

# Rhodes College Digital Archives - DLynx

## Ronald Ivy, Memphis State University BSA, 1968

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David Yellin- This is May 9<sup>th</sup> Thursday 4 pm. This is the second tape, the second tape with Roland Ivy the second tape, thank you. As I recall last time we ended right after the mini riot and were talking around it, concerning it. What I would like to do today is kind of continue in sort of chronological order, framework, but you don't have to stick to it and then get to the Martin Luther King confab or meeting and so on and then just go on from there. I do have a keen desire to ask you about this kind of thing and a couple other mainly because I think from the historical point of view I think it would be valuable. Or if you want to we can start with that so we don't forget?

Ron Ivy- This is simply a carbon of the overhead of a black man.

David Yellin- Of a?

Ron Ivy- Of a black man.

David Yellin- And what does it called?

Ron Ivy- It is called, they call it several names I don't call it anything. Actually it is a symbol supposedly to symbolize black unity.

David Yellin- And what does it symbolize what does it mean?

Ron Ivy- I mean it is supposed to symbolize black unity and a connection with the afro-American heritage.

David Yellin- I see, is this only a positive thing or is it negative as somebody mentioned to me that you don't like the white or you hate the white?

Ron Ivy- No it is actually supposedly a positive, I guess you would I don't know any other term for it but just...

David Yellin- Well it symbolizes something for, not against.

Ron Ivy- No it is not a negative, it is not a supposedly.

David Yellin- You can do one without the other. But well excuse me I have to stop nit now...(Tape Break)

David Yellin- Ok.

Ron Ivy- (muffled) element like everything else. It started off being symbolic and now it has began to become affair more or less.

David Yellin- And it might even lose its meaning because people have it, my son has some thing. Was it called a nikki?

Ron Ivy- No a tiki.

David Yellin- A tiki. Is that what that is?

Ron Ivy- This is what they are beginning to call it now.

David Yellin- I guess the whole kind of tiki but you have a special African mask. I once saw an exhibit of African art.

Ron Ivy- This was probably from the guy who called this took his copy form a book of African design.

David Yellin- Incidentally that art was just tremendous just fabulous. And based on ancient and primitive art and just (muffled) it was on television and the Milwaukee museum I believe. Very very good. Also I just wanted to ask you, you hear this and you want to get it authentic. Two things, when you wear white pants does that mean anything?

Ron Ivy- Not exactly.

David Yellin- Oh really, I am getting misinformation. Do you know what the objection was or is to the city of Memphis symbol or insignia? Did you ever hear that? I think when reverend Bell came down the aisle on that February 24<sup>th</sup> he said we are going to burn the symbol we don't like it and I don't know it was never explained, it surely wasn't in the papers.

Ron Ivy- Well as far as I could understand I didn't put too much thought into it as far as I could understand it was just another attempt to break up this connections of, on the part of Memphians and on the part of people in this part of the country period. Two glorify the past and to symbolize the past and to try to perpetuate it.

David Yellin- Because if I remember the symbol it has a steamboat and cotton on it.

Ron Ivy- cotton on it and I think there is a picture of a negro.

David Yellin- Really?

Ron Ivy- With a white suit or something I can't say, but it is something like this is an old cotton south.

David Yellin- Slavery.

Ron Ivy- Yeah.

David Yellin- Well I can understand that because I remember...

Ron Ivy- Traditionalism.

David Yellin- Yeah when we first came here the book by the chamber of commerce it had an old slave kind of thing with cotton.

Ron Ivy- I think this was in line with what people have been doing for years (Muffled) I remember now a little boy, my people eat a lot of oysters for some reason, Now they were from Memphis my mother was from Memphis and my father

was from not far from Memphis but they eat a lot of oysters and we would go to stores and niggerhead oysters.

David Yellin- What did you call them?

Ron Ivy- Niggerhead, this is the brand name.

David Yellin- On the can? Really?

Ron Ivy- Yeah and now it is called negrohead, we laughed about it then and said the next step is it will be called coloredhead.

David Yellin- Colored and then black head.

Ron Ivy- Like the Methodist church has changed.

David Yellin- Really they did I'll be darned.

Ron Ivy- It changed from the African Methodist Episcopal church to colored Methodist Episcopal church and now it is something else I don't know what it is now.

David Yellin- Yeah well ok do you recall anymore symbols and any special signs or...

Ron Ivy- Well there are numerous hand shakes now, in every part of the country. Black people have this thing if you can go through this hand shake then you are our head brother. A brother that said so, a brother...it's more of a clenched fist that type of thing, a brother in the sense of being in the spirit of black militancy and togetherness.

David Yellin- You mean it is a series of things and it is not a handshake like so.

Ron Ivy- No it is not just something.

David Yellin- Kind of like (muffled).

Ron Ivy- This and this.

David Yellin- Yeah we use to do that as kids, I don't know (muffled).

Ron Ivy- I had several but this is something now mixed in with the neo-civil rights movement. I choose to call it the black revolution. The latest stage of black revolution.

David Yellin- Well I guess this is a good time because I recall what you said last time and I was going to ask you about that phrase you said with quotes worthy of so-called militants and the black revolutionary movement and I gather the reason that you were at these conferences we are going to talk about was because of your association with that. Ok, well I presume we will get to that and so let's leave unless you can think of anything about the min riot on March 28<sup>th</sup>, anything and you gave

me a very vivid description which I must thank you because really in my mind I can see it which I couldn't before, just from you were. I still want to find out more about the beginning the head of the line. So that night then, after then and how long did the gas affect you?

Ron Ivy- Well the gas I mean the went (muffled) gas bombs (muffled) By the time I had gotten in the church and walked around a while I could, you know I was together again and my mind was functioning but my eyes burned for quite some time, all day really.

David Yellin- (muffled).

Ron Ivy- And so forth got Reverend Lawson to find some people in the churches and the first thing he said was if you have been sprayed with gas if you came in contact with it don't rub your eyes. SO I didn't rub my eyes but they did stay, they burned for quite a while and my legs were rather weak and so forth but it wore off I guess in a couple of hours, 2 hours.

David Yellin- Yes, because this happened in the morning about 11 or so right?

Ron Ivy- Yes.

David Yellin- Then can you remember what you did?

Ron Ivy- Yeah I think I can. Well we left the church we walked up and down and I think my car was parked on Vance. We got in the car and we sat and surveyed the (muffled).

David Yellin- So you and how many there were?

Ron Ivy- There were a car full of us really.

David Yellin- From Memphis state?

Ron Ivy- Yeah. About 5 or so, 5 or 4 fellows and a girl. We rode around for a while and then we went to Owen College and for some reason they had locked the door to Owen College. So we sit down on the steps and chit chatted with the Owen kids for awhile. We left and we decided we were coming out here they saying that let's go out to Memphis state and see how many brothers didn't come down to march. You know we were going (muffled) meddle the guys that didn't come to march and so we came out here. And we got out here and we didn't find too many people here at all and so we went downstairs and students talked awhile and we got into a few arguments about why the march, why the violence broke out.

David Yellin- So among your selves?

Ron Ivy- Among ourselves. The regular discussion on what had happened and everybody had a different experience to relate to these things. Well later on...

David Yellin- Were there any unusual ones you can remember?

Ron Ivy- Not, just about everybody had experiences (muffled) mace being thrown, tear gas.

David Yellin- Any body hit?

Ron Ivy- A couple guys had gotten hit in the head with a billy stick but they weren't hurt. We had one very serious thing, I think it was very serious something that made everybody angry all over here as soon as we heard that some fellows had asked, had told us to come on down to the Big M, this is when it was a café (muffled)> Anyway they say come on down to the Big M, this is when we were about to go into the church, this is before the policemen had caught up...

David Yellin- Yeah this is after the riot sort of broke up.

Ron Ivy- Yeah and we didn't go, I didn't go first of all because I didn't have too much money in my pocket to go out and spend it but as soon as we got to the store we found out the policemen had raided the Big M and one of our, one of our fellow students out here had gotten into some vicious violence and some guys that had gone to school...

David Yellin- Was he there?

Ron Ivy- Yeah, they were going to school over here like Kenneth Dotson and a few others they had gotten hurt badly and had to go to the hospital.

David Yellin- Really?

Ron Ivy- Yeah and this guy's brother told us the story of what happened there and it tended to make everybody angry.

David Yellin- When did he tell you that that day or the next day.

Ron Ivy- This happened to be told on Friday.

David Yellin- Friday, so the next day. I read about that.

Ron Ivy- It was Thursday really thinking that the march was on Friday he told this to us on Thursday afternoon before I guess they had it in the papers.

David Yellin- Yeah I read about it in the Tri-state Defender and picture and testimony from a lot of people. Ok then the next day was Friday the 29<sup>th</sup>, anything happen over the weekend?

Ron Ivy- The next day was Friday, if I can remember, I don't remember too much after Friday because certain weeks I called people and people called me and they were saying well what is to be done. Nobody seems to want to do anything. The curfew was down and everybody was frightened in a sense, they were afraid of what the soldiers would do and that sort of thing. The night before, the terrible night as far as in our neighborhoods were concerned because this was the first time that I

could remember troops walking around in our front yard in big jeeps with machine guns on the park on the side of the house. We live on the corner of Lauderdale and Cleveland and this was going on all night. Some guy was throwing a cocktail or throwing a bottle in the window all night and every time the bottle would hit you would hear the window break and then you would hear sirens and (muffled) and hear all these heavy trucks.

David Yellin- Did you stay inside?

