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BURROUGHS, JAMES BENJAMIN. An Approach to Directing America Hurrah by Jean-Claude van Itallie. (1970) Directed by Kathryn England.

The purpose of this thesis was to study the script, develop an approach to the play, produce the play, and evaluate the production of Jean-Claude van Itallie's America Hurrah.

The preliminary part includes the following: (1) historical and stylistic analyses of the play, (2) character descriptions and analyses, (3) a discussion of the function and mood of the set, and (4) justification for the director's choice of the script for production.

The second part includes the director's prompt book of the production, performed on April 10, 11, and 12, 1970, in Taylor Theatre at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Types of notations included are: (1) movement, composition and picturization, (2) rhythm and tempo notes, and stage business, and (3) sound notes. Floor plans and production photographs implement this record.

Part III contains the director's critical evaluation of his work with the production. Discussed in this chapter are: (1) goals and aims of interpretation, style, and mood, (2) actor-director relationships during the rehearsal period, and (3) audience reaction to the production.

AN APPROACH TO DIRECTING AMERICA HURRAH

BY JEAN-CLAUDE VAN ITALLIE

by

James Benjamin Burroughs

A Thesis Submitted to  
the Faculty of the Graduate School at  
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro  
in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Fine Arts

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Approved by

Kathryn England  
Thesis Adviser

APPROVAL SHEET

This thesis has been approved by the following committee of the Faculty of the Graduate School at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

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April 16, 1970  
Date of Examination

## DEDICATION

The writer wishes to dedicate this thesis to his wife, Carlotta; to the ensemble of America Hurrah; and to all men who sincerely work for peace in the world.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The writer wishes to gratefully acknowledge the help and encouragement given him by his thesis adviser, Miss Kathryn England, and especially the gift of her time spent in helping the writer structure this paper. He further wishes to express his gratitude to Dr. Herman Middleton and Dr. David Batcheller for serving on his Thesis Committee, and for their help and many suggestions which enabled the writer to complete his thesis. The writer also wishes to acknowledge, with a great deal of affection, the help of Tom Kenyon who supplied the original music and lyrics for "American Jesus" and the original incidental music for this thesis production.

The writer wishes, in addition, to acknowledge the time, the talent, and the many suggestions of Miss Jennifer Lowe, who served as choreographer for this thesis.

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PART I

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PART I

THE PLAYWRIGHT AND THE PLAY

Arrigo Murray, in spite of the vividness of its subject matter, is not a propagandistic drama. The play deals with specific conditions existing in America today. In doing so the approach used is objective, and almost documentary as the living newspapers of the 1930's in its presentation. Max Gluck and Itallie may be shocked by the conditions he sees and lives in, but he is able to keep a

THE PLAYWRIGHT AND THE PLAY

The first section of this thesis deals with the external influences on the script: Max Gluck's background, the influence of the Open Theatre on his work, and the social conditions existing in America today. The second section is an internal analysis of the script; the theme and style, the plot, the characters and their interrelationships, and the function and mood of the sets, the costumes, and the lighting. The third section explains the rationale for choosing Arrigo Murray, the director's approach to the play, and the changes he will make in the script.

## PART I

## THE PLAYWRIGHT AND THE PLAY

America Hurrah, in spite of the vividness of its subject matter, is not a propagandistic diatribe. The play deals with specific conditions existing in America today. In doing so the approach used is objective, and almost documentary as the Living Newspapers of the 1930's in its presentation. Jean-Claude van Itallie may be shocked by the conditions he sees and lives in, but he is able to keep a sense of perspective of social awareness and dramatic structure.

The first section of this thesis deals with the external influences on the script: van Itallie's background, the influence of the Open Theatre on his work, and the social conditions existing in America today. The second section is an internal analysis of the script; the theme and style, the plot, the characters and their interrelationships, and the function and mood of the sets, the costumes, and the lighting. The third section explains the rationale for choosing America Hurrah, the director's approach to the play, and the changes he will make in the script.

### External Influences

Jean-Claude van Itallie was born in Brussels, Belgium, in 1936. His family fled the German invasion in 1940, and landed in the United States on a Japanese fishing boat.

Critical reading and research relative to the external influences on the playwright failed to yield any mention of van Itallie's life from the time of his arrival in the United States to his graduation from Harvard in 1958. A letter from van Itallie to this director revealed nothing of those years. In this letter the playwright stated: "It is destructive, I think, to rake over the past . . . and try to figure out what led to what . . . Things don't lead so directly to other things."<sup>1</sup>

Van Itallie graduated from Harvard in 1958 and moved to New York's Greenwich Village. The young playwright was dissatisfied with the social and political climate in this country, and with the state of the commercial Broadway theatre: "At that time there was nowhere, to my knowledge, that an unknown playwright with a few unconventional one-act plays could go to see his work performed sympathetically."<sup>2</sup> He turned to the non-commercial houses in the Village, and

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<sup>1</sup>Jean-Claude van Itallie, Personal Letter to James Burroughs, March 11, 1970, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Jean-Claude van Itallie, "Playwright at Work: Off-Off Broadway," Tulane Drama Review, X (April, 1966), p. 154.

his subsequent association with the Open Theatre was to exert a great influence on him.

The Open Theatre was formed by a group of actors under the leadership of Joseph Chaikin, formerly the central actor of the Living Theatre. This group hoped to find playwrights to help in their search for new theatre forms.

The Open Theatre turned away from the traditional approach to theatre and explored forms which would have an increased and more relevant impact on the audience. They began to explore the non-behavioristic in theatre:

" . . . dream and myth and poetry, and . . . some mutual spiritual and political commitments . . . which we could express effectively to an audience."<sup>3</sup> Their work began to take on the controlled, abstract but somehow logical shape of the dream, heightened by the concrete imagery of poetry. Van Itallie worked with the actors, gaining impulses from them and supplying the words and structure which best suited the situation he was building. The influence of the Open Theatre is evident in the dream-like structure of America Hurrah with its shifting, seemingly-unconnected sequences.

Van Itallie has lived in the United States for thirty years and has been affected by the changing conditions which have caused an isolation and alienation of the human spirit: the technological explosion, the shifting but never-ending

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

military conflicts which seem to mysteriously start and which no one seems to find a means of halting. He has seen the official lie which is quickly, but inadequately, covered by another set of data.

The era in this country when man is able to feel comfortable with his government is past, as is his comfort with society and himself. Political promises are shoved aside once a man is in office, and any attempt to question the progress of the previously-made promise is countered by a barrage of buck-passing and skillful evasion. Social programs become token rather than concentrated efforts needed to correct the fault. A customer's query to a corporation is handled by a computer which grinds out the same programmed answer time after time. The result is that man has lost something essential: human contact and the ability to believe he governs his own life and fate.

Confused as to his place in a world growing each day closer yet more impersonal, more densely populated yet in face-to-face relations more dehumanized; a world appealing ever more widely for his concern for unknown masses of men, yet fundamentally alienating him from his next door neighbor, today . . . man has become mechanized, routinized, made comfortable as an object; but in the profound sense displaced and thrown off balance as a subjective creator and power.<sup>4</sup>

The contradictory part of the entire irrational situation is that the constitutional framework upon which America

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<sup>4</sup>Eric and Mary Josephson, eds., Man Alone (New York: Dell Publishing Company, 1962), p. 10.

is governed still allows, in its structure, the most individual freedom of any system for the citizen. There is a place for standardization: but of objects, not people.

The populace is disoriented and confused by the streaming contradictions which surround it as an inescapable part of life. The reality of what exists in no way meets the reality of what is supposed to exist.

Contemporary men live in a constructed bubble built for their protection against the reality of their existence. We bask in the ideal of the "beautiful people" shown us in the television ads, in the inundation of daily soap operas; in the assurance and contrapuntal denials of mass media communications; and in the collection of material and property as if possession would guarantee insulation against our fears.

In the midst of our bubble, we read the paper or watch an on-the-spot television event showing us the stark, undeniable truth. Illusion is displaced by the horror of the reality in the world we have built.

Van Itallie, seeing with the eye of an artist, reflects the reaction of a playwright shocked by what is the everyday fare of the nation. He deeply senses the basic contradiction existing in America today: the schism between the surface well-being and security as opposed to the true fears we express in our dreams.

The more we build an aura of normality and security, the more likely our dreams will show us in unrelenting terms

the full extent of our fears. Van Itallie says:

We all read the news, and it's full of gore; horror, physical and psychological; evidence of individual and mass madness . . . . The more our outside reality is full of American summer sunshine, suburban lawnmowing, bright skies and blooming rhododendron, the more often our dreams include the final thunder-clap, and the ultimate bright white dissolving light.

Somewhere in ourselves we are all expecting it, and so the dream comes as a relief after a long wait. It helps us make a reconciliation between the reality of a summer's day in the country and the reality of black print on white newspaper, so full of violence and pain. Consciously we can make no connection between ourselves peacefully reading them in the light of the sunshine on the breakfast table.<sup>5</sup>

He explores what is common to all men in the twentieth century society: the alienation and false reality we build to deceive ourselves juxtaposed against the truer reality of our dreams:

They are dreams of recognized hatreds and aggressions, twisted motives, bodies cut off from minds, aimless spirits, reflections of unrecognized parts of ourselves, a bedlam of disjointed shapes already wandering aimlessly in a world destroyed, where the bomb has already fallen.<sup>6</sup>

Van Itallie's work is not that of the therapist or social activist calling to action, but of the commentator who documents both the illusion and the dream in such a way as to make the audience aware of their own dreams and of the

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<sup>5</sup>Jean-Claude van Itallie, Editorial, New York Times, p. D1, September 17, 1967.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.



forces which restrict them from being as fully human as they are capable of being.

For the most part, however, van Itallie walks gently over the stagnating pond. His work is threaded through with the objectivity of a playwright who can step outside the anguish and pinpoint the causes; blending together in a dramatic event which is " . . . anguishingly funny, yet oddly poignant, and more than passing wise in the way of today's world."<sup>7</sup>

#### Internal Influences

The highly individual and distinct nature of the three one-act plays which comprise the whole of America Hurrah requires the director to consider each separately. The three plays explore existing conditions in America today, which inhibit and restrict human beings from fully exploring the limits of their humanity. The production is unified by virtue of each play's functioning as a part of that whole. Although the three one-acts do not pretend to deal with the entire spectrum of social illnesses in this country, they do cover three major areas: (1) the alienation and the inability to communicate on human terms, (2) the vast band of trivia of television programming which bears no relevance to the lives and realities of workers and viewers, and (3) the casual

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<sup>7</sup>"Air-Conditioned Blightmare," Time, November 18, 1966, p. 80.

destruction of objects representing conditions existing in contemporary society.

Interview, phase I of America Hurrah, explores alienation and the inability of the individual to communicate with institutions in a meaningful way. The locale is the cold, sterile indifference of an employment agency. Four applicants are led through a confusing and bewildering array of questions by four automatized interviewers until the job interview breaks down into a celebration of the inane. The archetypal characters mark their celebration by simultaneous and "round-robin" speeches, games of leap frog and square dances; pointing up the utter banality of a situation devoid of human contact and bound by devotion to the filling in of items on a sheet of paper. The situation rages with the irrationality of slavishly observing rules for their own sake.

The interview sequence ends and melts into various situations which point up the deadly silence in America today, the silence of isolation. A visit to a psychiatrist produces nothing but meaningless words and vague generalities. A young girl comes late to a cocktail party and tries to explain unsuccessfully that she is apologizing for being late because she was killed in an accident. A lonely old woman on a crowded subway comes to realize her isolation. A woman on a crowded street seeks directions and ends up being smothered by the jostling crowd. A confessional begins, and ends as

always, an empty ritual. A politician who evades direct answers is torn apart by a mob who sought direct answers, not evasion. The play ends with all eight characters fully automatized, marching disjointedly about the stage, devoid of humanity.

TV, phase II of America Hurrah, takes the vast "wasteland" of inane television to task by juxtaposing the lives and realities of three television rating workers against the trivial realities of five television "personalities." The television programming includes segments from a female talk show, newscasts, commercials, fantasy shows, situation comedy and family comedy. The daily task of rating television programming and the reality of the lives of the three raters is juxtaposed against the interrelationships between the television personalities.

The positioning and timing of dialogue and action between the two groups reveal the hidden desires and thoughts of the three raters: Hal, Susan, and George. The five personalities gradually take over more of the stage space as the play progresses, creating a slow invasion. The final result is that the reality of the two groups overlaps, making a clear distinction of what is real and non-real impossible to determine.

Motel, the final phase of America Hurrah, opens in the plastic "hominess" of a motel room festooned with various plastic novelty items. The sole speaker is a gigantic doll

who spins in busy little circles and maintains a constant monologue concerning the hundreds of trivial novelty items which can be ordered from a catalogue. Two garishly dressed dolls enter, a man and a woman. They take no notice of the Motel-Keeper Doll but begin to settle into the room. The two dolls begin a systematic but casual destruction of the room, engaging in crass and vulgar love play with no more feeling for each other than for the items they destroy. They scrawl foul slogans on the walls and, when nothing is left to be destroyed, they stroll over to the Motel-Keeper Doll and destroy her. After the head is ripped from the Motel-Keeper Doll's body, they leave as casually as they came.

By using the absurdist techniques of grotesque dolls, nonsense language and an inane situation, the destructive, crude and vulgar element in American life is emphasized. The American citizen, once outside his own area of responsibility such as home and work, can and does become an animal of extraordinarily crass and destructive behavior.

The play is theatricalistic with elements of absurdism and realism. No attempt is made to give the audience the impression of watching anything but a staged performance. The audience is "distanced" from the play by knowing they are watching a staged performance, and by absurdist techniques to emphasize the inane and "absurd" elements of the play. Among those used will be masks for the four interviewers to emphasize the routinized and mechanical way they respond to the

applicants, and to de-emphasize their own humanity. Cliché is used to point up the destruction of meaning in language in all three plays. The intent is to show that language has become a matter of empty form and has lost its human meaning. The absurdity of the interview sequence will be pointed up by games of leap-frog and piggy back rides. The grotesqueness of human behavior in Motel will be heightened and emphasized by the use of the three dolls, themselves garish and crude: gigantic grotesqueries of all that is destructive and base in man.

This director's approach to the play, then, is theatrical, using the absurdist techniques mentioned in the above paragraph. The intent of Interview, phase I of America Hurrah, is to show the effect of alienation on the individual, caused by his inability to communicate on human terms with social institutions and governmental and religious institutions. In TV, phase II, this director intends to juxtapose the realistic action of the raters against the non-real activity of the television "personalities" showing the widening gulf between man and his language.

This director intends, through the use of theatrical and absurdist techniques, and realism juxtaposed against the non-real, to create a dramatic event which will cause the audience to remain objective, although uncomfortable as they watch the unrecognized and consciously denied parts of themselves acted out before them. Inasmuch as the playwright does

not wish to spare the feelings of the audience, this director will pursue the violence, the nonsense language, the foul language and crass behavior of the characters as far as he is allowed directorial judgement over the play. The director hastens to add that he will make whatever cuts he feels necessary, but feels it imperative that the audience be made aware of their own secret fears and desires: their own crass and violent wishes and the foul language they use or think in a day's course.

The characters do not overtly rebel against the forces which oppress them but submit without struggle. They are the ruined people of our real dreams: celebrants in the ritual of the inane--priest and sacrifice.

Tension in the play derives from the inability of the characters to deal with the forces which oppress them. There is no real clash of will, only the heart-rending, ineffectual irritation and empty threats of those beaten down and unable to rise. They are the everyday workers degraded by their jobs, workers ill-equipped to find meaningful employment in a technological society. They are nightmare images of ourselves: giant, crude puppet-images stalking about destroying with a casual abandon the conditions they helped make.

#### Character Analysis

There are no psychologically "complete-as-individual" characters in America Hurrah. The characters are all archetypal, and reflect general groups in the social make-up of

America, rather than individual characters meeting and dealing with their destiny. The characters are not noble or elevated but reflect the average man on the street. They are symbols of the effects of repressive forces too overwhelming to deal with.

The four interviewers are nameless, expressionless automatons: men and women who dress alike and respond to the job applicants in a completely computerized manner. They function rather than live.

The four applicants are merely average people caught up in, and trapped by, the system. The housepainter is an average man, underpaid and out of work. The floorwasher is an elderly woman alone, ill-equipped to deal with a highly technological world. The bank president is a sleek, aggressive servant out for money and comfort. The lady's maid is a defensive little person who has built a dignity far beyond the reality of her drab little world.

Hal is one of the young moderns: sophisticated, well-educated and bored by his job. He is an aggressive bully and a coward. Susan is also one of the young moderns. She is a hysteric, and though well-intentioned lacks the will to assert herself. George, supervisor of the viewing room, is middle-aged, harried, and lacks the will to carry out his intentions toward Susan.

The Motel-keeper doll is the representation of the homey-type person enthralled with novelty, passing it off for

the latest and most enchanting item. She spins around in circles, never getting anywhere beyond the small circle of her closed-in existence.

The man and woman doll represent the "average" tourist who works at his routine for fifty weeks and raises Cain the other two, becoming boorish, crude, and destructive once he is away from his home, friends, and work. The dolls are basically the American citizen who is dissatisfied with his state and casually destroys the symbols of his oppression.

The director has, hopefully, made it clear that the play falls outside the realm of realistic drama, that it is a theatrical event. The set, therefore, should reflect in a non-specific way the terrible sterility which is at the heart of the play. Color should be neutral, or reflect the color found in institutional buildings. Furniture should be minimized, and abstracted into non-realistic shapes in Interview. In TV furniture should be sparse and of the metal frame type prominent in institutional buildings. Motel should contain realistic furniture and profuse plastic novelty items.

#### Director's Justification

Several contributing factors led to the choice of America Hurrah. The script is exciting, and offers a chance to depart from realism to explore the new forms emerging in present-day theatre.



At the first reading, America Hurrah produced a chilling effect on this director. The situations, ideas, and problems explored in the script were problems this director was dealing with. America Hurrah offered a chance to present a play dealing with relevant social issues.

This director has, for some time, wanted to work with the Ensemble concept in staging. America Hurrah, with its equality of parts, offered that opportunity. The parts are not structured as to importance of the characters, with leads, character leads, secondary and minor roles. They are instead structured so that all characters share the same importance, in role, in lines, and in action.

In order to achieve the disciplined ensemble, four days of preliminary training will be used, during which time the ensemble will work on nothing but group improvisations and group sensitivity exercises. The attempt is twofold: to build an ensemble capable of working together as a communal, inter-dependently reacting unit, and to break down certain social barriers which inhibit the actors from more fully using their resources.

By giving the ensemble group improvisations demanding the full and total concentration of each actor working as an interdependent part of the whole, this director hopes to achieve an ensemble unity which will bring to the play the discipline and unity it demands. The improvisations will be designed around the group as a whole instead of one or two

actors, and the total participation and interaction of the actors determines the success or failure of the exercises.

Group sensitivity will be employed to break down certain social barriers and previous conditioning, and to enable the actors to translate abstract feelings and concepts into concrete physical action. An exercise to be used will be in touch: to touch and feel the bodies of the actors in the ensemble. It is this director's belief that touch was a priori to the word as a means of communication. It was, and is, one of the most compelling and personal means for one human being to communicate with another. The actor must certainly touch and use the bodies of other actors, yet, in the opinion of this director, we live in a society which is essentially non-touch oriented.

In order to better understand one of the complex situations in the play, that situation will be lifted out, and both verbal and non-verbal improvisations directly related to the situation will be undertaken and explored. When necessary, sensitivity exercises will also be used to make clear the underlying responses in the situation being explored.

In conclusion, this chapter has been comprised of both an external and internal analysis of Jean-Claude van Itallie's America Hurrah. This director has included a justification for his choice of scripts for study and production. What follows is the result of these elements as they are applied to the production of America Hurrah.

## PART II

PROMPT BOOK

## PART II

## PROMPT BOOK

TV

(THE PLAY OPENS IN A TELEVISION RATING ROOM. IT IS A STARK, INSTITUTIONAL ROOM. THE TABLE DOWN RIGHT IS THE RATERS' TABLE. A DOOR ON STAGE LEFT OPENS TO THE CORRIDOR. A DOOR ON STAGE RIGHT LEADS TO THE BATHROOM. THERE ARE TWO FILE CABINETS, ONE UP STAGE AND ONE DOWN STAGE OF THE BATHROOM. A BULLETIN BOARD IS DOWN RIGHT. THERE IS A COAT RACK DOWN LEFT, A COFFEE TABLE DOWN LEFT, AND A TELEPHONE UP STAGE OF THE STAGE LEFT DOOR. THE CONSOLE AND SCREEN ARE UP STAGE CENTRE. SEE FIGURE 1.)

HAL: (LEANING ON RIGHT SIDE OF TABLE, THROWING DARTS) So what do you say?

SUSAN: (SITTING ON HER STOOL) I don't know.

HAL: (AT DOWN RIGHT FILE CABINET) That doesn't get us very far, does it?

SUSAN: Well, it's such a surprise, your asking. I was planning to work on my apartment.

HAL: I'll help you, after the movie.

SUSAN: That's too late. One thing I have to have is eight hours' sleep. I really have to have that.

(GEORGE ENTERS, CROSSES TO COAT RACK TO PUT ON SWEATER.)

HAL: Hi, George.

SUSAN: Hello, George.

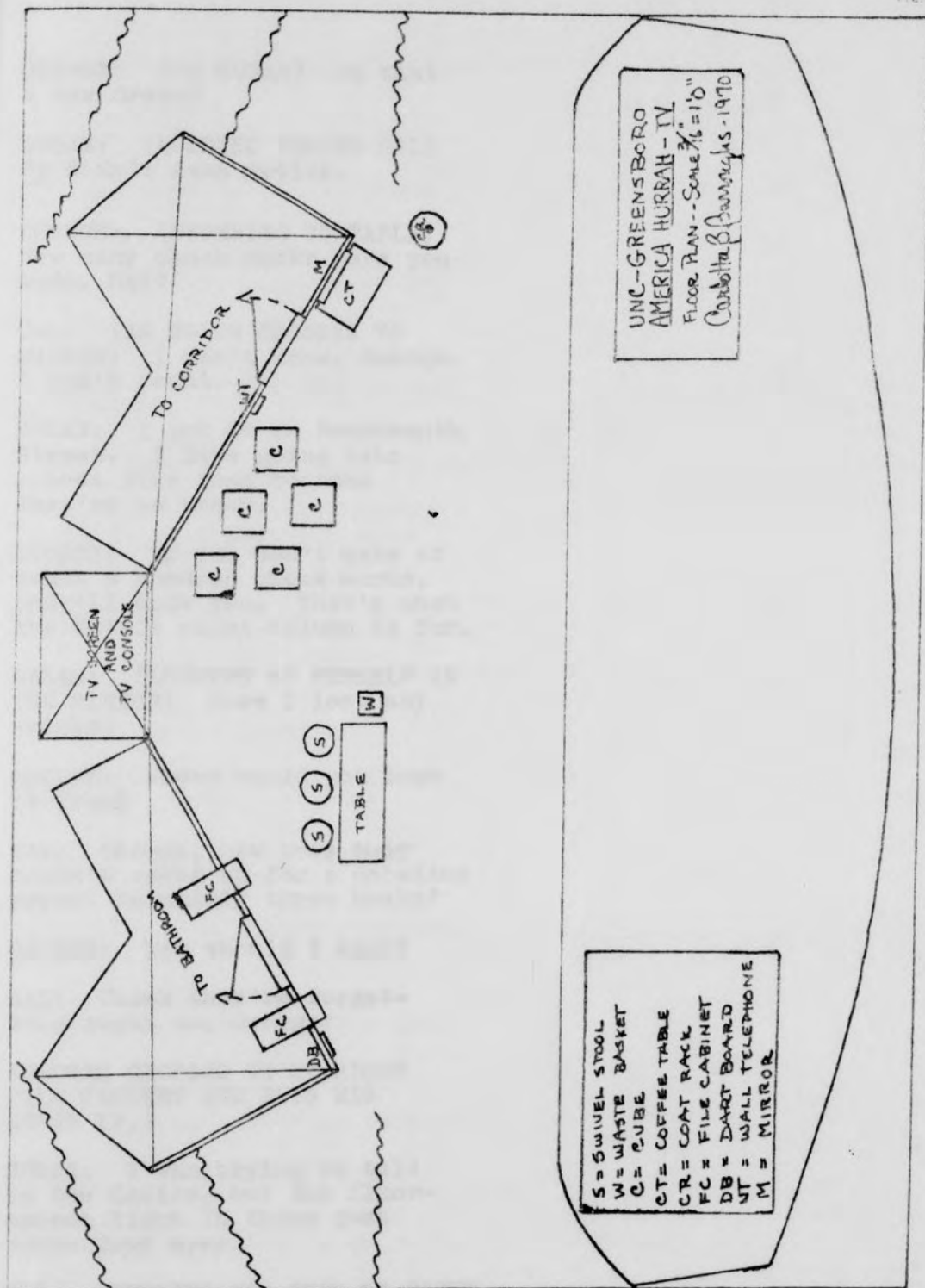


Figure 1

GEORGE: (TO SUSAN) Is that a new dress?

SUSAN: (NODDING TOWARD HAL)  
He didn't even notice.

GEORGE: (CROSSING TO TABLE)  
How many check marks have you made, Hal?

HAL: (AS SUSAN CROSSES TO MIRROR) I don't know, George. I don't count.

SUSAN: I got it on Fourteenth Street. I love going into places like that because they're so cheap.

GEORGE: If you don't make at least a hundred check marks, they'll dock you. That's what the totals count column is for.

SUSAN: (LOOKING AT HERSELF IN THE MIRROR) Have I lost any weight?

GEORGE: Where would you lose it from?

HAL: George, how come they haven't asked us for a detailed report in nearly three weeks?

GEORGE: How should I know?

HAL: Think they're forgetting about us, George?

(GEORGE CROSSES TO UP RIGHT FILE CABINET AND PUTS HIS LUNCH IN.)

SUSAN: I was trying to tell in the Ladies, but the fluorescent light in there just burns your eyes.

