

## "Man-on-the-Street", Buffalo, New York, December 1941

**AFS 6454B**

### **Cut B1**

Charles Harrell: This is Buffalo, New York, speaking. Telling what we think of the Japanese aggression. These interviews are recorded for the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., through the facilities of WBEN, the Buffalo Evening News station. Charles Harrell speaking. What is your name sir?

Frederick A. Hodge: Frederick A. Hodge.

Charles Harrell: And where do you live?

Frederick A. Hodge: I live on Lynwood Avenue.

Charles Harrell: In Buffalo.

Frederick A. Hodge: In Buffalo, yes.

Charles Harrell: What is your occupation, Dr. Hodge?

Frederick A. Hodge: Well, I have done a number of things. Chemical engineer during the last war. Educational work and so on.

Charles Harrell: I understand at one time that you were an instructor in the university and college.

Frederick A. Hodge: I was yes for a number of years.

Charles Harrell: Where was that, sir?

Frederick A. Hodge: University of Virginia and Winter College in South Carolina.

Charles Harrell: And you have retired and now living in Buffalo?

Frederick A. Hodge: I am.

Charles Harrell: At that time when you were an instructor in the college and university what did you teach?

Frederick A. Hodge: I taught philosophy and psychology.

Charles Harrell: And you are also a specialist in chemical engineering. Is that right sir?

Frederick A. Hodge: Yes, that's right.

Charles Harrell: Where were you when the news came?

Frederick A. Hodge: Sunday I was at home. I just happened to turn on a news program about five minutes late and heard it coming in.

Charles Harrell: Do you regularly listen to the news?

Frederick A. Hodge: Not usually at that time of day.

Charles Harrell: This was chance.

Frederick A. Hodge: This was just a chance.

Charles Harrell: And what room were you in your home?

Frederick A. Hodge: I was in my den.

Charles Harrell: Alone?

Frederick A. Hodge: Alone.

Charles Harrell: What was your first reaction?

Frederick A. Hodge: I was utterly astounded. I couldn't believe it.

Charles Harrell: You did not expect it?

Frederick A. Hodge: No, I did not expect it.

Charles Harrell: What did you think would happen before the news came?

Frederick A. Hodge: I thought that Japan would continue to temporize, possibly declare war on China and a blockade of the Chinese coast.

Charles Harrell: But you did not expect them to do anything to us?

Frederick A. Hodge: No.

Charles Harrell: Did it mean anything to you and your family? Was there an immediate reaction from your family?

Frederick A. Hodge: Oh yes. My wife and daughter were very much surprised and we were, I think, rather dumbfounded and perhaps a little note of sorrow because of what it meant. We knew it meant that we would be at war.

Charles Harrell: Did you call for them when you heard the news?

Frederick A. Hodge: I did. Immediately.

Charles Harrell: And where were they?

Frederick A. Hodge: My daughter was in her own room, my wife was in the front of the house somewhere.

Charles Harrell: How old is your daughter, sir?

Frederick A. Hodge: My daughter is twenty-three.

Charles Harrell: Did she react to the news?

Frederick A. Hodge: Yes, she was very much excited over it.

Charles Harrell: What does this mean to you, Dr. Hodge?

Frederick A. Hodge: Nothing in particular, excepting that I have one son that might possibly be called. A little beyond the age at present.

Charles Harrell: What does he do?

Frederick A. Hodge: He travels for a publishing house.

Charles Harrell: I see. Dr. Hodge, do you think this will change your life? Do you think that there will be a new set of values for you in your home and in your everyday life?

Frederick A. Hodge: If I live long enough, which would probably include another decade, I think it's going to change the life of everybody.

Charles Harrell: What shall we do?

Frederick A. Hodge: I think we must revise entirely our whole national policy. We must see to it that the nations of the world have the necessities of life. But perhaps have the necessities for war restricted in some way.

Charles Harrell: Do you hate the Japs?

Frederick A. Hodge: No, not at all.

Charles Harrell: Do you hate the Jap government?

Frederick A. Hodge: Yes, I think I do. I dislike it very much.

Charles Harrell: You do not hate the Japs as people.

Frederick A. Hodge: No, not at all.

Charles Harrell: And what do you think of their government?