Ron Ivy- Yeah I stayed inside on Thursday night. Friday I don't think too many people were too anxious to do anything and Saturday it was about the same situation Saturday.

David Yellin- What was the reaction to two things, excuse me, two things. One, did you have any reaction to the fact that this was in a sense that the first time that Martin Luther King had been involved in a march that was broken up because of violence from the marchers themselves, of course there was so many other things that there was violence.

Ron Ivy- Well my reaction to that, I thought about that and I said about that it was almost like a I told you so type of thing. I had long since arrived at the conclusion that this nonviolent direct action, these demonstrations that were supposed to be peaceable, could only be peaceable if the opposing force where the people they were demonstrating against allowed it. And I had it fixed in my mind that the police here and the administration here didn't condone the demonstrations therefore they would do anything they could to do everything to stop it, and regardless of whether Dr. King was leading or whoever was leading the march that day they would try to do everything they could to stop it. I had from just hearsay hearing talk and so forth I knew that the white Memphians didn't necessarily like Dr. King. And I knew that in regards of how much the might say they would rather have King here than Stokely Carmichael or Ratt Brown. I knew that they disliked them just as much so in terms of violence breaking out because King was here I don't think King had any control over violence, I don't think anybody can really control it. You couldn't stop it, you couldn't stop it once it came, I don't think you can control whether or not it happens. You can try to eliminate the problems that might frustrate people and might make people angry. Give criminal elements the opportunity to do certain things. You can use preventative measures but I don't think the man Martin Luther king had the power or the support or the following or anything else to actually get people to psychologically say that I am going to be nonviolent because of the presence of Dr. Martin Luther King.

David Yellin- You didn't believe that?

Ron Ivy- I didn't believe it. So when the first violence erupted like I said it really didn't surprise me that violence erupted what surprised me was the degree of violence. After all I have been in Memphis all my life like all the people that said I

never thought this would happen in Memphis, well I didn't either. I never thought that the degree of the bouts would reach the point of...

David Yellin- Why didn't you think that?

Ron Ivy- Simply because I never thought Memphians had cared enough about anything besides the cotton carnival and little trivial things like that, really especially Memphis negros. I didn't think they cared nothing about anything to become that angry and frustrated. To give violent to resolve. Neither did I think, I was rather surprised that the police.....all my life in coming in contact with policemen the fist thing, one of the first things that most negro kids especially in the lower class areas, one of the things they learn in the first place is that a cop is not your friend. A cop is a guy you called when you can't call anybody else and a cop was a guy that you don't get around unless you have to. The cop is a guy that you might expect him to do anything. But I really didn't thin that the policemen would(muffled) some of the children that they did, like women and children, I didn't think they could do this but they did and this simply I guess, added to my slight mistrust in policemen,. I think it was the same feeling in a lot of people.

David Yellin- Ok. Can we, the next step.

Ron Ivy- Well the next step as far as I am concerned here, I went to Hamilton Friday.

David Yellin- That is your school.

Ron Ivy- We didn't have any classes.

David Yellin- Do you teach history or political science there?

Ron Ivy- History.

David Yellin- History, what year?

Ron Ivy- 12<sup>th</sup> grade.

David Yellin- Oh.

Ron Ivy- We had school but we didn't have any classes because the students didn't tend to have class. In other words the students had decided that they didn't have any superiors. I suppose this is natural. In otherwards they followed the policemen and the teachers didn't help them the principal is in his office he is obviously had something to do with getting the policemen there too they didn't act as there were no superiors they were free they could do what they wanted to do. They always wanted to miss class so they just didn't have class.

David Yellin- I mean yeah any excuse is a good one but...

Ron Ivy- Didn't anybody try to...

David Yellin- How did the kids get along with you or vice versa?

Ron Ivy- Well I had a pretty good relationship with most of the kids.

David Yellin- Do they think of you as an older generation?

Ron Ivy- No, this is maybe one of my problems, I don't have this protective device.

David Yellin- I don't know whether it is a problem.

Ron Ivy- I don't have this protective device, in other words they come to me and say what they want to say and the way they say it to their peers or anyone else. I have a pretty good relationship with most of them and I talked to several of them downtown Thursday before the march started, several of them were down there talking.

David Yellin- Ron would you entertain an idea or have you already done this, or do you think it would do any good. Because part of what we want to do is to get as much of a record as possible. Would you think about asking your classes or if it is not too late, their reaction.

Ron Ivy- Well I have done this. As a matter of fact I spent all day Monday, the following Monday, doing just this.

David Yellin- Did they write it down?

Ron Ivy- No, I didn't write anything.

David Yellin- Did they write anything down, or was that too hard you think?

Ron Ivy- No they didn't write it down, we just spent a day, a whole day discussing what had happened. What I was really doing was trying to find out how they thought about it.

David Yellin- Do you remember what they did think about it?

Ron Ivy- Yeah there was every, all of the kids seemed to be proud of what happened at Hamilton on Friday. They seem to have that as the last thing, the escape from the prison. This is what they call Hamilton and they had to escape from the prison and they (muffled).

(muffled)

David Yellin- You were talking about the Hamilton students that is interesting that they were escaping from....

Ron Ivy- They had attitudes that we did, it was as if they had been wanting to do some thing like this all the time because they have a, their attitude towards the physical is a critical situation. They look at him as an uncle tom as somebody that needs to be gotten rid of but he has the power now because he is the principle and all of them seem to have the attitude that if they ever can they are going to get him you see. So this was one of the ways they seem to feel about what happened at

Hamilton and that is one of the ways that they had shown the principle that he wasn't the omnipotent person that he thinks he is. He is the most egotistical man I have ever talked to in my life.

David Yellin- What is his name?

Ron Ivy- His name is Harry T. Cash. He is very egotistical.

David Yellin- I have seen his name in the paper, it might be interesting to talk to him and see what makes him tick.

Ron Ivy- I was going to, I don't recall if he is an uncle tom because I have a personal definition of an uncle tom.

David Yellin- And what is that, you know I was going to ask it.

Ron Ivy- An uncle tom means a person who loves the condition he is in. That is a person that loves his separate class citizenship and loves the roles he has to play and a person that truly thinks he is inferior a person that truly thinks the white man is superior to him and there are people like this believe it or not. There are people that truly say they will sit down and say things like a nigger ain't nothing, I wouldn't buy anything from a nigger. I place all my trust in the white man you know.

David Yellin- Did they mean themselves too you think?

Ron Ivy- Yeah.

David Yellin- Really?

Ron Ivy- This is, they accept the fact that they say I am inferior. White man is better and this is an uncle tom to me. Mr. Cash to me is a very egotistical man, a man who has dealt politically with his job. A man who has, in other words pulled off deals and things to get in the position he is. A man who is proud of it and won't let anything stand in the way of a man who would sacrifice his personal dignity to keep his job.

David Yellin- Well I wonder when you egotistical it is kind of hard to be both, I don't mean to catch you but let's kind of explore that.

Ron Ivy- He is egotistical very egotistical but the (muffled) that he is it is strange that for instance if a white man was to talk to Mr. Cash I imagine, I have seen it, I have heard it, I have never seen him in that situation as a matter of fact I have been trying to catch him in one so I could see. He seems to be the kind of person that would smile and grin and go through all the playing the role, the role of lesser to in the face of the white man. But to his own people he (muffled)

David Yellin- I just wonder I mean I am not saying or disputing your observations, but perhaps and I don't know this Mr. Cash it is unfair, generally the prototype of what you are saying I believe we all know people of this kind...

Ron Ivy- The reason that I sort of think this is what he would do is because I had told people about Mr. Cash and all of them seem to have a very high opinion of him. They seem to say he is such a nice man, such an honorable man. I, Mr. Cash being honorable? This man who sits down and tells us for two hours that he is the master teacher and that he is great and that he is this and he did this and he did that and.....

David Yellin- Well he, I am just trying to figure out that he instead of feeling that negro the black man is a second class citizen and he is not any better and the white man is better he probably likes to perpetuate that myth because he himself has learned to bridge the relationship and he is not only comfortable but he is happy and powerful he has all the power and it reminds me of the time early when integration was taking place why the negroes were against integration.

Ron Ivy- He was one of them, I know the NAACP demonstrated in front of Hamilton high school and this was awful, that they would have to demonstrate against a negro principal.

David Yellin- Now to get back to the kids who are still my greater interest, you know Mr. Cash is going to go on.

Ron Ivy- Well these children some of them were angry, very angry attitude about...

David Yellin- Did the idea that they finally did something and part of it was to get even with him and this is always but also was it part of what we have to call an expression of their own worthiness masculinity, maleness whatever you want even females and particularly the females and I am sure there were girls in their too.

Ron Ivy- Quite a few.

David Yellin- But they were acting I am a man, in the true sense of...

Ron Ivy- They were very proud of themselves this what I was saying. Very proud of what part they had taken the part that they had played in what had happened. They were very proud of the fact that they were downtown when it all started. They were very proud of the fact that they had made(muffled) one of the boys told me he was a veteran. He seemed a very proud veteran of what had happened. And they expressed...

David Yellin- Well you know people can't understand that, I can remember as a kid and I lived in kind of a sort of ghetto, it wasn't a ghetto of poverty but it was a ghetto of religion and to go downtown you felt like you were a big man. And I ma not surprised that they were downtown in the middle of the day in a school day and all of that gives you a great feeling and that is all part of it. Well ok, do you think, what are he kids like now?

Ron Ivy- Now I think they are a little bit confused, I think they are a very confused now. I think it is the fault of several people including myself probably. At least my students I think that I probably have something to do with adding to that confusion

in other words, they are lost as to which leaders to follow and so forth. Dr. King's death had a tremendous effect on...