HAL: (CROSSES AND SITS ON RIGHT OF TABLE) I've never been to

the Ladies. You think I'd like it?

GEORGE: (CROSSES TO HAL AND TAPS HIM ON THE CHEST) This viewing room is the backbone of the rating system.

HAL: He said that to you last month, George. Things move fast.

GEORGE: (CROSSES TO COFFEE TABLE) Are you trying to make me nervous?

HAL: Maybe.

GEORGE: Well, don't, because my stomach is not very good this morning.

SUSAN: I want to know seriously, and I mean seriously, do you think I've lost any weight?

GEORGE: Where from?

HAL: Why don't you let yourself go?

SUSAN: (CROSSES TO TABLE) What do you mean?

HAL: Just let nature take its course.

SUSAN: And what if nature wants you to be a big fat slob?

(GEORGE CROSSES TO CONSOLE)

HAL: Then be a big fat slob.

SUSAN: Thanks. (SHE SITS)

(GEORGE TURNS A DIAL ON THE CONSOLE WHICH TURNS ON TV.)

(TWO OF THE PEOPLE ON TELEVISION)



HAL: Why try to look like somebody else?

TURN AROUND AND PLAY HELEN AND HARRY FARGIS, WHO ARE AT HOME. HELEN IS BAKING COOKIES DOWN CENTRE. SEE FIGURE 2.)

HELEN: Harry, what are you working on in the garage?

SUSAN: I'm trying to look like myself thin. Very thin.

HARRY: (CROSSES FROM UP LEFT TO HELEN) If I succeed in my experiments, nobody in the world will be hungry for love. Ever again.

HAL: (OFFERING HIM ONE) Want a cigarette, George?

GEORGE: No, thanks.

HELEN: Hungry for love? Harry, you make me nervous.

HAL: Just one?

HELEN: You really do.

GEORGE: No.

HARRY: Men will put down their arms.

SUSAN: Hal, why don't you try to help George instead of being so cruel?

HELEN: You haven't been to work for a week now. You'll lose your job.

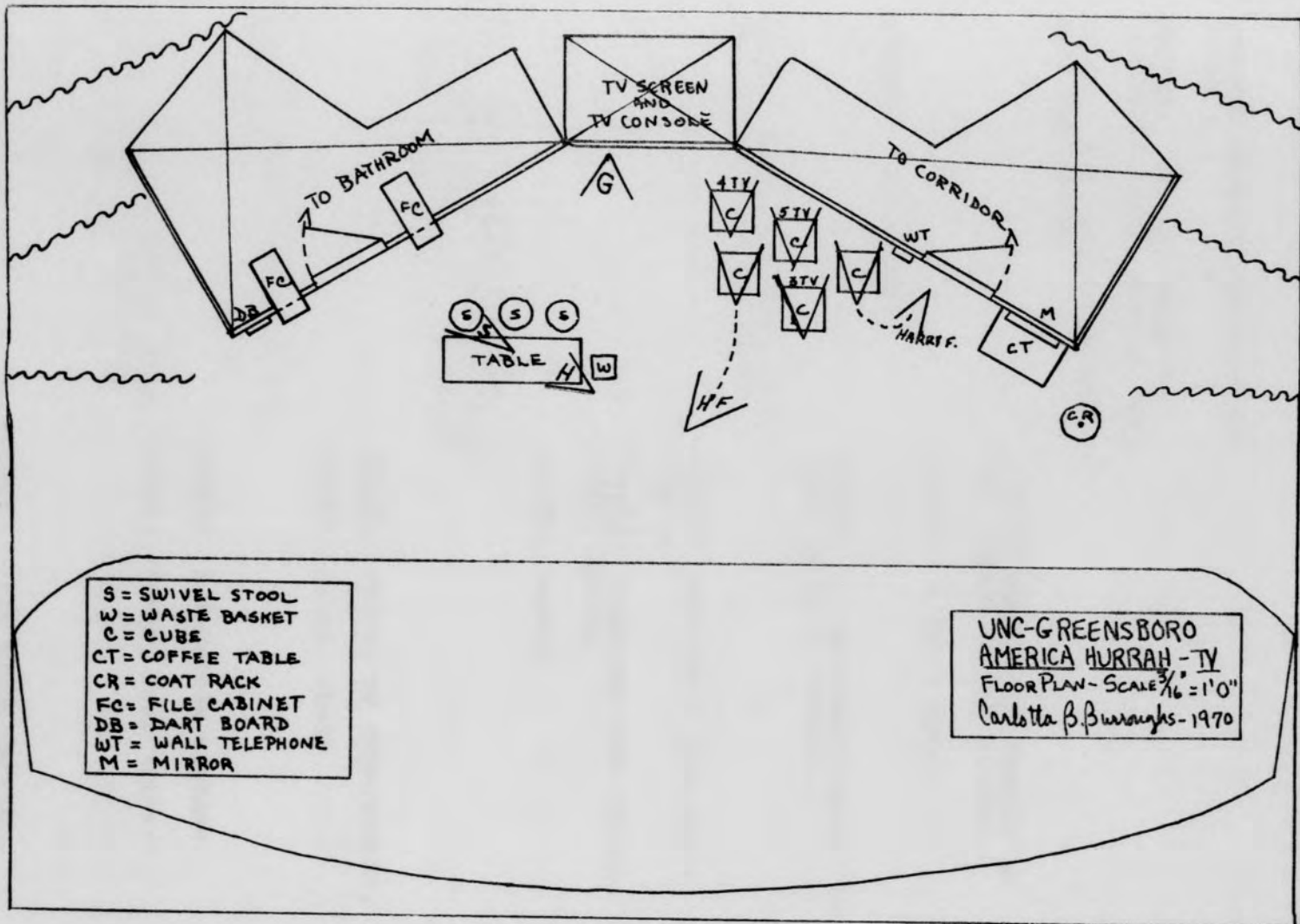
HAL: I'm just offering him a cigarette.

HARRY: You don't understand. This is more important.

HELEN: Oh, Harry, I don't understand you at all any more. I really don't.

(HARRY CROSSES BACK UP LEFT.)

Figure 2



(GEORGE CROSSES LEFT SIDE OF TABLE.)

GEORGE: (AS HAL TAKES THE CIGARETTE AWAY) Give me one.

SUSAN: Hal, that's utter torture for George.

(HELEN MUMBLES TO HERSELF AS SHE CLEANS UP THE KITCHEN.)

HELEN: I don't know.

GEORGE: Give me one.

HELEN: I just don't know. He used to be so docile.

SUSAN: Don't, George. He's just playing cat and mouse.

HELEN: And now I just don't know--

HARRY: (CALLING FROM THE GARAGE) Helen!

HELEN: Harry?

HAL: That's right, George. Don't have one. I'm just playing cat and mouse. (HE LIGHTS A CIGARETTE.)

HARRY: Helen, my experiments.

HELEN: Harry, what?

GEORGE: Just give it to me, will you?

HARRY: A terrible mistake.

SUSAN: Try to control yourself for just another half hour, George.

HELEN: Harry, your voice--

GEORGE: No.

SUSAN: Why not?

HARRY: (HIS VOICE GETTING LOWER AND GRUFFER) For the

love of heaven, Helen, keep away from me.

HELEN: What happened?

GEORGE: Because I don't wanna control myself for just another half hour. (HE SITS ON LEFT STOOL.)

HAL: Whatever you want, George. (HE HANDS CIGARETTE TO GEORGE.)

HELEN: Harry? (SHE WALKS TOWARD HARRY A LITTLE BIT.)

HARRY: I can't restrain myself any more. I'm coming through the garage door. (COMES DOWN STAGE WITH A MONSTER FACE; HIS VOICE IS NOW VERY DEEP AND GRUFF.) I'm irresistibly attracted to you, (CROSSES TO HELEN) Helen, irresistibly.

HELEN: Eeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeee-  
eeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeek!

HARRY: (STEPPING TOWARD HER) Helen, I love you. (GOES TO EMBRACE HER)

HELEN: Harry, you're hideous.

(THEY FIGHT CENTRE STAGE.)

HELEN: Eeeeeek! Eeeeeeeee-  
eeeeek! Eeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeek!

SUSAN: What was the point of that, Hal?

HAL: No point. (CROSSES TO DOWN STAGE FILE CABINET)

(AS HELEN SCREAMS, WONDERBOY IS DISCOVERED DOING HIS HOMEWORK.)

WONDERBOY: Two superquantims plus five uranium neutrons, and I've got the mini-sub fuel. Hooray. Boy, will my friends

(HAL SITS ON THE RIGHT EDGE OF THE TABLE AND PLAYS DARTS DURING THIS SCENE.)

in the U. S. Navy be pleased? Hey, what's that? Better use my wonder-vision. Helen Fargis seems to be in trouble. Better change to Wonder (STANDS) boy (JUMPS UP ON CUBE) and fly over there in a flash. (JUMPS OFF CUBE AS IF FLYING) I guess I'm in the nick of time. (SPINS HARRY AROUND AND SUBDUES HIM WITH A PUNCH IN THE JAW. HARRY COLLAPSES AND THEN FREEZES ON FLOOR UP STAGE.)

HELEN: Oh, Wonderboy, what would have happened (CROSSES TO WONDERBOY'S LEFT) if you hadn't come? But what will happen it IT?

WONDERBOY: I'll fly him to a distant zoo where they'll take good care of him.

HELEN: Oh, Wonderboy, how can I ever repay you?

WONDERBOY: (SNIFFING) Are those home-baked cookies I smell?

SUSAN: The president of the company has an Eames chair. (CROSSES TO UP RIGHT FILE CABINET)

(HELEN SMILES AT WONDERBOY THROUGH HER TEARS: HE PUTS HIS ARM AROUND HER SHOULDERS.)

GEORGE: How do you know that, Susan?

WONDERBOY: Tune in tomorrow, boys and girls, when I'll subdue a whole country full of monsters.

(HELEN FREEZES BESIDE CORRIDOR DOOR AS WONDERBOY CONTINUES.)

WONDERBOY: And in the meantime, remember: Winners eat Wonderex. (SMILES AND JUMPS DOWN LEFT BY COAT RACK IN THE WONDERBOY UP-RAISED ARM POSITION. HE ALSO FREEZES.)

SUSAN: Jennifer showed it to me.

GEORGE: You asked to see it?

(FIRST NEWS ANNOUNCER RISES FROM FLOOR AND SITS ON DOWN STAGE CENTRE CUBE.)

SUSAN: Don't worry, George. He wasn't there. I just had this crazy wild impulse as I was passing his office. I wanted to see what it looked like. Isn't that wild?

FIRST NEWS ANNOUNCER: Little girls means back to school season is here again. Among the many little girls in downtown New York were Darlene, nine, Lila, four, and Lucy Gladden, seven, of Lynbrook, Long Island.

HAL: Did you sit in it?

SUSAN: I didn't dare. What would I have said if he'd come in?

FIRST NEWS ANNOUNCER: In Washington, D. C., as he left John Foster Dulles Airport, as the President's favourite representative, the Vice President said he was bursting with confidence. (HE FREEZES.)

(GEORGE GOES TO THE REST ROOM.)

HAL: I love you, Mr. President of my great big company, and that's why I'm sitting in your nice warm leather arm chair. (CROSSES TO COFFEE TABLE.)

SUSAN: You're perverted. I don't want to be a person working in a company who's never seen her president.

(SECOND NEWS ANNOUNCER STRAIGHTENS FROM POSITION AND STANDS DOWN STAGE LEFT.)

SECOND NEWS ANNOUNCER: U. S. spokesman said families would be given adequate shelter and compensation. Our planes are under strict orders not to return to base with any bombs. The United States regrets that a friendly village was hit. The native toll was estimated as sixty.

SUSAN: (TO HAL WHO IS GETTING COFFEE) While you're up--

HAL: What?

SUSAN: You know. Get me a Coke. (TITTERS AT HER OWN JOKE)

(HAL PUTS COFFEE CUP DOWN AND EXITS THROUGH CORRIDOR DOOR.) SECOND NEWS ANNOUNCER: This was high, explained spokesmen, in answer to questions, because of (GEORGE RETURNS FROM THE REST ROOM AND CROSSES TO CONSOLE.) the type bomb used. These are known as Lazy Dogs. Each Lazy Dog contains ten thousand slivers of razor-sharp steel. (HE FREEZES.)

GEORGE: (TURNING TV SOUND OFF) Can I come over tonight? (HE CROSSES DOWN CENTRE.)

SUSAN: Not tonight. (CROSSES TO FILE)

GEORGE: (FOLLOWING HER DOWN RIGHT AND SITTING ON TABLE) Why not tonight?

(TWO PEOPLE ON TELEVISION DO A SILENT COMMERCIAL FOR LONGFORD CIGARETTES: A MAN LIGHTS A WOMAN'S CIGARETTE AND SHE LOOKS PLEASED.)

SUSAN: Because I don't feel like it.

GEORGE: You have a date?

SUSAN: What business is that of yours? Don't think because--

GEORGE: Who with?

SUSAN: None of your business. (CROSSES AWAY FROM HIM)

GEORGE: What about late, after you get back, like one o'clock. (STARTS TOWARD TELEPHONE)

SUSAN: (CROSSES TO COFFEE TABLE) That's too late. I need lots of sleep.

GEORGE: (FOLLOWS SUSAN BACK FROM COFFEE TABLE ) I'll call

first. (CROSSES TO TELEPHONE)

SUSAN: (CROSSES TO CONSOLE)  
You'd better. (TURNS VOLUME  
UP)

(TV ACTORS IN COMMERCIAL  
FREEZE.)

(WHENEVER HAL, SUSAN, AND  
GEORGE HAVE NOTHING ELSE TO  
DO, THEY STARE STRAIGHT AHEAD,  
AS IF AT A TELEVISION SCREEN.)

(GEORGE AND SUSAN DO THIS NOW. HAL COMES BACK WITH A COKE  
AND SITS AT TABLE FACING UP-  
STAGE. GEORGE DIALS THE  
PHONE NUMBER) (SALLY AND BILL ARE TWO CHAR-  
ACTERS IN A WESTERN. SALLY  
RISES FROM UP RIGHT CUBE,  
CROSSES TO CENTRE, AND FACES  
BILL. BILL CROSSES FROM COAT  
RACK TO CONSOLE.)

GEORGE: Hello, dear. Yes,  
I'm here. Listen I'm afraid  
I have to take the midnight  
to three shift.

SALLY: Don't go, Bill.

BILL: (CROSSES DOWN CENTRE  
TOWARD SALLY) I've got to.

GEORGE: I've got to. The  
night supervisor is out.

SALLY: Oh, Bill.

GEORGE: And I've already said (BILL CROSSES TO LEFT CENTRE  
I would. AND STANDS FACING DOOR.)

SALLY: Oh, Bill.

GEORGE: Listen, let's talk  
about it over dinner, huh?  
I'll be out after you go to  
sleep and in before you wake  
up so what's the difference?  
Listen, let's talk about it  
over dinner I said. Listen,  
I love you. Good bye. (HANGS  
UP, CROSSES CENTRE STAGE AND  
THEN UP STAGE RIGHT)

(SALLY CROSSES DOWN LEFT TO  
MIRROR. SHE FIXES HER HAIR.)

(STEVE, THE VILLAIN, RISES  
FROM THE CUBE WHERE HE HAS BEEN  
WAITING FOR BILL TO RIDE OFF.  
HE CROSSES TO SALLY, WHO IS



HAL: (WATCHING TV INTENTLY BUT TALKING TO GEORGE) You have to take the midnight to three shift, George? That's really too bad.

HAL: Got a call while I was out? (CROSSES TO CONSOLE)

GEORGE: Do either of you want to take on (SNAPPING THE SOUND OUT ON THE WESTERN) some evening overtime this week?

SUSAN: (CROSSING TO UP RIGHT FILE CABINET) Which?

GEORGE: Five to midnight Tuesday and Thursday.

HAL: Thursday. (CROSSES TO DOWN RIGHT FILE CABINET)

SUSAN: Oh, all right, I'll take Tuesday.

HAL: Did you want Thursday?

SUSAN: I'd like to get the apartment finished.

HAL: Then give me Tuesday.

SUSAN: Not if you have something on Thursday. (CROSSES TO CONSOLE)

HAL: No sweat.

SUSAN: (TURNING UP VOLUME) Oh, I know, it was that talk with that man.

GEORGE: (CROSSES DOWN RIGHT CENTRE) What talk with what man?

SURPRISED BY HIM.

SALLY: Steve!

STEVE: Bill's dead, Sally.

SALLY: I don't believe you.

(STEVE TRIES TO EMBRACE SALLY. SHE SLAPS HIM HARD AS HE APPROACHES HER. HE TRIES IT AGAIN. SHE SLAPS HIM AGAIN. HE TRIES IT A THIRD TIME. SHE SLAPS HIM A THIRD TIME. THEN HE GRABS AND KISSES HER DESPITE HER TERRIBLE STRUGGLING. SHE RUNS UP STAGE CENTRE. THEY STRUGGLE UP STAGE CENTRE, UP STAGE RIGHT, AND BACK TO UP STAGE CENTRE.)

(BILL, HIS ARM WOUNDED, APPEARS AGAIN. SEEING STEVE WITH HIS SALLY, HE DRAWS AND AIMS.)

BILL: Sally, duck! (SALLY DUCKS. BILL SHOOT'S STEVE, THEN GOES TO SALLY TO MAKE SURE SHE IS ALRIGHT. HE PICKS HER UP AND CARRIES HER DOWN CENTRE. STEVE JUMPS BILL AND THEY FIGHT UPSTAGE CENTRE. SALLY

CROSSES DOWN LEFT.)

SUSAN: A man he has to talk to.

GEORGE: About a job?

HAL: I probably won't even see him.

GEORGE: What kind of job?  
(CROSSES DOWN RIGHT AND SITS ON EDGE OF TABLE)

HAL: For the government. I tell you I probably won't see him.

GEORGE: If you quit, Hal, I'll need three weeks notice. If you care about severance pay.

(BILL IS LOSING HIS FIGHT WITH STEVE BECAUSE OF HIS WOUNDED ARM. STEVE IS ABOUT TO GET THE GUN.)

HAL: I haven't seen him yet, even.

GEORGE: Or about me.

SALLY: (WARNINGLY) Bill!

HAL: I wasn't going to mention it.

(IN THE NICK OF TIME, SALLY SHOOTS STEVE IN THE BACK WITH A RIFLE FROM DOWN RIGHT. HE FALLS CENTRE, MAKING A MUTE APPEAL TO HER. HE IS DEAD NOW, AND SHE IS APPALLED AT WHAT SHE HAS DONE.)

SUSAN: I'm sorry. It was my fault.

GEORGE: Just don't spring anything on me. If you don't like the job, leave. But don't spring anything on me because I can't take it, you know that.

HAL: George, I'm not quitting.

SUSAN: He likes this job too much, George.

HAL: I love it more than my own life. I wouldn't leave it for all the world, George.  
Honest Injun.

(BILL FALLS CENTRE STAGE.  
SALLY RUNS TO BILL AND KNEELS  
BESIDE HIM. SEE FIGURE 3.)

SALLY: (EMBRACING BILL) Oh,  
Bill!

GEORGE: Can you imagine what  
I'd have to go through to  
train another person? Can  
you?

BILL: I love you, Sally.

SALLY: (TOUCHED) Oh, Bill.

BILL: Let's move to another  
town.

SALLY: (DELIGHTED) Oh,  
Bill.

(THEY BOTH CROSS BACK TO CUBES  
AND SIT ON THE FRONT TWO.  
THEY FREEZE.)

SUSAN: (CROSSES DOWN LEFT AND  
THEN CENTRE) Listen, I just  
remembered a joke. There's  
this writing on the subway.  
"I love grills," it says on  
the wall. So somebody crosses  
out "grills" and writes in  
"girls". "I love girls," it  
says now. And then somebody  
else writes in, "What about us  
grills?" (LAUGHS AND LAUGHS  
OVER THIS)

(GEORGE GOES INTO REST ROOM.)

(DOWN STAGE LEFT CROSS FIRST,  
SECOND, FOURTH, AND FIFTH TV  
ACTORS AND STAND LINED UP FROM  
LEFT TO RIGHT IN THAT ORDER.  
THE SECOND NEWS ANNOUNCER SITS  
ON DOWN STAGE CUBE.)

SUSAN: What about us grills?  
Isn't that fantastic?

SECOND NEWS ANNOUNCER: The  
President is accompanied by  
his wife, and by his two  
daughters. (HE FREEZES.)



HAL: What's the matter with you?

SUSAN: (STILL LAUGHING) I still think that's the funniest thing I ever heard. (CROSSES AND SITS IN GEORGE'S SEAT)

HAL: Shhhhhh.

PRESIDENT: We will stamp out aggression wherever and whenever . . .

(SUSAN CONTINUES LAUGHING.)

HAL: Shhhhhh. Stop it.

SUSAN: I can't.

PRESIDENT: We will tighten our defenses and fight, to guarantee the peace of our children, our children's children and their children.

SUSAN: I can't stop. Get the water.

(GEORGE GETS UP TO GET SOME WATER. HAL WANTS TO WATCH TELEVISION AND CAN'T HEAR IT AT ALL BECAUSE OF SUSAN'S LAUGHTER. GEORGE COMES BACK AND STANDS DOWN RIGHT HOLDING THE CUP OF WATER.)

PRESIDENT: That all men are not well-intentioned or well-informed or even basically good, is unfortunate.

HAL: This is easier. (SLAPS SUSAN VERY HARD ON THE FACE)

SUSAN: Ow!

SUSAN: Just who do you think you are? (STANDS AND WALKS AROUND AGITATEDLY)

PRESIDENT: But these people will not be indulged.

(THE PRESIDENT'S FAMILY PROVIDES THE APPLAUSE.)

HAL: Are you finished?

SUSAN: I couldn't help it.

PRESIDENT: Those who are our friends will declare themselves

publicly. The others, we will not tolerate.

SUSAN: Sadist.

PRESIDENT: Belief in American success and victory is the cornerstone of our faith.

SUSAN: Why didn't anyone get water?

GEORGE: Don't look at me.

PRESIDENT: Whatever else may chance to happen on far-off shores, nothing, I repeat nothing, will be allowed to disturb the peace and serenity of our cities and suburbs, and when we fight we fight for a safer and more comfortable America, now and in years to come. Thank you.

SUSAN: You don't slap people because they're sick.

HAL: Every day we go through the same thing. You laugh. We bring you water. You spill the water all over everybody, and half an hour later you stop.

SECOND NEWS ANNOUNCER: The President and his family will now be cheered by the cadet corps.

SUSAN: Give me the water, George. I'm going to take a pill. (CROSSES DOWN LEFT TO COAT RACK, BACK TO TABLE AND UPSTAGE TO UP RIGHT FILE CABINET TO PUT PURSE IN.)

(THE PRESIDENT AND HIS FAMILY RESPOND TO CHEERS LIKE MECHANICAL DOLLS. SECOND NEWS ANNOUNCER HUMS ONE BAR OF "FOR HE'S A JOLLY GOOD FELLOW".)

(THEY FREEZE.)

GEORGE: (GIVING HER WATER AND CROSSING TO CONSOLE) What makes you laugh like that?

(A SPANISH TEACHER APPEARS,  
CROSSING FROM DOWN LEFT TO  
DOWN CENTRE.)

(GEORGE LOWERS VOLUME BUT DOES  
NOT TURN IT OFF.)

SUSAN: I'm a hysteric. I  
mean I'm not constantly hys-  
terical but sometime I get  
that way. I react that way,  
through my body. You're a  
compulsive, Hal, a nasty,  
little compulsive.

SPANISH TEACHER: (SOFTLY)  
Buenos dias muchachos and  
muchachas. Hello, boys and  
girls. Muchachos. Boys.  
Muchachas. Girls. Aqui esta  
la casa. Here is the house.  
Casa. House. (SHE FREEZES.)

HAL: How do you know?

SUSAN: I've discussed it with  
my analyst. Hysterics react  
through their bodies. Compul-  
sives react compulsively.

GEORGE: What does he say about  
me?

SUSAN: (CROSSING TO GEORGE'S  
STOOL) He doesn't.

(EFFICIENT RESEARCHERS WALK  
BACK AND FORTH ACROSS THE  
STAGE, CHECKING THINGS, NOD-  
DING CURTLY AT EACH OTHER, AND  
SO ON. FIFTH TV ACTOR CROSSES  
TO FRONT OF TABLE, TO CENTRE,  
TO UP RIGHT, TO DOWN LEFT CUBE,  
TO DOWN LEFT COAT RACK. THE  
SECOND TV ACTOR CROSSES TO  
TABLE LEG, THEN UP RIGHT, THEN  
DOWN RIGHT, THEN TO COFFEE  
TABLE. THE OTHERS KEEP CHANG-  
ING SO THAT THE ENTIRE SET IS  
INSPECTED.)

GEORGE: Hmph.

HAL: How long have you been  
going now? Twenty-seven years?

SUSAN: A year, Wise Guy.

HAL: How long do you expect to  
be going?

SUSAN: It might take another  
two or three years.

GEORGE: I know people who have gone for ten or twelve years.

HAL: Don't you think that's a lot?

GEORGE: If you need it, you need it. It's a sickness like any other sickness. It's got to be looked after.

HAL: What did they do in the old days?

GEORGE: They stayed sick.

UGP ANNOUNCER: (SITTING ON LEFT CUBE) Who are they? They are a community of devotion. Men and women whose lives are dedicated to the researching of more perfect products for you. Get the benefit of a community of devotion. Look for the letters UGP whenever you buy a car, radio, television set, or any of a thousand other products. Their tool: devotion. Their goal: perfection.

(TV ACTORS FREEZE IN POSITIONS)

SUSAN: My analyst has been going to his analyst for twenty-five years.

HAL: How do you know?

SUSAN: He told me.

(FIRST NEWS ANNOUNCER TURNS FROM TELEPHONE AND STANDS ON CUBE LEFT FACING DOWN STAGE.)

FIRST NEWS ANNOUNCER: Three men were critically injured during a civil rights demonstration in Montgomery, Alabama, today.