Frederick A. Hodge: I think their government is just about as rotten as a government could be. It is dictatorial. It is not, in any sense, democratic. It leaves nothing for the individual to do or to say and it probably is worse if anything because of the religious element and the dictatorships of Europe.

Charles Harrell: What do you think of our government?

Frederick A. Hodge: Theoretically I think it's fine. I think naturally that we can improve it and will improve it.

Charles Harrell: Do you think the war will bring improvement?

Frederick A. Hodge: I do. I think it will be more democratic after the war than it is now.

Charles Harrell: What do you think of our people?

Frederick A. Hodge: Do you mean in regard to government?

Charles Harrell: In regard to the government and in regard to the war?

Frederick A. Hodge: Well, I think that people are today — and that is one of the great values that has come out of this war — they are absolutely united behind the government. The party lines are going to be washed out and probably one of the greatest things — the one that has impressed me most — is that every country in this hemisphere practically, is standing right with us. I do not think that would have been possible ten years ago.

Charles Harrell: Do you have a passion for this country?

Frederick A. Hodge: I have a very strong love and feeling for it, yes.

Charles Harrell: And yet you recognize evils here which we can correct?

Frederick A. Hodge: Oh yes, I think that there are a number of things. They are the minor things.

Charles Harrell: What would you say, just to name a few?

Frederick A. Hodge: Well, I think the only, as has been said, I think the only cure for the evils of democracy is more democracy.

Charles Harrell: What do you think can come after the war?

Frederick A. Hodge: I think we will certainly pass through some years of depression, not as great depression as we have had or did have after the last war however, because I believe that our social security will take up a lot of the slack in the employment lines, provide for the older people, which were not provided for before, and therefore perhaps will temper the storm somewhat.

Charles Harrell: Do you think that we will gain as far as unity is concerned for after the war, by the war, or do you think we'll go back to a divided nation perhaps.

Frederick A. Hodge: Well, we'll never gain what you might call political unity. We wouldn't want to. That's the very basis on which our democratic ideals rest. We don't want our people to think the same. No people does come to that sort of unity unless they are forced to it. But we will continue to have our differences of opinion and some will continue to be more violent in them than others. But, after all that's the make-up of a good democracy.

Charles Harrell: Dr. Hodge, should we have reattributive justice? Should we rake a vengeance upon Japan when we get them at the peace table?

Frederick A. Hodge: In a way, when we get them at the peace table — I like that term — I don't believe that we should bomb Japanese cities. That's too much the Hitler way of executing hostages. That is the execution of the innocent for all of the evil that have been done by others. But I think that we should absolutely draw a line and we should see to it that the guilty are punished.

Charles Harrell: How old are you Dr. Hodge?

Frederick A. Hodge: Sixty-five.

Charles Harrell: And that concludes this interview.

## **Cut B2**

What is your name?

Timothy Sullivan: Timothy Sullivan.

Charles Harrell: And what do you do for a living Mr. Sullivan?

Timothy Sullivan: I'm a machinist.

Charles Harrell: Whereabouts?

Timothy Sullivan: Buffalo Foundry and Machine Company.

Charles Harrell: How long have you been there?

Timothy Sullivan: Two years.

Charles Harrell: Have you been a machinist all your life?

Timothy Sullivan: No I haven't.

Charles Harrell: What did you do before that?

Timothy Sullivan: Well, I worked at all different odd jobs.

Charles Harrell: Mr. Sullivan, how did you feel when you heard of the Japanese aggression?

Timothy Sullivan: Well, I was surprised and then again I thought "Well, it was impossible." I didn't believe it.

Charles Harrell: Did you experience any fear or excitement?

Timothy Sullivan: No, I didn't because after all I had pretty good faith in our navy.

Charles Harrell: Are you married?

Timothy Sullivan: Yes sir.

Charles Harrell: Any children?

Timothy Sullivan: One.

Charles Harrell: Mr. Sullivan, do you hate the Japs?

Timothy Sullivan: No, I don't believe I hate anybody, but I don't like any of this stab in the back business.

Charles Harrell: Do you dislike the Jap people?

Timothy Sullivan: No, not necessarily.

Charles Harrell: What do you think about their government?

Timothy Sullivan: Why I think it's all right as far as it's kept in Japan.