David Yellin- On how?

Ron Ivy- Since that this was the only man not and they probably felt the same thing. This was the only man that regardless of what he advocated that they disagreed with, regardless of how many other people disagreed with him or how many other people agreed with him he seemed to be the one man that everybody could be loyal to. He seemed to be the one man who everybody could follow regardless of their personal convictions they would follow him because he was Martin Luther King because he was just one leader.

David Yellin- Why do you think that is? I mean really?

Ron Ivy- I think that, I look at it almost the same way, in other words I had compared Dr. King nationally to myself on Memphis State's campus, myself with the black student association.

David Yellin- Alright.

Ron Ivy- The fact that most of the black students on this campus disagreed with my personal convictions and yet they did still follow me. They would follow me on anything I suppose, that was the reason I was always (muffled) what I was doing. They follow me out of some respect. In other words they said you did such and I think it may have been because he was the beginning the person that really began. He second phase, I won't say second phase, but he previous phase of the black revolution. He was the man that said well, he was the man that began the sit-ins and marches and freedom riots, this man began this active resistance movement in this country.

David Yellin- Ron I have an idea. You are a fellow who obviously thinks about these things and so on. As we said the other day early on you were intellectual and (muffled) What do you think of this for the reason of Martin Luther King. It is just hat listening to you and somehow thinking visually of these kids here. In the main most people aren't as logical as you are or you are making them out to be, the logic comes usually after an emotional reaction. It seems to me that what Martin Luther King had for the negro people is that no matter what he did, or let me put it another way, the cause and it did matter what he did, the Nobel Prize which people didn't understand in particular but they did in essence and so on and a matter that all through these things that you point out that he did. He still was and always a negro and reflecting the negro feeling and remained as oppose to anybody even, Jackie Robinson, Ralph Bunch, Sammy Davis, Howard Bellefonte, who always in their success and eminence became close to the white establishment. But Martin Luther King even though he was acknowledged and even in a sense embraced by part of the white was always a negro. And maybe this was what the kids felt that he was their identity.

Ron Ivy- When they would hear him speak they didn't hear the, I have heard people call him recently since he is dead a very eloquent speaker but when they heard Martin Luther King speak it wasn't like going out to hear Ralph Bunch speak. When you went out to hear Ralph Bunch speak you always went out as if you were going to hear Goodman institute lecture on something. But when you went to hear Dr. King speak you heard a Baptist minister and all negroes I don't care what faith they are, they like to hear Baptist ministers because they speak in the old southern negro vernacular and they speak with this emotional thing and they could, in other words he was the type of man even though eh was nationally important you know he was a nobel peace prize winner, he was known throughout the world but he was still the type of man you wouldn't feel out of place if you went over (muffled) we get this but at the meeting we had the youngest fellows with us and walked up and docked him a cigarette. It was just like this he just wasn't, didn't seem to be this guy that...

David Yellin- He was humble, he was really humble.

Ron Ivy- And he went in his pocket and he said if I had a dollar for every cigarette I would give away I would have enough money to finance the march to Washington.

David Yellin- He said that?

Ron Ivy- Yeah.

David Yellin- That is interesting you say that I don't remember, I really don't remember. I think it was the night before when he made that (muffled) beautiful speech. The night before here and also that Sunday in Washington I have sent he mountain. You know when he was talking, I think it was here now that I think of it. Then he started as somebody who was watching with me said, boy now he is pouring it on, now he is the Baptist ministers, this is not the exact, but and it really was and I remember hearing him once up north when he did that and the tone he would take. That is, I think so much of that has to do with his, he never lost his identity you know.

Ron Ivy- No he didn't.

David Yellin- And if there is anything that I suppose that would testify to what we have to call his greatness is this very fact, because I guess we are also saying that he didn't become what he had to in his position, he made his position kind of fit him and this is very very important and I am interested and I think we all should be about the very, at the march how, of course afterwards how it was so easy for people who disagreed with him not to feel conscious stricken and I mean the negroes. Because they knew all the time kind of his affiliation or their affiliation. Ok the kids, they are lost now they don't know what leader to have.

Ron Ivy- No, for instance the march to the poor people's march.

David Yellin- Yes.

Ron Ivy- They don't ordinarily talk to teachers about things like this because most of them have the attitude that their teachers are uncle toms, the teachers work for the white folk and you don't talk to teachers because you may as well be giving up all your secrets. But quite a bit, most of them talk to me, because one first of all they say I am playing teacher. They say you are playing teacher and then they hear me speak and I speak in the same vernacular they speak in. I can talk all their jive talk they can and I would look funny if I was to say the loud colors they wore and you know they just relate to me as part of their generation I guess you could say and then too they know I like to talk and they can talk whatever they want to talk they know they can always find a conversation. And several of the kids said to me, they said (muffled)

David Yellin- They call you Mr. Ivy?

Ron Ivy- Yeah, they said are you going to Washington. I said well if I go I am just going to see what's happening because I think it is (muffled) for negros to try and organize after (muffled) whites, Mexicans and everybody else and they can't even get themselves together at least they haven't yet gotten themselves together. And they would say well I don't know what to do, my preacher told me Sunday that he was going and he urged the congregation to go. My mother says, you can't go. Some of the kids said my mother said that is up to you whether or not you want to go and school administration said you had better not go. And they were very confused over just this and then they were confused about Ralph Abernathy. A lot of them they didn't know Abernathy, they had always seen Abernathy every time Dr. King would speak Abernathy would speak but he was sort of a liked playing the supporting role. He wasn't the star and he didn't know how to, they didn't trust Abernathy and they didn't know the other SCLC members and they didn't trust hem and they knew that negro preachers had been known for swindling their congregations out of all this money buying Cadillac's with it, so they didn't have very much trust with the preachers yet in still they wanted to since like they said Hamilton is in now, this is the expression they used, they know us now because we made news in New York you see. So they feel this attachment now to the movement as a fellow put it there they are veterans and they all part of themselves and yet they were confused they didn't know whether to follow these people, they didn't know what to do.

David Yellin- Well maybe we will get back tot hat because I think you would say that is not only true of he young people.

Ron Ivy- This is true of...

David Yellin- A lot of people. Now I don't want to get lost now in the events. When if you can remember, I guess if there was anything that happened before April 1<sup>st</sup> was a Monday the 2<sup>nd</sup> and when Martin Luther King said that the reason the march disrupted was because for the first time in his career neither he or his aides made any preparation. We did not talk to the militants, of course thereby presuming that militants were responsible for this, you said the other day that they weren't.

Ron Ivy- Yeah this was the first assumption that the invaders, that the militants did this. They were the cause of what had happened. Reverend Lawson even though I don't think he never came out and accused anybody personally but he made several references to the black organizing project as being the ...which includes the invaders. He made several references to this group, he didn't call it by name but everybody knew who he was talking about as the people who started this.

David Yellin- That is the (muffle) outfit.

Ron Ivy- And then Dr. King put aside reverend Lawson.

David Yellin- Where did he do this?

Ron Ivy- Reverend Lawson had...he I don't know where he did it but it has been accepted that Dr. King had, it was in the papers and everything that Dr. King had said reverend Lawson didn't do a good job in planning and organizing the demonstration. He said that the reverend Lawson had failed to communicate with the militants and I heard reverend Lawson say himself at one of the strategy meetings at Clayborne Temple that he had everything under his control.

David Yellin- Yes.

Ron Ivy- So Dr. King and his crew came into Memphis I suppose, thinking this was already planned and that they were just invited guests but they found out that it wasn't planned properly and that since he was supposed to be reporting it meeting the demonstration the blame actually came down first on him and then he felt the need to rectify his position that is to what did he say, I have got to prove that I can lead a (muffled) demonstration.

David Yellin- That there can be , yes, and (muffled). So how then did you become involved next?

Ron Ivy- Well the next thing that happened reverend (muffled) started to get into contact with the 50 members at (muffled).

David Yellin- I assume you are a member.

Ron Ivy- Yeah.

David Yellin- Can you tell me how do you become a member?

Ron Ivy- Well anybody that wants to become a member is automatically accepted.

David Yellin- Oh it is not a...

Ron Ivy- (muffled) We do have a structure. But how I became a member I was one of the, this is another example of something I helped organize and naturally help sister (muffled) organize it, I was incorporated into the governing structure. But reverend Orange started to get into contact with several people and then they in turn called

me and said that reverend Orange wanted to have a meeting. Well I didn't make the meeting the first meeting he had.

David Yellin- When was that?

Ron Ivy- This was Monday, Sunday night and Monday.

David Yellin- Sunday you said March 31<sup>st</sup>.

Ron Ivy- Yes, Sunday night and Monday I think they were all staying at the Lorraine.

David Yellin- They had two meetings?

Ron Ivy- I don't know I think it was just a thing where they talked all day Sunday and Monday and what reverend Orange was trying to do he was trying to first of all get cooperation from us for the new demonstration they were trying to plan. Plus he seemed interested in our program. He said that our program was the type of program they would like to see initiated in a large urban cities, large urban areas.

David Yellin- Now can you tell me more about your program if not now later.

Ron Ivy- I can tell you later.

David Yellin- Alright yes, let's go on with this and we will go back to it.

Ron Ivy- Well then there was a meeting, he wanted to meet with the executive board about what they should...which just includes representatives from the different cells, the different factions. Now these are college kids from the different campuses, the invaders and what we call the cats downtown.

