportionate amount of money. They didn't steal it. Clipping, they called it. They clipped a few bucks."

[...]

p458 "New Orleans, Corpus Christi, Houston, Port Isabel, down the Gulf to Mexico. "The Richard Halliburton dream, I had that one, too. There was a great world of adventure. If you believe in Horatio Alger and Richard Halliburton, you believe something will work out."

p458 "The Depression ended for me about '37. There seemed to be more work available. You weren't feeling guilty if you drove through the streets with a car. I moved into the middle classes, a little unhappy. . . ."

[...]

EPILOGUE

Reed, "The Raft"

p459

p459 "He is from an upper middle-class suburb of Chicago, attends college and has worked during the summer months. He is nineteen."

p459 "Chester and I planned to go down the Mississippi on a raft. Prompted, of course, by Mark Twain. We'd build ourselves a raft, start at Joliet and go down to New Orleans. My father thought I was joking. He said I couldn't go. ... What struck me as rather strange was his saying: if I saved some money this year, maybe next summer I could go to Europe. Which is something, he said, he'd always wanted to do. While he was talking about the Depression, he was almost on the verge of crying."

p459 "Why would he agree to a European trip and not to the other one? I think the Mississippi trip was just not his idea of fun. He saw it as a ...

p460 ... hardship. It might just be that he'd like to tell his friends that his son is off to Europe. He wouldn't want to tell his friends that his son is on the Mississippi River on a raft."

[...]

p460 "CHESTER: What struck me was his talking about dreams. Dreams was his word. We didn't talk about this as our dream. "You boys have dreams. I had dreams, my wife and

I have dreams we haven't accomplished." Our Mississippi thing didn't strike him as the right kind of dream to have somehow."

[...]

Virginia Durr, "A Touch of Rue"

p461

p461 Terkel described Durr: "*She and her husband, Clifford, are of an old Alabamian lineage. During Franklin Roosevelt's Administration, he was a member of the Federal Communications Commission. She had been a pioneer in the battle to abolish the poll tax.*"

p461 "Oh, no, the Depression was not a romantic time. It was a time of terrible suffering. The contradictions were so obvious that it didn't take a very bright person to realize something was terribly wrong."

p461 "Have you ever seen a child with rickets? Shaking as with palsy. No proteins, no milk. And the companies pouring milk into gutters. People with nothing to wear, and they were plowing up cotton. People with nothing to eat, and they killed the pigs. If that wasn't the craziest system in the world, could you imagine anything more idiotic? This was just insane."

p461 "And people blamed themselves, not the system. They felt they had been at fault: . . . "if we hadn't bought that old radio" . . . "if we hadn't bought that old secondhand car." Among the things that horrified me were the preachers -- the fundamentalists. They would tell the people they suffered because of their sins. And the people believed it. God was punishing them. Their children were starving because of their sins."

p461 "People who were independent, who thought they were masters and mistresses of their lives, were all of a sudden dependent on others. Relatives or relief. People of pride went into shock and sanitariums. My mother was one."

[...]

p462 "The Depression affected people in two different ways. The great majority reacted by thinking money is the most important thing in the world. Get yours. And get it for your children. Nothing else matters. Not having that stark terror come at you again. . . ."

p462 "And there was a small number of people who felt the whole system was lousy. You have to change it. The kids come along and they want to change it, too. But they don't seem to know what to put in its place. I'm not so sure I know, either. I do think it has to be responsive to people's needs. And it has to be done by democratic means, if possible. Whether it's possible or not -- the power of money is such today, I just don't know. Some of the kids call me a relic of the Thirties. Well, I am."

p462 **THE END**
