

IX 12/6

Informant Mr. George J. Bouhana Sex M Age 67 Interview Schedule Code _____
Religious Sect Maronite-R. Catholic Country of Origin U.S. born Immigrant Age n.a.
Interviewer Alix Naff City Warren, Michigan Date May 19, 1980

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

II/B/1

Informant said they heard of the radical left and right, the KKK, but they were never involved in them. They played basketball, volleyball ... with colored boyds; claims they had the first integrated camp in the world--1923-24-25. They took a black boy with them to the convention in N.Y. and tried to hide him in the hotel where they stayed.¹ Claims that they had black boys in their camp, although there as the time an anti-Black movement.

The radical left were the unions; "they called me a Communist because I was a union man". Informant made speeches and was very active.

¹ The black boy dept in the car.

VII/3/4

VIII/2/9

IX/2/6

Informant Mrs. Adeby Coury Sex F Age 72 Interview Schedule Code IX/2/b
Religious Sect Orthodox-R. Catholic Country of Origin Lebanon Immigrant Age 12
Interviewer Richard Coury City Cairo, Illinois Date May 24, 198

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

IV/A
/1

She didn't know of any politically oriented Arab-American organizations in the Thirties; the local club was a social club, not concerned with domestic or foreign politics "so far as I know".

Informant Mrs. Adeby Coury Sex F Age 72 Interview Schedule Code IX/2/6
Religious Sect Orthodox-R. Catholic Country of Origin Lebanon Immigrant Age 12
Interviewer Richard Coury City Cairo, Illinois Date May 24, 1980

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

III/B
/3

She was aware of Fr. Coughlin. "But I thought what he had to say was just, came out of heaven". "He was talking about all for the poor and the common man... then he broke relations with Franklin D. Roosevelt and I thought now I don't know about that; anyway he finally faded out of the picture. But he was a very strong personality and he talked on radio, had a regular program".

She thinks the Syrians who were Republicans were impressed with Roosevelt; "yeah I think they were; I think everybody was". She doesn't know if they voted for him but thinks they could have because it meant a change from Hoover; there was real hard times through the Hoover administration "and yet I didn't see where anybody could make the difference. At the time I didn't know any better".

"There weren't any labor unions in Cairo". Her husband, as a meat-cutter, never belonged to a union of any kind. "There wasn't any union organizers in Cairo. So everybody worked very cheap. In fact, the elders of the city... did not want to pay high wages and they kept everything out... yes, in terms of industry "because they... were getting colored people from Tennessee and Kentucky and Missouri to come over to Cairo and work for 75¢ an hour in their sawmills... and elevators.... So that's I guess was the beginning of the ruination of Cairo. That's why it didn't succeed. Slave labor was all it was. "We cashed many checks for \$9 for a whole week's work".

VI/6/c

IX/2/b

Informant Mr. Oscar Alwan Sex M Age 65 Interview Schedule Code I/2/6
Religious Sect Maronite Country of Origin Lebanon Immigrant Age 13
Interviewer Alix Naff City Peoria, Illinois Date July 16, 1980

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

I/B/2

Informant came at age of 13, old enough to have a Lebanese mentality.

I/B/2

Americanization is the result of mixing with the Americans. The conditions helped the Arabs to be with Americans. The interaction, business, commerce, politics, all helped assimilation process. They were forced to assimilate.

At first they only associated with Lebanese; did not associate with Americans. They didn't have a Lebanese* church then, only for the last 6 or 7 years.

*
(Maronite)

Informant Mr. Oscar Alwan Sex M Age 65 Interview Schedule Code X/2/6
Religious Sect Maronite Country of Origin Lebanon Immigrant Age 13
Interviewer Alix Naff City Peoria, Illinois Date July 16, 1980

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

I/B/2

Never experienced discrimination as a Syrian, even in school.