David Yellin- The cats.

Ron Ivy- The cats downtown.

David Yellin- Just the cats downtown.

Ron Ivy- Yeah. So this meeting was supposedly with Dr. King and his staff however the meeting was held at the Lorraine Motel Tuesday, Tuesday night at ,we started around 6:00. And we got to the meeting and I took three fellows from out here with me...

David Yellin- So 4 in all?

Ron Ivy- Four of us. And at the meeting there were several, there were some people I didn't know, and I still don't know who they were form out of town. There was this guy down from Cairo Illinois.

David Yellin- These are all black people?

Ron Ivy- Yeah, from a group representing a group that I think they called the Liberators in Cairo Illinois. And that was up north and they talked about what they

had been, they say trying to fill in everybody what had been transgressed Sunday and Monday, that is what they had been talking about. He and reverend Owens were singing, Dr. King in his (muffled) he couldn't get there, he didn't give a reason he just said Dr. King had some urgent business.

David Yellin- Yeah he was in Memphis at the time Dr. King?

Ron Ivy- No he wasn't there. I know he hadn't gotten here, but he was supposed to get here, for this meeting.

David Yellin- That is right, he came in Wednesday morning instead of Tuesday night.

Ron Ivy- (Muffled) so we had the discussion with, had two purposes really,, one thing we want to hear what this guy from the Liberators wanted, what he had to, what he was here for, we wanted to know what he was here for and why he chose to come in this meeting what he had to, what program he wanted to sell us on. And what did he want from us and so forth, And really he didn't want anything he just came down, he was just another guy who came down that was almost like a reporter from his organization.

David Yellin- And he was only alone, himself?

\_Ron Ivy- He was alone, yeah. He had cameras and everything with him, he was sort of like a press agent from this group in Cairo.

David Yellin- And he showed you pictures or he was going to take pictures here to bring back?

Ron Ivy- Yes.

David Yellin- I see.

Ron Ivy- Then reverend Orange talked to us, we argued with him for I guess about two hours about, well first of all we were trying to find out whether or not we could get SCLC to implement our program. Reverend Orange stated that he thought our program was a good program and if his fellow staff members agreed than he thought that they could do something in the way of implementing our program.

David Yellin- With money?

Ron Ivy- With money and moral support and so forth. Influence really, we didn't expect them to give us any money we just wanted that group, his group SCLC since it did have national contacts.

David Yellin- Now did you want this overt support, I mean that they would give the stamp everybody would know it?

Ron Ivy- We wanted overt support from SCLC, well he said that Dr, King would be there the next day and he would go over the program with Dr. King and with his fellow staff being members and set up a meeting with us the next day. However,

later on that night it turned to a pretty productive meeting because later on that night Jesse Jackson got in.

David Yellin- I Must confess I have heard, I think he is..

Ron Ivy- Jesse Jackson got in, and Jesse Jackson was concerned with trying to find out why the black organizing project wasn't working in a coordinated effort with COME and the ministerial alliance. And we told him how the ministerial alliance looked at us, the fact that they said we were undesirable and that we were young militants and they didn't want to have anything to do with us and he had talked to them prior to talking to us.

David Yellin- Oh he had.

Ron Ivy- He had talked to them prior to talking to us and he said yeah because this is attitude that they expressed to him, that we weren't to be trusted, that we were dangerous and so forth.

David Yellin- Had they ever tried to get in touch with you in connection with the march on the 28<sup>th</sup> or the one that was....

Ron Ivy- Actually they had never tried to get in touch with us they had tried to get in touch with them.

David Yellin- Oh you had.

Ron Ivy- Yes, we had tried to attend one strategy meeting and they told us that our presence wasn't desired.

David Yellin- Now who actually told you?

Ron Ivy- This is reverend Lawson speaking he said our presence wasn't desired at the strategy meeting.

David Yellin- And this was before the snow storm had cancelled that first march?

Ron Ivy- Yes this is before. Well that night Jesse Jackson said well he was trying to figure out a way, he saw a need for a united effort, he said that he thought it was stupid for us to be over her and COME to be over there and he said as far as funds were concerned he thought he said it would be easier to get somebody to help him in a program such as ours if there wasn't this factionalism in the, among the leaders, among he membership.

David Yellin- Yeah, Ron can I ask you something because it seems to me important for me to understand and we will get back to chronological order now that we have Jesse Jackson and his t-shirt and...I great admirer when I heard him speak. When you are talking now about your program and COME and getting together, were you then I mean, now being then. Were you then referring or using as a frame of reference for action between you the strike, sanitation strike or overall or what?

Ron Ivy- Well we were not necessarily talking about the sanitation strike simply because the sanitation strike was so political, so politically oriented. The black community supposedly was behind the sanitation workers therefore we were behind the sanitation workers. However, the ethics on the part of the black community out, other than the sanitation workers and the union were being handled by COME therefore, we were certainly concerned, we were concerned with the fact that we weren't given any part in directing or any efforts for any programs to show the support or to gather support from the black community for the sanitation workers.

David Yellin- Now do you feel, and I have never heard it charged but this is just something that comes up as you explain it that the COME used or took advantage of or in some way made capital out of the fact that by intruding into the sanitation strike they would therefore take the leader in the whole movement.

Ron Ivy- Yeah this seemed to, this, well I think they had the attitude even before the sanitation workers strike, that if anybody was going to take over the movement it was going to be the ministers, it was going to be through the church because of the actual power that negro ministers have over the negro community. So we did feel that they had assumed more authority than had been delegated to them.

David Yellin- Now do you think for instance that there had been some kind of a Jesse, say Jesse Jackson's feeling had been put into effect. Well that is not a fair question but I think it is important now more important than what would have happened so we will get to that ok, strike that.

Ok Jesse Jackson meet with you and he agreed with you that COME really didn't want you to come.

Ron Ivy- Jackson was here and eh tried to clear up these personal (muffled) the fact that reverend Lawson didn't like Charles Cabbage, reverend Lawson didn't like certain members in our organization., He didn't know me personally, so he couldn't dislike me personally.

David Yellin- Until he met you?

Ron Ivy- Yeah. He would say what is, he was trying to find out what was it about, this man Lawson. Made people dislike him, made young negros dislike him.

David Yellin- Now Lawson really was the leader of COME.

Ron Ivy- Yeah the was actually the chairman of the strategy committee. He was trying to figure out why is it that there was this personal conflict and the reasons that they gave I couldn't relate to them because the transactions that had gone on between, reverend Lawson and certain members in our organization just didn't relate to me, I have never been to reverend Lawson's church even though I have people that go to his church I have never been there. my only contact with reverend Lawson has been listening to him speak on several occasions.

David Yellin- Well what did for instance Charles Cabbage say?

Ron Ivy- Well basically said that Lawson didn't like them because he thought he knew everything because he knew all the answers and he thought that they should be all ears and...which I got the attitude from him too.

David Yellin- Of course that is kind of interesting you know it takes one to know one, when Lawson was a young man he was probably just like they were, don't you think? I mean of course he is articulate and he is bright and I don't think anybody denies that.

Ron Ivy- Yeah very, as a matter of fact I think one of the reasons that some of the members in our organization dislikes Lawson is because he is such a true (muffled).

David Yellin- Yes and because he does have the answers you being to become suspicious of somebody right. So it is as almost so many things are kind of a personality thing as much as anything else.

Ron Ivy- Yeah and what Jackson was trying to tell us was that he thought it was stupid for us to let his personality stand in the way of something that good be worked up to something that could be very constructive as far as not only helping the sanitation workers but in continuing the movement here. I think Jackson, I don't think Jackson was that concerned with the sanitation workers strike, I think he was more concerned with eh movements continuance here and overall.

David Yellin- Of course the sanitation strike would eventually end and then what?

Ron Ivy- I think this is the main conjecture.

David Yellin- Was he persuasive in any way, did he make any inroads in your group that you saw?

Ron Ivy- Well, I think he did, was rather persuasive in that everybody started thinking in terms of comment or referencing (muffled) without disagreements. (muffled) everybody still had to maintain attitudes, but they thought that we should maintain a separate and distinct organization.

David Yellin- Why?

Ron Ivy- Mainly because of the distrust of (muffled). The fact that he preachers can always sell you out, the fact that they have done it for years and years they made political deals, they made political deals with Crump, they made political deals with politicians. I am going to get in my churches and I am going to condone your candidacy and I am going to preach, I am going to spend this Sunday preaching your campaign for so much money, this was known and (muffled) be a separate organization in the event that some preacher did decide to sell out, and with this whole COEM didn't mean that he would sell the whole group, the whole movement.

David Yellin- I see, he would cooperate with them but not have an official alliance in that sense. But still a voice in making...yeah just are there any ministers that are trusted?

Ron Ivy- No I don't think so. The closest man to being trusted was reverend Ralph Jackson and he came to the meeting that night also. Reverend Jackson came to the meeting and he came to the meeting with that invitation of saying that one of our, that we could have a representative on the strategy committee. And we did, get one at that point.

David Yellin- Who was it .

Ron Ivy- Charles Ballard.

David Yellin- Charles?

Ron Ivy- Ballot.

David Yellin- B-a-l-l-a-r-d?

Ron Ivy- He is our, he is the guy that keeps up with all the finances and figures and so forth.

David Yellin- I see, ok, now did...

Ron Ivy- (Muffled) secretaries.

David Yellin- Did Mr. Jackson the other...

Ron Ivy- This is reverend Ralph Jackson.

David Yellin- Not Ralph Jackson, not Ralph Jackson, but Jesse Jackson, did anybody ever insist that while why does they go and talk to the ministers?

