

SS037.mp3

Bill Thomas- This is tape 3 with reverend Hal Middlebrook.

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- Okay when I left SCLC, SCLC was talking and in the process then which they never got started because they wanted Cethia Vivian or me to take it. See Vivian left and went to the urban training center in Chicago and I left and came home for a rest to take a new department called the department of economic opportunities. And the purpose of that department was to organize all of our affiliates and sitters across the country in performing co-ops and performing various poverty programs and to make use of some funds. I have been in communication with some people here lately talking about doing the same kind of thing all over again with our affiliates.

Joan Beifuss- Does Rhett Boyd try to come into that household?

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- Rhett Boyd would come more in the area of direct action. Which would be James Bell and I am surmising from my conversations with some people recently, that Grant boycotting will be spreading across this country more and more within the next few months. Let me just say that I have just done a, tape a few days ago that was broadcast on DIA, WDIA this past Sunday. I am supposed to be talking about poverty and urban problems and this is one of the things we talked about these houses, these run down dilapidated shacks in the slums where people, landlords built a house 40 years ago and he was through paying for it 20 years ago and now he is making nothing but clear profit and he never puts any money back into it. Or I just written a letter to the rental agent for instance on these apartments here today. Talking about this very kind of stuff because they out (muffled). I think one of the greatest things that could be done would be to organize some other strikes. But let's perhaps if we can and perhaps later on we can talk about SCLC's program.

Bill Thomas- Fine.

Joan Beifuss- Fine.

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- Several things transpired here in Memphis. One of the things I think Memphis ought to be grateful for is James Lawson. Because James Lawson had a tendency to hold many of us, from William Smith, and several other fellows and myself kind of in check. Because he was talking about escalation but he was talking about very moderate escalation as when I am talking about escalation I am talking about real escalation. Even to the point of civil disobedience. I am talking about, and an example of what I am talking about is that you only had three arrests in this town, three sets of arrests that ere massive arrests. Arrests for any form of civil disobedience, one of them was really not civil disobedience. One was when they were arrested at city hall and they voluntarily went to jail smiling and walking...

Joan Beifuss- Were you in that group?

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- No.

Bill Thomas- This was done very gently.

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- And it is a good thing I was not in that group. I never would have gone to jail in the manner in which they went to jail. They would have had to drag me....Secondly, reverend Blackburn went to jail, he and another group of fellows were standing in front of some trucks one night. Then the final group of people went to jail, and I well reverend Harvey to jail once by himself.

Joan Beifuss- What for by yourself?

Reverend Grant Harvey- Well we were picketing out at the Poplar Plaza. Is it poplar plaza?

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- Yeah. Highland area.

Reverend Grant Harvey- Highland. This white guy was sitting on the bus stop heckling the youngsters kids who picketed. I was the oldest somebody in charge and I was trying to get them in order and all. So by this time all the police and everything they were out there. Man went on to tell the police that I cursed him and they arrested me for disorderly conduct.

Joan Beifuss- Was it dismissed?

Reverend Grant Harvey- Yeah it was dismissed because the guy who swore out the warrant didn't even show up in court.

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- Oh yeah, I imagine I was in jail longer than any of the other people who got arrested. Because I got arrested about oh some where looking for noon and I didn't get out of jail until almost 8:00 that Saturday night. They tried to be like I wasn't there. Every time they called me they said no we don't have him he is not here. And finally I knew some of the fellows on the desk up there that had gone to school with me and every time I wanted to use the phone I use it. So I kept calling back and calling my family there and so they finally said yeah he is here and so they let me off on all charges.

Joan Beifuss- Let me ask you something, I understand that in your early days in the movement still there were certain jails in the south that people were really afraid to be arrested and put in. Is this true in Memphis? Are you afraid to be arrested in Memphis?

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- No. no.

Reverend Grant Harvey- No,no.

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- Well now let me back up and say that there are some policemen in Memphis now that I would be afraid of them to arrest me.

Reverend Grant Harvey- Me too.

Joan Beifuss- But I mean on the whole as far as being put into Memphis jail.

Reverend Grant Harvey- When they took me to jail by myself, first thing it was the first time I had been to jail, I didn't know anything about going down underneath the ground tunnel business that you go through. And when the guy got out, he took his gun out and held it in a position as if he was going to beat me and that automatically frightened me then.