GEORGE: Can you feel the tranquilizer working?

SUSAN: A little bit. I think so.

FIRST NEWS ANNOUNCER: This afternoon the Vice President arrived in Honolulu. As he stepped off the plane, he told newsmen that things are looking up.

GEORGE: Maybe I should have one too.

FIRST NEWS ANNOUNCER: The Defense Department today conceded that United States aircraft may have mistakenly flown over Chinese territory last month. If this is so, said spokesman, we're sorry.

SUSAN: (CROSSING TO CONSOLE AND TURNING VOLUME OFF) Are you upset?

GEORGE: I can feel my stomach.

(THE TV ACTORS MOVE FROM THEIR FREEZE AND A ROCK-AND-ROLL GROUP IS SEEN SINGING AND PLAYING. FIRST TV ACTOR IS SITTING ON LEFT CUBE PLAYING DRUMS. SECOND TV ACTOR IS STANDING DOWN RIGHT CUBE PLAYING LEAD GUITAR. THIRD TV ACTOR IS STANDING UP LEFT CUBE PLAYING SECOND GUITAR. FOURTH TV ACTOR IS STANDING UP LEFT CENTRE PLAYING PIANO. FIFTH TV ACTOR IS STANDING ON DOWN LEFT CUBE SINGING.)

SUSAN: (CROSSING TO FILE CABINET THEN TO GEORGE, AFTER GETTING PILL FROM PURSE) Here.

GEORGE: I'd like some coffee.

HAL: I'd like some lunch.

SUSAN: Lunch! I'll get it.

(SHE DASHES TO COAT RACK AND PUTS ON HER COAT.)

HAL: Hey!

SUSAN: Rare with onion and a danish. I know. So long, you guys.

(SHE EXITS OUT THE LEFT DOOR.)

HAL: (THROWING DARTS INTO THE BULLETIN BOARD) Think she's all right?

GEORGE: (SITTING ON HIS STOOL) People wouldn't say this is a crazy office, or anything like that.

HAL: Nope.

GEORGE: (LOOKS AT HAL AND THEN TURNS AWAY QUICKLY) She's really a nice girl, isn't she?

HAL: (CROSSES TO RIGHT OF TABLE AND BEGINS DOING PUSH-UPS) Yep.

GEORGE: You like her, don't you?

HAL: Yup.

GEORGE: I mean you don't just think she's a good lay, do you?

HAL: (STOPS DOING PUSH-UPS AND LOOKS AT GEORGE) What makes you think I lay her?

GEORGE: (NERVOUSLY) Well, don't you?

HAL: (GETTING UP) George, that's an old trick.

GEORGE: I'm just trying to find out whether or not you really like her.

HAL: (CROSSES AND SITS ON HIS STOOL) Why do you care?

GEORGE: (TURNS AWAY) I feel protective.

HAL: That's right. She's half your age, isn't she?

GEORGE: Not exactly half.

HAL: How old are you, George, exactly?

GEORGE: Forty-three.

HAL: (CROSSES LEFT TO COFFEE TABLE) Huumph.

GEORGE: What's that mean?

HAL: I was just wondering what it would be like to be forty-three.

GEORGE: It stinks.

HAL: (LOOKS AT GEORGE) That's what I thought.

GEORGE: (CROSSES TO HAL) You'll be forty-three sooner than you think.

HAL: (CROSSES UP CENTER TO CONSOLE) I'll never be forty-three.

GEORGE: Why not?

HAL: I don't intend (OVER HIS SHOULDER) to live that long. (THE ROCK-AND-ROLL GROUP BOWS.)

GEORGE: You have something?

HAL: No. I just don't intend to live that long. (HE TURNS THE VOLUME ON)

(THE TV CHARACTERS PLAY PEACE MARCHERS CROSSING DOWN STAGE. THEY BEGIN TO MARCH FROM DOWN LEFT TO DOWN CENTRE AND BACK AGAIN SINGING "WE SHALL OVER-COME." SEE FIGURE 4.)



Figure 4

FIRST NEWS ANNOUNCER: (SEATED ON HIS CUBE) A group of so-called peace-niks marched down the centre mall of the capital today, singing.

(HAL CROSSES TO REST ROOM AT RIGHT.)

FIRST NEWS ANNOUNCER: (NOW STANDING ON HIS CUBE) One young man from New York City predicted:

(THE YOUNG MAN CROSSES TO THE CUBES FROM HIS PEACE MARCHING AND STANDS DOWN RIGHT OF THE FIRST NEWS ANNOUNCER.)

ONE YOUNG MAN FROM NEW YORK CITY: The Washington Monument is going to burst into bloom and . . .

(THE FIRST NEWS ANNOUNCER SNATCHES THE MIKE AWAY JUST AS THE YOUNG MAN IS SAYING "FORNICATE".)

GEORGE: It's healthy.

(THE YOUNG MAN CROSSES BACK INTO THE CROWD OF PEACE-NIKS AS ANNIE KAPPELHOFF CROSSES UP ONTO THE CUBE BESIDE THE FIRST NEWS ANNOUNCER.)

FIRST NEWS ANNOUNCER: A little girl, Annie Kappelhoff, had her own ideas:

ANNIE: (AS IF LEADING A SCHOOL CHEER) Burn yourselves, (GIVES THE "UP YOURS" SALUTE) not your draft cards, burn yourselves, (GIVES THE "UP YOURS" SALUTE) not your draft cards.

(SHE CONTINUES TO CHEER SILENTLY AS THE FIRST NEWS ANNOUNCER CONTINUES HIS BROADCAST.)

FIRST NEWS ANNOUNCER: Later in the day Annie was the star of her own parade. She's head cheerleader of Wilmut High School of Maryland. Today Annie cheered her team to victory, thirty to nothing, over neighboring South Dearing. Annie is also an ardent supporter (ANNIE DROPS THE SILENT CHEERING AND DOES A BRISK NAZI SALUTE ON THE FOLLOWING LINES) of the Young American Nazi Party, and hopes to be a model. And now, a message.

HAL: (CROSSES FROM REST ROOM AND SITS ON HIS STOOL) Are you a Republican, George? (THEY FREEZE.)

GEORGE: That's right.

HAL: You know I have a lot of friends who won't even speak to Republicans.

GEORGE: I'd rather not discuss politics.

HAL: (CROSSES UP RIGHT TO FILE CABINET) Why not?

GEORGE: Because we probably don't see eye to eye.

HAL: So?

GEORGE: So I'd rather not discuss it. And my stomach's upset.

FAMOUS TV PERSONALITY: (CROSSES DOWN LEFT) Are you one of those lucky women who has all the time in the world?

FAMOUS TV PERSONALITY: Or are you like most of us: busy, busy, busy all day long with home or job so that when evening comes you hardly have time to wash your face, much less transform yourself into the living doll he loves?

FAMOUS TV PERSONALITY: Well then, K-F is for you. More than a soap. More than a cream. Why, it's a soap-cream. You apply it in less time than it takes to wash your face, and it leaves your skin tingling with loveliness. Try it. And for a super thrill, use it in the shower. (HE FREEZES.)

(THE TV CHARACTERS CROSS AND SIT ON THE CUBES UP LEFT AS LILY HEAVEN'S ANNOUNCER CROSSES DOWN LEFT AND SMILES.)

LILY HEAVEN'S ANNOUNCER: The Lily Heaven Show, Ladies and Gentlemen, starring that great star of stage, screen, and television: Lily Heaven.

(THERE IS A SPECIAL KNOCK ON THE DOOR.)

HAL: What's that?

GEORGE: Nothing. (CROSSES TO CONSOLE AND TURNS THE VOLUME OFF)

HAL: What do you mean, nothing?

GEORGE: (CALLING) One minute.

HAL: (GETTING PANICKY) One minute until what?

(GEORGE CROSSES TO THE LIGHT SWITCH AT STAGE LEFT DOOR AND CUTS IT OFF.)

HAL: (STANDING) I knew it. What's going on?

GEORGE: (CALLING) Okay.

HAL: Okay what? What? What?

SUSAN: (COMING THROUGH STAGE LEFT DOOR WITH A CAKE WITH LIGHTED CANDLES ON IT) Okay this, stupid.

HAL: (SINKS BACK ONTO HIS STOOL) Oh my God; you're crazy.

SUSAN: (TO GEORGE) One, two, three . . .

SUSAN AND GEORGE: (SINGING AS THEY CROSS TO TABLE) Happy Birthday to you, / Happy Birthday to you, / Happy Birthday

(LILY HEAVEN MAKES A GRAND, IMAGINARY "ENTRANCE", VERY STAR-LIKE, AND CROSSES DOWN LEFT.)

(LILY HEAVEN BEGINS TO PANTOMIME THE WORDS OF A FAMILIAR SONG DURING THE ENTIRE BIRTHDAY SEQUENCE.)

dear Hal,/ Happy Birthday to you.

SUSAN: (PUTTING CAKE ON TABLE)  
Happy Birthday. You had no idea, did you? (KISSES HAL)

GEORGE: Happy Birthday.  
(SHAKES HANDS WITH HAL, THEN  
TURNS AND WATCHES TV SCREEN)

HAL: Thanks . . . a lot.

(GEORGE CROSSES LEFT AND CUTS  
LIGHTS BACK ON.)

SUSAN: (EXCITEDLY) Make a wish and blow.

(HAL TAKES A DEEP BREATH, BLOWS ON THE CANDLES BUT DOESN'T GET THEM ALL. HE TRIES AGAIN AS SUSAN GOES TO UPSTAGE FILE CABINET, GETS TWO PRESENTS, AND CROSSES BACK TO TABLE.)

SUSAN: Well, almost. People thought I was crazy walking down the hall with this cake and this lunch in a paper bag. And I was petrified one of you would swing the door open while I was walking in the corridor and knock me down and the cake and everything. I was almost sure you'd guessed, Hal, when I put the presents in my locker this morning.

HAL: I hadn't.

SUSAN: I love birthdays. I know it's childish, but I really do. Look at the card on George's. (CROSSES TO HAL'S LEFT)

HAL: (LOOKING AT CARD, SPEAKING EVENLY) It's cute.

SUSAN: Open it. (HAL OPENS PACKAGE) It's a tie.



(GEORGE CROSSES UPSTAGE OF TABLE AND STANDS LOOKING AT TV SCREEN, AFTER GETTING SANDWICH.)

HAL: Well. Thanks, George. I can use this. (MAKES A MOCK NOOSE OF TIE AROUND HIS NECK, LEANING HIS HEAD DOWN STAGE LIMPLY)

GEORGE: You're welcome. (HE THROWS THE LINE OVER HIS SHOULDER WITHOUT LOOKING AROUND.)

SUSAN: (LOOKING AT TIE, AND THEN SITTING) It's a good tie.

GEORGE: What'd you expect? (CROSSES TO CONSOLE WITH THE SANDWICH IN HIS HANDS)

SUSAN: (STOPPING HAL FROM GIVING HER A DRINK) Save mine for when we eat the cake, so the birthday will last longer.

HAL: (LOOKING AT GEORGE) George, there's egg salad all over the dials.

GEORGE: (TURNING UP VOLUME) Sorry.

LILY HEAVEN: So long, everybody.

SUSAN: (CROSSES TO GEORGE WITH A NAPKIN AND THEN TO COFFEE TABLE LEFT) Here's a napkin. I'll make some coffee.

LILY HEAVEN: This is Lily Heaven saying so long.

GEORGE: Good. (HE CROSSES TO TABLE AND SITS.)

(PART OF LILY'S AUDIENCE, PLAYED BY THE TV CHARACTERS, APPLAUDS. THE OTHERS LOOK BORED.)

(HAL AND GEORGE ARE MESMERIZED BY LILY HEAVEN. SUSAN PAYS NO ATTENTION BUT GETS COFFEE AND CROSSES BACK TO TABLE.)

LILY HEAVEN: (GUSHING AS IF EACH SENTENCE WERE HER LAST) Here's wishing you a good week before we meet again. (CROSSES DOWN STAGE LEFT) From all of us here to all of you out there: so long.

Thanks a lot and God bless you.  
This is Lily signing off.  
(CROSSES TO LEFT CENTRE) I  
only hope that you enjoyed  
watching us as much as we en-  
joyed being here. It's been  
really wonderful being with  
you. Really grand, and I hope  
you'll invite us into your  
living room next week. I only  
wish we could go on but I'm  
afraid it's time to say so  
long, so from the actors and  
myself, from the staff here,  
I want to wish you a very,  
very good week. (CROSSES TO  
CENTRE STAGE) This is your  
Lily saying so long to you.  
(CROSSES WITH GRAND GESTURES  
TO STAGE RIGHT) So long. So  
long. So long. So long.  
Have a happy and so long.  
Till next week. Bye, so long.

(SHE FREEZES STAGE RIGHT OF  
TABLE. THE TELEVISION AUDI-  
ENCE FREEZES IN POSITION.)

GEORGE: Give me another of  
those tranquilizers. The first  
one doesn't seem to have done  
a thing.

(GEORGE TURNS THE VOLUME OFF.  
SUSAN WATCHES HAL WHO HAS BEEN  
OPENING HIS OTHER PRESENT.)

HAL: Say, this is nice.

SUSAN: It's an art book.

HAL: I can see that.

GEORGE: Hal especially inter-  
ested in art?

SUSAN: (CROSSING TO COFFEE  
TABLE AND RETURNING WITH CUP)  
A person doesn't have to be  
especially interested in art  
to like it.

HAL: It must have cost a lot, Susan. Here, George. (PASSES A PIECE OF CAKE TO GEORGE WHO SITS ON HIS STOOL)

SUSAN: Well, as a matter of fact, I got it on sale. (SITS)

HAL: If I had a place for it, everything would be fine. Cake, Susan?

SUSAN: (TO GEORGE) Hal still doesn't have a place.

GEORGE: What kind of place are you looking for?

HAL: I'd like to find an apartment with more than one small room for under a hundred dollars.

(SECOND TV CHARACTER CROSSES FROM HER CUBE TO UPSTAGE OF GEORGE AND DOES A SILENT COMMERCIAL FOR HEADACHE PILLS.)

SUSAN: Do you want to live in the Village?

HAL: Makes no difference.

GEORGE: Don't live down there.

SUSAN: Why not?

GEORGE: It's too crowded.

SUSAN: It's not so crowded, and in the Village you can see a lot of wonderful faces.

GEORGE: Yes, well, frankly I've been working for a living for twenty-one years, and I resent having to support a lot of bums on relief.

SUSAN: That's not the Village. That's the Bowery.

GEORGE: Let's not talk about it.

SUSAN: Why not?

GEORGE: I already told Hal that people with different points of view shouldn't talk about politics. (STOPS, REALIZING HE IS GETTING ANGRY, AND ATTEMPTS TO LAUGH) And I shouldn't be eating this cake either. (THE FIFTH TV CHARACTER CROSSES FROM HER CUBE TO DOWN STAGE LEFT BESIDE THE COFFEE TABLE AND BEGINS A SILENT MONOLOGUE.)

(GEORGE CROSSES TO THE CONSOLE AND TURNS THE VOLUME ON.)

LADY ANNOUNCER: And now First Federal Savings and Kennel-Heart Dog Food (THE FIRST AND THIRD TV CHARACTERS TAKE CUBES FROM UP LEFT AND BRING THEM CENTRE STAGE. THEY SIT AND BECOME RON AND CAROL. SEE FIGURE 5.) present Luncheon With Carol, a program especially designed for the up-to-date woman. Our topic for today: I Quit. And here's Carol. (SHE FREEZES.)

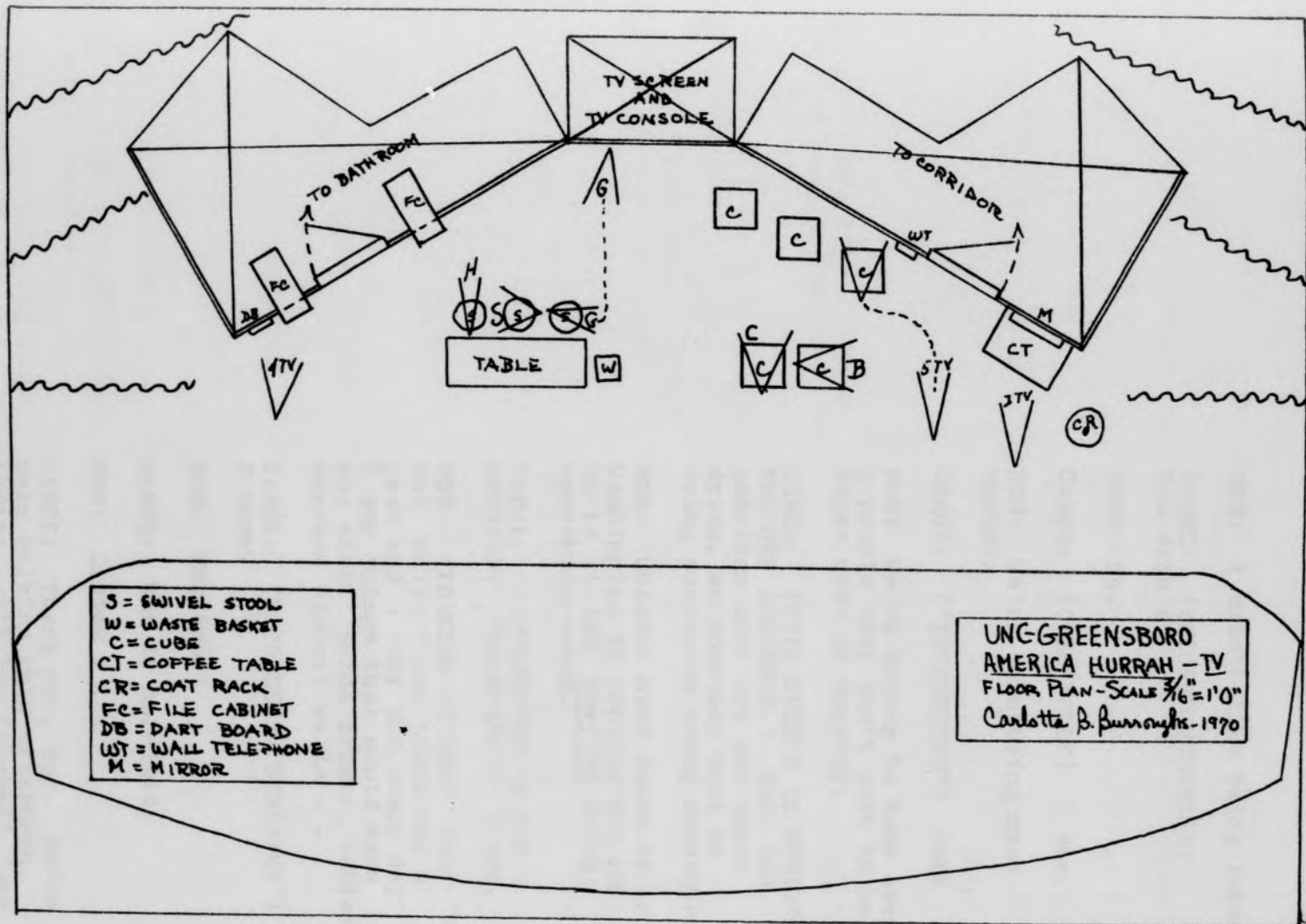
CAROL: (SHE IS SUPER-SWEET, MADDENINGLY LIGHT AND "INTERESTED".) Hello, ladies. This is Carol. I have as my guest today Mr. Ron Campbell just back from an eighteen month tour of the war. Mr. Campbell was a member of the famed Green Berets. He is a holder of the Bronze Star and the Order of Merit. He has been nominated for the Silver Star. A few weeks ago he was offered a field commission as captain. But instead of accepting, what did you do, Ron?

RON: I quit.

CAROL: That's right, you quit. Tell us why you quit, Ron, when you were obviously doing so well?

(CAROL'S TONE IS THAT OF A SCHOOL TEACHER COAXING A BACKWARD BOY.)

Figure 5



RON: I didn't like being there.

CAROL: (FEIGNED SURPRISE)  
You didn't?

RON: No.

CAROL: (CHEERFULLY) I see.

RON: We're committing mass  
murder.

CAROL: ("INTERESTED") Yes?

RON: We're trying to take over  
a people that don't want to be  
taken over by anybody.

CAROL: (THIS SPEECH IS STRICTLY  
FOR HER AUDIENCE.) Now, Ron,  
American boys are out there  
dying, so somebody must be  
doing something wrong somewhere.

RON: Whoever over there or in  
Washington is sending men out  
to be killed, they're doing  
something wrong.

CAROL: (INTERESTED IN HIS  
OPINION: "TOLERANT") I see.

RON: (LOOKING AT HER) You  
do? Well, I was there for a  
year and a half and every day  
I saw things that would make  
you sick. Heads broken, babies  
smashed against walls . . .

CAROL: (WITH DEEP "SYMPATHY")  
I know.

RON: You know?

CAROL: War is horrible.

RON: Listen . . .

CAROL: Thank you, Ron. We've  
been talking this afternoon,  
ladies, with Ron Campbell, war  
hero.

RON: Will you let me say something, please?

CAROL: (TOLERATING HIM KINDLY)  
And a fascinating talk it's been, Ron, but I'm afraid our time is up.

RON: One . . .

CAROL: (WITH HER SPECIAL SMILE FOR THE LADIES) Ladies, see you all tomorrow.

(RON AND CAROL FREEZE.)

SUSAN: (DREAMILY) I think I'm floating further and further left.

GEORGE: You don't know anything about it.

SUSAN: I was listening to Norman Thomas last night . . .

LADY ANNOUNCER: This programme was brought to you by First Federal Savings and Kennel-Heart Dog Food. The opinions expressed on this programme are not necessarily those of anyone connected with it. A dog in the home means a dog with a heart.

GEORGE: I'm going to the men's room.

(HE CROSSES TO BATHROOM)

LADY ANNOUNCER: Kennel-Heart. Bow-wow. Wow.

(SHE FREEZES.)

SUSAN: Poor George.

HAL: You still haven't told me about tonight.

SUSAN: Told you what about tonight?

(FIRST AND FOURTH TV ACTORS PORTRAY A VERY ENGLISH MAN AND A VERY ENGLISH WOMAN WHO

APPEAR IN THE BILLION DOLLAR  
MOVIE. THEY CROSS TO CENTRE  
STAGE.)

HE: Sarah.

SHE: Yes, Richard.

HAL: Are we going to the  
movies or are we not going to  
the movies?

HE: Our old apartment.

SUSAN: I don't know. I can't  
make up my mind.

SHE: Yes, Richard. It's  
still here.

HAL: (CROSSING DOWN STAGE  
RIGHT OF FILE CABINET) That's  
just fine.

HE: It seems very small to  
me.

SUSAN: I want to work on my  
apartment.

SHE: It does to me, too.

HAL: (SITTING ON EDGE OF  
TABLE) Okay.

(SHE CROSSES DOWN LEFT CENTRE.)

HE: Do you think we can live  
in it again?

SHE: Not in the old way.

SUSAN: I should really get  
it done.

(HE CROSSES TO HER.)

HE: In a better way.

HAL: You're right.

(HAL SITS ON STOOL.)

SHE: You've changed, too,  
Richard, for the better.

HE: So have you, Darling, for  
the better.



SUSAN: Suppose I let you know by the end of the afternoon?

HAL: Suppose we forget I ever suggested it.

SHE: I've learned a lot.

HE: Maybe that's what war is for.

SHE: (CROSSING TO UP STAGE SIDE OF BATHROOM DOOR) The brick wall in front of the window is gone.

HE: (CROSSING TO HER) We'll rebuild for the future.

SUSAN: Oh, all right, I'll go. (CROSSING TO COFFEE TABLE, TOSSING LINE OVER HER SHOULDER) Happy?

SHE: I hope there is never any more war. Ever, ever again.

HAL: I'm so happy I could put a bullet through my brain.

HE: Amen.

(THEY FREEZE WITH HER HEAD ON HIS SHOULDER.)

SUSAN: Sugar?

HAL: You're like my grandmother.

(FIRST NEWS ANNOUNCER BREAKS FROM HE AND SHE EMBRACE AND SITS IN CENTRE STOOL. HE PICKS UP SOME PAPERS FROM THE TABLE AS IF TO READ THEM.)

SUSAN: How?

HAL: She asked me if I took sugar every day we lived together. It was very comforting.

HAL: "Hal," she used to say to me, my grandmother, "you are going to be a great, big man."

FIRST NEWS ANNOUNCER: Baseball's Greg Pironelli, fifty-six, died today of a heart attack in St. Petersburg, Florida. He hit a total of four hundred and eighty home runs and had a lifetime batting average of three-forty-one.

(HAL CROSSES TO SUSAN AT THE COFFEE TABLE.)

HAL: "Everybody's going to love you." She used to sing that song to me: "Poppa's gonna buy you a dog named Rover, and if that doggie does not bark, Poppa's gonna buy you a looking glass, and if that looking glass should break, you're still the sweetest little boy in town."

(SUSAN HANDS COFFEE TO HAL AND CROSSES PAST HIM.)

SUSAN: That's nice.

(HAL FOLLOWS HER BACK TO THE TABLE WHERE THEY BOTH SIT.)

(GEORGE ENTERS, GOES TO THE TELEPHONE AND DIALS.)

GEORGE: Hello, Dear? I've gotten out of the midnight-to-three shift.

GEORGE: Isn't that wonderful?

GEORGE: My stomach is killing me.

(GEORGE HUNTS FOR PENCIL. SUSAN CROSSES TO HIM AND GIVES HIM ONE. SHE THEN CROSSES TO DOWN STAGE FILING CABINET.)

GEORGE: (WRITING) Large soap cream. Why large? No, I don't care. I was just wondering.

GEORGE: Toothpaste.

GEORGE: Mayonnaise.

GEORGE: Bologna.

FIRST NEWS ANNOUNCER: In 1963, the year he was elected to baseball's hall of fame in Cooperstown, New York, Pironelli suffered his first stroke. Pironelli owned a Florida-wide chain of laundries.

(FIRST NEWS ANNOUNCER PICKS UP ANOTHER SET OF PAPERS FROM THE TABLE.)