Ron Ivy- Yeah that was have you talked to the preachers, and he said yes, well..

David Yellin- What do you call them preachers, ministers, or both?

Ron Ivy- Well we just call them preachers.

David Yellin- What would you call them in the vernacular if you weren't talking to me?

Ron Ivy- Preachers.

David Yellin- Preachers right. I thought you might have a kind of...

Ron Ivy- Of course sometimes we use the term nigger leaders. We use that term to mean those negros that have been appointed by the white press as our leaders.

David Yellin- Aha, see that is what I want to get, see that is rich stuff, we would never know that.

Ron Ivy- We usually refer to, these people as the nigger leaders.

David Yellin- But if I would call them that you would get mad would you?

Ron Ivy- Well not really, (muffled).

David Yellin- Right, ok. Now that meeting lasted Tuesday night?

Ron Ivy- That meeting Tuesday night lasted about, it lasted from about 3:00 in the evening until about 11:00 at night.

David Yellin- Yeah I still have to get used to that, you mean the afternoon.

Ron Ivy- Yeah.

David Yellin- See I am a northerner...

Ron Ivy- Lasted until..

David Yellin- What did you do for dinner, or for supper or what?

Ron Ivy- I don't remember eating anything.

David Yellin- You went through all this..

Ron Ivy- We just sit there, everybody just sit there and smoke.

David Yellin- Was it one of the hotel rooms or was it?

Ron Ivy- It was a hotel room that had a bedroom because I was sitting on the side of the bed, there was some chairs but not enough there.

David Yellin- About a dozen there or more?

Ron Ivy- Or there were about 20 people.

David Yellin- Good grief, ok and that meeting was over, what can you remember was the conclusion of that meeting how did you feel it had...

Ron Ivy- Well from that meeting these were the things that I saw that were accomplished first of all, we sent the man from Cairo Illinois back home, and he left with the attitude that there wasn't anything left of him to do here we had an organization that we seemed to know what we were doing and there wasn't any help he could give us.

David Yellin- So he announced that he was going home?

Ron Ivy- He just said he was going home, as a matter of fact, I think he got the address from a couple of people so he could write in case he wanted to know what

was happening or something like this. He went home and reverend Orange promised to present our program to SCLC.

David Yellin- Alright another curiosity thing for me reverend Orange was there and Jesse Jackson came in what was there relationship?

Ron Ivy- Well they were, they both served on the SCLC staff, Jesse Jackson had been to Clayborne Temple that night you see at the strategy meeting at the COME, the ministerial alliance and he was also staying at Lorraine Motel.

David Yellin- Yes, now did he intentionally come to your meeting?

Ron Ivy- Yes. As a matter of fact, we expected him.

David Yellin- I see so t hat was planned.

Ron Ivy- After the strategy meeting we expected him to come.

David Yellin- Alright so now then reverend Orange promised...

Ron Ivy- To present our program to Dr. King and he said that he would get in contact with us before the meeting time. He would set up with Dr. King the next day.

David Yellin- Now what was the immediate project? Was it the march coming up on Monday?

Ron Ivy- Yes the march coming up on Monday was all, on the agenda.

David Yellin- I mean at least you were going to see what you would do about towards that. But you could say then but however the since the meeting was also the overall they wanted Memphis to be organized and (muffled).

Ron Ivy- Yeah.

David Yellin- And they asked you to participate in the march?

Ron Ivy- No they didn't, they never asked us that night to participate. Some people, I don't remember who exactly was making accusations but some brothers were accusing reverend Orange of trying to get our support to get us to participate in the march Monday and so forth but reverend Orange said this wasn't his real concern, he said the staff, the SCLC staff wanted to talk to us. But this is not why he was there, he was there because he had read the program and he was interested, very interested in the program.

David Yellin- I see.

Ron Ivy- We ought to clear up certain things on the program about the program.

David Yellin- Did you trust him?

Ron Ivy- I didn't trust him personally anymore than I trusted anybody else. Like I said you can't trust anybody but you have to trust everybody. I wasn't going to follow him.

David Yellin- But did you feel that he was really trying to con you in?

Ron Ivy- I felt that he was sincere to his purpose and this is what is important that he is sincere to his purpose and I am sincere to my purpose where the only conflicts would be conflicts about purposes, not conflicts of personal things.

David Yellin- But did anybody, I mean I think this is relevant, I ma not quite sure yet how but....that did anybody in your group or that group feel that what the was doing (muffled) could very well been interested in your program that part yeah but their real objective was to be sure that they cause any trouble Monday?

Ron Ivy- I think that this was the opinion of most people that this was his real first, initial purpose in being there.

David Yellin- But he never said it was?

Ron Ivy- No he never..

David Yellin- In fact in a way he denied it?

Ron Ivy- Yeah well it was he was doing some thing that you yourself would do if you had this objective and you appreciate this.

Ron Ivy- Yeah we as a matter of fact, all of us appreciated it.

David Yellin- Yeah this is just something that he knew you knew, right and this is the way people go and I agree with you there is nothing dishonest with that.

Ron Ivy- As a matte of fact we saw it as two separate and distinct groups.

David Yellin- And you were well I don't want to say proud, but you at least felt fine that they recognize you in order to do this so that this was for you too, a kind of a thing that at least now we are being recognized and let's act right because we want to have a voice, we think we are right.

Ron Ivy- Yeah.

David Yellin- Oh so you supposedly left?

Ron Ivy- Well left until..

David Yellin- 11:00.

Ron Ivy- We accepted a couple of fellows were (muffled) through those days.

David Yellin- Oh you mean local people?

Ron Ivy- Yeah, (muffled) I don't know why they were staying but they just were. (Muffled) waiting for Dr. King and the staff the rest of Dr. King's staff, sort of pre-planned hospitality to SCLC staff. So I went home and most of the people did go home and the next day I got a call a the school from the Lorraine Motel saying that the meeting with Dr. King was set up for two o'clock Wednesday. The next day I (muffled) we left and we came out here and got you know the same fellows that were at the meeting the other day, the day before and we went to a motel even though nobody stayed from Memphis state but myself and William Harold and we went too....

David Yellin- (muffled).

Ron Ivy- Harold.

David Yellin- Was she...

Ron Ivy- We went to dinner first after talking in the room we went downstairs to the (muffled) room. This is when I first saw Dr. King that day.

David Yellin- Oh down on the patio, when you went up to the hotel room who was there?

Ron Ivy- Well this was just our organization.

David Yellin- Oh I see those were the men who were staying there.

Ron Ivy- Yeah and we went down to the (muffled) Dr. King greeted us and we sat down and he told us to order the things that we want. And everybody catfish, everybody eating catfish and drank coffee and apple pie. We drank beer but of course the ministers drank coffee.

David Yellin- That is a dirty trick.

Ron Ivy- Then what was being discussed at the table, at Dr. King's table, big table the head table I guess you might call it was the injunction.

David Yellin- Oh yes.

Ron Ivy- That (muffled).

David Yellin- And who was there do you recall?

Ron Ivy- Well Dr. King, Jesse Jackson, his whole staff was there really. Reverend Abernathy everyone was standing there.

David Yellin- Was reverend Orange there too.

Ron Ivy- Yeah reverend Orange was here too, he insisted that he reverend Orange sit at our table because he was drinking beer. He was the youngest one of them and he was drinking beer.

David Yellin- And he was a minister of the COME organization here?

Ron Ivy- Yeah, my cousin Gerald Fanion went to reverend Lawson's (muffled) then we discussed the injunction (muffled). He didn't know what everybody else was thinking about it but he really wasn't concerned. He said they were going to fight the injunction but he wasn't in any (muffled) going to call off the planned march that Monday because of the injunction. He planned he said he as going to fight it but if they couldn't get the judge to overturn that they were going not go on anyway in spite of the injunction and then the (muffled) broke up and Dr. King went to a press conference and we weren't invited to.

David Yellin- Was it a the Lorraine Hotel?

Ron Ivy- Yes, this lasted about 10 minutes, this one lasted about 10 minutes from what I could gather he said the same thing at the press conference that he said at the (muffled) he said he was going to fight the injunction but if the injunction wasn't over turned that he was going to go on anyway.

David Yellin- At the banquets table did he make a speech and stand or was he (muffled)..

Ron Ivy- No he was, it was a very informal type of thing, everybody was speaking in very informal jive type vernacular.

David Yellin- Did he pour it on?

Ron Ivy- He just spoke like a soul brother language, he didn't go through, he didn't preach neither did he give a formal speech he was just talking like everybody else. Telling jokes and all.

David Yellin- When he talked like that, you said he talked vernacular. Did he use any phrases that you ordinarily you wouldn't hear?

Ron Ivy- Well the man himself spoke in, we said he spoke in the prophesy of Jesus, but he didn't. He had his poetic terms.

David Yellin- At all times.

Ron Ivy- His poetic flow in his voice.

David Yellin- At all times, even when he was just..

Ron Ivy- When he talked informally with cigarettes and so forth, he always spoke like he was reciting poetry.

David Yellin- But it didn't seem unnatural to you that he were...

Ron Ivy- No it just seemed like this is the way Dr. King would talk (muffled). SO he went to he press conference and afterwards, after about ten minutes reverend orange came in and he told us that the meeting with (muffled) was set up in the

conference room and we left the restaurant and we went up into the conference room. And Dr. King and the entire staff, we were surprised because we didn't know the entire staff was coming. We were under the impression that Dr. King and reverend Orange alone, reverend Abernathy, Andy Young.