Charles Harrell: You don't like their government outside of Japan?

Timothy Sullivan: Not for our country.

Charles Harrell: What do you think we ought to do to them? Should we fight them foul the way they fight us?

Timothy Sullivan: Well, my idea of it is, is fight fire with fire.

Charles Harrell: If they bomb our undefended cities bomb theirs in retaliation?

Timothy Sullivan: That's right.

Charles Harrell: Do you feel that the Japanese people are to blame for this? What do you think caused the war? Let me ask it that way?

Timothy Sullivan: Well, I suppose it's just a few people grasping for power.

Charles Harrell: And by that group, "few people", whom do you mean?

Timothy Sullivan: Well —

Charles Harrell: You mean the government of Japan? The people there? Or do you mean the dictatorship of the military leaders or whom do you mean?

Timothy Sullivan: Well, that would be more like my answer, the dictator people.

Charles Harrell: What are you going to do now that this thing is upon us?

Timothy Sullivan: Well, I suppose I'll just have to fall in line with whatever is offered. —

Charles Harrell: Do you belong to a union?

Timothy Sullivan: Yes, we have a shop union.

Charles Harrell: A shop union?

Timothy Sullivan: Yes.

Charles Harrell: You feel like that you'll have to make some sacrifices?

Timothy Sullivan: I suppose. The same as we all did in the last war.

Charles Harrell: You're willing to make them?

Timothy Sullivan: Yes sir.

Charles Harrell: Mr. Sullivan, what do you think about the American people? Do you think we're ready for this?

Timothy Sullivan: Well, —



Charles Harrell: Your honest opinion.

Timothy Sullivan: We've never been ready for anything, but we've always been able to meet it.

Charles Harrell: Do you think we'll meet this?

Timothy Sullivan: I do.

Charles Harrell: Do you think that we will not learn by experience then of being ready for future things?

Timothy Sullivan: Well, we've always made mistakes in the past and corrected them. And I think that's our plan of procedure right now.

Charles Harrell: Do you think Mr. Sullivan, that when we get the Japanese at the peace table after this is over and we've won, what sort of a peace shall we write? Should we demand justice? Should we take vengeance upon the people of Japan?

Timothy Sullivan: No, I don't think that's ever been our policy.

Charles Harrell: What do you think we ought to do?

Timothy Sullivan: As a matter of fact, in my opinion we've always been too lenient. We should, well we should put down a set of rules to go by for the Japanese people and all people. That is if we win this war.

Charles Harrell: Do you think there's any doubt?

Timothy Sullivan: Well, it's going to be a hard struggle, but honesty will win.

Charles Harrell: And you think our side has honesty on it?

Timothy Sullivan: That's right.

Charles Harrell: And do you feel Mr. Sullivan that it'll be a long war?

Timothy Sullivan: Yes I do.

Charles Harrell: You're ready for that?

Timothy Sullivan: It's a mechanical war and that will be a long one.

Charles Harrell: That will be a long time.

Timothy Sullivan: That's right.

Charles Harrell: Mr. Sullivan, I have just one other question to ask you. How does your family feel about it, your wife, your home?

Timothy Sullivan: Well I suppose the same as every other family that has children in it. We're all fearful of what may happen to the children if we should lose this war.

Charles Harrell: And you recognize that as a distinct possibility.

Timothy Sullivan: That's right. We're all out to protect our home and our loved ones.

Charles Harrell: Do you feel that we should declare war on any other nations besides Japan? Germany or Italy?

Timothy Sullivan: Japan is the only nation that has molested us and that's the nation we should deal with at the present time.

Charles Harrell: And wait for the others and if they try something declare war on them?

Timothy Sullivan: Not wait for the others as we have waited for Japan, but to be prepared for them in any event.

Charles Harrell: In case they should come?

Timothy Sullivan: That's right.

Charles Harrell: Thank you very much Mr. Sullivan. This concludes the interview.

Timothy Sullivan: This is Tim Sullivan. Age thirty-five. I believe that the president of our country, Franklin D. Roosevelt, is the greatest president this country has ever had. I have always voted the Republican ticket, but I did vote for Franklin D. Roosevelt. I believe that he is the greatest president the United States has ever had for the simple reason that he has done more for the working man than any other president of our time.