FIRST NEWS ANNOUNCER: The Pentagon revealed today that the investigation into the alleged massacre at Wy Son resulted in charges against fourteen officers, including five generals, two colonels, three majors, and four captains. The head of the panel for the Pentagon stated that the inquiry, which had over three hundred witnesses and recorded over 15,000 pages of testimony, established clearly that a "tragedy of major proportions" did in fact occur at Wy Son.

FIRST NEWS ANNOUNCER: (SHIFTING PAPERS) Two hundred white parents and interested citizens attacked school busses today bearing Negro children to a previously-all-white elementary school in Red Clay, South Carolina. State Troopers broke up the mob after two school busses were overturned and several children and adults were injured. Spokesmen for the adults expressed surprise at being called "rednecks," "bigots," and "racists." They were, they said, "anguished parents striking out with a basic instinct: to protect their young." The elementary

GEORGE: Listen, Honey, I love you. You know that, don't you.

children "were horrified and had no idea what was happening," one official reported.

(FIRST NEWS ANNOUNCER FREEZES.)

GEORGE: No, I have not been drinking and it's rotten of you to ask.

GEORGE: Okay, okay, I'm sorry. (HANGING UP PHONE) Goodbye.

SUSAN: Have a little coffee, George.

GEORGE: (CROSSING TO CONSOLE) No, thanks.

HAL: (NEEDLING) Oh, come on, George, have a little coffee.

GEORGE: (CROSSING TO TABLE AND SITTING) A sip.

SUSAN: (CROSSING TO COFFEE TABLE) Sugar or superine?

GEORGE: Sugar.

SUSAN: (WARNINGLY) George.

GEORGE: Don't take care of me. I said sugar.

(GEORGE CROSSES UP STAGE RIGHT CABINET AND GETS HIS SANDWICH.)

SUSAN: Whatever you want, George.

(TV ACTORS MELT DOWNSTAGE IN BACK OF CUBES AS THE EVANGELIST CHOIR. THEY LINE UP STAGE RIGHT TO LEFT AS FOLLOWS: FOURTH TV ACTOR, THIRD TV ACTOR, SECOND TV ACTOR, AND FIFTH TV ACTOR WHO CARRIES THIRD CUBE AND PLACES IT BY THE OTHER TWO. THE FIRST TV ACTOR IS ON THE CUBES AND WALKS BACK AND FORTH AS THE EVANGELIST WHILE THE CHOIR SINGS "ONWARD CHRISTIAN SOLDIERS.")

EVANGELIST: If we could look through the ceiling of this wonderful new air-conditioned stadium we could see the stars. Nonetheless I have heard them in faraway countries, I have heard them criticize, criticize us and the leaders we know and love.

SUSAN: (CROSSING TO TABLE) What are you eating now, George?

GEORGE: (INTENTLY WATCHING  
CONSOLE SCREEN) Chicken sand-  
wich.

SUSAN: Give me a bite.

(GEORGE CROSSES TO TABLE, GIVES  
SUSAN A BITE OF SANDWICH, AND  
RETURNS TO HIS POSITION OF  
SCREEN-WATCHING.)

(HAL PLAYS WITH HIS LETTER  
OPENER WHILE SUSAN THEN EATS  
ANOTHER PIECE OF CAKE.)

(GEORGE STARTS TO COUGH.)

(HAL CROSSES TO CONSOLE AND  
TURNS THE VOLUME OFF.)

SUSAN: What's the matter,  
George?

(SUSAN CROSSES UP TO GEORGE  
WHO MOTIONS HER AWAY, COUGHING  
HIS WAY DOWN STAGE LEFT TO  
CORNER OF TABLE. HAL FOLLOWS.)

HAL: Spit it out, George.

SUSAN: Hal, leave him alone.

HAL: (THUMPING GEORGE ON THE  
BACK) George, spit it out.

SUSAN: (COMING DOWN RIGHT OF  
GEORGE) Hal! George, is it  
epilepsy?

HAL: It's something in his  
throat.

SUSAN: Try to tell us what it  
is, George.

EVANGELIST: Why? Well I will  
tell you why. They criticize  
us because we are rich, as if  
money itself were an evil.  
Money, the Bible says, is the  
root of evil, not evil itself.  
I have seen a roomful of men  
and women, powerful Hollywood  
celebrities at four o'clock  
a.m. in the morning, listen-  
ing to me with tears stream-  
ing down their faces crying  
out to me that they had lost  
touch with God.

EVANGELIST: "In God We Trust"  
is on our coins, ladies and  
gentlemen--

(DURING THE ENTIRE CHICKEN  
EPISODE, THE EVANGELIST PACES  
BACK AND FORTH, PANTOMIMING  
HIS SERMON. THE CHOIR CON-  
TINUES TO SING VERSE AFTER  
VERSE OF "ONWARD CHRISTIAN  
SOLDIERS" SILENTLY.)

HAL and GEORGE: (TOGETHER)  
Chicken!

HAL: He has a chicken bone  
stuck in his throat.

SUSAN: Oh my God. Well, give  
him some water.

(GEORGE'S CHOKING IS GETTING  
WORSE.)

HAL: Water will wash right  
by it. Let me look. (PUTS  
GEORGE PROPPED ON TABLE, LEANS  
HIS HEAD BACK, AND LOOKS INTO  
HIS MOUTH.) Don't move, George.  
I want to take a look.

(SUSAN LOOKS DOWN HIS THROAT  
ALSO.)

HAL: (LOOKING) There it is.

SUSAN: (LOOKING) Ugh, it's  
stuck in his throat. (CROSSES  
TOWARD BATHROOM DOOR) I'll  
get some water.

HAL: (LETTING GO OF GEORGE  
WHO FALLS TO FLOOR IN FRONT OF  
TABLE, STILL COUGHING) Not  
water.

SUSAN: (TURNING TO HAL) Why  
not?

HAL: Because water will wash  
right past the thing. It needs  
something to push it out.

SUSAN: Like what?

HAL: Like bread.

SUSAN: Bread? Bread will get  
stuck on the bone and he'll  
choke.

HAL: (CROSSING TO SUSAN) You  
are wrong.

SUSAN: I'm right.

HAL: Bread will push it right down.

(GEORGE IS REALLY BEGINNING TO CHOKE BADLY.)

SUSAN: Water will do that.

(SUSAN CROSSES TO BATHROOM.)

HAL: You're wrong.

SUSAN: It's you that's wrong and won't admit it.

HAL: I'm gonna give him some bread.

SUSAN: I won't allow it.

(HAL CROSSES TO SUSAN AND STOPS HER AT THE BATHROOM DOOR. AS HE SPEAKS HE WORKS HER BACK DOWN STAGE RIGHT.)

HAL: You won't allow it?

SUSAN: It'll kill him.

HAL: He's choking right now and I'm going to give him some of this bread.

SUSAN: Give him water.

HAL: I said bread.

SUSAN: (STARTING FOR BATHROOM AGAIN) And I said water.

HAL: (GRABBING HER ARM) Bread.

SUSAN: Water. Ow, you're hurting me.

(GEORGE IS HAVING A VERY BAD TIME. HAL AND SUSAN TURN TO LOOK AT HIM, SPEAKING SOFTLY.)

SUSAN: Let's call the operator.

HAL: It would take too long.

SUSAN: And he wouldn't like anyone to see him.

HAL: Why not?

SUSAN: I don't know.

(AT THIS POINT GEORGE FINALLY COUGHS THE THING UP, AND HIS COUGH SUBSIDES INTO AN ANIMAL PANT.)

SUSAN: (GOING TO HIM, PATTING HIM) Poor George.

HAL: It's over.

SUSAN: No thanks to you.

HAL: Nor you.

SUSAN: (PUTTING GEORGE'S HEAD ON HER BREAST) He might have choked. (CROONING) Poor old George.

GEORGE: (PUSHING HER AWAY AND LURCHING TO CONSOLE WHERE HE TURNS VOLUME BACK ON) Up yours!

EVANGELIST CHOIR: (SINGING)  
With the cross of Jesus--

(HAL FOLLOWS GEORGE TO CONSOLE AND CHANGES CHANNELS FROM THE EVANGELIST'S MEETING TO "MY FAVOURITE TEENAGER." HAL GOES TOWARD TABLE AND SITS. GEORGE GOES TO THE BATHROOM.)

(EVANGELIST'S MEETING BREAKS. FIRST TV ACTOR GOES CENTRE STAGE, FIFTH TV ACTOR SITS AT TABLE, SECOND TV ACTOR STANDS BESIDE SEATED ACTOR, THIRD AND FOURTH TV ACTORS CROSS TO THE COFFEE TABLE AND DRINK COFFEE TOGETHER.)

SUSAN: (CROSSING TO HER FILE CABINET) Poor George.

MOTHER: Why aren't you going?

DAUGHTER: (LEANING HEAD ON ARM PROPPED ON TABLE) Because I told Harold Sternpepper he could take me.

MOTHER: Yes, and . . .

DAUGHTER: Well, Harold Sternpepper is a creep. Everybody knows that.

(THIRD AND FOURTH TV ACTORS MAKE SOUNDS OF CANNED LAUGHTER THROUGHOUT THE EPISODE.)

HAL: What movie are we going to? (SITS)

MOTHER: So, why . . .

SUSAN: (SITTING BETWEEN HAL AND DAUGHTER) I don't know.

DAUGHTER: Oh, because I was mad at Gail.

(CANNED LAUGHTER)

MOTHER: (CROSSING BEHIND SUSAN, LOOKING AT DAUGHTER) What about Johnny Beaumont?

HAL: What about George?

DAUGHTER: What about him?

SUSAN: What about him?

HAL: (TURNING AWAY FROM SUSAN) Well, I guess it's none of my business.

MOTHER: (CROSSING TO FIRST TV ACTOR) Well, I guess it's none of my business.

GEORGE: (RETURNING AND CROSSING DOWN STAGE RIGHT) What's the matter?

FATHER: (CROSSING TO DAUGHTER IN MOCK CONCERN) What's the matter?

SUSAN: Nothing.

DAUGHTER: Nothing.

GEORGE: Going somewhere?

FATHER: Why aren't you dressed for the prom?

SUSAN: We're going to the movies.

DAUGHTER: I'm not going to the prom.

(HAL, SUSAN, AND GEORGE ARE SLOWING DOWN BECAUSE OF THEIR MESMERIZATION BY "MY FAVOURITE TEENAGER.")

FATHER: Why not? Why isn't she going, Grace?

MOTHER: (SHRUGGING) Don't ask me. I just live here.

(CANNED LAUGHTER)



GEORGE: What movie are you going to?

FATHER: Why doesn't anyone tell me anything around here?

(CANNED LAUGHTER)

DAUGHTER: (GETTING UP TO CROSS TO STAGE LEFT CUBE AND SIT) Oh, why don't you two leave me alone? I'm not going because nobody's taking me.

GEORGE: Mind if I come along?

FATHER: (SITTING IN GEORGE'S CHAIR) Nobody's taking my little girl to the junior prom? I'll take her myself.

SUSAN: Oh, George, you don't really want to.

DAUGHTER: (STIFLING A YELP OF HORROR) Oh no, Daddy, don't bother. I mean how would it look, I mean . . .

GEORGE: I'd be pleased as punch.

FATHER: I'd be pleased as punch.

DAUGHTER: (ASIDE TO AUDIENCE) Help.

(CANNED LAUGHTER)

SUSAN: Hal, say something.

MOTHER: (CROSSING TO FATHER) Now, Dear, don't you think for your age . . .

(CANNED LAUGHTER)

HAL: (TO GEORGE) You look bushed to me, George.

GEORGE: Who's bushed?

FATHER: My age? (STANDS, INDIGNANT)

(CANNED LAUGHTER)

FATHER: (DOING A TWO-STEP UP CENTRE) I'd like to see anybody laugh at my two-step.

(GEORGE CROSSES AND SITS ON HIS STOOL.)

(CANNED LAUGHTER)

DAUGHTER: (CROSSING TO MOTHER)  
Oh, Daddy. Mother, do something.

(CANNED LAUGHTER)

(HAL, SUSAN, AND GEORGE ARE COMPLETELY MESMERIZED BY THE TELEVISION SHOW.)

(FATHER MOVES UP STAGE BEHIND SUSAN.)

MOTHER: I think it's a very nice idea. (PUTS HER ARM AROUND GEORGE'S SHOULDER) And maybe I'll go with Harold Sternpepper.

(CANNED LAUGHTER)

DAUGHTER: (CROSSING TO HAL)  
Oh, Mother, oh, Daddy. (SITS ON HAL'S KNEE) Oh no!

(CANNED LAUGHTER MOUNTS.)

(NOW THEY ALL SPEAK LIKE SITUATION-COMEDY CHARACTERS.)

HAL: What movie shall we go to?

GEORGE: Let's talk about it over dinner.

HAL: Who said anything about dinner?

(CANNED LAUGHTER COMES FROM ALL THE TV ACTORS.)

SUSAN: Isn't anybody going to ask me what I want to do?

(CANNED LAUGHTER)

GEORGE: Sure, what do you want, Susan?

(CANNED LAUGHTER)

HAL: It's up to you.

(CANNED LAUGHTER)

SUSAN: Well, have I got a surprise for you two. I'm going home to fix up my apartment and you two can have dinner together.

(CANNED LAUGHTER)

(HAL, SUSAN, AND GEORGE SLOWLY JOIN IN ON THE CANNED LAUGHTER, WHICH RISES HYSTERICALLY AND THEN CUTS OFF SHORT AS ALL EIGHT PEOPLE FREEZE WITH THEIR FACES FROZEN INTO LAUGHING MASKS.)

## PART II

## PROMPT BOOK

INTERVIEW

(THE PLAY OPENS IN A STERILE PERSONNEL OFFICE. THERE ARE TWO DOORS AND EIGHT CUBES. THE DOOR UP RIGHT WILL BE CALLED THE INTERVIEWERS' DOOR. THE DOOR UP LEFT WILL BE CALLED THE APPLICANTS' DOOR. THE FOUR CUBES ON RIGHT CENTRE ARE THE INTERVIEWERS' CUBES AND WILL BE LABELED IC-1, IC-2, IC-3, AND IC-4. THE CUBES ON LEFT CENTRE ARE THE APPLICANTS' CUBES AND WILL BE LABELED AC-1, AC-2, AC-3, AND AC-4. SEE FIGURE 6.)

(THE FIRST INTERVIEWER, A YOUNG WOMAN, ENTERS FROM THE INTERVIEWERS' DOOR, CROSSES TO IC-1, AND SITS AS THE FIRST APPLICANT ENTERS FROM THE APPLICANTS' DOOR AND CROSSES TO AC-4.)

FIRST INTERVIEWER: (STANDING) How do you do? (SITS)

FIRST APPLICANT: (SITTING ON AC-4) Thank you, I said, not knowing where to sit.

FIRST INTERVIEWER: Won't you sit down?

FIRST APPLICANT: (STANDING QUICKLY, AFRAID TO DISPLEASE) I'm sorry.

FIRST INTERVIEWER: (POINTING TO AC-1) There. Name please?

FIRST APPLICANT: (CROSSING TO AC-1, REMAINS STANDING) Jack Smith.

FIRST INTERVIEWER: Jack What Smith?

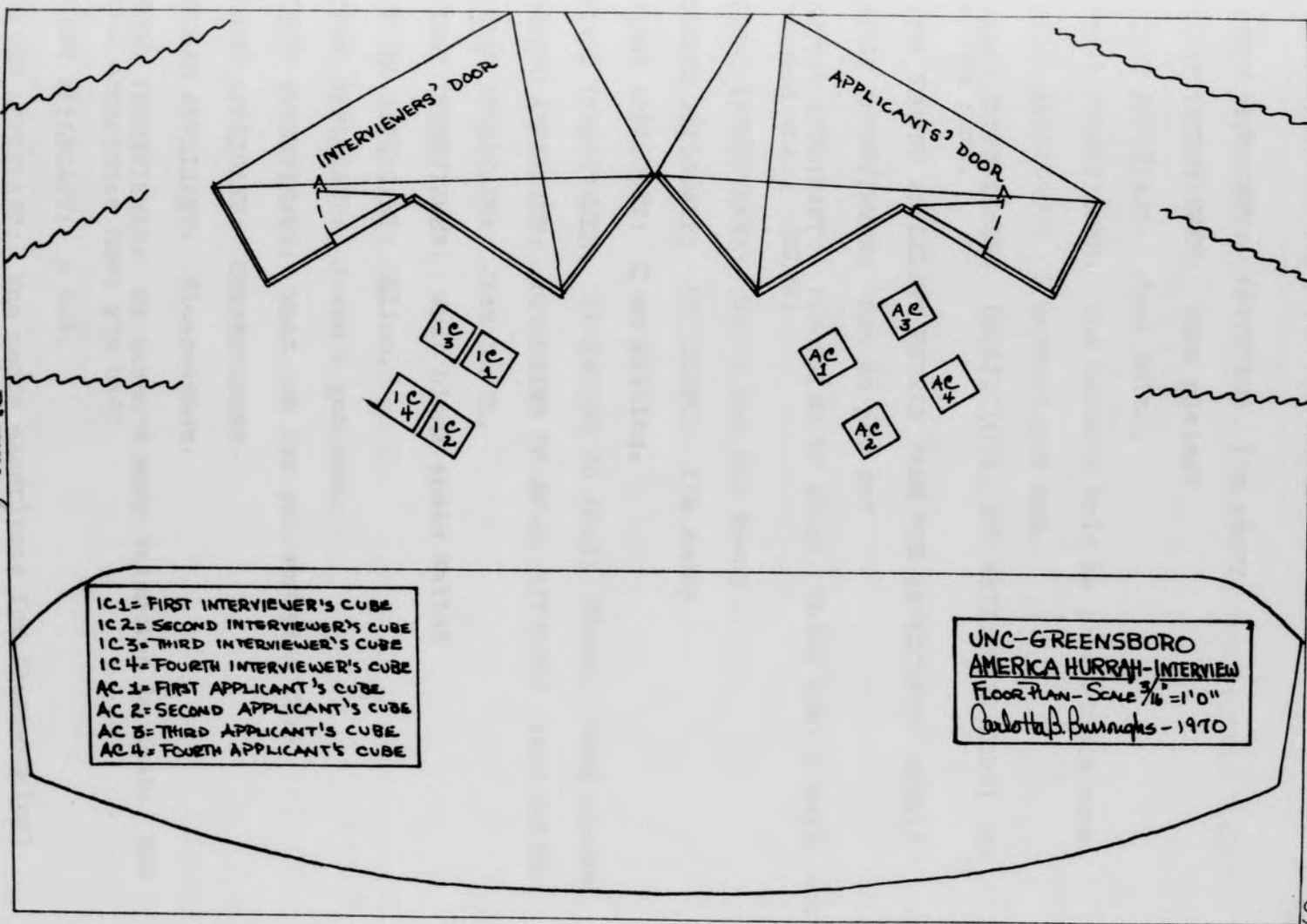
FIRST APPLICANT: Beg Pardon?

FIRST INTERVIEWER: Fill in the blank space, please. Jack blank space Smith.

FIRST APPLICANT: I don't have any.

FIRST INTERVIEWER: I asked you to sit down. (POINTS TO AC-1) There.

Figure 6



FIRST APPLICANT: (SITTING) I'm sorry.

FIRST INTERVIEWER: Name please?

FIRST APPLICANT: Jack Smith.

FIRST INTERVIEWER: You haven't told me your middle name.

FIRST APPLICANT: I haven't got one.

FIRST INTERVIEWER: (SUSPICIOUS, BUT WRITING IT DOWN) No middle name.

(THE SECOND APPLICANT ENTERS FROM THE APPLICANTS' DOOR.)

FIRST INTERVIEWER: How do you do?

SECOND APPLICANT: (CROSSING TO AC-4) Thank you, I said, not knowing what. (SITS)

FIRST INTERVIEWER: Won't you sit down?

SECOND APPLICANT: (STANDING) I'm sorry.

FIRST APPLICANT: I am sitting.

FIRST INTERVIEWER: (POINTING TO AC-2) There. Name please?

SECOND APPLICANT: (CROSSING TO AC-2, SITTING) Jane Smith.

FIRST APPLICANT: Jack Smith.

FIRST INTERVIEWER: What blank space Smith?

SECOND APPLICANT: Ellen.

FIRST APPLICANT: Haven't got one.

FIRST INTERVIEWER: What job are you applying for?

FIRST APPLICANT: Housepainter.

SECOND APPLICANT: Floorwasher.

FIRST INTERVIEWER: We haven't many vacancies in that. How much experience have you had?

FIRST APPLICANT: A lot.

SECOND APPLICANT: Who needs experience for floorwashing?

FIRST INTERVIEWER: You will help me by making your answers clear.

FIRST APPLICANT: Eight years.

SECOND APPLICANT: Twenty years.

(THE THIRD APPLICANT ENTERS FROM THE APPLICANTS' DOOR, CROSSES DOWN STAGE OF THE APPLICANTS' CUBES TO IC-4, AND SITS.)

FIRST INTERVIEWER: (AS HE ENTERS) How do you do.

SECOND APPLICANT: I'm good at it.

FIRST APPLICANT: Very well.

THIRD APPLICANT: Thank you, I said, as casually as I could.

FIRST INTERVIEWER: Won't you sit down?

THIRD APPLICANT: (STANDING QUICKLY) I'm sorry.

SECOND APPLICANT: I am sitting.

FIRST APPLICANT: (STANDING) I'm sorry.

FIRST INTERVIEWER: (POINTING TO AC-3) There. Name please?

(THE THIRD APPLICANT CROSSES TO AC-3 AND SITS.)

FIRST APPLICANT: Jack Smith.

SECOND APPLICANT: Jane Smith.

THIRD APPLICANT: Richard Smith.

FIRST INTERVIEWER: What exactly Smith, please?

THIRD APPLICANT: Richard F.

SECOND APPLICANT: Jane Ellen.

FIRST APPLICANT: Jack None.

FIRST INTERVIEWER: What are you applying for?

FIRST APPLICANT: Housepainter.

SECOND APPLICANT: I need money.

THIRD APPLICANT: Bank president.

FIRST INTERVIEWER: How many years have you been in your present job?

THIRD APPLICANT: Three.

SECOND APPLICANT: Twenty.

FIRST APPLICANT: Eight.

(THE FOURTH APPLICANT ENTERS FROM APPLICANTS' DOOR, STANDS, AND THEN CROSSES DOWN CENTRE.)

FIRST INTERVIEWER: How do you do?

FOURTH APPLICANT: I said thank you, not knowing where to sit.

THIRD APPLICANT: I'm fine.

SECOND APPLICANT: Do I have to tell you?

FIRST APPLICANT: Very well.

FIRST INTERVIEWER: Won't you sit down?

FOURTH APPLICANT: (CROSSING TOWARD APPLICANTS' DOOR) I'm sorry. (UNCERTAIN, SHE HOLDS BY APPLICANTS' CUBES.)

THIRD APPLICANT: Thank you.

SECOND APPLICANT: (STANDING) I'm sorry.

FIRST APPLICANT: Thanks.

FIRST INTERVIEWER: (POINTING TO AC-4) There. Name please?

ALL APPLICANTS: (TOGETHER) Smith.

FIRST INTERVIEWER: What Smith?

FOURTH APPLICANT: Mary Victoria.

THIRD APPLICANT: Richard F.

SECOND APPLICANT: Jane Ellen.

FIRST APPLICANT: Jack None.

FIRST INTERVIEWER: How many years experience have you had?

FOURTH APPLICANT: Eight years.



SECOND APPLICANT: Twenty years.

FIRST APPLICANT: Eight years.

THIRD APPLICANT: Three years, four months, and nine days, not counting vacations and sick leave and the time both my daughters and my wife had the whooping cough.

FIRST INTERVIEWER: Just answer the questions please.

FOURTH APPLICANT: Yes, Sir.

THIRD APPLICANT: Sure.

SECOND APPLICANT: I'm sorry.

FIRST APPLICANT: That's what I'm doing.

(THE SECOND INTERVIEWER, A YOUNG MAN, ENTERS FROM THE INTERVIEWERS' DOOR, CROSSES WITH SHARP, AUTOMATED PRECISION TO IC-3 AND SITS.)

SECOND INTERVIEWER: How do you do?

FIRST APPLICANT: (STANDING) I'm sorry.

SECOND APPLICANT: I'm sorry.

THIRD APPLICANT: (STANDING) I'm sorry.

FOURTH APPLICANT: Thank you.

SECOND INTERVIEWER: What's your name?

FIRST INTERVIEWER: Your middle name, please.

FIRST APPLICANT: Smith.

SECOND APPLICANT: Ellen.

THIRD APPLICANT: Smith, Richard F.

FOURTH APPLICANT: Mary Victoria Smith.

FIRST INTERVIEWER: What is your exact age?

SECOND INTERVIEWER: Have you any children?

FIRST APPLICANT: I'm thirty-two years old.

SECOND APPLICANT: One son.

THIRD APPLICANT: I have two daughters.

FOURTH APPLICANT: Do I have to tell you that?

FIRST INTERVIEWER: Are you married, single, or other?

SECOND INTERVIEWER: Have you ever earned more than that?

FIRST APPLICANT: (SITTING) No.

SECOND APPLICANT: (STANDING) Never.

THIRD APPLICANT: Married.

FOURTH APPLICANT: Single, now.

(THE THIRD INTERVIEWER, A WOMAN, ENTERS FROM THE INTERVIEWERS' DOOR, CROSSES, STEPS UP ONTO IC-4, AND SITS ON THE SHOULDERS OF THE SECOND INTERVIEWER.)

THIRD INTERVIEWER: How do you do?

FIRST APPLICANT: (STANDING) Thank you.

SECOND APPLICANT: (SITTING) I'm sorry.

THIRD APPLICANT: (STANDING) Thank you.

FOURTH APPLICANT: I'm sorry.

(THE FOURTH INTERVIEWER, A MAN, ENTERS FROM THE INTERVIEWERS' DOOR, CROSSES, STEPS UP ONTO IC-3, AND SITS ON THE SHOULDERS OF THE FIRST INTERVIEWER.)