David Yellin- Jesse Jackson.

Ron Ivy- Some of them I don't know. Hosea Williams. Al of these..

.David Yellin- Was reverend Bevel there?

Ron Ivy- Yeah but no. Bevel was not.

David Yellin- Now when you say you were surprised was that pleasant surprise?

Ron Ivy- No it wasn't pleasant it was just surprise. We (muffled) all these cats.

David Yellin- Well didn't you think that was more important and more pressing?

Ron Ivy- Well we felt that we had gotten more recognition the act that the whole SCLC staff had come to meet with us across the table, but we didn't sit in that order we just sit around the room. I was sitting directly opposite Dr. King and Jesse Jackson had just bought a new pair of shoes and he was over in the corner talking about how good his feet were going to feel once he got into these shoes and he called me fairly (muffled).

David Yellin- Army?

Ron Ivy- Army bros, that talk saying he is going to march all over the country, he was joking. And then the meeting started and Dr. King hadn't read our program. He said he hadn't had time to read our program and reverend Orange then explained it briefly what our program was.

David Yellin- Did he do a good job?

Ron Ivy- Yes. And Dr, King said you know, heard what member so his staff, reverend Abernathy, and reverend Young and Jesse Jackson and this one man I can't think of his name, he is a preacher I know on Dr. King's staff and he said something to Hosea Williams said some thing and then they all seemed to have the same attitude that they did like our program and they thought it was beautiful and then they started talking about money and Dr. King said, told us that the SCLC staff didn't have a lot of money that they were working on a tight budget and that a lot of the financial support that he had in the beginning of his movement and a as his movement grew he had lost, he said he had lost a lot of his support, financial support because he had taken his stand against the war in Vietnam. He stated he did still command lot of influence in far as interceding for us and on our behalf with certain contacts that he knew had funds that they gave to organizations like ours to start a program and get a program started. He promised us that he would at his earliest opportunity contact

a group in New York that were having meetings at the same time about giving funds to organizations like ours.

David Yellin- Did he mention that?

Ron Ivy- Yeah the name of the group it had something to do with the national council of churches. And it was a Presbyterian (muffled) I think but the exact name of it I don't know. But he said that he would call himself and that the reason he would call himself and we hoped that he would think this way, that his calling would put out a program on top priority.

David Yellin- Right.

Ron Ivy- He also said that Andy Young said rather that our program wasn't, hadn't been, I guess you would call it drawn up, it wasn't, idolized and so forth as far as legality and the things and that he volunteered his services to us because he said he was the man for SCLC. (muffled) so forth SCLC and he volunteered his services and he said that he would meet with Charles Ballard the next day at 9:00 in the restaurant at the Lorraine and go over the program and start to write the program as soon as he had the opportunity. And probably I think that what was more important to Dr. King wasn't the fact that he had (muffled) I think that what was more important to him was the fact that he was steadily all through the session he was steadily asking us and we respect his integrity and he was steadily trying to think to us that he respected ours and he said that as long as we respected his integrity, I guess she meant trusted him.

David Yellin- Did he mean himself personally?

Ron Ivy- I think he meant himself personally and his organization. I think when he spoke of myself, I think he spoke of respecting my integrity, I think he was saying speaking for his entire organization.

David Yellin- Now why would he ask you on what basis?

Ron Ivy- I think that he asked, he kept injecting this because he felt that we did not respect his integrity, I think he had the idea and where he got it from I am suspicious that the preachers might have told him that we had a lot to do with the violence that erupted Thursday because this was something he was quoted in the paper rather saying that some of the young militants were angry because they weren't getting a voice in planning on this and I think that he felt that we were angry with him.

David Yellin- Did he mean by his, yes I can see that.

Ron Ivy- He was trying to say don't be angry with me, because I am sincere and you can trust me because I believe that you are sincere and I trust you.

David Yellin- Well now how did he relate all of this to what he was trying to do, did he feel at any time that you were not even in favor of what he was trying to do?

Ron Ivy- I think that Dr. King knew that we did not follow his philosophy of nonviolence on down the line. That his nonviolence in all situations. I think he was, I know he was aware of this. But he was of the opinion that he had the attitude that we may because if we didn't trust him if we didn't respect him, and respect his integrity then we may try to stand in the way to mess up. Mess up an attempt of his organization.

David Yellin- But at the same time was he saying to you and I will put it in crude terms well I believe in nonviolence you may not believe in it why don't you come over to join me?

Ron Ivy- No he didn't.

David Yellin- What was he saying rather?

Ron Ivy- I don't think he was, I don't think he was even trying to persuade us to follow him but follow his philosophy either. I think what he was really trying to do was to eliminate the possibility of our disrupting the march Monday or any other march that he demonstrated or boycott or whatever he was trying to do.

David Yellin- So in other words when he would come up with a suggestion in a way he would say let me do it I am not hurting you in any way we are both out for the same thing eventually and at the same time was he saying however if you want to go ahead and do something you go ahead and do it and I won't stop in your way?

Ron Ivy- Yes.

David Yellin- So he wasn't suggesting however that you are violent?

Ron Ivy- He did say once that, he did say if you do something I think is wrong I am going to say you did something wrong but I am not going to try to stop you from doing what you think is right.

David Yellin- He was asking, he was of course allowing you to do the same thing.

Ron Ivy- Yes.

David Yellin- So what he was saying in other words too was we may disagree but at least we're on the same side and we should stay this way.

Ron Ivy- Right and he would tend to see that if at any time we had a meeting with him or his staff and we argued and we disagreed that once we left out of that meeting we said that we weren't to let anybody suspect that we had arguments and that we were disunited.

David Yellin- Even though we might be?

Ron Ivy- Yeah.

David Yellin- Because you were going to come together some other time and maybe, did you believe him?

Ron Ivy- Yes.

David Yellin- Now why did you believe him rather than Martin Luther King?

Ron Ivy- Now this is a strange, I don't think it is strange but this is the way it was. We, everybody respected and trusted Dr, King from the start anyway. I guess this, as a matter of fact before we had the meeting with him Wednesday. Some younger fellows were overanxious just to see him. You know they just wanted to get a chance to talk tot Dr., King and to sit at the same table with him. When we had left the meeting one of the boys said well, I ma going home to tell my mamma I sat at the table with Dr, King.

David Yellin- That's right, little did he know how important it was then.

Ron Ivy- Yeah.

David Yellin- Well how more important it was. So that he was, he had the respect of...

Ron Ivy- As a matter of fact one of the more outspoken and more militant members, said in the meeting one of the last things said, he said that Dr. King for the first time, he said I have been talking, UI have talked with people for the last year or so trying to get out program implemented and trying to get our program started and trying to get people to rectify with us as a group. He said for the first time a man has said he respected our integrity because everybody else...and he was speaking the truth, everybody else we had talked to seemed to they were talking with the attitude that we were dangerous. And that they had better not make any promises to us. And they had better not trust us in anyway because we were dangerous and they was no telling what time we might disrupt the whole city and might disrupt the whole country.

David Yellin- What did Dr. King say to that?

Ron Ivy- Dr. King said simply that he had, he was talking about the different groups he had talked about all over the country and he said this was the attitude that most of the groups that expressed to him that this was their opinion that other people wouldn't talk to me. And he seemed to be elated over the fact that this fellow did think so highly of him. (muffled) this is the attitude that this guy took. Who am I and you sit down and you tell me you respect me and you will take my word in other words.

David Yellin- What was your impression of Dr. King, the same as others?

Ron Ivy- Yeah.

David Yellin- You go home and tell your mamma?

Ron Ivy- Yeah.

David Yellin- Did you?

Ron Ivy- Yeah I did the same thing.

David Yellin- Did you? What did you say?

Ron Ivy- I just simply shared what kind of man he seemed to be and I told her that he seemed to be a very educated man and he seemed to be the first Baptist minister that I believed I had ever met that I believed that I could believe the things that he says.

David Yellin- Did she run next door and tell her neighbors?

Ron Ivy- Well she got on the phone.

David Yellin- Yeah I am sure she did. Ok, now about your program.

Ron Ivy- Well our program is really a two fold program. The first part of our program we call CUP. Community Unification Project Program. This is aimed at unifying the black community from the community level. That is setting up community organizations to make people politically aware of...this is another way of (muffled) expressing black awareness like we do with our music. Doing it really on a community basis and that is in your own neighborhood.

David Yellin- Blocks.

Ron Ivy- Yeah block, (muffled). From there we, this is the initial things in our program we call organizing in the block of groups and before then of course we have to train or council people from the different neighborhoods on the techniques of organizations, workshops that is to train organizers, much in the way that SNICK did back in the 50's. People attended workshops on how to be organized and the same thing they went out into rural areas and poverty stricken areas and organized.

David Yellin- Much of the same that labor groups did and if you will excuse the expression, the communists. Everybody organizes.

Ron Ivy- The second part of our program is to really construct the thing. To provide recreations, to stress our Afro-American heritage such as black art and plays and drama and so forth. (Muffled) publications, a black newspaper and it would be a black newspaper devoted to the problems, what has happened in the black community, (muffled) by black people and so forth. Radio programs, actual instruction of people in the poverty stricken areas in consumer economics. Because it is a real (muffled) like so many even have the (muffled) to realize that the people in the poverty stricken areas could live better if they never made a dime more, they could live better if they knew how to spend it. In other words that they knew that a Volkswagen could last as long as they want to keep a Cadillac and run cheaper and so forth. If they knew little things like buying, how to buy on groceries. You don't go

buy neck bones 6 days a week for 16 cents a pound and the on Sunday you buy pork chops that cost you 89 cents a pound. In other words you could eat something just as good on Sunday and your family would be a lot more healthy not eating neck bones and beans and rice, this is the diet of a lot of the people in poverty stricken area, they eat beans and rice and neck bones and rice, and neck bones and beans 6 days a week and then on Sunday they eat very expensive food because this is Sunday dinner, this is the day they sit at the table and eat instead of eating on the porch this type of thing. This simple consumer economics, what is the same type of thing that SNICK did, or SNICK tried to do but SNICK wasn't able to do it because of the national ostracism of SNICK. (muffled).