Informant Thelma Webby Sex F Age 82 Interview Schedule Code IX/2/6
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin U.S. born Immigrant Age N/A
Interviewer Alix Naff City Cedar Rapids, Iowa Date June 19, 1980

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

IIA1 Americans were telling Lebanese that they belonged to the yellow race.
"Roosevelt was the one that told them: Did Jesus belong to the yellow race?"
Because Roosevelt said that, Arabs from the old country sent him an
Arabian horse.

VIII / 2 / a

IX / 2 / c

IX / 2 / b

Informant Wagha Sophiea Sex F Age 80 Interview Schedule Code 1X/2/6
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin Lebanon Immigrant Age 20
Interviewer Alix Naff City Royal Oak, Mich. Date May 28, 1980

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

IB2

Knew about Fr. Coughlin (a right wing radical) and attended his church a couple of times but wasn't interested in him or his ideology.

Not aware of events leading to WW2.

Informant Aliya Ogdie Hassan Sex F Age 70 Interview Schedule Code IX/2/b
Religious Sect Sunni Muslim Country of Origin U.S. born Immigrant Age N/A
Interviewer Grant Farr City Dearborn, Mich. Date June 2, 1980

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

IIB3

- Her two cousins were involved in Eagle Pass Bridge - during the Strikes at Ford to organize unions.
Re: Arab involvement in the unions, several Arab men in Dearborn backed the Union. She personally was never involved.

Her American husband admired Fr. Coughlin, like almost everyone else - he was a hero.

Her Father was a Republican and raised her as such, but she first voted for FDR.

vi/6/c

ix/2/b

Informant Aliya Ogdie Hassan Sex F Age 70 Interview Schedule Code IX/2/6
Religious Sect Sunni Muslim Country of Origin U.S. born Immigrant Age N/A
Interviewer Grant Farr City Dearborn, Mich. Date June 2, 1980

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

- IIA2 - Her father kept up on international politics both in the homeland and around the world. He was very interested in the Russian revolution. She remembers that her father cried when the French visited the tomb of Salahadin. He would say "how dare they, they never had a general like Salahadin."
- Her father thought in the 1920's that anyone with any bad thought was a communist. He called the IWW the "I won't work" Union. He was a republican.

VIII / 2 / f

VIII / 2 / g

IX / 2 / b

Informant Mahomed Wazney Sex M Age 90 Interview Schedule Code over..... IX/2/6
Religious Sect Shi'i Muslim Country of Origin Lebanon (Syria) Immigrant Age 25
Interviewer Alixa Naff City Dearborn, Michigan Date June 3, 1980

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

- IIB3 When he worked at Studebaker in South Bend he joined the Union and was one of the organizers of the Union from 1937 until 1939 in Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky. He was an organizer of the Union because "the factory was slaving the people. There was a law in the state of Ind. if you go on the picket line you have to carry the sign and walk back and forth and you can't go more than three men in the line separate and you couldn't talk; if somebody go by and say good morning you go three years in jail."
- IIB3 On the reaction of the factory to the Union he said "if you stand and talk to another man and they think you talk about the Union you are out." He added "you have no right to hold your job, and if the boss wants a new man, you are out, you are finished."
- IIB3 The Union members had to put union labels on their clothes. "In the shop the boys were together, they come in and find a shirt on you not union made, they tear it off." The workers tore his shirt and pants off because he didn't wear the union label. After they tore his shirt and pants, the workers took him to another room and gave

Over.....

him other clothes. He "didn't get mad," he "just laughed," so the workers said that he was the kind of man to put in the presidency of the Union.

IIB3 The management of Studebaker was strongly against the Union. Informant had an argument with a foreman who asked him who he was going to vote for. When informant refused to say, the foremen fired him. So informant took him to court and won the case.

IIB3 First, informant was elected a committee man and his boss "didn't want to talk" to him. He and other members of the Union organized a strike (didn't say why.)

Conversation with:
Informant Zenib Sabaugh

Sex F Age 75 Interview Schedule Code IX/2/b

Religious Sect Shi'i Muslim

Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 17

Interviewer Alixa Naff

City Dearborn, Mich. Date May 30, 1980

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

She got her citizenship through her husband and first voted for FDR in 1932 and remains a Democrat.