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- When I was arrested here I was cursed, called all kinds of MF's SOB's...

Reverend Grant Harvey- Oh well they cursed me and did stuff like that even after I got upstairs they cursed me.

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- Then the policemen discovered I was a minister. I had on a collar but I had on overalls. Then when they discovered I was a minister that whole tone and attitude changed.

Reverend Grant Harvey- It was just the opposite in my case. I didn't have my collar on but I did have my cross on. I just (muffled) I told them in the beginning, my name is reverend emphasized it. They refused to say it and when they wrote the thing up they refused to recognize it and every time they would just call me anything just like everyone else who threw me around. Not literally threw but I mean in a sense.

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- I took some 40 kids to jail for standing in front of garbage trucks (muffled) . Well when we got into the cell they separated a fellow named Ballard, who was supposed to be one of the leaders of the invaders. They left the real leader John (beswift?), they put him in the cell with the young kids, in the tank. But they separated Ballard and me because we were supposed to be the leaders.

Bill Thomas- Oh really, they just didn't know or what?

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- I don't know.

Bill Thomas- If you could, trying to think of a little bit...one of the things that we know about which is kind of picturesque and if you could tell us about it a little more. Was the ceremony down at city hall and the burial of justice, will you tell me how that came about and how was that organized.

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- I am used to having what we call diversionary tactics on the (Muffled). I think you ought to never in a campaign carry on the campaign the same every single day. I was most opposed to those picket walks everyday.

Reverend Grant Harvey- I thought it was silly too.

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- That was the silliest thing I have ever heard of. See because all of the police were expecting you to come down main street., walk down main street to the city hall and back up. If I had been the director of the action I

would have carried them, police would have been downtown one day looking for us and we would have been out at east gate shopping center. Or this kind of thing. One day the adults were on their little picket wall, and I decided it was time for us to do something different. So that particular day we borrowed a casket from R.S. Lewis Funeral Home.

Bill Thomas- They just loaned you the....

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- Yeah, well one of the young men who was working as an assistant with the youth division works for R.S. Lewis and I have been for some time about a year or so the kind of minister where I have carried on the service of funerals that was not a member of a church. And then Mr. Lewis is the rental agent, his rental company is the rental agent for these apartments, so he and I were good friends. So we borrowed the casket, we could have gotten the hears if we had wanted it. We took the casket and we marched down the street.

Bill Thomas- Now do you remember what kind of casket it was.

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- Oh just the plain simple casket, it was the cheapest casket that he had.

Joan Beifuss- He didn't give you the best huh?

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- Well I asked him for the cheapest, so that if it got damaged in any way and we decided we had to pay for it or something it would be much easier to pay for a cheap wooden casket covered with velvet, than it would be to pay for steel.

Bill Thomas- How cheap is a cheap casket, do you know?

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- Oh it is very cheap, well we won't get into the details because funeral businesses make quite a bit of money off of these things and I won't get into that. But we decided to do this, this was a diversionary tactic that this was new to him. And very seriously as we marched down the street you could see white women coming....well let me back up and say first of all this is no criticism, but white men in America basically have trained white women to be afraid of negro men. This is basic. So that basically if a white woman sees 10 negro men the fears and the phobias that been built up in her mind by the white male, she feel that is a thousand negro men coming and just naturally they are going to have to do something to them. Because all negro men according to the white man basically have high sex drives and there sex urges are never completed and they are just going to have to rape....you know, you know. So that you could see as we came down that street with mostly negro young men in the forefront and a casket too, that all these white women coming out in the Russell Stover candy store would come up and the first thing they would see is all these negro men coming down the street singing. Now that is the first problem, Then they look up secondly and they see a casket, now that is really too much. And one woman actually fainted on Main St.

Bill Thomas- Oh really.

Reverend Grant Harvey- Another decent thing about it was, nobody knew anything about this, this was all, and Harold and I had just discussed it just while we were standing in front of the kids trying to get the kids wild. (Muffled) So the police always watched the church, we had a citizen's man radio over in the office so we could pick up police calls you know. The guy was operating so when the hearse pulled up, the fellow across the street radioed headquarters and said a hearse is pulling up in front of the church and it looks like they are about to have a funeral. That passed on, so when all of us came to get the casket out they said, well they are taking the casket in now, no they are coming back with it we don't know what is going on? They just purged on the church just like this, and of course (muffled)

Joan Beifuss- Are the garbage workers also marching at this time?