David Yellin- Two phases.

Ron Ivy- Yeah.

David Yellin- Gee do you have a written thing on this?

Ron Ivy- Well I have on copy a rough draft that is very simple.

David Yellin- You have all these things?

Ron Ivy- Well I am not much of what you call a writer.

David Yellin- Where did this come from Ron?

Ron Ivy- This program?

David Yellin- Yeah.

Ron Ivy- Well we started formulating this program and thinking about what we wanted to do what we had talents to do. We were up there in a small number of people.

David Yellin- You were all young people.

Ron Ivy- Yeah we had a guy from originally from Memphis that had taught art in Chicago and he was very interested in black art for instance. Just he talents that we had ourselves.

David Yellin- Where did the violence come from?

Ron Ivy- Violence.

David Yellin- Where did you become violent in quotes or...

Ron Ivy- Violence, we don't look at violence first of all like a lot of people do. We look at violence as (muffled) politics, it is simply a tactic. Violence is not our end nor our desire, I don't think any of us are that willing and that ready to enter into a violent...

David Yellin- So you can get hurt basically.

Ron Ivy- Right, but then too we don't disavow (muffled) disavowed this power to disrupt. We would rather us the threat of violence than actually have to demonstrate how we are of the attitude that the riots that have occurred in this city were started by anybody, we don't think the riots were started by an one person or any one incident. And we felt hat why should we go around condemning riots, when we didn't start any riots. We don't, we aren't concerned with whether or not merchants lost so many millions of dollars in profit, we don't care that your Detroit merchants should have thought of t his a long time ago, in fact how long did they think...

David Yellin- Does it occur to you then however, that it is not so much, it is not always what you think is so, it is what people think is so. So that if people think that you started it you have to deal with that, because that becomes the truth.

Ron Ivy- That becomes...

David Yellin- The truth in so fat as other people and let's say the white people or even the people who don't like what you are doing to black people and the police.

Ron Ivy- This becomes, this has been our major problem.

David Yellin- So how do you deal with it?

Ron Ivy- We don't, we haven't really spent too much time dwelling on this type of thing. We talk about it, we say that well John didn't you know that in the paper the other day it said that you tried to incite a riot. And John says yeah I saw that in the paper.

David Yellin- You are talking about (muffled).

Ron Ivy- Yeah. Ferguson I saw the paper where Ferguson did all thee things and (muffled) well it wasn't a laughing matter because people are going to believe that Ferguson is running around inciting riots.

David Yellin- And I saw in the paper in the Southwestern that where John Ferguson said that if I did all the things they said I did why (muffled) but what I am getting at is for instance that this did mean something to me. And I believed it meant some thing to me.

Ron Ivy- Well an example of this, I had about 4 of these (muffled) some of them were made by the same guy, in a plastic bag the other day and they were in one of these new rooms up in the new student center. And I wasn't there I was in the study room and I had left my books in there with some kids. And this guy they say some white people came into the room and they didn't watch them because they didn't care whether they came, the room was supposed to be private but they weren't saying anything private so they didn't care whether they came in or not but anyway they left with these. Now what are they going to do with them I wondered. I said now what in the world they are going to do with these symbols of black unity.

David Yellin- Yes.

Ron Ivy- But then several people, this was becoming almost a conversation of peace, the other people wanted to know what did it stand for (muffled) had the attitude that this stands for everybody as well as one of these is a loud mouth.

David Yellin- He explained to me.

Ron Ivy- Yeah he hates white people and is ready to burnt he place down.

David Yellin- Now suppose this were the general impression and you were going...

Ron Ivy- I look at it like this, it is one of the tings, that is not the real, it has been revised several times.

David Yellin- I think this is more important.,

Ron Ivy- Scratches.

David Yellin- When was this?

Ron Ivy- A lot of that, all that is all the stuff I had gotten together and stapled together because I took it all and read it all again and wrote another one.

David Yellin- (Muffled) Oh I see. Well can I make a copy of this.

Ron Ivy- Well I suppose so.

David Yellin- You want to back?

Ron Ivy- Yes.

David Yellin- Alright. We will talk about hat because I see I am kind of running out of tape and also I am tingling with some thing hat is outside the province of this tape.

Ron Ivy- Actually that program is the original one that is about the most original (muffled) we had.

David Yellin- But what has happened (muffled).

Ron Ivy- Our program has been worked on baby so many like Andy Young.

David Yellin- Yeah did he do anything on it?

Ron Ivy- He injected his expertise.

David Yellin- Did he do anything on it?

Ron Ivy- Yeah, he itemized it and he made..

David Yellin- That next morning you mean?

Ron Ivy- He started on it the next morning but he, he took his time but it is done.

David Yellin- It is done and you have a formal?

Ron Ivy- Yeah as a matter of fact, a meeting was held yesterday, I couldn't make the meeting, I haven't heard.

David Yellin- But it would be interesting that the formal thing and you have compared that and you see, that would be interesting. Well ok, now we go from there and that was the last you saw of Dr. King?

Ron Ivy- Yes.

David Yellin- On that Wednesday was when you saw him, and now just to kind of anything else you can think of at this point?

Ron Ivy- Well that is about all I can think of. Except that night the 7<sup>th</sup> things happened after the meeting that night. There were rather strange and funny to me. For instance, we got back in the room and some of the guys here they didn't believe for one minute that SCLC didn't have any money. They had been (Muffled) travel around the country year in and year out and they don't have any money. (muffled). So we one of the guys went back down to Dr. King's room and talked to them again and they don't....Hosea Williams he is very, he is a very, I would be afraid of him and others if he ever got angry I would make sure that...

David Yellin- Is he the big guy?

Ron Ivy- Yes this is the guy that is supposed to be the bad man, or the veteran, I am the veteran. I am afraid of him as a person as far as physical contact with him, if he ever got angry I would make sure I was out of swing reaching distance of him. He came back up in this room and they had (muffled) they had a very heated meeting, staff meeting. He came back to the room with this pother fellow that I can't remember his name and he was sweaty and so forth. Andy Young came down in his undershirt and he said that he didn't like the idea of us barging in on their staff meeting. Well we didn't know they were having a staff meeting and so we apologized for that. Then he cooled down some and he said...

David Yellin- Was Dr. King in on the meeting when they came in?

Ron Ivy- No Dr. King was still in his room. I suppose he had gone to bed it was pretty late, it was about 9:00. So they said that they had decided that they would get us, they said they could get us some little things, what you call it seed money. This whole thing that before you money can go you have got to plant a seed. If they could probably swing a little seed money simply from their personal expenses that is to keep us around. And they told us they would pay the hotel bill for us and stuff. We had to stay there so long that we had to (muffled) and so forth. But the way it happened was so funny because here this guy came in that we were scared to death of everybody and we are supposed to be tough.

David Yellin- You are going to remind him that he is nonviolent.

Ron Ivy- This big bad black militants sitting down. The (muffled) what this preacher is going to do to them. So this scared me also. I didn't know what this guy was going to do he came down here sweating looked like he had been in a fight.

David Yellin- And what did he say, did he talk rough?

Ron Ivy- Yeah very. He talks like a marine sergeant.

David Yellin- And then ok, anything else happen that night?

Ron Ivy- No then after that everybody went home.

David Yellin- So it was sort of arranged that they would kind of take care of you temporarily, (muffled) was going to meet in the next morning and Dr, King would eventually talk to somebody in New York?

Ron Ivy- I think that Dr, King said he would call sometime that night, he would call the people in New York sometime that night or the next morning.

David Yellin- Right and it didn't happen he didn't call that night or the next morning as far as...

Ron Ivy- He called the next morning because later on after his death, after his death, the representatives from the group in New York came down.

David Yellin- Did they really?

Ron Ivy- They came down the Monday that they had the memorial march.= downtown.

David Yellin- Oh yes I see.

Ron Ivy- And we met them there that day.

David Yellin- Did you meet with them during the march or after.

Ron Ivy- After the march because most of us were march marshals. I wasn't but most of the guys.

David Yellin- Why weren't you?

Ron Ivy- I wasn't a march marshal because I didn't feel like being a march marshal. I marched. I just marched. I simply was a in mourning of Dr. King and we decided that we may as well play this trivia also.

David Yellin- Now can you help any reconstruct any other time that you knew of that Martin Luther King did anything that you know of. I mean he may have called sometime between the time when he left you and of course his death.

Ron Ivy- Well I do know that there was another impromptu meeting now, I don't know exactly what happened there.

David Yellin- Was that with your group?

Ron Ivy- Yeah with our group because we were supposed to meet with Dr. King again, we were supposed to meet with Dr. King that Friday. Friday after he was killed.

David Yellin- and you didn't obviously.

Ron Ivy- From what I could gather that meeting with him on Friday had to do directly with the march.

David Yellin- I see, then now, where were you when you heard the news?

Ron Ivy- When I heard the news that Dr. King had been shot I was at Memphis state in the student leader banquet in the cafeteria. I left immediately.