Informant George F. Addes Sex M Age 70 Interview Schedule Code IX/2/6
Religious Sect Melkite Country of Origin U.S. born Immigrant Age N/A
Interviewer Alix Naff & Grant Farr City St. Claire Shores, Michigan Date June 14, 1980

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

- IA1 After peddling, father worked in RR in LaCrosse area as a fireman - early '20's. Father had some economic problems and was not pleased by his job as fireman, so he left after short period. Went to Toledo, Ohio where he had some relatives. Since relatives were working in Toledo, father thought he could use their help in finding a good job.
- IA2 Informant worked in Automobile plant, Willys Overland.
- IA2 In Toledo family lived in a neighborhood with about 25 Lebanese families, some from their own village. Didn't know if there were any Maronites in Toledo, because they "didn't have a Maronite church." There were 2 Orthodox and one Melkite church in Toledo. Didn't know if there were any Muslims at that time in ~~TOLEDO~~ his neighborhood. "A lot of Muslims worked in plants, business, barbers, grocery stores, meat houses in Toledo." Toledo attracted a lot of Arabs because it was a railroad center. Had an uncle who worked on RR industry in Toledo, which was the fifth biggest center. If people worked, they had to work 12 hours a day.

Over.....

IA2

Father worked for Willy plant off and on. from 1922 to 1938 when the plant was broke. Plant was bankrupted in 1929 or 30 when father temporarily unemployed, he worked as a carpenter to make money.

After informant finished high school he worked selling insurance for about a year. Then worked for Willys until 1933 or 34. He was elected secretary of treasury of the UAW in 1936.

He sold papers at age 13 since parents didn't make enough money. He shined shoes in Toledo on weekends, while going to school, 10¢ a shine. "I worked hard because I wanted to help my family, we had a lot of love for one another." Brother was also working. Had a sister who sold papers too. Brother got into auto mechanics about 1925, and he went to Chicago and took a course in mechanics.

Informant wanted to go into aviation in about 1927 but he couldn't leave his parents because they were experiencing financial difficulties. So he didn't go. Parents were putting up money to sent his brother to Chicago to take a course in mechanics.

IA3

In Toledo at Willys late 1920's he used to work 6 days a week. In about 1928 or 29 parents bought a boarding house." They had a restaurant in it to take care of the boarders and others that would "frequent" the place, from factories around the location.

Father got a job in Flint, in Buick Co. around 1924 or 1925 when unemployment in Toledo "went belly up". Family joined him then stayed in Flint a couple of years.

Informant George F. Addes Sex M Age 70 Interview Schedule Code _____
Religious Sect Melkite Country of Origin U.S. born Immigrant Age N/A
Interviewer Alix Naff & Grant Farr City St. Claire Shores, Michigan Date June 14, 1980

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

IA3 When When informant worked at Willys he made 35¢/hour. When asked if that was good, he said, "No" and added: "that's why we organized our department" and went in there to ask for 65¢/hour.

Informant was interested in politics and organizing in 1933. When Roosevelt got elected, he passed the "MIRE", which gave the right to workers to organize. Informant was not afraid to organize because he thought "the law was behind him." He claimed he used to work under bad conditions. He and brother worked in polishing department at Willys at temporary jobs before moving to other departments. Brother had mechanics degree from Chicago but there was no opening for him. He said "we used to work like horses." Company management made workers "punch the clock" (punch out) and then go back to work for an hour or two, but they were not paid for overtime. He said "I couldn't see this." So he and brother told fellow workers when quitting time comes we punch out and go home, we don't have to work overtime. But only he and brother left, (maybe because workers were afraid of losing their jobs) So foremen told him and brother that they were fired. But since management knew brother had a mechanical skill they sent him to the department he wanted to work in.

One of family friends used to work as personnel manager in Willys (he was not Arab).