FOURTH INTERVIEWER: How do you do?

FIRST APPLICANT: (SITTING) I'm sorry.

SECOND APPLICANT: Thank you.

THIRD APPLICANT: (SITTING) I'm sorry.

FOURTH APPLICANT: Thank you.

ALL INTERVIEWERS: (TOGETHER) What is your social security number please?

(THE APPLICANTS DO THE NEXT FOUR SPEECHES SIMULTANEOUSLY.)

FIRST APPLICANT: 333-6598-55907653439-003.

SECOND APPLICANT: 999-5735-699075452-11.

THIRD APPLICANT: I'm sorry. I left it home. I can call home if you let me use the phone.

FOURTH APPLICANT: I always get it confused with my checking account number.

(THE INTERVIEWERS DO THE NEXT FOUR SPEECHES IN A ROUND.)

FIRST INTERVIEWER: Will you be so kind as to tell me a little about yourself?

SECOND INTERVIEWER: Can you fill me in on something about your background, please?

THIRD INTERVIEWER: It'd be a help to our employers if you'd give me a little for our files.

FOURTH INTERVIEWER: Now what would you say, say, to a prospective employer about yourself?

(THE APPLICANTS ADDRESS PARTS OF THE FOLLOWING FOUR SPEECHES DIRECTLY TO THE AUDIENCE.)

FIRST APPLICANT: (CROSSING DOWN STAGE CENTRE) I've been a union member twenty years, I said to them, if that's the kind of thing you want to know. Good health, I said. Veteran of two wars. Three kids. Wife's dead. Wife's sister, she takes care of them. I don't know why I'm telling you this, I said, smiling. (CROSSES BACK TO AC-1 AND SITS)

SECOND APPLICANT: (CROSSING THREE PRECISE STEPS DOWNSTAGE) So what do you want to know, I told the guy. I've been washing floors for twenty years. Nobody's ever complained. I don't loiter after hours, I said to him. Just because my boy's been in trouble is no reason, I said, no reason--I go right home, I said to him. Right home. (CROSSES UPSTAGE AND SITS ON AC-2)

THIRD APPLICANT: (STANDING AND FACING AUDIENCE) I said that I was a Republican and we could start right there. And then I said that I spend most of my free time watching television or playing in the garden of my four-bedroom house with our lovely daughters, aged nine and eleven. I mentioned that my wife plays with us, too, and that her name is Katherine, although, I said, casually, her good friends call her Kitty. I wasn't at all nervous. (SITS)

FOURTH APPLICANT: (STANDS AND FACES AUDIENCE) Just because I'm here, sir, I told him, is no reason for you to patronize

me. I've been a lady's maid in houses you wouldn't be allowed into. My father was a gentleman of leisure, and, what's more, my references are unimpeachable. (SITS)

FIRST INTERVIEWER: I see.

SECOND INTERVIEWER: All right.

THIRD INTERVIEWER: That's fine.

FOURTH INTERVIEWER: Of course.

(THE APPLICANTS DO THE FOLLOWING FOUR SPEECHES SIMULTANEOUSLY.)

FIRST APPLICANT: Just you call anybody at the Union and ask them. They'll hand me a clean bill of health.

SECOND APPLICANT: I haven't been to jail if that's what you mean. Not me. I'm clean.

(THE INTERVIEWERS DISMOUNT.)

THIRD APPLICANT: My record is impeccable. There's not a stain on it.

FOURTH APPLICANT: My references would permit me to be a governess, that's what.

THIRD INTERVIEWER: (CROSSING TO FIRST APPLICANT TO INSPECT UNDER HIS ARMS) When did you last have a job housepainting?

FOURTH INTERVIEWER: (CROSSING TO SECOND APPLICANT TO INSPECT HER TEETH) Where was the last place you worked?

FIRST INTERVIEWER: (CROSSING TO THIRD APPLICANT TO INSPECT HIS HAIR AS THOUGH LOOKING FOR FLEAS AND DANDRUFF) What was your last position in a bank?

SECOND INTERVIEWER: (CROSSING TO FOURTH APPLICANT TO INSPECT HER EARS AND HAIR) Have you got your references with you?

(THE APPLICANTS DO THE FOLLOWING FOUR SPEECHES SIMULTANEOUSLY.)

FIRST APPLICANT: I've already told you I worked right along 'til I quit.

SECOND APPLICANT: Howard Johnson's on Fifty-First Street all last month.

THIRD APPLICANT: First Greenfield International and Franklin Banking Corporation Banking and Stone Incorporated.

FOURTH APPLICANT: I've got a letter right here in my bag. Mrs. Muggintwat only let me go because she died.

FIRST INTERVIEWER: (STEPPING AROUND AND SPEAKING TO SECOND APPLICANT) Nothing terminated your job at Howard Johnson's? No franks, say, missing at the end of the day, I suppose?

SECOND INTERVIEWER: (CROSSING TO THIRD APPLICANT) It goes without saying, I suppose, that you could stand an FBI security test?

THIRD INTERVIEWER: (CROSSING TO FOURTH APPLICANT) I suppose there are no records of minor theft, or shall we say, borrowings from your late employer?

FOURTH INTERVIEWER: (CROSSING TO FIRST APPLICANT) Nothing political in your Union dealings? Nothing leftist, I suppose? Nothing rightist either, I hope.

(AS EACH INTERVIEWER FINISHES HIS SPEECH, EACH ONE CROSSES UP CENTRE TO FORM A LINE.)

(FOLLOWING THE LAST INTERVIEWER'S SPEECH, EACH APPLICANT CROSSES UP CENTRE AND STANDS FACING ONE OF THE INTERVIEWERS. SEE FIGURE 7.)

FIRST APPLICANT: (BOWING TO FIRST INTERVIEWER) What's it to you, buddy?

SECOND APPLICANT: (BOWING TO SECOND INTERVIEWER) Eleanor Roosevelt wasn't more honest.

THIRD APPLICANT: (BOWING TO THIRD INTERVIEWER) My record is lily-white, sir.

FOURTH APPLICANT: (BOWING TO FOURTH INTERVIEWER) Mrs. Thumbletwat used to take me to the bank and I'd watch her open her box.

(STILL IN A LINE, THE FOUR INTERVIEWERS CROSS DOWN RIGHT TO FORM A LINE ON A DIAGONAL FROM DOWN RIGHT TO RIGHT CENTRE.)

FIRST INTERVIEWER: Good!

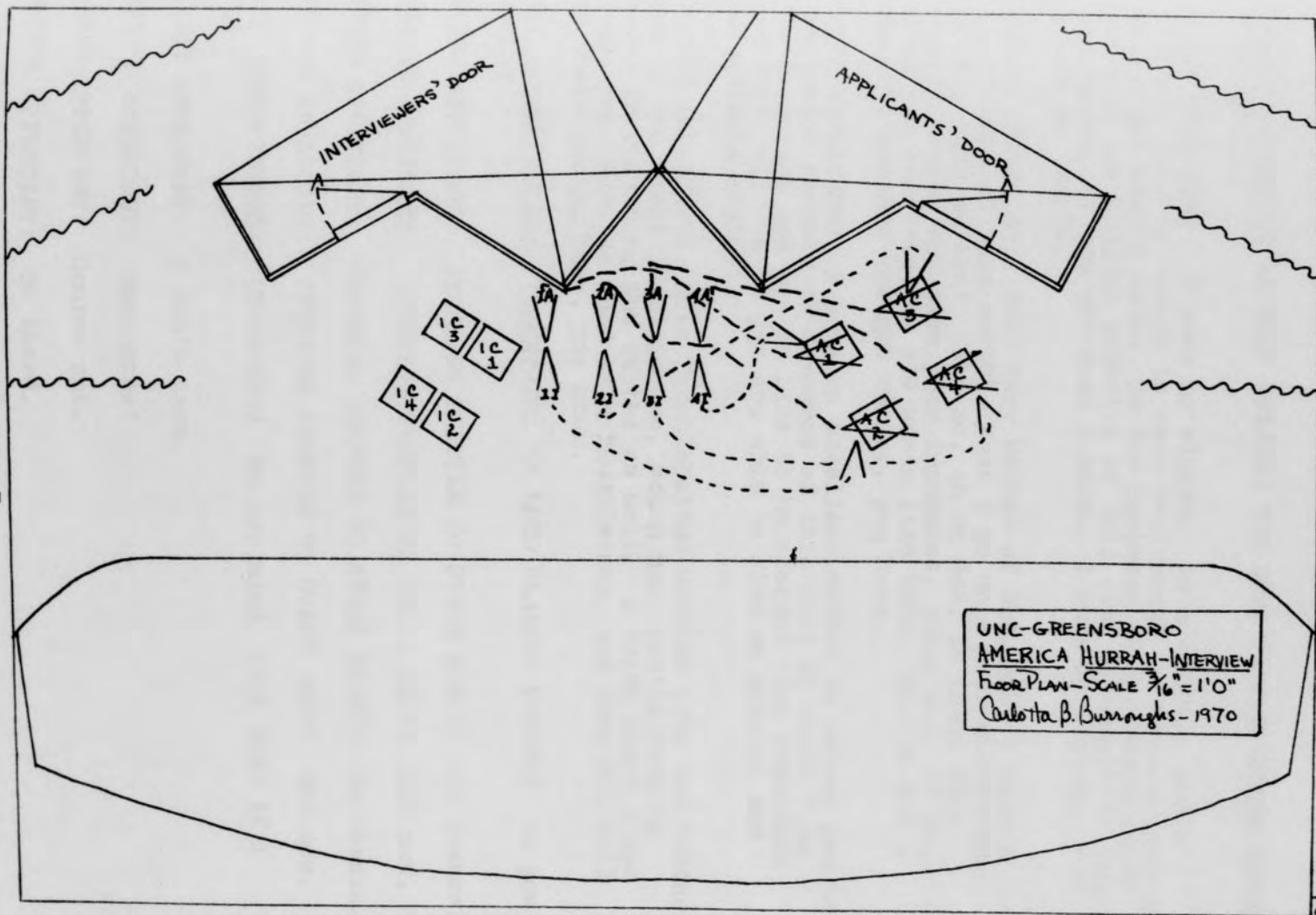
SECOND INTERVIEWER: Fine!

THIRD INTERVIEWER: Swell!

FOURTH INTERVIEWER: Fine!

(THE FOUR APPLICANTS TURN TO FACE THE AUDIENCE AND BEGIN A

Figure 7



CHORUS KICK-LINE AS THEY DELIVER THE NEXT FOUR SPEECHES SIMULTANEOUSLY.)

FIRST APPLICANT: I know my rights. As a veteran, and a citizen. And my cousin is very well-known in certain circles, if you get what I mean. In the backroom of a certain candy store in the Italian district of this city my cousin is very well known, if you get what I mean. I know my rights. And I know my cousin.

SECOND APPLICANT: Holy Mary Mother of God, must I endure all the sinners of this earth? Must I go on a poor washerwoman in this city of sin? Help me, oh my God, to leave this earthly crust, and damn your impudence, young man, if you think you can treat an old woman like this. You've got a thought, another thought coming, you have.

THIRD APPLICANT: I have an excellent notion to report you to the Junior Chamber of Commerce of this City of which I am the Secretary and was in line to be elected Vice President and still will be if you are able to find me gainful and respectable employ!

FOURTH APPLICANT: Miss Thumblebottom married into the Twiths, and if you start insulting me, young man, you'll have to start in insulting the Twiths as well. A Twith isn't a nobody, you know, as good as a Thumbletbat, and they all call me their loving Mary, you know.

ALL INTERVIEWERS: (TOGETHER, IN LOUD BLARING VOICES) Do you smoke?

FIRST APPLICANT: (TURNING PROFILE TO STAGE RIGHT) No thanks.

SECOND APPLICANT: (TURNING PROFILE TO STAGE LEFT) Not now.

THIRD APPLICANT: (TURNING PROFILE TO STAGE RIGHT) No thanks.

FOURTH APPLICANT: (TURNING PROFILE TO STAGE LEFT) Not now.

ALL INTERVIEWERS: (TOGETHER) Do you mind (ALL BOW) if I do?

FIRST APPLICANT: I don't care.

SECOND APPLICANT: Who cares?

THIRD APPLICANT: Course not.

FOURTH APPLICANT: Go ahead.

(THE INTERVIEWERS CROSS TO THE APPLICANTS' CUBES ON STAGE LEFT AND SIT FACING EACH OTHER. AS THEY SMOKE, THEIR GESTURES ARE MECHANICAL AS IF THEIR SMOKING IS NOTHING MORE THAN AN INGRAINED REFLEX.)

FIRST INTERVIEWER: I tried to quit but couldn't manage.

SECOND INTERVIEWER: I'm a three pack-a-day man, I guess.

THIRD INTERVIEWER: If I'm gonna go, I'd rather go smoking.

FOURTH INTERVIEWER: I'm down to five a day.

(THE FOUR APPLICANTS SNEEZE LOUDLY.)

FIRST APPLICANT: Excuse me, I'm gonna sneeze.

SECOND APPLICANT: Have you got a hanky?

THIRD APPLICANT: I have a cold coming on.

FOURTH APPLICANT: I thought I had some tissues in my pocket book.

(ALL APPLICANTS SNEEZE AGAIN, EVEN MORE LOUDLY THAN BEFORE.)

FIRST INTERVIEWER: Gesundheit.

SECOND INTERVIEWER: God bless you.

THIRD INTERVIEWER: Gesundheit.

FOURTH INTERVIEWER: God bless you.

(APPLICANTS SNEEZE AGAIN. THIS TIME IT IS A TINY LITTLE SNEEZE.)

(THE APPLICANTS RETURN TO THEIR CUBES AND SIT FACING UPSTAGE.)

(THE INTERVIEWERS CROSS STAGE RIGHT CENTRE TO THEIR CUBES. THE SECOND INTERVIEWER SITS ON IC-3 FACING AUDIENCE. THE FOURTH INTERVIEWER CLIMBS ON TOP OF IC-3 AND SITS ON THE SECOND INTERVIEWER'S SHOULDERS. INTERVIEWER ONE CLIMBS ON IC-3 AND STANDS THERE WITH HER ARMS RESTING ON THE FOURTH INTERVIEWER'S SHOULDERS. THE THIRD INTERVIEWER SITS ON THE STAGE FLOOR BELOW THE SECOND INTERVIEWER. THE EFFECT IS THAT OF A HUGE, IMMUTABLE, UNREACHABLE TOTEM. SEE FIGURE 8.)

(THE INTERVIEWERS SAY THE FOLLOWING LINES AS IF ONE PERSON WERE SPEAKING.)





Figure 8

FIRST INTERVIEWER: Do you  
SECOND INTERVIEWER: speak any  
THIRD INTERVIEWER: foreign languages?

FOURTH INTERVIEWER: Have you

FIRST INTERVIEWER: got a

SECOND INTERVIEWER: college

THIRD INTERVIEWER: education?

FOURTH INTERVIEWER: Do you

FIRST INTERVIEWER: take

SECOND INTERVIEWER: shorthand?

THIRD INTERVIEWER: Have you

FOURTH INTERVIEWER: any

FIRST INTERVIEWER: special

SECOND INTERVIEWER: qualifications?

FIRST INTERVIEWER: Yes?

FIRST APPLICANT: (CROSSING DOWN CENTRE AND FACING AUDIENCE)  
Sure, I can speak Italian, I said. My whole family is Italian so I oughta be able to, and I can match colors, like green to green, so that even your own mother couldn't tell the difference, begging your pardon, I said, I went through the eighth grade. (HE GENUFLECTS TO THE TOTEM AND CROSSES DOWN LEFT CENTRE.)

SECOND INTERVIEWER: Next.

SECOND APPLICANT: (CROSSING TO THE INTERVIEWERS) My grandmother taught me some Gaelic, I told the guy. And my old man could rattle off in Yiddish when he had a load on. I never went to school except for church school, but I can write my name good and clear. Also, I said, I can spot an Irishman or a Yid a hundred miles away. (SHE GENUFLECTS TO THE TOTEM AND CROSSES DOWN LEFT CENTRE, LEFT OF FIRST APPLICANT.)

THIRD INTERVIEWER: Next.

THIRD APPLICANT: (CROSSING DOWN CENTRE AND FACING AUDIENCE)

I've never had any need to take shorthand in my position, I said to him. I've a Z.A. in business administration from Philadelphia and a Z.Z.A. from M.Y.U. night school. I mentioned that I speak a little Spanish, of course, and that I'm a whiz at model frigates and warships. (HE GENUFLECTS TO THE TOTEM AND CROSSES DOWN LEFT CENTRE, LEFT OF THE SECOND APPLICANT.)

FOURTH INTERVIEWER: Next.

FOURTH APPLICANT: (CROSSING DOWN CENTRE AND FACING AUDIENCE) I can sew a straight seam, I said, hand or machine, and I have been exclusively a lady's maid although I can cook and will too if I have someone to assist me I said. Unfortunately aside from self-education grammar school is as far as I have progressed. (SHE GENUFLECTS TO THE TOTEM AND CROSSES DOWN LEFT CENTRE, LEFT OF THE THIRD APPLICANT.)

(THE INTERVIEWERS DISMOUNT AND CROSS DOWN LEFT CENTRE, EACH STOPPING IN FRONT OF AN APPLICANT. THEY SPEAK THE FOLLOWING LINES AND TURN TO FACE AUDIENCE AS EACH ONE FINISHES.)

FIRST INTERVIEWER: Good.

THIRD INTERVIEWER: Fine.

SECOND INTERVIEWER: Very helpful.

FOURTH INTERVIEWER: Thank you.

(EACH APPLICANT, DURING HIS NEXT SPEECH, JUMPS ON THE BACK OF THE INTERVIEWER DIRECTLY IN FRONT.)

FOURTH APPLICANT: You're welcome, I'm sure.

THIRD APPLICANT: Anything you want to know.

SECOND APPLICANT: Just ask me.

FIRST APPLICANT: Fire away, fire away.

(THE FOLLOWING SPEECHES ARE SPOKEN AS THE INTERVIEWERS MILL ABOUT THE STAGE WITH THE APPLICANTS ON THEIR BACKS.)

FIRST INTERVIEWER: Well unless there's anything special you want to tell me, I think--

SECOND INTERVIEWER: Is there anything more you think I should know about before you--

THIRD INTERVIEWER: I wonder if we've left anything out of

this questionnaire or if you--

FOURTH INTERVIEWER: I suppose I've got all the information down here unless you can--

(THE INTERVIEWERS BEGIN TO REFORM A LINE DOWN LEFT.)

FIRST APPLICANT: I've got kids to support, you know, and I need a job real quick--

SECOND APPLICANT: Do you think you could try and get me something today because I--

THIRD APPLICANT: I don't like to sound pressureful, but you know I'm currently on unemployment--

FOURTH APPLICANT: How soon do you suppose I can hear from your agency? Do you--

(THE INTERVIEWERS HAVE REFORMED THE LINE DOWN LEFT. DURING THE NEXT FOUR LINES, EACH APPLICANT JUMPS OFF HIS INTERVIEWER'S BACK.)

FIRST APPLICANT: Beggin' your pardon.

SECOND APPLICANT: So sorry.

THIRD APPLICANT: Excuse me.

FOURTH APPLICANT: Go ahead.

(DURING THE NEXT SPEECHES, EACH INTERVIEWER ON HIS LINE TURNS PROFILE STAGE LEFT, KNEELS, AND STAYS THAT WAY.)

FIRST INTERVIEWER: That's quite all right.

SECOND INTERVIEWER: I'm sorry.

THIRD INTERVIEWER: I'm sorry.

FOURTH INTERVIEWER: My fault.

(EACH APPLICANT, DURING HIS NEXT SPEECH, BEGINS LEAP-FROGGING OVER THE INTERVIEWERS' BACKS.)

FIRST APPLICANT: My fault.

SECOND APPLICANT: My fault.

THIRD APPLICANT: I'm sorry.

FOURTH APPLICANT: My fault.

(EACH INTERVIEWER, DURING HIS NEXT SPEECH, BEGINS LEAP-FROGGING, TOO, OVER THE APPLICANTS' KNEELING FORMS. THE INTERVIEWERS AND APPLICANTS CONTINUE THE LEAP-FROGGING UNTIL THEY REACH UP RIGHT. THEY LEAP FROG FROM DOWN LEFT, TO UP LEFT, TO UP CENTRE, AND THEN TO UP RIGHT. SEE FIGURE 9.)

FIRST INTERVIEWER: That's all right.

SECOND INTERVIEWER: My fault.

THIRD INTERVIEWER: I'm sorry.

FOURTH INTERVIEWER: Excuse me.

FIRST APPLICANT: My fault.

SECOND APPLICANT: My fault.

THIRD APPLICANT: I'm sorry.

FOURTH APPLICANT: My fault.

FIRST INTERVIEWER: That's all right.

SECOND INTERVIEWER: My fault.

THIRD INTERVIEWER: I'm sorry.

FOURTH INTERVIEWER: Excuse me.

(THE FOUR INTERVIEWERS STAND AND WALK IN A LINE DOWN RIGHT TO FORM A DIAGONAL LINE FROM DOWN RIGHT TO RIGHT CENTRE.)

FIRST INTERVIEWER: Do you enjoy your work?

FIRST APPLICANT: (STANDING AND FACING INTERVIEWERS) Sure, I said, I'm proud. I know I'm no Rembrandt, I said, but I'm proud of my work, I said to him.

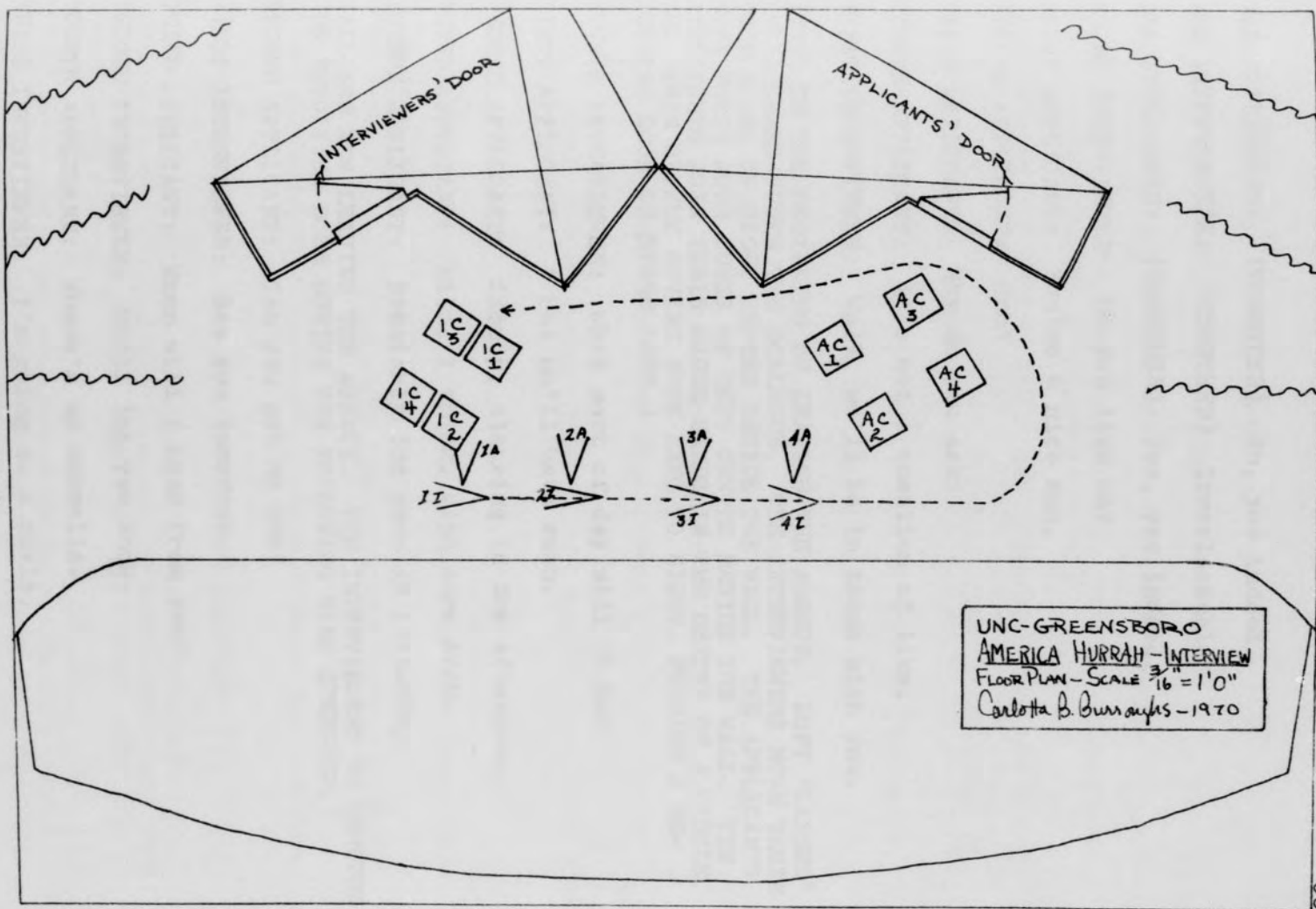
SECOND APPLICANT: (STANDING AND FACING INTERVIEWERS) I told him it stinks. But what am I supposed to do, sit home and rot?

THIRD APPLICANT: (STANDING AND FACING INTERVIEWERS) Do I like my work, he asked me? Well, I said to gain time, do I like my work? Well, I said, I don't know.

FOURTH APPLICANT: (STANDING AND FACING INTERVIEWERS) I told him right straight out: for a sensible person, a lady's maid is the only possible way of life.

SECOND INTERVIEWER: Do you think you're irreplaceable?

Figure 9



ALL APPLICANTS: (TOGETHER) Oh, yes indeed.

ALL INTERVIEWERS: (TOGETHER) Irreplaceable?

ALL APPLICANTS: (TOGETHER) Yes, yes indeed.

THIRD INTERVIEWER: Do you like me?

FIRST APPLICANT: You're a nice man.

SECOND APPLICANT: Huh?

THIRD APPLICANT: Why do you ask?