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- They are marching downtown.

Reverend Grant Harvey- So they all went down there.

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- And this startled the daylights out of them. They didn't know we were coming with it either.

Joan Beifuss- What were you singing as you marched?

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- I believe we were singing, we were either singing Old Freedom, Old freedom over men before I will be a slave...

Reverend Grant Harvey- Yeah I will be there to my grave yeah.

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- This sounds right. Well reverend Lawson was marching I think and this startled the day lights out of him. He was not expecting this to come marching down Main St.

Bill Thomas- How many were there do you remember about?

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- Kids? I would say about 50 or 60 or more.

Joan Beifuss- Would those have been college kids?

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- No mostly high school.

Joan Beifuss- High school.

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- I just have not to have the picture here but I have pictures of that scene, of the session down at the courthouse steps. Where we had the little funeral service, and the sign said justice is dead in Memphis, Lobe killed. People passing by on the bus with a shotgun. It looked to me kind of like the whole Memphis police department and part of the fire department turned out down there in front of city hall.

Reverend Grant Harvey- I really believe they actively thought we had something in that casket.

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- You know it is a strange thing but once I look back over it now I kind of wish that I had gotten somebody and put them in that casket and then just opened it.

Reverend Grant Harvey- The same thing happened when we decided to march down the street in the garbage bins.

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- Yeah but the most important thing I think that shocked him to death was the day we marched in the rain and we set a group going regularly to main street just as we did everyday, and they sent all of their policemen up towards main street and just about the time they sent all the policemen up to main, I sent another group up Hernando to Vance, down Vance to 2nd and they just knew I was going to go up to Main St. see. And instead I turned and had them to go up 2nd street against the traffic and the policemen could not drive against the traffic because it was just about 5:00 when the traffic is heaviest. The policemen finding themselves having to park their cars and their motorcycles and get out and walk in the rain without rain coats. A lot of people say it is aggravation, well it is but sometimes on the civil rights movement you have to drive police officers to do what you want them to do in order to create the kind of situation you want to create.

Joan Beifuss- This kind of thing like bearing freedom was that checked then through the COME strategy meeting or could you just do that on your own? How tight was the organization?

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- No it was not checked through COME.

Reverend Grant Harvey- It really wasn't checked by anybody.

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- It was supposed to have been checked through COME. But the problem I had with that the COME strategy committee of which I was a member, did not have the militancy in the leadership in order to really escalate the campaign as was really needed. You see it is my contention that Dr. King never really needed to come to Memphis, because we had not done what we could have done. I was talking two weeks before Dr. King came to Memphis about taking a group of kids at rush hour 5:00 in the evening, 4:30 in the evening, out to Bellevue and Union and Main and Madison and start walking across the street just like you would cross the street but take your time so you are in the street just about when the yellow light comes on the caution light. Instead of going on across the street just sit down in the middle of the street. Now I know if you do this by the time the police officers get out there to get you out of the middle of the street and drag you out of the street, that the right moment the traffic is going to be backed up so far that it is going to take 3 hours to untie it. I seen it happen in (muffled) Virginia. In just the right moment we sat down in the middle of the intersection and tied up traffic so tight that it took the police 3 hours to untie that traffic.

Joan Beifuss- Was Lawson your main stumbling block and can you explain that?

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- Yeah, yeah.

Bill Thomas- Ok well before we get too far away from the burial at justice, what time of day was that done?

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- About 5:00.

Bill Thomas- For that reason it was a...

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- That was just the time we used, the kids usually marched. The kids...the adults march ended just about that time. Which will always leave a slack and the people getting off of work would miss the adults because the adults would be through and we always try to get ours around that time so we could catch the adults downtown. We caught them that day and we caught them by surprise. Those people on the busses who were coming from the kitchens and from the stores and things working who were coming back to this side of town were shocked to death that they passed by city hall and saw us holding memorial service with a casket out on the steps. You know they didn't know what was happening. Then you get downtown and you see a group of folks marching through town with a casket in the air. To them this is a...

Bill Thomas- Then did you carry the casket back or...

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- Back to the church .