Over.....

IA3

So informant asked manager for a job in another department. He went to metal finishing department. Then the Co. went broke and the workers were layed off - @ 1929 or 1930. Informant got odd jobs like car repair, bodybuilding. "Brother had no problem getting a job because of his mechanics skill, and he opened his own garage during the Depression." Father also got odd jobs - carpenting, remodeling. When WPA came into existence, informant worked for it as a foreman, around a year.

Then he worked for the mayor on construction putting a pipeline in gas line for Standard Oil. Then he worked as foreman over brick layers. He worked for slightly over a year with WPA.

IB1

In Flint he bought hot dogs and sold them to workers with night shift to make some extra money. When asked if Lebanese asked him to get jobs for them he replied, "the Union had no influence to get jobs in the plant" in those days.

In the late 1930's the Lutfy family in Detroit called him once and asked if they should sign with the Union and whether he would "negotiate for them." He replied "I can't do this," but added "If you tell me what Union I would contact them." So he did contact the Union (didn't say which) and Lutfy signed the contract according to his advice. Lutfy called informant every holiday to thank him. He claimed that no Lebanese was "really" involved with the Union because they were afraid to be fired. Involvement in Union was because he had a lot of experience and he read a lot about labor, and because he knew that the building trade in Toledo was "all unionized". He had passive support from Lebanese community.

Informant George F. Addes Sex M Age 70 Interview Schedule Code _____
Religious Sect Melkite Country of Origin U.S. born Immigrant Age N/A
Interviewer Alix Naff & Grant Farr City St. Claire Shores, Michigan Date June 14, 1980

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

IB3

Informant stated that there were no leaders in the Union from Arab community, except for one. (see Leadership) In response to the question about the impact of domestic politics in the 20's and 30's on the membership in the Union, he stated, "there were two worker groups, the reserve group that was not involved directly, and the aggressive group which wanted organization because they knew what the fruits were." The reserve group then realized that joining the Union was the "way to go" so they fought for the Union.

In 1938 or 39 the management in Ford plant hired people to report about the workers if they had any connection with the Union or even if they talked about the Union. Workers were fired if they were caught talking about the Union. The spies for management were workers who also sold pocket radios to follow workers and behaved in a certain way so that the workers wouldn't suspect them. They bought coffee and lunch for workers to give the impression that they were making extra money. Spies were paid by management. One of the spies came to informant's office in Toledo and asked about the membership, but when the spy was named in one of the committees of the Union he disappeared and informant never saw him again. In answer to question about his ideology and his connections with other political

Over.....

groups he stated that it was other groups which "got attached" to him and his comrades. He said that he has been, in fact, anti -communist and anti-Russia because communism is against Catholicism. "I was raised as a Catholic, and went to Parochial school all my life, even in high school." He added "I always had fear of communism, I always had fear of "Russia." I always was pro-Catholicism."

When the electric auto light strike was on in Toledo, the Trotskyites were holding their rallies, with about 25, 30 or 40 people. Informant was looking at them from his office window and "hoping and praying they don't have a big crowd." He didn't want his Union members to belong to either "communists or Trotskyites."

Informant didn't want to get closer to any communist, altho some communists became union members later. He stated that he disagreed with Walter Reuther's "philosophy" and didn't want to get associated with him in the first convention in South Bend, Ind. because he just got back from Russia. Later he found out that Reuther was not a communist, but the communists voted for him.

He didn't care about ideology, politics or religion of people who joined the Union. The essential thing ofr him is to join the Union and vote for him (Reuther). Reuther started the Red Baiting in the Union after Homer Martin. Martin called the Union by different names bu he said "I don't remember him ever saying I was a communist, In fact, I don't remember anybody ever saying that."