FOURTH APPLICANT: It's not a question of like.

FIRST INTERVIEWER: Well, we'll be in touch with you.

(THIS IS THE BEGINNING OF LEAVING THE AGENCY. SOFT "CANNED" MUSIC COMES UNDER THE DIALOGUE. THE INTERVIEWERS MOVE THEIR FOUR CUBES UP RIGHT CENTRE BESIDE THE WALL. THE APPLICANTS MOVE THEIR FOUR CUBES UP LEFT CENTRE BESIDE THE WALL. THE APPLICANTS JOIN THEIR RIGHT HANDS IN THE CENTRE OF A CIRCLE AND BEGIN SLOWLY MOVING FROM LEFT TO RIGHT, FORMING A REVOLVING DOOR ON STAGE LEFT.)

FOURTH INTERVIEWER: What sort of day will it be?

FIRST APPLICANT: I bet we'll have rain.

SECOND APPLICANT: Cloudy, clearing in the afternoon.

THIRD APPLICANT: Mild, I think, with some snow.

FOURTH APPLICANT: Precisely the same as yesterday.

(ALL ARE NOW LEAVING THE AGENCY. THE INTERVIEWERS GO THROUGH THE REVOLVING DOOR DURING THE FOLLOWING NINE SPEECHES.)

SECOND APPLICANT: Can you get me one?

FIRST INTERVIEWER: See you tomorrow.

THIRD APPLICANT: When will I hear from you?

SECOND INTERVIEWER: We'll let you know.

FOURTH APPLICANT: Where's my umbrella.

THIRD INTERVIEWER: I'm going to a movie.

FIRST APPLICANT: So how about it?

FOURTH INTERVIEWER: Good night.

THIRD APPLICANT: Can you help me, Doctor, I asked.

(THE INTERVIEWERS AND APPLICANTS PEEL OFF THE REVOLVING DOOR AND EXIT THROUGH THE APPLICANTS' DOOR.)

(WHEN ALL OF THE INTERVIEWERS AND APPLICANTS ARE OFF STAGE, THE FOURTH INTERVIEWER MAKES A SIREN SOUND AND THE FOLLOWING LINES ARE DELIVERED AS A LOUD CROWD NOISE; THEY OVERLAP SO THAT THE STAGE IS EMPTY ONLY BRIEFLY.)

FIRST INTERVIEWER: It'll take a lot of work on your part.

SECOND INTERVIEWER: I'll do what I can for you.

THIRD INTERVIEWER: Of course I'll do my best.

FIRST INTERVIEWER: God helps those who help themselves.

FIRST APPLICANT: I have sinned deeply, Father, I said.

FIRST INTERVIEWER: You certainly have. I hope you truly repent.

SECOND INTERVIEWER: In the name of the Father, etcetera, and the Holy Ghost.

THIRD INTERVIEWER: Jesus saves.

FOURTH APPLICANT: I said, can you direct me to Fourteenth Street, please?

FIRST INTERVIEWER: Just walk down that way a bit and then turn left.

SECOND INTERVIEWER: Just walk down that way a bit and turn right.

THIRD INTERVIEWER: Take a cab! Do you like me?

(THE FOURTH INTERVIEWER, CONTINUING TO MAKE THE SIREN SOUND, ENTERS FROM THE APPLICANTS' DOOR AND CROSSES DOWN STAGE RIGHT. THE FOURTH APPLICANT ENTERS FROM THE APPLICANTS' DOOR AND CROSSES DOWN CENTRE.)

FOURTH APPLICANT: Can you direct me to Fourteenth Street, I said. I seem to have lost my--I started to say, and then I was nearly run down.



(THE REMAINING INTERVIEWERS AND APPLICANTS ENTER FROM THE APPLICANTS' DOOR AND CROSS UP CENTRE. THEY WILL PLAY VARIOUS PEOPLE ON A STREET: LADIES SHOPPING, TWO LOVERS, A DRUNK, A LECHER, A BLIND MAN, A BLIND GIRL, BUSINESSMEN, A POLICEMAN. THEY CROSS FROM UP CENTRE TO DOWN CENTRE, AND EACH TIME THEY GO BACK UPSTAGE, THEY WILL ASSUME ANOTHER CHARACTER. THE FOURTH APPLICANT WILL CROSS ON A HORIZONTAL CIRCUIT FROM LEFT TO RIGHT AND BACK, WEAVING THROUGH THE CROWD.)

FOURTH APPLICANT: I haven't got my social security, I started to say, I saw someone right in front of me and I said, could you please direct me to Fourteenth Street, please, to get a bargain, I explained, although I could hardly remember what it was I wanted to buy. I read about it in the paper today, I said, only they weren't listening and I said to myself, my purpose for today is to get to--and I couldn't remember . . .

(THE PEOPLE ON THE STREET MAKE NO ATTEMPT TO AVOID CONTACT WITH ONE ANOTHER. WHEN THEY DO BUMP AGAINST SOMEONE, THEY IMMEDIATELY SPIN OFF THAT PERSON AS MUCH AS THE IMPETUS OF CONTACT REQUIRES, SO THE EFFECT IS THAT OF A HUMAN BILLIARD GAME.)

FOURTH APPLICANT: I've set myself the task of--I've got to have--it's that I can save, I remembered where it was so I started to look for my wallet which I seem to have mislaid in my purse, and a man--please watch where you're going, I shouted with my purse half open, and I seemed to forget--Fourteenth Street, I remembered, and you'd think with all these numbered streets and avenues a person wouldn't get lost, you'd think a person--you'd think a person would help a person you'd think so. So I asked the most respectable man I could find, I asked him, could you direct me to Fourteenth Street, please. He wouldn't answer, just wouldn't. I'm lost, I said to myself. The paper said--the television said--they said, I couldn't remember what they had said. I turned for help: "Jesus Saves," the sign said.

(THE PEOPLE ON THE STREET BEGIN TO JOSTLE AND SHOVE EACH OTHER, BECOMING MORE VIOLENT UNTIL THE END OF THE SPEECH.)

FOURTH APPLICANT: I couldn't remember where I was going. "Come and be saved," it said.

(THE CROWD HAS ENVELOPED THE FOURTH APPLICANT IN THE MELEE, AND SHE IS TRAPPED BY THE SHOVING MOB UNTIL SHE IS DROWNED.)

FOURTH APPLICANT: So I said to the man with the sign, please sir, won't you tell me how to, dear lord, I thought, anywhere, please sir, won't you tell me how to--can you direct me to Fourteenth Street, please!

(THE SEQUENCE MELTS, AND THE GIRLS MARCH TO DOWN RIGHT TO FORM A STRAIGHT LINE. THE BOYS MARCH DOWN LEFT TO FORM ANOTHER STRAIGHT LINE. ALL FACE THE AUDIENCE AS STUDENTS IN A GYM CLASS. THE SECOND INTERVIEWER, WHO HAS STAYED COOLLY OUT OF THE CROWD DURING THE LAST SEQUENCE, STEPS FORWARD FROM HIS POSITION DOWN LEFT. HE IS NOW THE GYM INSTRUCTOR. MARTIAL MUSIC BEGINS AS HE MOVES.)

GYM INSTRUCTOR: I took my last drag and strode manfully into the room. Okay, men, I said brightly, let's see the basic step. And, breathe it in and two and three and four. And, breathe it in and stick it out and three and four. Keep it nice. You want to radiate don't you? You want to radiate that charm and confidence they have in the movies, don't you, I told them.

(THE GYM INSTRUCTOR CROSSES TO CENTRE STAGE AND TO THE GIRLS ON STAGE RIGHT. EACH GROUP TAKES AN EXAGGERATED EXERCISE POSITION AND EXAGGERATES THE MOVEMENTS. THE FACES OF BOTH GO DEAD-PAN AND EMPTY NOW.)

GYM INSTRUCTOR: Now Ladies. And breathe it in and stick 'em out and step right out and four.

(THE GIRLS STEP FORWARD ONE PACE.)

GYM INSTRUCTOR: And, breathe it in and stick 'em out. Stick them out!

(THE GIRLS STEP FORWARD ONE MORE PACE AND THRUST OUT THEIR CHESTS.)

GYM INSTRUCTOR: That's what you've got them for, isn't it? I told them. (CROSSING TO SECOND APPLICANT, WHO NODS WEAKLY) And keep it nice, all of you. (INCLUDING THE BOYS WITH AN ARM GESTURE AND TURN OF HIS HEAD) You're selling all the time. That's right, isn't it, Miss? (STEPPING AGAIN TO SECOND APPLICANT, WHO AGAIN NODS) Right, I said. And stick it out and step right out and smile, I shouted.

(THE BOYS AND GIRLS SMILE HUGELY.)

GYM INSTRUCTOR: And breathe it in and step right out and smile. (CROSSING TO BOYS STAGE LEFT) Keep it nice. Keep it nice for the other fellow and you'll see how nice it can be for you. Smile!

(THE BOYS AND GIRLS SMILE EVEN MORE WIDELY, CREATING A GROTESQUE IMAGE.)

GYM INSTRUCTOR: Only don't smile so big, I told them. You

look like a bunch of creeps when you smile that big.

(THE SMILES DROOP.)

GYM INSTRUCTOR: Smile like you're holding something back.

(THE GYM INSTRUCTOR CROSSES RIGHT CENTRE, AND THE STUDENTS ASSUME A GROTESQUE LEER.)

GYM INSTRUCTOR: Something big, a secret, I said. That's the ticket. Now let's see it. And, breathe it in and stick it out.

(ALL STUDENTS TAKE A STEP FORWARD.)

GYM INSTRUCTOR: Step on out and nod.

(ALL STUDENTS TAKE A STEP AND NOD.)

GYM INSTRUCTOR: Step right on out and shake.

(ALL STUDENTS TAKE ANOTHER STEP AND SHAKE.)

GYM INSTRUCTOR: Faster, I told them to see how fast they would go.

(MARTIAL MUSIC INCREASES FROM  $33\frac{1}{3}$  TO 45 RPM.)

GYM INSTRUCTOR: And breathe it in and stick it out.

(ALL STUDENTS TAKE A STEP FORWARD.)

GYM INSTRUCTOR: Step right out and smile.

(ALL STUDENTS ASSUME A SMILE.)

GYM INSTRUCTOR: And breathe it in and stick it out, and step right out and smile . . .

(ALL STUDENTS TAKE ONE STEP FORWARD.)

GYM INSTRUCTOR: . . . and breathe it in and stick it out, and step right out and smile . . .

(ALL STUDENTS TAKE ONE STEP FORWARD.)

GYM INSTRUCTOR: . . . and breathe it in and stick it out and . . . S M I L E!

(ALL STUDENTS SHUDDER AND MELT INTO THE SUBWAY SEQUENCE. THEY CROSS UP CENTRE AND FORM TWO PARALLEL LINES FROM UP CENTRE TO LEFT CENTRE. THEY ARE RIDERS ON A SUBWAY, AND

THEIR MOVEMENTS TAKE ON THE MOTION OF A SUBWAY. THEIR FACES ARE INDIFFERENT. THE SECOND APPLICANT IS NOW AN OLD WOMAN. SHE MAKES HER WAY THROUGH THE LINES OF PEOPLE AND SITS ON THE BACK OF THE THIRD APPLICANT, WHO HAS SHUFFLED UPSTAGE AND KNEELED WITH HIS HANDS ON THE FLOOR TO FORM A SEAT.)

SECOND APPLICANT: God forgive me, you no-good chump, I said to him. I used to love you . . . not now. Not now . . . God forgive me . . . God forgive me for being old. Not now, I said, I wouldn't wipe the smell off your uncle's bottom, not for turnips, no. God forgive me. . . . remember how we used to ride the roller coaster at Coney Island, you and me? Remember? Holding hands in the cold and I'd get so scared and you'd get so scared and we'd hug each other and buy another ticket . . . remember . . . ? Look now, I said. Look at me now! God forgive you for leaving me with nothing . . . God forgive you for being dead . . . God forgive me for being alive . . .

(THE SUBWAY COMES TO AN ABRUPT HALT. THE FIRST INTERVIEWER SWINGS OFF, CROSSES LEFT AND SITS ON THE CUBES FACING AUDIENCE. SHE IS NOW THE TELEPHONE OPERATOR. THE OTHERS ALL FORM A TELEPHONE CIRCUIT FROM LEFT CENTRE TO UP RIGHT CENTRE, WITH SOME OF THEM UP ON THE CUBES. SEE FIGURE 10.)

(THE TELEPHONE OPERATOR ALTERNATES HER OFFICIAL VOICE WITH HER ORDINARY VOICE WHEN SPEAKING WITH HER FRIEND ROBERTA, ANOTHER OPERATOR WHOM SHE REACHES BY FLIPPING A SWITCH. EACH TIME SHE SPEAKS TO A DIFFERENT CUSTOMER OR TO ROBERTA, THE TELEPHONE CIRCUITRY CHANGES POSITIONS.)

TELEPHONE OPERATOR: Just one moment and I will connect you with information . . . just one moment and I will connect you with information.

(TELEPHONE OPERATOR FLIPS SWITCH AND CIRCUITRY CHANGES.)

TELEPHONE OPERATOR: Ow! Listen, Roberta, I said, I've got this terrible cramp.

(TELEPHONE OPERATOR FLIPS SWITCH AND CIRCUITRY CHANGES.)

TELEPHONE OPERATOR: Hang up and dial again, please, we find nothing wrong with that number.

(TELEPHONE OPERATOR FLIPS SWITCH AND CIRCUITRY CHANGES.)

TELEPHONE OPERATOR: You know what I ate, I said to her, Wednesday special, baked macaroni, maplenut fudge, I said.

(TELEPHONE OPERATOR FLIPS SWITCH AND CIRCUITRY CHANGES.)



Figure 10

TELEPHONE OPERATOR: I'm sorry but the number you have reached is not--

(TELEPHONE OPERATOR FLIPS SWITCH AND CIRCUITRY CHANGES.)

TELEPHONE OPERATOR: I can feel it gnawing at the bottom of my belly, I told her. Do you think it's serious, Roberta? Appendicitis, I asked.

(TELEPHONE OPERATOR FLIPS SWITCH AND CIRCUITRY CHANGES.)

TELEPHONE OPERATOR: Thank you for giving us the area code but the number you have reached is not in this area.

(TELEPHONE OPERATOR FLIPS SWITCH AND CIRCUITRY CHANGES.)

TELEPHONE OPERATOR: Roberta, I asked her, do you think I have cancer?

(TELEPHONE OPERATOR FLIPS SWITCH AND CIRCUITRY CHANGES.)

TELEPHONE OPERATOR: I'm sorry, the number you have reached--ow!

(TELEPHONE OPERATOR FLIPS SWITCH AND CIRCUITRY CHANGES.)

TELEPHONE OPERATOR: Well, if it's lunch, you know what they can do with it tomorrow. Ow!

(TELEPHONE OPERATOR FLIPS SWITCH AND CIRCUITRY CHANGES.)

TELEPHONE OPERATOR: One moment, please, I said.

(TELEPHONE OPERATOR FLIPS SWITCH AND CIRCUITRY CHANGES.)

TELEPHONE OPERATOR: Ow, I said, Roberta, I said, it really hurts.

(THE TELEPHONE OPERATOR FALLS OFF HER CUBE IN PAIN. THE ENSEMBLE MELTS TO FORM AN OPERATING ROOM. THE CUBES ON STAGE RIGHT ARE STACKED TO FORM AN OPERATING ROOM TABLE. THREE ACTORS BRING THE TELEPHONE OPERATOR TO UP STAGE RIGHT AND PLACE HER ON THE OPERATING TABLE. THE FOURTH INTERVIEWER MAKES A SIREN SOUND AS THE TELEPHONE OPERATOR IS BEING BROUGHT TO AND PLACED ON THE OPERATING TABLE. THE OTHER ACTORS MAKE STYLIZED SOUNDS AND MOVEMENTS AS SURGEONS AND NURSES IN THE MIDST OF AN OPERATION. TWO ACTORS FORM THE BREATHING APPARATUS. AFTER THE TELEPHONE OPERATOR IS ON THE OPERATING TABLE, ALL ACTORS FORM HER BREATHING PATTERN WHICH ACCELERATES, THEN SUDDENLY STOPS. AFTER A MOMENT THE ACTORS BEGIN TO SPREAD OVER THE STAGE FOR THE COCKTAIL PARTY AFTER

THE CUBES ARE PLACED INTO THEIR FORMER POSITION. THE SECOND APPLICANT AND FOURTH INTERVIEWER CROSS TO CENTRE STAGE AND FACE EACH OTHER. THE FIRST INTERVIEWER CROSSES TO UP STAGE LEFT AND SITS ON THE CUBES, FACING FRONT. THE FIRST APPLICANT CROSSES UP RIGHT AND SITS ON THE CUBES, ALSO FACING FRONT. THE THIRD APPLICANT CROSSES DOWN RIGHT AND FACES RIGHT. THE SECOND INTERVIEWER CROSSES DOWN LEFT AND FACES CENTRE. THE FOURTH APPLICANT CROSSES DOWN LEFT CENTRE AND FACES IN. THE FOCUS IS NON-DIRECTIONAL. MOVEMENT OF DRINKING AND SMOKING IS STYLIZED AND SYNCHRONIZED. THE EFFECT GIVEN IS UTTER INDIFFERENCE. THE PEOPLE COMPLETELY IGNORE THE THIRD INTERVIEWER WHO IS A GIRL AT A PARTY. SHE GOES FROM PERSON TO PERSON AS IF SHE WERE IN A GARDEN OF LIVING STATUES.)

GIRL AT THE PARTY: And then after the ambulance left I went up in the elevator and into the party. (CROSSING TO SECOND APPLICANT AND FOURTH INTERVIEWER AT CENTRE) Did you see the accident, I asked, and they said they did, and what did he look like, and I said he wore a brown coat and had straight brown hair. (CROSSING TO THIRD APPLICANT) He stepped off the curb right in front of me. We had been walking up the same block, he a few feet ahead of me, this block right here, I said, but he wasn't listening. (CROSSING TO FIRST APPLICANT) Hi, my name is Jill, I said to someone sitting down and they looked at me and smiled so I said his arm was torn out of its socket and his face was on the pavement gasping but I didn't touch him (CROSSING BACK TO THIRD APPLICANT) you aren't supposed to touch someone before--I wanted to help, I said, but he wasn't listening. When a man came up and said, was it someone you knew and I said, yes, it was someone I knew slightly, someone I knew, yes, and he offered me a drink and I said no thanks, I didn't want one, (CROSSING TO SECOND APPLICANT AND FOURTH INTERVIEWER) and he said how well did you know him, and I said I knew him well, yes, I knew him very well. You were coming to the party together, he said, yes, I said, excuse me. (CROSSING TO FIRST INTERVIEWER) Hi, my name's Jill, did you hear a siren, and they said, oh, you're the one who saw it, was he killed?

(THE GIRL AT THE PARTY HAS BEEN SPEAKING RAPIDLY, EXCITED, BUT SHE BEGINS TO BE RESIGNED TO THE FACT THAT NO ONE IS LISTENING. HER SPEECH SLOWS DOWN.)

GIRL AT THE PARTY: And I said, yes, I was, excuse me, and went back across the room but couldn't (CROSSING TO SECOND INTERVIEWER) but I couldn't find another face to talk to until I deliberately bumped into somebody because I had to tell them one of us couldn't come because of the accident. (BUMPING INTO THE SECOND INTERVIEWER) It was Jill. (LOOKING DIRECTLY AT THE SECOND INTERVIEWER, WHO IS OBLIVIOUS TO HER PRESENCE) Jill couldn't come. (BEGINNING TO CROSS DOWN LEFT

CENTRE, BUT TURNING BACK TO HIM AS IF TRYING ONCE MORE) I'm awfully sorry I said, because of the accident. (CROSSING TO THE FOURTH APPLICANT) She had straight brown hair, I said, and was wearing a brown coat, and two or three people looked at me strangely and moved off. (CROSSING TO THE FOURTH INTERVIEWER) I'm sorry, I said to a man, and laughed and moved off. (CROSSING TO AND PUSHING OVER THE FIRST INTERVIEWER, WHO RIGHTS HERSELF AS IF UNAFFECTED) I'm dead, I said to several people and started to push them over.

(THE GIRL AT THE PARTY CROSSES TO CENTRE AND SHOVES THE SECOND APPLICANT AND FOURTH INTERVIEWER, WHO MOVE AND ASSUME THE SAME POSITIONS. THE GIRL CROSSES TO THE FIRST APPLICANT AND SHOVES HIM. HE RIGHTS HIMSELF AND NEVER LOOKS AT HER.)

GIRL AT THE PARTY: (CROSSING SLOWLY BACK TO CENTRE) I'm dead, thank you, I said, thank you, please, I'm dead.

(THE FOURTH INTERVIEWER AND FIRST INTERVIEWER TAKE HER ARMS AND LAY HER DOWN ON THE FLOOR DURING THE FOLLOWING LINES.)

GIRL AT THE PARTY: until two of them got hold of my arms and hustled me out. I'm sorry, I said, I couldn't come because of the accident. I'm sorry, excuse me.

(ALL ACTORS FALL DOWN ON THE FLOOR AND REMAIN IN WHATEVER POSITIONS THEY LIE, EXCEPT FOR THE FOURTH INTERVIEWER AND THE THIRD APPLICANT. THEY CROSS UP RIGHT TO THE CUBES. THE FOURTH INTERVIEWER SITS ON THE CUBES FACING CENTRE, BECOMING THE PSYCHIATRIST. HIS WRITING MOVEMENTS ARE STYLIZED AND MECHANICAL, A RITUAL OF FORM WITHOUT MEANING. THE THIRD APPLICANT LIES ON THE FLOOR BELOW THE CUBES, FACING THE AUDIENCE. HE IS THE PATIENT.)

THIRD APPLICANT: Can you help me, Doctor, I asked him. Well, it started, well it started, I said, when I was sitting in front of the television set with my feet on the coffee table. (HE LIES ON HIS BACK AND STRETCHES HIS FEET IN THE AIR.) Now I've sat there hundreds of times, thousands maybe, with a can of beer in my hand. I like to have a can of beer in my hand when I watch the beer commercials. But now for no reason I could think of, the ad was was making me sick. So I used the remote control to get another channel, but each channel was making me just as sick. The television was one thing and I was a person, and I was going to be sick. (RISING TO HIS KNEES) So I turned it off and had a panicky moment. I smelled the beer in my hand and as I vomited I looked around the living room for something to grab onto, something to look at, but there was just our new furniture. I tried to get a hold of myself. I tried to stare straight above the television set, at a little spot on the wall I know. I've had



little moments like that before, Doctor, I said, panicky little moments like that when the earth seems to slip out from under, and everything whirls around and you try to hold onto something, some objects, some thought, but I couldn't think of anything. (LYING DOWN ON THE FLOOR AGAIN, PROPPING HIS HEAD ON HIS ARM) Later the panic went away, I told him, it went away, and I'm much better now. But I don't feel like doing anything anymore, except sit and stare at the wall. I've lost my job. Katherine thought I should come and see you. Can you help me, Doctor, I asked him.

(THE PSYCHIATRIST MERELY TURNS HIS HEAD AND SPEAKS IN THE GENERAL DIRECTION OF THE THIRD APPLICANT. HIS TONE IS BORED AND INDIFFERENT, COMPLETELY EXPRESSIONLESS.)

PSYCHIATRIST: Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, HOSTILE,  
Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, PENIS,  
Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, MOTHER,  
(HOLDING OUT HIS HAND)  
Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, MONEY.

(THE THIRD APPLICANT TAKES THE PSYCHIATRIST'S OUTSTRETCHED HAND AND GETS UP, EXTENDING HIS OTHER HAND OVER TO THE OTHER ACTORS WHO HAVE STOOD UP AND FORMED A SQUARE DANCE CIRCLE. ALL BOW AND BEGIN A GRAND RIGHT AND LEFT, CHANTING AS THEY MOVE AROUND THE CIRCLE.)

ALL: Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, HOSTILE,  
Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, PENIS,  
Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, MOTHER,  
Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, MONEY.

(ON THE LAST WORD "MONEY" THEY SWING QUICKLY TO FORM A TIGHT CIRCLE WITH THE THIRD APPLICANT INSIDE. THEY CHANT THE FOLLOWING LINES AGAIN, BUT IN A SLOWER, MORE OMINOUS, TEMPO. THE THIRD APPLICANT PITS ALL HIS FORCE AGAINST THE MOVING CIRCLE, TRYING TO BREAK OUT, BUT HE CANNOT. THE CIRCLE, FORMED AT CENTRE, TAKES A SMALL DIAGONAL RIGHT, THEN A SHARP DIAGONAL DOWN LEFT, THEN CROSSES TO DOWN RIGHT ON THE LINES. SEE FIGURE 11.)

ALL: Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, HOSTILE,  
Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, PENIS,  
Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, MOTHER,  
Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, MONEY,  
Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, HOSTILE,  
Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, PENIS,  
Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, MOTHER,  
Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, M O N E Y.