Bill Thomas- I see.

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- Yeah we used it once again after that. One day we used all three tactics combined. The garbage cans the casket and then marching up the one way streets all at the same time.

Reverend Grant Harvey- One of the other, a different tactic we use was we went the usual route as they expected us to but when we came back we came back a different way. We even started back like we were coming back, but when we got to the first one way street going north, that's the street we came down. I think it is Monroe or something like that. We came down, because see police couldn't come down Monroe.

Bill Thomas- Madison, Madison.

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- Madison? Is it Madison. We came down Madison to 3rd. Then part of us went down 3rd and part of us went another way, see they were all...they didn't know what was going on.

Reverend Grant Harvey- They stopped us one day, they stopped us down there, we had jumped on a man down in the crowd. We didn't even know anything about anybody.

Bill Thomas- Well now let's just for the record, your area of responsibility through this firmly because with the youth, is that correct?

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- That my area all the way.

Bill Thomas- Yeah, and how did this come about?

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- Well I have worked with young people throughout my period in the civil rights movement. I found that youth provide the greatest challenge to the system. Of the persons who are on the strategy committee I spoke the language of the majority of the kids better than any of the other persons that did.

Bill Thomas- Was it difficult to get them involved in this because...

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- No and yes. We had the kids totally involved and we had, I don't know if you remember the morning when the kids from Northside High turned out the school. Well that particular morning every school in town was supposed to be turned out. We had made plans for that, and I got a call, some calls on Sunday morning from some members of the strategy committee who were much more moderate than I. Who gave me the order to tell them don't come out. Well I got the word around as much as possible and less than 2 or 3 other schools were bursting at the seams because the kids still wanted to come out, we had built them up to this point. Northside just came on out anyway. Lester was going to come out the next day so people just had to go out and try to put it out. Well after they had built the kid up to his point where they were ready to come out, the kids were disappointed they couldn't come out. They said the kids who had come out back to school and some of them got suspended and all of this, then this dampened a lot of the kid's spirits and they would not take as much as an active part as they would have. But I kept a very good contingent.

Joan Beifuss- How many would you say?

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- I kept about 150 active every day. I couldn't have had, for instance, had I not gone on to Hamilton high school like I did on the day of Dr. King's first march, you would have had an explosive situation right then at Hamilton. Because you know police beat some kids and sprayed mace and all this on some kids. But you had kids who were actually ready to get those policemen down there. Not only kids but you had some faculty members down there with their pistols. And some mothers who came up to the school with pistols who said they were not going to see those kids being beaten by those policemen like they were.

Bill Thomas- Well since we are into that day can you tell us about what happened that night.

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- We had quite a bit of mobilization and people were beginning to really show up and then we got a telephone call from director Holloman that an explosive situation was going on at COME, I mean at Hamilton.

Bill Thomas- This was when you were down...Why would he call you?

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- He knew that the police could not handle this see. He knew that reverend Lawson could not handle this.

Bill Thomas- So he was looking for help from the organization.

Reverend Grant Harvey- He knew the only person who could handle them at the point was me. So I went down and the policemen was going to jump on me until I told him you better call your superior officer and see that I (muffled). So I went in and we got things quieted on back down and the kids went ahead and marched to the church. Well on the way back I got a call on my two way radio from our headquarters. Get to Lester high school at once.

Bill Thomas- Hamilton you got there was that after the...

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- This was right after the police had started spraying their mace and beating a few people, the ambulance was just leaving when I got there. Taking one girl to the hospital.

Joan Beifuss- What started the whole thing?

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- The principle called the police because the students were determined to walk off of the school campus.

Bill Thomas- He wanted to keep the school...

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- He wanted to keep the school in operation...

Joan Beifuss- This was before school opened in the morning wasn't it?

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- It...

Reverend Grant Harvey- It was after the first period break.

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- It was during the first period class.

Reverend Grant Harvey- That was a time schedule all over school so that is the schedule we had given them. Go to school but leave as soon as you get there.

Joan Beifuss- You mean go in and sit in your classroom and then leave?

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- Go in and check in.

Reverend Grant Harvey- Go in and check in, but then you just go home.

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- So then you won't be a truant for the day. See if you don't go to school at all then you become a truant for the day. In Lester the kids were climbing out of the windows in Lester. Came back by Booker Washington and police had just finished spraying mace over there.