Informant George F. Addes Sex M Age 70 Interview Schedule Code _____
Religious Sect Melkite Country of Origin U.S. born Immigrant Age N/A
Interviewer Alixa Naff & Grant Farr City St. Claire Shores, Michigan Date June 14, 1980

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

IB1

In Willy Plant, Toledo, he was elected the Financial Secretary of the Union (didn't say which) and worked full time. Then, in 1936, he was elected International Secretary of Treasury in South Bend, Ind. Then he moved to Detroit. When asked if Ford Co. in Detroit did anything for workers to Americanize them: "Sure they did, to develop the loyalty, to keep the Union out." When asked if he approved what Ford did in its sociology dept. for workers, he replied: "NO, who was running the sociology dept.? they were the servicemen, who were the guards. The service people were responsible for the destruction or elimination of those who were favorable to the Union, and then fired them." He claimed people accepted work in Ford Co. because of \$5./day and they didn't know about the horrible conditions of work. (Unlike some interviewees, who said that Henry Ford was innocent because he didn't know what was going on in the plant) the informant stated that, in fact, Henry Ford was aware of what was going on "He just didn't want a Union."

Informant's technique of organizing people in the Union was to have people who supported the Union go out and look for additional members, "especially those who were discharged for one reason or another." When they (workers) heard about the UAW and its headquarters the Union got a lot of publicity and people came and offered help. He added "we quietly tried to organize Ford." After that there was

Over.....

an internal struggle within the Union. The president of the Union met with Ford attorneys to make a deal with Ford, to bring workers to Ford and sign contracts. Shortly after that the Union split up into two camps, the Homer Martin Camp and informant's camp. The informant was one of the leaders. The CIO provided funds for the Union: \$50,000, to open offices and try to get the people that Martin took, although Martin took only a small number. "We wanted them all under one Union." Then Union members went to Cleveland and had a convention, the Union elected officers around 1938. Then it went after Ford in "a real determined way." Other companies, like GM were Union organized, Ford was the last one to have a Union. Informant worked for Ford after the Union was introduced.

"I think Ford had a reputation because of his \$5. a day wage. The Ford workers respected him for it, but when he put Bennet in charge things began to change, because the workers began to recognize they were in a speed-up system." They couldn't talk they couldn't smoke etc.

The Arabic speaking people didn't want to get involved in Union activities, because they knew that they came to U.S. to make money and go back. The colored people didn't get to the Union because Ford had "indoctrinated them" through their religious leaders. Blacks were in Ford as "friends" Blacks were an obstacle for the Union because it was necessary to talk to their community leaders and ministers who then talked to the black workers. During the strike blacks stayed in the plant "If they would have come out of there before the peace treaty between the Union and their leaders, there would have been a lot of bloodshed" because the "whites outside were ready to take them on." Blacks didn't think the Union would win and they were afraid of discrimination from the Union. Finally they came around because their leaders talked to them,

Informant George F. Addes Sex M Age 70 Interview Schedule Code IX/2/b
Religious Sect Melkite Country of Origin U.S. born Immigrant Age N/A
Interviewer Alix Naff & Grant Farr City St. Claire Shores, Michigan Date June 14, 1980

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

IB3

The A.C.T.U. won against informant one year in Buffalo convention, because he wanted the votes of communists. "If he is a delegate," he said, "I want his vote." Walter Reuther did the red baiting because he wanted leadership and informant didn't want to give him leadership. So Reuther wanted to make a deal with informant He wanted informant to run with him and Thomas, and whoever won will support the other for Secretary of Treasury. Reuther thought that Thomas will be in the third place and consequently he drops, and informant will win and support Reuther for Secretary of Treasury. Informant refused the plan, and Walter Reuther had his own campaign and "included" informant "with his so-called left wing." Reuther declared informant as a left wing member. In Atlantic City convention, Walter Reuther won against informant. Reuther and Phil Murrey asked Walter to withdraw his name, informant "got up and walked out."