(ON THE LAST WORD "MONEY" THE ACTORS ALL THROW UP THEIR HANDS

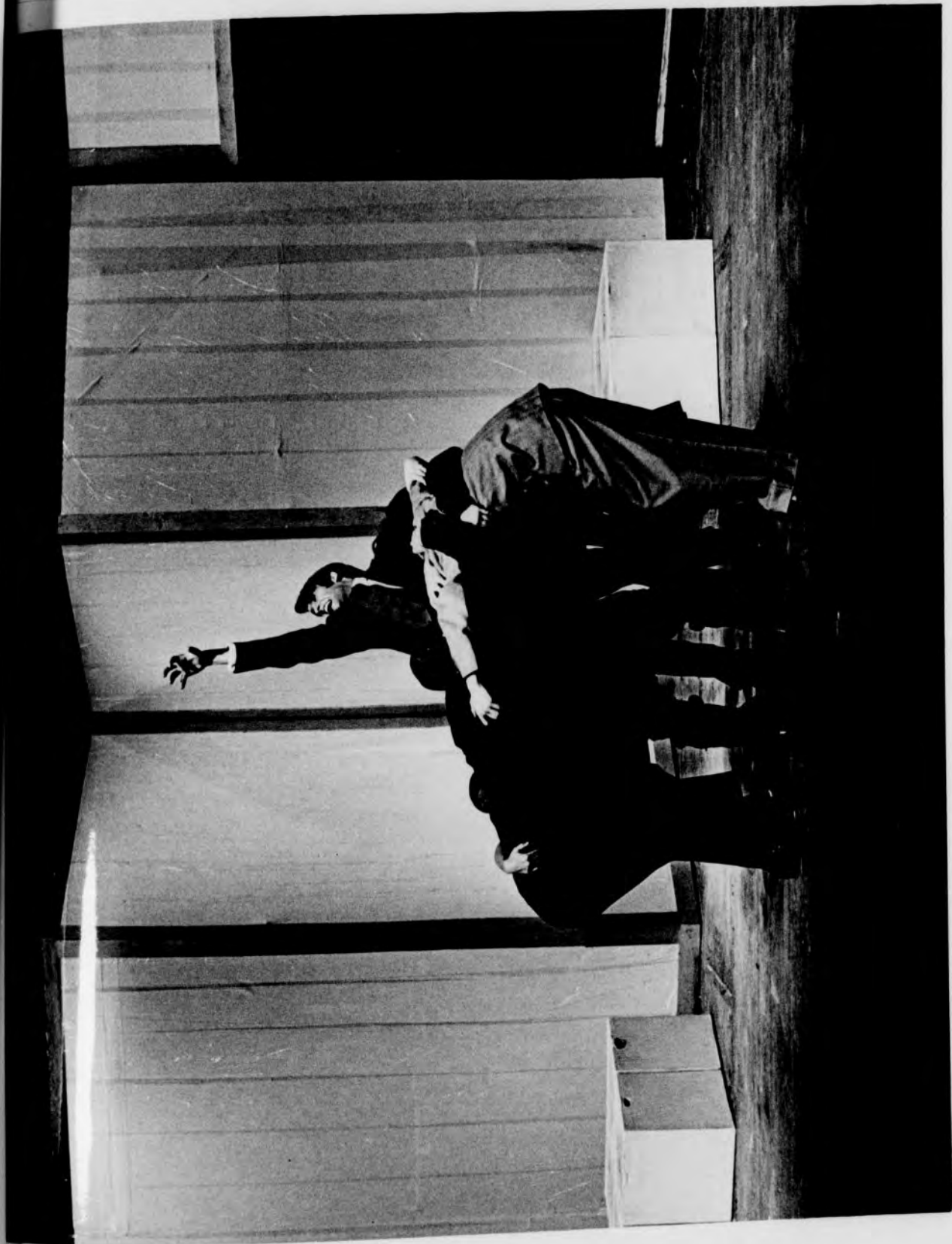


Figure 11

AND SHRIEK THE WORD, LETTING THE TONE DESCEND INTO THE PITCH FOR THE CONFESSIONAL. THE WOMEN CROSS UPSTAGE CENTRE AND KNEEL. THE MEN CROSS UPSTAGE OF THE WOMEN AND KNEEL ALSO. THE WOMEN BOW THEIR HEADS, LETTING THEIR HAIR COVER THEIR FACES. THE "BLAH, BLAH" CONTINUES BUT MORE SLOWLY WHILE THE OTHERS ACCOMPANY IT WITH A DESCANT OF KYRIE ELEISON. DURING THE CONFESSIONAL SEQUENCE, THE KNEELING ACTORS SLOWLY BOW THEIR BODIES AND SWAY, SO THAT BY THE END, THEIR HAIR IS BRUSHING THE FLOOR. THE FIRST APPLICANT SITS ON THE CUBES STAGE LEFT WITH HIS BACK TO THE SECOND INTERVIEWER. HE IS THE PRIEST AND SITS WITH HIS LEGS FOLDED AND HIS HEAD SLIGHTLY BOWED. THE SECOND INTERVIEWER CROSSES DOWNSTAGE OF THE CUBES STAGE LEFT AND KNEELS FACING AUDIENCE. HIS MANNER AT THE BEGINNING IS NOT IMPASSIONED. IT IS CLEAR THAT THIS IS A FRUITLESS RITUAL. AS THE SPEECH CONTINUES AND FUTILITY MOUNTS, HIS INTENSITY MOUNTS ALSO.)

SECOND INTERVIEWER: (CROSSING HIMSELF) Can you help me, Father, I said, as I usually do, and he said, as usual, nothing. I'm your friend, the housepainter, I said, the good housepainter. Remember me, Father? He continued as usual to say nothing. Almost the only color you get to paint these days, Father, is white. Only white, Father, I said, not expecting any more from him than usual, but going on anyway. The color I would really like to paint, Father, is red, I said. Pure brick red. Now there's a confession, Father. He said nothing. I'd like to take a trip in the country and paint a barn door red, thinking that would get a rise out of him, but it didn't. God, I said then, deliberately taking the Lord's name in vain, the result of taking a three inch brush and lightly kissing a coat of red paint on a barn door is something stunning and beautiful to behold. He still said nothing. Father, I said, springing it on him, Father, I'd like to join a monastery. Can you help me, Father? Nothing. Father, I said, I've tried a lot of things in my life, I've gone a lot of different ways and nothing seems any better than any other, Father, I said. Can you help me, Father, I said. But he said nothing as usual, and then, as usual, I went away.

(LOUD ROCK MUSIC COMES OVER THE SPEAKERS, AND ALL RISE AND BEGIN FRENZIED DANCING WHILE SAYING THE FOLLOWING LINES.)

SECOND INTERVIEWER: My

FOURTH INTERVIEWER: fault

SECOND APPLICANT: Excuse me.

(THE THIRD INTERVIEWER CROSSES DOWN RIGHT CENTRE AND FORMS THE AXIS FOR A REVOLVING DOOR. ALL JOIN AND SPIN AROUND DURING THE FOLLOWING LINES.)

FOURTH INTERVIEWER: (LOUDLY) Next.

FIRST INTERVIEWER: (LOUDLY) Can you

SECOND APPLICANT: (LOUDLY) help

FIRST APPLICANT: (LOUDLY) me?

FOURTH INTERVIEWER: (LOUDLY) Next.

FIRST INTERVIEWER: (LOUDLY) Can you

SECOND APPLICANT: (LOUDLY) help

FIRST APPLICANT: (LOUDLY) me?

FOURTH INTERVIEWER: (LOUDLY) Next.

(THE FIRST APPLICANT LEAVES THE REVOLVING DOOR AND CROSSES UP RIGHT TO STAND ON THE CUBES. HE IS THE POLITICIAN'S MAN AND SPEAKS AS IF HE WERE A CARNIVAL BARKER.)

FIRST APPLICANT: Step right up, ladies and gentlemen, and shake the hand of the next governor of this state. Shake his hand and say hello. Tell your friends you shook the hand of the next governor of this state. Ask him questions, tell him problems. Don't be shy. Shake the hand of our next governor.

(THE FIRST APPLICANT POINTS UP LEFT TO THE THIRD APPLICANT, WHO HAS CROSSED TO STAND ON THE CUBES STAGE LEFT.)

(THE ACTORS CROSS LEISURELY TO FORM A LOOSE CROWD AROUND THE POLITICIAN, AS HE TURNS TO GREET THE CROWD. SEE FIGURE 12.)

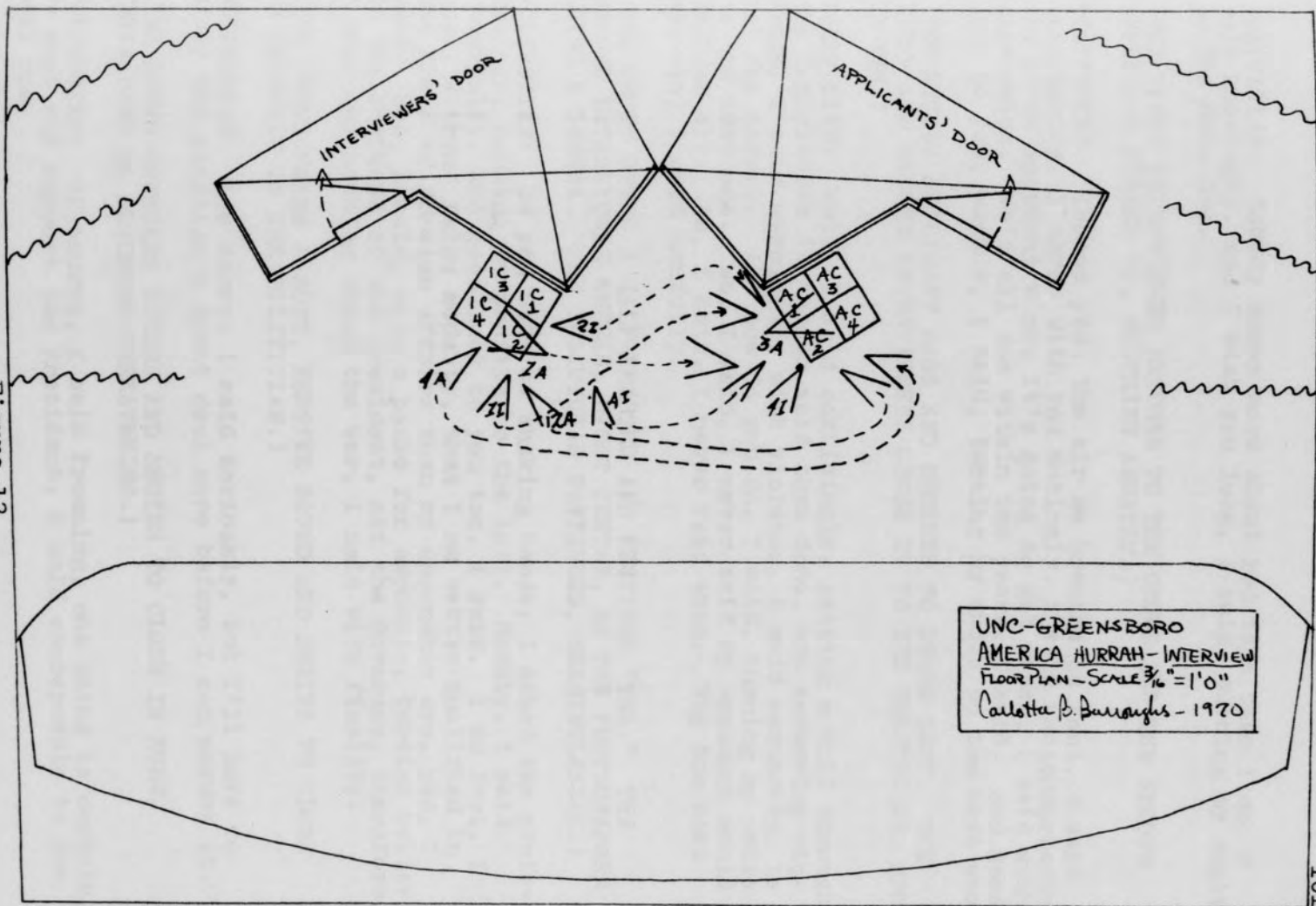
POLITICIAN: Thank you very much, I said cheerfully, and good luck to you, I said, turning my smile to the next one.

(THE THIRD INTERVIEWER CROSSES TO THE POLITICIAN AND TUGS ON HIS PANTS LEG. THE FIRST APPLICANT STEPS DOWN FROM HIS CUBES AND STROLLS OVER TO MINGLE WITH THE CROWD.)

POLITICIAN: Our children are our most important asset, I agreed earnestly. Yes, they are, I said solemnly. Children, I said with a long pause, are our most important asset. I only wish I could, madame, I said earnestly, standing tall, but rats, I said regretfully, are a city matter.

(THE THIRD INTERVIEWER RETURNS TO THE CROWD AS THE FIRST INTERVIEWER RUSHES UP TO HIM HOLDING HER STOMACH, APPEALING TO HIM, MAKING THE SAME NOISE AS SHE MADE AS THE TELEPHONE OPERATOR.)

Figure 12



POLITICIAN: Nobody knows more about red tape than I do, I said knowingly, and I wish you luck, I said, turning my smile to the next one.

(THE FIRST INTERVIEWER RETURNS TO THE CROWD AND THE SECOND APPLICANT STALKS UP, MOUTHING ANGRILY.)

POLITICIAN: Indeed yes, the air we breathe is foul, I said indignantly, I agree with you entirely, I said wholeheartedly. And if my opponent wins, it's going to get worse, I said with conviction. We'd all die within ten years, I said. And good luck to you, madame, I said, turning my smile to the next one.

(THE SECOND APPLICANT GAGS AND CROSSES TO STAGE LEFT. THE FIRST AND SECOND INTERVIEWERS CROSS UP TO THE POLITICIAN, ARM IN ARM.)

POLITICIAN: Well, I said confidingly, getting a bill through the legislature is easier said than done, but answering violence, I said warningly, with violence, I said earnestly, is not the answer. And how do you do, I said, turning my smile to the next one. No, I said, I never said my opponent would kill us all. No, I said, I never said that. May the best man win, I said manfully.

(THE CROWD GIVES A HALF-HEARTED AND RESTLESS "YEA." THE SECOND INTERVIEWER KNEELS, RIGHT CENTRE, AS THE PHOTOGRAPHER USING A CAMERA. THE POLITICIAN CONTINUES, MEANINGLESSLY.)

POLITICIAN: Do you want us shaking hands, I asked the photographer, turning my profile to the left. Goodby, I said cheerfully, and good luck to you too, I said. I do feel, I said, without false modesty, that I am better qualified in the field of foreign affairs than my opponents are, yes, I said. But, I said, with a pause for emphasis, foreign policy is the business of the president, not the Governor, therefore, I will say nothing about the war, I said with finality.

(THE CROWD MAKES A SOFT, RESTIVE SOUND AND BEGINS TO CLOSE IN SLIGHTLY ON THE POLITICIAN.)

POLITICIAN: I'm sorry, I said seriously, but I'll have to study the question a great deal more before I can answer it.

(THE CROWD GRUMBLES LOUDER AND BEGINS TO CLOSE IN MORE. THEIR TONE IS BECOMING THREATENING.)

POLITICIAN: Of course, I said frowning, one thing is certain, we must all support the President, I said concernedly to the next one.

(THE CROWD IS OPENLY ANGRY NOW AND CLOSES IN A TIGHT RING AROUND THE POLITICIAN. THEIR VOICES RISE IN ANGER AND FRUSTRATION DURING THE NEXT SPEECH SO THAT THE POLITICIAN IS FORCED TO SHOUT ABOVE THE MOB.)

POLITICIAN: I'm sorry about the war, I said. Nobody could be sorrier about the war than I am, I said sorrowfully, but I'm afraid, I said gravely, that there are no easy answers. (SMILING, PLEASED WITH HIMSELF) Good luck to you, too, I said, turning my smile to the next one.

(THE CROWD SCREAMS AND DRAGS THE POLITICIAN DOWN FROM THE CUBE AND BEGINS TO BEAT HIM. THE BLOWS TAKE ON A DEFINITE, MECHANICAL RHYTHM. THE CROWD HAS ENCLOSED HIM UTTERLY. THE WOMEN FLAIL THE POLITICIAN WITH THEIR HAIR SO THAT THE EFFECT IS OF A WILD, FRENZIED MOB. THE CHARACTERS RISE IN PAIRS AND SINGLY TO LURCH ABOUT THE STAGE. THEY ARE ALL COMPLETELY AUTOMATIZED, LURCHING ROBOTS. THEIR FACES ARE DEVOID OF HUMAN FEELING, THEIR MOVEMENTS OF ARMS AND LEGS ARE JERKY AND STIFF: LEGS ARE STIFF, ARMS ARE MOVED FROM THE ELBOW AND SHOULDER ONLY. THE FIRST APPLICANT GUIDES THEM ALL DOWNSTAGE TO FORM A LINE FROM DOWN RIGHT CENTRE TO DOWN LEFT CENTRE. ONCE IN PLACE, THE ACTORS MARCH IN PLACE UNTIL ALL OF THEM ARE IN THE WIDE LINE. WHEN ALL ARE IN THE LINE, THE FIRST APPLICANT JOINS THEM AS THE FOLLOWING LINES ARE SPOKEN.)

SECOND INTERVIEWER: My

FOURTH APPLICANT: fault.

SECOND APPLICANT: Excuse

FOURTH INTERVIEWER: me.

FIRST INTERVIEWER: Can you

SECOND APPLICANT: help

FIRST APPLICANT: me?

FOURTH INTERVIEWER: Next.

(ALL CONTINUE TO MARCH IN PLACE AND BEGIN TO ACCENT THE BEAT WITH THEIR FEET ON THE FOLLOWING LINES.)

SECOND INTERVIEWER: My

FOURTH APPLICANT: fault.

SECOND APPLICANT: Excuse

FOURTH INTERVIEWER: me.

FIRST INTERVIEWER: Can you

SECOND APPLICANT: help

FIRST APPLICANT: me?

FOURTH INTERVIEWER: Next.

SECOND INTERVIEWER: My

FOURTH APPLICANT: fault.

SECOND APPLICANT: Excuse

FOURTH INTERVIEWER: me.

FIRST INTERVIEWER: Can you

SECOND APPLICANT: help

FIRST APPLICANT: me?

FOURTH INTERVIEWER: Next.

(ALL MAKE THE BEAT HEAVIER AND MORE VIOLENT UNTIL THE FINAL EFFECT IS ONE OF A COMPLETE MACHINE MARCHING. THEY COME STRAIGHT DOWNSTAGE TOWARD THE AUDIENCE ON THE FOLLOWING LINES. WHEN THEY ARE EVEN WITH THE LIP OF THE APRON, THE LIGHTS GO OUT ABRUPTLY, SO THAT IT APPEARS THEY WILL CONTINUE MARCHING OUT INTO THE AUDIENCE.)

SECOND INTERVIEWER: My

FOURTH APPLICANT: fault.

SECOND APPLICANT: Excuse

FOURTH INTERVIEWER: me.

FIRST INTERVIEWER: Can you

SECOND APPLICANT: help

FIRST APPLICANT: me?

FOURTH INTERVIEWER: Next.

SECOND INTERVIEWER: My



FOURTH APPLICANT: fault.

SECOND APPLICANT: Excuse

FOURTH INTERVIEWER: me.

FIRST INTERVIEWER: Can you

SECOND APPLICANT: help

FIRST APPLICANT: me?

FOURTH INTERVIEWER: Next.

SECOND INTERVIEWER: My

FOURTH APPLICANT: fault.

SECOND APPLICANT: Excuse

FOURTH INTERVIEWER: me.

FIRST INTERVIEWER: Can you

SECOND APPLICANT: help

FIRST APPLICANT: me?

FOURTH INTERVIEWER: Next.

SECOND INTERVIEWER: My

FOURTH APPLICANT: fault.

SECOND APPLICANT: Excuse

FOURTH INTERVIEWER: me.

FIRST INTERVIEWER: Can you

SECOND APPLICANT: help

FIRST APPLICANT: me?

FOURTH INTERVIEWER: Next.

(BLACKOUT.)

## PART II

## PROMPT BOOK

MOTEL

(THE SETTING IS A TOURIST MOTEL ROOM. A DOOR TO THE OUTSIDE IS UP LEFT CENTRE. THE BATHROOM IS DOWN LEFT. A WINDOW IS UP RIGHT CENTRE. A BED IS LOCATED RIGHT CENTRE AND AN ARMCHAIR IS BELOW THE BED. THERE IS A TELEVISION SET DOWN LEFT AND A VANITY WITH CHAIR UP LEFT CENTRE. SHELVES FOR BRIC-A-BRAC ARE DOWN LEFT BESIDE THE BATHROOM DOOR. THE ROOM IS FILLED WITH PLASTIC NOVELTY TRIVIA. SEE FIGURE 13.)

(DURING THE LAST THREE MINUTES OF THE INTERMISSION, THE PROP CREW BRINGS ON AN OVERSIZED, GROTESQUE DOLL WHICH LEANS ON THE DOLLY AS IT IS ROLLED ON. THE TWO CREW MEMBERS REMOVE THE HUGE FIGURE FROM THE DOLLY AND PLACE IT DOWN STAGE OF THE BED, BESIDE THE ARM CHAIR. THE TWO CREW MEMBERS THEN ROLL THE DOLLY OFF, LEAVING THE MOTEL-KEEPER DOLL IN PLACE, MOTIONLESS.)

(AS THE VOICE BEGINS, THE MOTEL-KEEPER DOLL'S ARMS MOVE AND THEN SHE FUSSES ABOUT THE ROOM IN LITTLE CIRCLES.)

MOTEL-KEEPER DOLL'S VOICE: I am old. I am an old idea; (BEGINNING TO CROSS IN CIRCLES TO UP RIGHT CENTRE) the walls; that from which it springs forth. I enclose the nothing, making then a place in which it happens. I am the room: a Roman theatre where cheers break loose the lion; a railroad carriage in the forest at Compiegne, in 1918, and in 1941. (MOVING UP STAGE LEFT BESIDE THE VANITY) I have been rooms of marble and rooms of cork, all letting forth an avalanche. Rooms of mud and rooms of silk. This room will be slashed too, as if by a scimitar, its contents spewed and yawned out. This is what happens. It is almost happening, in fact. I am this room. (STARTING BACK TOWARD DOWN STAGE RIGHT OF THE BED, STILL MOVING IN LITTLE CIRCLES) It's nice; not so fancy as some, but with all the conveniences. A touch of home. The antimacassar comes from my mother's house in Boise. Boise, Idaho. Sits kind of nice, I think, on the Swedish swing. That's my own idea, you know. All modern, up-to-date, that's it--no motel on this route is more up-to-date. Or cleaner. Go look, then talk me a thing or two.

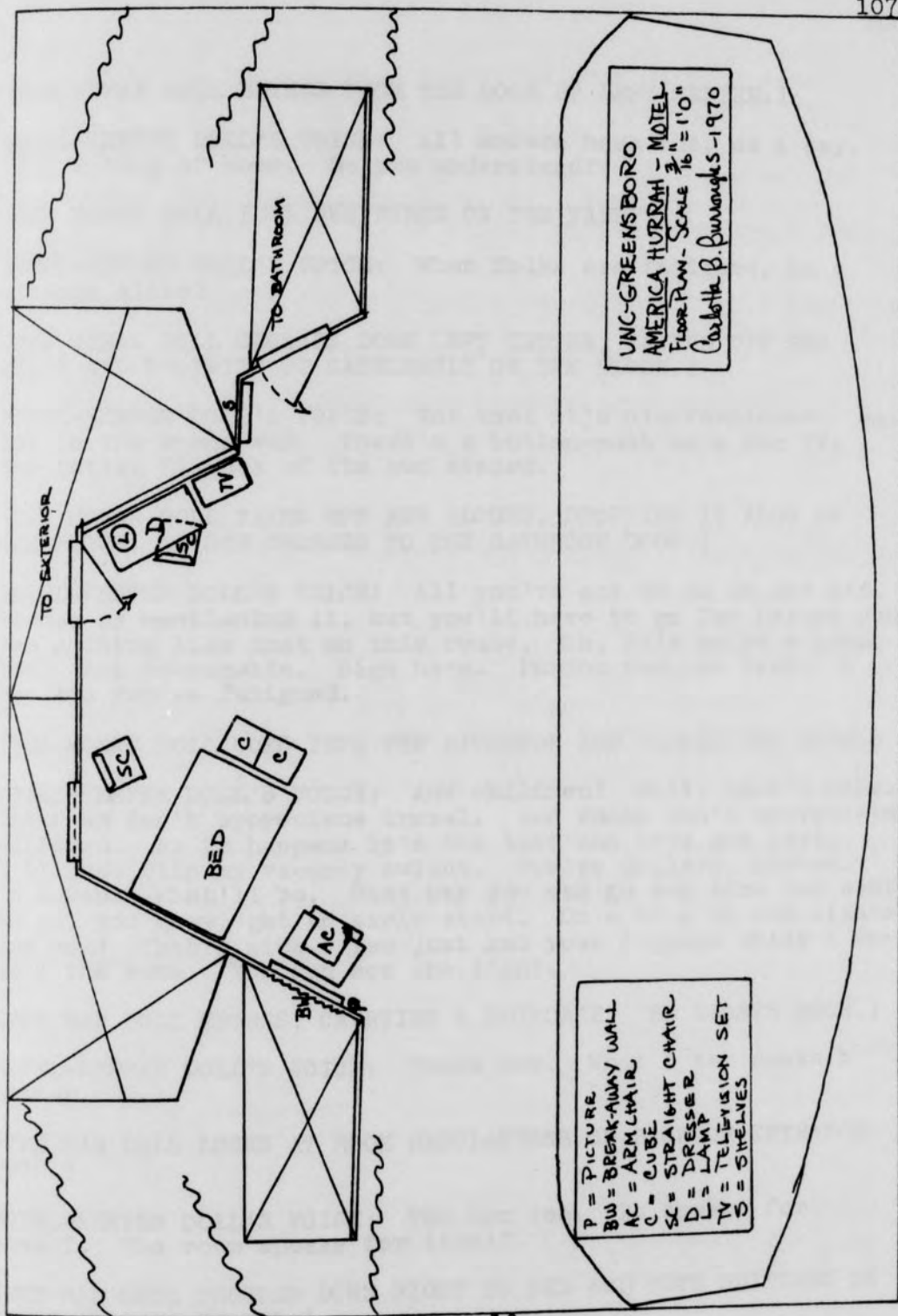


Figure 13

(THE WOMAN DOLL ENTERS FROM THE DOOR UP LEFT CENTRE.)

MOTEL-KEEPER DOLL'S VOICE: All modern here but, as I say, with a tang of home. Do you understand?

(THE WOMAN DOLL PUTS HER PURSE ON THE VANITY.)

MOTEL-KEEPER DOLL'S VOICE: When folks are fatigued, in a strange place?

(THE WOMAN DOLL CROSSES DOWN LEFT CENTRE, TAKING OFF HER SKIRT AND DROPPING IT CARELESSLY ON THE FLOOR.)

MOTEL-KEEPER DOLL'S VOICE: Not that it's old-fashioned. No. Not in the wrong way. There's a button-push here for TV. The toilet flushes of its own accord.