Reverend Grant Harvey- They arrested several...

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- They arrested several people over there at Booker Washington.

Joan Beifuss- Did a group from Lester get down to the march?

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- Oh yes, a very large group. In fact, none of the schools really had anyone at school that day. In fact, a great many of the teachers did not show up for school that day.

Reverend Grant Harvey- Lots of school teachers at these schools, that when school started they had a full load, I think she told me she had 28 students, by 9:30 she had 3.

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- One teacher told me she didn't have but 12 students to show up. She kind of hinted at them that they ought not to have been there.

Bill Thomas- How was the word got out to the school youngsters to participate in the walk outs..

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- By word of mouth.

Bill Thomas- I see.

Reverend Grant Harvey- That was one way and then we were violating the school law.

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- But the other thing we had organized each school where we had sort of a kind of committee. Each school was responsible for getting the word around.

Bill Thomas- In their school?

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- In that school.

Reverend Grant Harvey- Then another thing we did on the school systems too is, you see some of us have particular entrees to various schools. And (muffled), at Porter's school for instance I knew people over there so I could go in easily myself and do whatever I wanted to do and never know the difference. And in a lot of instances this is what we had to do for the family. We had people, for instance one would go one place and I would go one and different places like that. We passed out handbills to the schools, talked to them.

Joan Beifuss- Is this inside schools or on the campus.

Reverend Grant Harvey- Inside the building.

Bill Thomas- That's because you know people in the school.

Reverend Grant Harvey- Right, and it was nothing unusual for them to see me.

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- I couldn't do that one time at Tech, I can now. The board didn't know it but they gave me an entrée into tech when they took the Student leaders at Northside and two negro leaders president and vice president of city class. Split them up sent one to Manassas and one to Tech. They did me a favor. They gave me entrance into Tech that I didn't have before. So this is why the kids came out we a very good march that day. I think that the police provoked a lot of what happened in there efforts to stop the situation by spraying people at the meeting, I think it built up a lot of emotions and it made a lot of people made you know.

Joan Beifuss- A lot of stories floating around down there, in front of the temple, in front of...

Bill Thomas- I think the rumor had gotten back that somebody had gotten killed.

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- Yeah well to be truthful with you, for a long time this little girl that they took from Hamilton was expected to die.

Bill Thomas- I see.

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- You see and this kind of hurt people. I said to inspector Holloman, that I thought that night we had him in a little caucus (muffled)...I said to him that the police could have done a lot better than they did with the treatment of people.

Reverend Grant Harvey- They really over reacted and as a result of that over reaction we had other problems.

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- We had other problems. Personally I was, you had a few bricks thrown and so forth by an element that was not in the march. Now what the policemen should have done was immediately have arrested that element out of the march and they were standing on the sideline. They should have arrested that element and let the rest go ahead. No they are going to turn the whole march around. Well this makes people mad. You don't turn around a march when you have you 10, 12, 15 thousand people marching. Just don't turn it around. I had been down at Beale and 3rd collecting sticks. Because we had some signs that said I am a man and they had sticks I had been there collecting sticks two or three other preachers had drawn and collected them. We put these sticks in a man's restaurant at Beale and 3rd. We were out and we got the word saying turn the marches around so we start turning everybody around telling everybody to go back to the church quietly. Just about this time a little young looking policemen runs up and hits me across the back with a billy stick.

Bill Thomas- Why did he do that?

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- I swerved and turned after getting hit and got sprayed with mace. The next thing I know someone had my hand leading me and they tell me right after that the fellows down on the (muffled) just started throwing bricks all over their cars. I can tell you to a great degree police provoked a lot of this stuff that happened there.

Joan Beifuss- What was the arrangement with the policemen for that march? Why weren't the policemen on any of the corners?

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- Well the arrangement was that we would have our marshals there. And that the only people who would be in the march would be our people who would be off of the sidewalks in the street between our marches. You follow what I am saying? Any other persons who were on the sidewalks were not on the march. It was the responsibility of the police officers to patrol those persons on the sidewalks. The policemen were not doing this.

Joan Beifuss- Was this an arrangement made with the police?