VI/5

VI/11

IX/2/6

Informant George F. Addes Sex M Age 70 Interview Schedule Code IX/2/6
Religious Sect Melkite Country of Origin U.S. born Immigrant Age N/A
Interviewer Alix Naff & Grant Farr City St. Claire Shores, Michigan Date June 14, 1980

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

IA3

When family was in Flint, informant "witnessed the KKK" In school, kids who belonged used to wear a cross with a red rhinestone. If someone didn't have that he would be beaten up. The KKK until 1936, had anti-foreign feelings, "against foreigners in general." When informant was asked if he had worn a cross with a red rhinestone he replied "No way." He was going to public school during these events, sister was going to Catholic School.

There was another group called the Black Legion in the 30's. "If you put on the spot they handed you a bullet, This was during the organization period."

Then family went back to Toledo so he didn't know what the KKK was doing in Flint after that. During those days people were moving from south to north because of the automotive industry. "I recall when they (Willys Co. agents who went south) used to bring people from the south in box cars." The blacks were not recruited. He thinks General Motors also recruited workers from south, because southern people worked for less money.

Informant Mr. Oscar Alwan Sex M Age 65 Interview Schedule Code X/2/6
Religious Sect Maronite Country of Origin Lebanon Immigrant Age 13
Interviewer Alixa Naff City Peoria, Illinois Date July 16, 1980

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

I/B/2

The belief in Lebanon was that Lebanese could do things better than the Americans, i.e. no respect for Americans; but this was not the case. But they didn't like the Americans. "We don't consider them like other people" i.e. act differently than other people.¹ "It was us who didn't know. We used to close our minds to them. After living with them here, we find they are much more knowledgeable than we. We now do see ourselves today, see ourselves better than the Americans. The Lebanese people, from ancient times in this country, never did anything bad. No one committed crimes here--stole, killed anyone; no one ever went to jail. Sure, occasionally a person was jailed for an hr. or two if accused of a crime, but no one was found guilty or jailed for 2-5 months. This is normal for everyone accused to be jailed for a short time.

¹Informant seems to say that at a certain period of time, Americans tried to falsely accuse Arabs because of their jealousy of the Arabs.

Notes on conversation after tape recorder was disconnected at end of interview:

Informant Nellie Khouri Jacobs Sex F Age 71 Interview Schedule Code IX/2/6
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin U.S. born Immigrant Age N/A
Interviewer Alix Naff City Spring Valley, Ill. Date July 7, 1980

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

She and her husband always voted. They first voted for FDR. Jake was a Democrat then went Republican, then Democrat again. It depended on who he was angry with.

VI/6/c

IX/2/b

Informant Ali Turfe
Religious Sect Shi'i Muslim
Interviewer Alix Naff & Grant Farr

Sex M Age 77 Interview Schedule Code TK/2/6
Country of Origin Lebanon Immigrant Age 17
City Dearborn, Mich. Date June 7, 1980

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

IB2

Union strike in 1937 in Ford Co. He claimed that Ford used gas on the working men. When his son found out, he asked his father to respond to the union's request. (described the Ford company and the union).

Informant Ali Turfe Sex M Age 77 Interview Schedule Code IX/2/6
Religious Sect Shi'i Muslim Country of Origin Lebanon Immigrant Age 17
Interviewer Alix Naff & Grant Farr City Dearborn, Mich. Date June 7, 1980

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

IB2

He didn't know what was going on in politics during the 1930's because he was too busy working, and didn't care.

Informant Mr. Alex Ecie Sex M Age 74 Interview Schedule Code IX/2/b
Religious Sect Sunni Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 15-17*
Interviewer Grant Farr City Dearborn, Michigan Date June 2, 1980
* Informant provides conflicting data.

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

II/A/2

1930's
Informant was not interested in politics.

Informant Mr. Alex Ecie

Sex M Age 74

Interview Schedule Code IX/2/6

Religious Sect Sunni

Country of Origin Syria

Immigrant Age 15-17*

Interviewer Grant Farr

City Dearborn, Michigan

Date June 2, 1980

* Informant provides conflicting data.

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

II/A/1

1920's

Informant is not active politically and doesn't "believe" in politics.