(THE WOMAN DOLL TAKES OFF HER BLOUSE, DROPPING IT ALSO ON THE FLOOR, AS SHE CROSSES TO THE BATHROOM DOOR.)

MOTEL-KEEPER DOLL'S VOICE: All you've got to do is get off. Pardon my mentioning it, but you'll have to go far before you see a thing like that on this route. Oh, it's quite a room. Yes. And reasonable. Sign here. Pardon the pen leak. I can see you're fatigued.

(THE WOMAN DOLL GOES INTO THE BATHROOM AND CLOSSES THE DOOR.)

MOTEL-KEEPER DOLL'S VOICE: Any children? Well, that's nice. Children don't appreciate travel. And rooms don't appreciate children. As it happens it's the last one I've got left. I'll just flip my vacancy switch. Twelve dollars, please. In advance that'll be. That way you can go any time you want to go, you know, get an early start. On a trip to see sights, are you? That's nice. You just get your luggage while I unlock the room. You can see the light.

(THE MAN DOLL ENTERS, CARRYING A SUITCASE. HE CLOSSES DOOR.)

MOTEL-KEEPER DOLL'S VOICE: There now. What I say doesn't matter.

(THE MAN DOLL LOOKS AT ROOM REGULATIONS ON BACK OF ENTRANCE DOOR.)

MOTEL-KEEPER DOLL'S VOICE: You can see. It speaks for itself. The room speaks for itself.

(THE MAN DOLL CROSSES DOWN RIGHT TO BED AND PUTS SUITCASE ON CUBES AT FOOT OF BED.)

MOTEL-KEEPER DOLL'S VOICE: (CROSSING DOWN RIGHT BESIDE ARM CHAIR, STILL MOVING IN LITTLE CIRCLES) You can see it's a perfect 1970 room. But a taste of home.

(THE MAN DOLL CROSSES DOWN RIGHT OF BED, THEN SITS ON THE DOWN STAGE LEFT CORNER AND TAKES OFF HIS SHORTS AND SHIRT. HE THROWS HIS CLOTHING ON THE FLOOR, LETTING THE ITEMS LAND AS THEY FALL.)

MOTEL-KEEPER DOLL'S VOICE: Comfy, cosy, nice, but a taste of newness. That's what. You can see it. The best stop on route six sixty-six. Well, there might be others like it, but this is the best stop. You've arrived at the right place. This place. And a hooked rug. I don't care what, but I've said no room is without a hooked rug. No complaints yet. Never. Modern people like modern places. Oh yes. I can tell. They tell me.

(THE MAN DOLL BEGINS AN INSPECTION OF THE BED DOWN STAGE. HE PULLS AT THE BEDSPREAD, TESTING ITS STRENGTH. SOON HE BEGINS JUMPING UP AND DOWN ON THE BED.)

MOTEL-KEEPER DOLL'S VOICE: Very very reasonable rates. No cheaper rates on the route, not for this. You receive what you pay for. (BEGINNING HER CROSS UP STAGE LEFT) All that driving and driving and driving. Fatigued. You must be. I would be. Miles and miles and miles. Fancy. Fancy your ending up right here. You didn't know and I didn't know. But you did. End up right here. Respectable and decent and homelike. Right here.

(THE WOMAN DOLL ENTERS FROM THE BATHROOM AND CROSSES UP LEFT TO HER PURSE. SHE GETS HER NIGHTGOWN AND CROSSES BACK INTO THE BATHROOM, CLOSING THE DOOR. THE MAN DOLL PULLS THE BEDSPREAD AND SHEETS OFF THE BED. HE TEARS THEM APART, LETTING THE PIECES FALL AS THEY WILL.)

MOTEL-KEEPER DOLL'S VOICE: All folks everywhere sitting in the very palm of God. Waiting, whither, whence. Any motel you might have come to on six sixty-six. Any motel. On that vast network of roads. Whizzing by, whizzing by. Trucks too. And cars from everywhere. Full up with folks, all sitting in the very palm of God. I can tell proper folks when I get a look at them. All folks.

(THE MAN DOLL RUMMAGES THROUGH THE SUITCASE, AFTER CROSSING TO THE FOOT OF THE BED. HE TOSSES THE ARTICLES FROM THE SUITCASE INTO THE AIR. THEY FALL TO THE FLOOR EVERYWHERE. SOME FALL ONTO THE MOTEL-KEEPER DOLL WHERE THEY EITHER STAY OR FALL, DEPENDING ON HER LITTLE CIRCLES.)

MOTEL-KEEPER DOLL'S VOICE: Country roads, state roads, United States roads, it's a big world and here you are. I noticed you got a license plate. I've not been to there myself. I've not been to anywhere myself, excepting town for supplies, and Boise. Boise, Idaho.

(TOILET PAPER AND TOILET SEAT ARE THROWN OUT OF THE BATHROOM, TOGETHER WITH OTHER BATHROOM ARTICLES. MAN DOLL CROSSES LEFT, DOWNSTAGE OF MOTEL-KEEPER DOLL, TO VANITY AND CASUALLY TEARS PAGES OUT OF THE OVERSIZED BIBLE AS HE STANDS LEFT CENTRE.)

MOTEL-KEEPER DOLL'S VOICE: (CROSSING BACK TO ARMCHAIR) The world arrives to me, you'd say. It's a small world. These plastic flowers here: "Made in Japan," on the label. You noticed?

(THE MAN DOLL CROSSES UP RIGHT CENTRE AND PULLS DOWN THE WINDOW CURTAIN, WADS IT UP AND TOSSES IT OVER HIS SHOULDER. TOWELS, TOWEL RACK, BATHROOM BRUSH, SPONGES, AND OTHER ITEMS CONTINUE TO SAIL INTO THE ROOM FROM THE BATHROOM.)

MOTEL-KEEPER DOLL'S VOICE: Got them from the catalogue. Cat-a-logue. Every product in this room is ordered. Ordered from the catalogue. Excepting the antimacassar and the hooked rug. Made the hooked rug myself. Tang of home. No room is a room without. Course the bedspread, hand-hooked, hooked near here at town. Mrs. Harritt. Betsy Harritt gets materials through another catalogue. Cat-a-logue.

(THE WOMAN DOLL COMES DOWN LEFT FROM THE BATHROOM, WEARING HER NIGHTGOWN OVER HER BRA AND PANTIES. THE MAN DOLL CROSSES DOWN LEFT TO HER. THE WOMAN DOLL OPENS HER NIGHTGOWN AND THE MAN DOLL PULLS OFF HER BRA. THEY EMBRACE CLUMSILY.)

MOTEL-KEEPER DOLL'S VOICE: Myself, I know it from the catalogue: bottles, bras, breaks, breakfasts, refrigerators, cast-round gates, plastic posies, paper subscriptions, Buick trucks, blankets, forks, clitter-clack darning hooks, transistors and antimacassars, vinyl plastics,

(THE MAN DOLL BREAKS FROM THE EMBRACE AND CROSSES DOWN LEFT CENTRE TO TURN ON THE TELEVISION SET. THE SOUND BLARES GLARING LOUD ROCK MUSIC.)

MOTEL-KEEPER DOLL'S VOICE: crazy quilts, paper hairpins, cats and catnip, club feet, canisters, bannisters, holy books,

(THE MAN DOLL AND THE WOMAN DOLL DANCE FOR FIVE COUNTS THEN, BORED WITH THAT, THEY CROSS UP CENTRE AND WRITE ON THE WALL.)

MOTEL-KEEPER DOLL'S VOICE: tatoood toilet articles, tables,

tea-cozies, pickles, bayberry candles, South Dakotan Kewpie Dolls, fiberglass hair, polished milk, amiable grandpappies, colts, Glasworthy books, cribs, cabinets, teeter-totters, and television sets. Oh I tell you it, I do, it's a wonder. Full with things, the world, full up.

(SOUND: A CIVIL DEFENSE SIREN BEGINS TO WAIL, SOFTLY AT FIRST, THEN BUILDING TO A DEAFENING ROAR UNTIL THE END OF THE PLAY. THE MAN DOLL AND THE WOMAN DOLL CROSS TO THE DOOR UP LEFT CENTRE AND TEAR THE REGULATIONS SIGN FROM THE DOOR. THEY THEN PROCEED TO TEAR THE SIGN ITSELF INTO PIECES.)

MOTEL-KEEPER DOLL'S VOICE: Shall I tell you my thought? Next year there's a shelter to be built by me, yes. Shelter Motel. Everything to be placed under the ground. Signs up in every direction up and down six sixty-six.

(SOUND: THE HARD ROCK MUSIC AND THE SIREN BEGIN TO BLEND AND BUILD TO THE GREAT CACOPHONY.)

MOTEL-KEEPER DOLL'S VOICE: Complete security, security while you sleep tight, bury your troubles at this motel. Homelike, very comfy, and encased in lead, every room its own set. Fourteen-day emergency supplies \$5.00 extra,

(THE ROCK MUSIC AND SIREN GROW LOUDER AND LOUDER. THE MAN DOLL AND THE WOMAN DOLL PROCEED METHODICALLY TO GREATER AND GREATER VIOLENCE. THE MAN DOLL CROSSES UP LEFT TO THE VANITY AND SMASHES THE LAMP. HE CROSSES DOWN RIGHT AND PUSHES THE ARM-CHAIR THROUGH THE WALL. FINALLY HE CROSSES UP RIGHT, SMASHES THE CHAIR BESIDE THE BED, THROWS THE REMAINS OUT THE WINDOW BY BREAKING THE WINDOW IN THE PROCESS, AND THEN GRABS THE SUITCASE AND TOSSES IT THROUGH THE OPEN WINDOW. THE WOMAN DOLL CROSSES LEFT AND SMASHES THE VANITY CHAIR AND FLINGS THE REMAINS THROUGH THE TELEVISION SCREEN GLASS. SEE FIGURE 14. SHE THEN CROSSES DOWN LEFT TO THE SHELVES AND BEGINS BREAKING THE ITEMS ON THE SHELVES BY THROWING THEM ABOUT THE ROOM. THE MAN DOLL AND THE WOMAN DOLL RETURN TO THE CENTRE AND EMBRACE, AGAIN ENGAGING IN CRUDE LOVE PLAY. SINCE THERE IS NOTHING LEFT TO BREAK, THEY CONVERGE ON THE MOTEL-KEEPER DOLL. THEY BEGIN TO DESTROY HER BY FIRST TEARING OFF HER ARMS AND THEN HER HEAD.)

MOTEL-KEEPER DOLL'S VOICE: self-contained latrine waters, filters, counters, periscopes and mechanical doves, hooked rugs, Dearest Little Picture Frames for Loved Ones Made in Japan--through the catalogue. Cat-a-logue. You can pick items and products: cablecrackles--so nice--cuticles, twisted combs with corrugated calisthenics, meat-beaters, fish-tackles, bug bombs, toasted terra-cottad Tanganyikan switch blades, ochre closets, ping-pong balls, didies, capricorn and cancer



Figure 14



V prognostics, crackers, total uppers, stick pins, basting  
tacks . . .

(WHEN THE MOTEL-KEEPER DOLL'S HEAD COMES OFF, THE SOUND COMES TO AN ABRUPT HALT SO THAT THERE IS AN ACUTE AWARENESS OF THE ABSENCE OF ANY SOUND. THE MAN DOLL AND THE WOMAN DOLL THROW THE HEADLESS BODY OF THE MOTEL-KEEPER DOLL ONTO THE BED AND THEN LEAVE AS CASUALLY AS THEY CAME. THE MAN DOLL EXITS DOWN RIGHT, THROUGH THE AISLE AND INTO THE LOBBY. THE WOMAN DOLL EXITS DOWN LEFT, THROUGH THE AISLE AND INTO THE LOBBY. THE STAGE LIGHTS BLACK OUT AND THE HOUSE LIGHTS COME UP. THE MOTEL-KEEPER DOLL REMAINS AS SHE IS UNTIL THE AUDIENCE HAS DEPARTED. THERE IS NO CURTAIN CALL.)

PART III

## PART III

## CRITICAL ANALYSIS

The selection of Martha Frazier by Jean-Claude Van  
 Halle was governed by his belief that the  
 subject would present a dramatic event of relevance to an audience.  
 The fact that Martha Frazier had never been produced  
 in the Broadway area, that the director himself was  
 reading and challenging, and that a designer was available  
 to assist in the production in accordance with the  
 director's wishes were also factors in his choice of  
 the play.

## CRITICAL ANALYSIS

The characters, the setting, the costumes, and the  
 dialogue represent a nightmare vision of contemporary life in  
 the United States. Research, observation, and personal feel-  
 ing led the director to structure the play in the form of a  
 dream.

The remainder of this chapter will consist of the  
 director's evaluation of the challenge, and the problem  
 presented in this production relative to the director's  
 interpretation of the style and the mood. The factors which  
 he wishes to point out in his critical analysis of the  
 production will be included. A study of audience response  
 to this director's personal observations will be included.

## PART III

## CRITICAL ANALYSIS

The selection of America Hurrah by Jean-Claude van Itallie was governed by this director's belief that the script would present a dramatic event of relevance to an audience. The fact that America Hurrah had never been produced in the Greensboro area, that the directorial elements were demanding and challenging, and that a designer was available who could visualize the production in accordance with this director's wishes were contributing reasons for the choice of the play.

The characters, the setting, the costumes, and the dialogue represent a nightmare vision of contemporary life in the United States. Research, observation, and personal feeling led the director to structure the play in the form of a dream.

The remainder of this chapter will consist of this director's evaluation of the challenges, and the problems encountered in this production relative to this director's interpretation of the style and the mood. The rapport with the actors will be discussed. A study of audience response and this director's personal observations will be included.

### Interpretation, Style, and Mood

This director saw America Hurrah as a play dealing with conditions existing in America today: conditions which restrict and inhibit the people from a full exploration of their humanity. These elements, as explored in the script are: the dehumanization caused by the lack of personal contact between the individual and the institutions which govern his life, the inundation of trite and meaningless mass media programming, and the base and destructive side of man.

In order to point up these elements, theatricalism was chosen as a basis for the approach to the play. This director wanted to allow the audience to use their intellect rather than their emotions in responding to the play, and the honest way that theatricalism presents a staged event rather than a representation of "true life" suited this purpose.

The theatricalistic approach was reinforced with absurdist techniques. The techniques used were: masks in Interview to dehumanize the interviewers, grotesque dolls in Motel to emphasize the base side of man, and cliché in all three one-act plays to point up the destruction of language which has become an empty shell without meaning.

By setting a mood consistent with the dream motif discussed in Part I under the heading of Internal Analysis, with shifting sequences and situations, and with characters such as might be found in a nightmare, the director hoped to

alienate the audience from their preconceived ideas of a well-ordered reality. He further hoped to disorient them from their emotions and to create an objective response.

While this director feels the mood was successfully created, he believes the total impact on the audience could have been stronger. Perhaps more use of strong language and suggestive business would have helped to create the objective response the director hoped to obtain. The elements of strong language and suggestive business were present in the script, and their use was explored in rehearsal. However, the director encountered the familiar problem: how much is in good taste and appropriate for a local audience.

In order to create a heightened impact on the audience, and to ease the technical aspects, the order of the three one-act plays was rearranged. The final week of rehearsal convinced this director that TV should come first, followed by Interview, and after intermission, Motel.

The script had Interview first, TV second, and Motel last. By putting the weakest play first, and following it with two consecutive strong ones, the dramatic impact was heightened. Also, the set-up for TV could be made prior to opening the house. This was desirable because the slide projector, which had to be focused and adjusted, could be placed before the audience was seated.

The timing of the separated speeches in TV demanded precision to get the point across. For example, the First News Announcer is giving a news release concerning the attack by white parents in "Red Clay, South Carolina," while George is making a phone call to his wife, and repeating a list of groceries he is to bring home. The News Announcer comments that the parents expressed surprise at being called bigots, and a spokesman for the parents explains that they were simply anguished parents driven by a basic instinct--to protect their young. At that point George's line is "Bologna," expressing the feeling to the audience that the spokesman's comment was a lie. The precision of delivery in the two lines makes a comical, but sharp, statement:

FIRST NEWS ANNOUNCER: . . .  
Spokesmen for the adults expressed surprise at being called "rednecks," "bigots," and "racists." They were, they said, "anguished parents striking out with a basic instinct: to protect their young."

GEORGE: Bologna.

The two groups operating simultaneously caused an understandable confusion among some audience members. While Hal, Susan and George were playing a scene, the five television characters were, at the same time, playing a scene from television programming such as a female talk show, a movie re-run, newscasts, westerns, and commercials. Thus, an audience used to seeing a scene with one central focus saw two groups, each with a focus of its own.

The various scenes in TV demanded a balance of voice level and "giving stage." While the reactions of the audience showed they understood most of the interrelationships, this director feels he should have worked out better blocking and voice balance to accent the scene.

The relationship between Hal and Susan could have been more clearly established if additional interplay had existed between the two. The relationship established was that of a spoiled, ego-centered child on the make for Susan again. If Hal had been directed to touch Susan as a reminder of his previous conquest, and in George's presence as a dare, the relationship would have been clarified to the audience.

This director realizes there were several scenes in Interview for which he failed to create a heightened impact. Had a more objective approach been taken to the Party sequence and the Confessional sequence, perhaps the audience response would have been more objective. This will be fully explained in the section under the heading of Actor-Director Relationships.

Motel was weakened by the awkward and distracting blocking given the actress playing the Motel-Keeper Doll. This blocking placed her directly downstage of the upstage action in progress, and her inordinate size prevented the audience from seeing the upstage action. An additional burden was placed on the actors playing the Man and the Woman Dolls.



They were made to rely on a sound cue, rather than having a continuous flow of action. The masks worn by the actors completely enclosed their heads and created a hearing problem. Consequently, they caught only snatches of the Motel-Keeper Doll's dialogue.

A large portion of the success of the production was due to the efforts of a talented choreographer. Her suggestions as to body movement and movement patterns greatly enhanced the style of the production. The director and the choreographer maintained a relaxed and open working relationship, and the ensemble often stayed after a long rehearsal to work on a difficult segment.

#### Actor-Director Relationships

From the first reading of the script, it became obvious that the characters were structured so that there were no clear divisions of character importance. There were no major or secondary parts, but archetypal characters representing general classes and types of people. This director felt the ensemble approach was needed to bring about the total interdependently-working unit he wanted.

Group improvisations and group sensitivity exercises were used to create the ensemble. The director feels the use of these two elements was justified since they more than adequately served their purposes.

Prior to the first formal rehearsal, four periods of four hours each were inserted into the rehearsal schedule. During these times the ensemble worked on nothing but group improvisations and sensitivity exercises. Improvisations such as a flower opening in the sun, the workings of a clock, children and toys at a party, workers on an assembly line, and underwater plants being moved by the current helped to generate the group interaction needed in ensemble work.

Sensitivity exercises used in training the ensemble included such exercises as breaking down the social barrier of non-touch and exploring compulsive behavior. Exercises exploring the responses stemming from being excluded from a group and the responses created when breaking out of one's inhibitions were also used. The result was that the ensemble created among themselves a unity built on trust and open knowledge of each other. A genuine affection and warmth helped cement the unity of the ensemble.

Although an informal and open relationship was established by these experimental exercises, the director was in full control of the production at all times. He did not anticipate any difficulty with the informality and received only the utmost cooperation and support from his actors.

At the first training period it was decided that, due to the nature of the exercises, some personal and intimate remarks might be made. It was decided as policy that these remarks would remain within the ensemble and would not be

publicly discussed. The result was as expected. Once the actors felt a bond of trust and integrity, their responses became astonishingly frank and honest, both during the discussions and the more personal exercises.

A strong bond of trust was needed in the ensemble to insure that the actors could enter into a difficult scene with complete confidence in the other actors. This director used two trust exercises he learned from Edward Setrakian, former Artistic Director of the LaMama group in New York.

The first exercise consisted of each actor, in turn, mounting a platform six feet above the floor. The others formed two lines below and locked arms tightly. The actor doing the exercise would close his eyes and fall off the platform into the arms of the fellow actors.

The second trust exercise was a variation of the first. Each member would mount the platform, but instead of falling off forward, would close his eyes and fall off backwards. This director participated in both exercises and found it did indeed require a great trust to surrender control of a situation and to rely on other people. He feels the exercise created a confidence which made unusually difficult sequences such as quickly building the totem in Interview to proceed with assurance and precision.

Although the ensemble functioned in accordance with the director's wishes, several individual problems occurred. The actor playing the First Applicant in Interview developed

a block with one of his speeches and, through the final performance was unsure of his lines. Even though the director worked with the actor outside rehearsal, finally cutting all lines not absolutely essential, and had the actor repeat the speech until it seemed set, the same block recurred at the next rehearsal. Had this director been more experienced, he might have found means to help the actor give a better performance. The young man was insecure onstage, and never fully captured the qualities of the housepainter of Italian background. The insecurity of the actor, however, did coincide with the insecurity of his character.

This director feels that the problems encountered in this production will be minimized in future productions by maintaining a fusion of the actor's craft with the exposure of his emotional responses. Failure to emphasize the discipline an actor must have led the actor playing the Man Doll in Motel to give himself up to his destructive impulses during the second performance and heavily damage the break-away furniture. Had the actor been instructed earlier in rehearsal to take a more disciplined approach to his part, the result would have been a controlled and pointed performance.

Two scenes in Interview might have been strengthened by the same insistence on discipline, the Party sequence and the Confessional sequence.

The actors understood the futility and alienation in the sequences they were playing, and, for many of the actors America Hurrah became the expression of a personal statement. Thus, the personal inclinations of the actors and the masterful dialogue of the playwright generated an intimate response. Had this director insisted on the balance between the actors' craft and their personal responses, both sequences could have been ordered to present the idea of futility and alienation in such a way as to cause the audience to respond with their intellect rather than their emotions.

The three incidents just cited lead the director to realize he must learn to stress the dual nature of the actors' craft, the objective as well as the subjective response to the script and the ideas contained therein. The actor uses his life experience as his source material to create a multi-dimensional character. He must then use his craft to shape the raw material of experience into an ordered and clear performance.

It was not necessary to stimulate originality and creativity in the ensemble. Instead theatre games were used in order to channel the abundant creativity already present among the enthusiastic members of the ensemble into the specific scene being studied.

Improvisations were used in TV to clarify the idea that, no matter how inane the programming may be, the actors involved act with a cool and natural style, and not with a great deal of "dramatic" exaggeration. Such plots included: "The Newlywed Game", situation comedies such as "Life With Father", talk shows, newscasts and commercials. The ensemble provided their own format as they acted the improvisation through, including their own plot, dialogue, and movement.

Mechanistically-oriented improvisations, and allowing the actors extreme latitude in blocking their own movement, helped create the startling effect of the telephone circuitry in the Telephone Operator sequence in Interview. Such improvisations as: the internal parts of a clock, parts of an airplane, workers on an assembly line, and mechanical toys helped the actors to work together with a machine-like precision.

#### Audience Response

In searching for a metaphor to use in the visualization of America Hurrah, the director found that the word "dream" suited his wish to evoke an objective response from the audience. The masks and dolls helped alienate the audience from a normal conception of reality, as did the shining-plastic set. Seemingly random movement patterns prevented the audience from becoming comfortable with what they were watching, and also prevented them from predicting an orderly sequence of events.

The director knew the audience would be composed largely of students from the several colleges and universities in the Greensboro area. The content of the play made him decide to request the publicity releases contain a statement advising parents that the play would not appeal to children.

The play was patterned to make it interesting and stimulating to a wide range of age groups, but the director feels the play was more readily accepted and understood by the younger audience, from eighteen to forty. He also believes that, for reasons of their own, some audience members maintained a hostile reaction to the production and closed themselves off from it entirely. Comments such as: "This is the sort of thing that gives our city a bad name" and "They shouldn't allow this in a university theatre" underscored this belief.

According to this director's observations, the opening night audience consisted of a large number of people from the Greensboro community, and from the colleges in the Greensboro area. The performance began with a brisk tempo and held that tempo to the end. The timing, precision, and interplay between characters were exceedingly well done. In general, the audience responded positively.

The actors seemed unable to pick up the tempo the second night, but at the beginning of the first television sequence the tempo began to move. The actors regained a good

part of the briskness and precision of the previous performance. As the tempo on stage picked up, the interest of the audience also increased as they began to enjoy themselves.

The audience for the second performance, however, was somewhat more sober than the previous one. This was due, perhaps, to the slow tempo. They became enthusiastic in Interview, however, and maintained this response through Motel.

The most perceptive of the three audiences was the small audience who viewed the final performance. Their ages were approximately thirty-five and under. This young audience caught almost all of the inter-related events in TV and responded to the satire with a great deal of laughter. Their laughter in Interview and Motel came from an understanding of the inane situations, rather from a purely comic amusement as did many of the older audience members. The receptive response might have derived from the youthful age of the audience, or from the actors' more sharply defined delivery of the lines. This director believes it was a combination of both factors.

At the conclusion of the last act, all three audiences sat still for a few seconds before applauding. When it came, the applause was less enthusiastic than hoped for as they were left without the familiar resolution with all ends neatly tied up. This reaction was expected.



### Personal Observations

As a result of having worked with a production as complex and demanding as America Hurrah, this director is more fully aware of his weaknesses. He feels a need to make himself more knowledgeable in choreographic processes. He realizes that even though van Itallie's wish is that the audience not be spared any comfort good stage practice in blocking, in order to make the most of stage space and actors, must be considered to make the production as clear and powerful as possible.

The result of working with the ensemble concept, and the results obtained by using group improvisations and group sensitivity have given this director two additional elements with which to approach an actor-training program. He feels ensemble acting can produce a theatre built on a foundation of joy in working in theatre; and that a total and communal response from the actors can be obtained from this approach.

He also realizes this approach is highly idealistic. The flexibility, informality, and warmth inherent in this approach may not work in all situations; and a more formal approach might work better in another situation. If an approach can be established involving the warm respect of both actor and director, bringing a relationship of commitment and joy, this director fully intends to pursue that approach to its fruition.

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