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- Yes. With inspector Holloman. Just very briefly another episode is that the Tuesday night before Dr. King came back to Memphis the last time. A group of negro leaders went to inspector Holloman again on a caucus at the Peabody and asked him saying, we are concerned about the police protection for Dr. King and we are really concerned about it what can we do? Inspector Holloman said, Dr. King's protection is my responsibility, and I will provide for him. Which means that if this be true than the blame for Dr. King's assassination must be thrown into inspector Holloman's lap.

Bill Thomas- Did he say what he would do?

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- No he just said he would provide for his protection. See we happened to know of cases when a negro policemen who had been placed at the fire station right across the street. For that Wednesday and most of that Thursday to watch Dr. King's activities and 2 hours before Dr. King was assassinated he was pulled out of that fire station. That the two negro firemen that had been assigned to that fire station one of them was sent from that fire station to another fire station in the middle of his shift. And the other one was called not to report to that fire station but to report to another fire station. Why? What I am saying, this is the question a lot of negroes are asking.

Joan Beifuss- What was the reason given the firemen?

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- There was no reason see. Some of these firemen still have this question. One of them incidentally has resigned now from the force.

Bill Thomas- Who is that?

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- Floyd Newsome. A lot of questions that negros at this time had about the police department of this city. Mary Payne's death for instance is a big question. Because witnesses say that the boy had not been involved in any looting, he did not have a knife and he was standing their with his hands behind his head when the policemen pulled the trigger.

Joan Beifuss- Did you know Larry Payne?

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- Yes I knew his family very well in fact (Tape glitch.)

Bill Thomas- Before you get to that, before you get to that, let's get you to Memphis.

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- Well.

Bill Thomas- You graduated?

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- I completed the requirements for a degree.

Joan Beifuss- Now were you working down at Ebernezer Baptist Church while you were still going to school?

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- Right, right, Dr. King Sr. and Jr., mostly under Dr. King Sr. because Dr. King Jr. was not there to take care of the pastoral responsibilities this was the responsibility of his father. I worked with the young people.

Joan Beifuss- Are Dr. King Jr. and Dr. King Sr. are they alike? Is the elder Dr. King...

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- Well Dr. King Sr. is not quite as refined we will say. And as cultured as Dr. King Jr. was. Dr. King Sr. did his undergraduate work at Morris Brown and some work at Moorehouse school of religion. His BD work. The rest of his degrees are honorary, of course his doctorate is an honorary degree. Whereas Dr, king Jr. had actually gone to Kroscha and Boston and had the rough edges knocked off you know. His mother being an accomplished pianist and a part of the Atlanta negro society for quite some time. But Dr. King Sr. provided the militancy. And the aggressiveness that Dr, King Jr. I think inherited. Dr. King Sr. had been fighting in Atlanta on the civil rights front a long time. He and William Holmes Boilers and B.J Johnson and Benjamin Mays were the old school fighters in Atlanta and they were well known. They fought the busses long before the busses were desegregated anywhere in the south perhaps except Montgomery. Dr. King was a beautiful figure in himself. He has been able to build a great congregation and he is respected. He is respected by people from across the board all over Atlanta. All of the known politicians who run, come to him for council and advice. One of the key things to do in Atlanta is to get the endorsement of Martin King Sr. and Williams Holmes Boilers. Basically it was thought if you got the support of these two you basically got the support of the negro community.

Reverend Grant Harvey- There are a few others of course but Dr. King Sr. provided a lot of things, the inspiration to Dr. King Jr.

Joan Beifuss- That is what I was wondering if you could almost trace back...

Reverend Hal Middlebrook- Well and then you also trace it back to the grandfather. Dr. King's mother's father. Who was pastor of Ebenezer church just before Dr. King Sr., who was also a fighter in Atlanta and who made a name for himself as being a staunch civil rights pastor. Who as the boys like to say, just tell it like it is.

Bill Thomas- Yeah right.

Joan Beifuss- So you went down to Albany Georgia also when the movement. Yeah right, I was in and out of Albany. This was immediately preceding the freedom riots which I had taken part in and we went to Albany with Dr. King and the campaign there was a beautiful campaign but I don't we succeeded as much as we wanted to. But we provided the nation with the first massive direct action campaign that was kind of planned. This was the first, many more were to follow of course but this was the first. A great deal happened in Albany we proved that negroes could get together easily...(Tape End)