Informant Mr. Mahomed Forge Sex M Age 86 Interview Schedule Code IX/2/6
Religious Sect Shi'i Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 26
Interviewer Grant Farr City Dearborn, Michigan Date June 6, 1980

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

I/A/1

Regarding politics, the informant didn't know what was going on in the 1920's and 1930's.

Informant Mr. Edward Ellis Sex M Age 74 Interview Schedule Code X/2/6
Religious Sect Orthodox? Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 13
Interviewer Alixa Naff City Grand Rapids, Michigan Date July 1962

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

Side II
045-115

In the old days, guests provided food for family of deceased; this eased the responsibility of the bereaved both emotionally² and financially. The guests usually stayed in the home of the bereaved (out of town guests).¹ Mr. Ellis feels that this custom was much better than the current custom.

Mr. Ellis is opposed to the excess of expensive caskets; he contrasts American funerals with those in the old country; there they go because of respect for the dead; here they go because of ~~smallness~~ of the family, than to bury the dead. The church
more or less
teaches them to bury the dead; that is why Mr. Ellis goes to funerals.

¹ or maybe he means they would stay, keep company with the family of the deceased in their home where the body of the deceased was.

² the bereaved are in sorrow too much to make food

Informant Mr. William Schervish Sex M Age 71 Interview Schedule Code IX/2/6
Religious Sect Maronite* Country of Origin United States Immigrant Age n.a.
Interviewer Alix Naff City Grosspointe Park, Michigan Date May 14, 1980
* Maronite mother, Orthodox father; attends Roman Catholic church

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

II/A/3

William approved of FDR administration. Listened to Father Coughlin, liked him; disagrees with Coughlin that FDR was communist, but dislikes communism.

IX/2/6

Informant Mrs. Zahdi Barsa Sex F Age 81 Interview Schedule Code TX/2/6
Religious Sect Melkite Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 14
Interviewer Alix Naff City St. Claire Shores, MI Date May 21, 1980

Life in America: Pre-World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

I/B/3

Voted for Roosevelt--still votes Democratic.
Unsure who she will vote for now.

Informant Mr. Ollie Okdie Sex M Age 67 Interview Schedule Code IX/2/6
Religious Sect Sunni Country of Origin Lebanon Immigrant Age 10
Interviewer Grant Farr City Lincoln Park, Michigan Date May 20, 1980

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

I/A/3

There was a strike at Ford in the late 1930's. Ford would bring out his goons (???) and Ruether was beaten up. He tells how Ford made a laborer an executive.

I/B/1

Ford brought in strike breakers by boat (???) around the boat (???)

He knew George Addes. There were quite a few Syrians that were leaders in the union: Ellis and one of the Berry (???) boys.

He talks about the community in the 1930's; he heard it from other children.

IX/2/b

VII/6/c

Informant Mr. Frank Abodeely Sex M Age 83½ Interview Schedule Code I/2/6
Religious Sect Orthodox Country of Origin Syria Immigrant Age 16
Interviewer Alix Naff City Cedar Rapids, Iowa Date June 17, 1980

Life in America: Pre World War I _____ World War I _____ 1920's _____ 1930's _____

I/B/2

Other Arabs didn't look down on peddlers. It was better to have a store; but Mrs. Abodeely didn't think they began opening stores until after WWI; Americans, however, looked down on peddlers; used to refer to them disparagingly.

Arabs emulated each other. If one opened a store and succeeded, others copied; they first started opening grocery stores, then taverns and now it's restaurants.

There is more self respect in working for oneself than be employed. Although many worked in packing house and Quaker Oats, just like Jews, he never work for other; don't even work for each other. He sees how much his fellow Jew is making and says "what the hell am I doing, I can work for myself" why should I work to make money for him.

I/B/3

Didn't like peddling from house to house; felt like beggar, not dignified, not respectable.

II/A/2

Many Arab grocers in town didn't necessarily compete with each other---maybe a little. All made money and raised families.