David Yellin- How did you hear it?

Ron Ivy- Some fellows came to the door and they knocked on the door and they called me to the door and they told me.

David Yellin- Some of your..

Ron Ivy- Yes.

David Yellin- And what did you think when you heard it, did you hear first he was shot or he was dead?

Ron Ivy- I heard he was shot first and the first thing I thought about was where?

David Yellin- Where?

Ron Ivy- Where did he get shot?

David Yellin- You mean where physically or where in the city?

Ron Ivy- Where in the city.

David Yellin- I see where did it happen? Why? Why did you think that?

Ron Ivy- I think I thought that mainly because I wondered mainly because like I said the other day when he was walking around the Lorraine Motel as if he was this ordinary guy as if nobody had any desire to hurt him, I thought, I think I was thinking then whether or not he had been shot, you know he was supposed to speak at Mason Temple that day.

David Yellin- Yes.

Ron Ivy- And I didn't know whether he had, I wasn't wondering whether or not he had been shot at the temple.

David Yellin- Did you wonder..

Ron Ivy- Had he been shot at the temple, this was almost, you could almost assume that violence would have broken out. These always (muffled).

David Yellin- But what I thought maybe would think who shot him, the where would have told him if a negro shot him or if a white man shot him?

Ron Ivy- I never, it never occurred to me that a negro would have shot him.

David Yellin- No that is as soon as I heard it my first reaction was I was sure that a white man shot him. And then what did you do?

Ron Ivy- I got up and I left the banquet and I went downstairs in the student center and got on the phone. I called Lorraine Motel. I asked for the suite that we had. The lady said she was sorry but they could only take emergency calls because so many calls were coming in so I hung up and I just, we just left. We got in our cars and so forth and left and we started towards town to take a fellow to catch the bus he lives way out somewhere and I didn't have enough gas to take him home and on the way downtown we came to a corner, I think it was, it was 2<sup>nd</sup> and Beale I think, 2<sup>nd</sup> and Beale, I think this was 2<sup>nd</sup> and Beale. We came to this corner of policemen stuck his pistol in the car and he said turn nigger and so we turned and we turned on Florida.

David Yellin- (Muffled)

Ron Ivy- This is all he said.

David Yellin- You know what he meant.

Ron Ivy- Yeah.

David Yellin- You weren't driving?

Ron Ivy- No I wasn't driving and we turned the corner and then this national guard soldier said move on nigger so we assumed that we better leave or we be shot. Because this drug store on the corner on this very corner (muffled) So we assumed that somebody had set the drug store on fire and that they probably thought we were down there to set some more.

David Yellin- Did you turn on the radio at all?

Ron Ivy- We had the radio on all the time, we turned on the radio as soon as we got in the car. The radio, we had heard, we heard leaving and I don't know at exactly what point, we heard leaving I knew, a lady on the phone had told me he was dead. Lady on the phone at the Lorraine. He was shot and he was dead on the counter and then we went down and in leaving downtown we made it our business to pass by the Lorraine Motel and we passed by the Lorraine Motel and there was squad cars

all over the place and we kept going. On the way out to where this guy live we got stopped twice and asked where we were going where we were coming from and by the time we got this guy all t he way out there and back into the section of the community most of the people were, had already gotten off the streets and we gotten on Bellevue and McElmore and turned the corner and cops stopped us again and asked us where we were going and that we better hurry up and get in, or they were going to take us downtown.

David Yellin- Were they all uniformly mean or some of them?

Ron Ivy- They all seemed, they acted, I don't know they acted the same way the cops downtown acted to me. I think, I was thinking all the time that if I had been in a car by myself there had been a couple of us in the car, that those cops would have gotten us out of the vehicle. (muffle) a lot of big guys, and neither time they stopped us were there enough cops you know to handle all of us at once.

David Yellin- You feel you better act or talk politely?

Ron Ivy- No, we didn't talk politely at all, as a matter of fact if we would have talked politely they would have probably had more confidence...

David Yellin- The fact t hat you are scared?

Ron Ivy- Yeah, but we didn't talk, the guys in the car I have never really heard any of them talk politely or meekly, especially when some cop was hollering nigger.

David Yellin- but how do you accept this, I mean this is the life?

Ron Ivy- Well I figured, I mean I wouldn't be surprised I heard policemen call me nigger as long as I can remember. You know I just (muffled) things like this I was rather, you know when this first cop hollered nigger turn, I said yeah this is what they do when man gets killed instead of finding the killer, this is what they do. Of course everybody was saying that he man had escaped, I said this is what they are doing.

David Yellin- Yeah they are directing traffic.

Ron Ivy- Yeah instead of running after the killer they are sticking guns under people cars and this mess.

David Yellin- Well.

Ron Ivy- So this is what happened that night and of course we couldn't make any phone calls out t hey had all the phone sin south Memphis tied up in some kind of way. I think this is probably further play to avert riots, to cut off the communications between people in the black neighborhoods because...

David Yellin- You didn't think the phones?

Ron Ivy- Yeah, all through the curfew the phones were, it was just very difficult to call out and somebody called in and during any time during the conversation you might suddenly be cut off and no long distance calls could be called out at all?

David Yellin- From your place?

Ron Ivy- Yes. From my office and from anybody I know I asked my (muffled) march curfew I (muffled) we found out that everybody's phones were off. Everybody in the neighborhood and there neighborhoods around for miles in large concentrations...

David Yellin- So you think that you couldn't communicate.

Ron Ivy- Yeah I think it is practical.

David Yellin- I guess if you were in charge.

Ron Ivy- It would keep people from gathering, the first main thing it would do is to cut off communication and I think this is probably the reason for the curfew. If nobody is on the street than nobody can see what happens.

David Yellin- So you think it was effective.

Ron Ivy- I think it was really effective.

David Yellin- Because they hadn't had the curfew there would have been much more...

Ron Ivy- If they hadn't had the curfew there would have been a lot more disruption. Alright...

David Yellin- Ron as we say in radio the few minutes left for us, because that doesn't mean we get to stop but on here. What do you, I was about to say hope, but both, what do you hope and envision in the near future for Memphis, for yourself?

Ron Ivy- Well for Memphis I see Memphis in its light, I think that Memphis has lost forever its reputation I guess you could see of being a city of good (muffled). I am not speaking in terms of how people on the outside looks at Memphis, I am speaking of terms that people that are here, the people that really didn't think anything like this could happen. The negroes had really trusted the city government to think that the negroes here were really unsure as to whether or not the police were right or wrong in the way they took action in their communities. I mean in terms, a lot of people said well you know in our neighborhood and these negroes get to fighting and it takes this type of brutality sometimes. Well these people were, I think these people found out that the police really were racist. I think that the people aren't going to forget because I (muffled) every negro in Memphis were, was affected personally with this family member has gotten beaten up or something and I don't think that it is possible that people are going to forget what Memphis did to black people and in the last few weeks, I don't think people are going to forget how white Memphis stood behind. I don't think people are going to forget how mayor Lobe

acted and how the white community supported mayor Lobe. I think that this is just remember these things is going to make Memphis very vulnerable to future violence and more violence and more intense violence.

David Yellin- Well are you...

Ron Ivy- Because our program, our project is concerned I am a skeptic, a hopeful skeptic depending on how you put it.

David Yellin- Don't you think that your program is needed now more than ever?

Ron Ivy- I think our program is, I think it was needed before more than it is now. I think it is needed now, it is badly needed now but I think if our program could have been implemented and put into operation before then this may not have happened, Possibly.

David Yellin- Are you saying therefore in that, for things to be better whatever that means for people to live together let's.....

Ron Ivy- I think it would be easier, I thin our job of unifying the black community now will be easier than it was before because now we don't have to listen, now the people aren't going to tell us well I think we need to work together with the white folks. People aren't going to say this now. People now are talking about black unity, about black...

David Yellin- You are going to do it yourself and so on?

Ron Ivy- Yeah.

David Yellin- Well then, are you saying something too that I am sure you thought of that if there is to be a better relationship, if you are allowed, if you the black people are allowed to live and improve your life that true if the white people change, it might help some, but we don't care now in a sense or you don't even expect the white people that...

Ron Ivy- I thin this is...

David Yellin- That you can do it yourself and you must do it yourself.

Ron Ivy- Yeah.

David Yellin- You are saying this are you in this respect.,

Ron Ivy- Yeah exactly.'

David Yellin- Of course at the same time there must be a simultaneous effort on the white people at least not to get worse, I mean at least.

Ron Ivy- Yeah because I am anticipating even further reaction on the part of the white community and I am anticipating the white community to go even further and try to stop.

David Yellin- You mean a back lash?

Ron Ivy- Yeah, I am anticipating.

David Yellin- Why is that?

Ron Ivy- I am anticipating a backlash as soon as the fact that Dr. King's death wears off, I am anticipating a backlash simply because the way I think, of course I am not white, I don't get to say this much and usually I hear people say well I am not black. But for the first time I am getting to say I am not white, I don't know how white people think I can only say the way I think they think. I think that a lot of white people were very, I have heard at least I have heard a lot of people express the attitude that we got away with something, negroes got away with something in this sanitation workers strike. The negroes got away with something when they tore up our stores and so forth. We let them get away this time and we are going to get them. I think that a lot of people, as a matter of fact a lot of people have this attitude. I think that even the city government is more, they are playing it harder now to build up forces to beef up the police force and so forth to the point where they can make sure that if further violence erupts in Memphis so that they can control it. I don't think the police force, I don't believe Chief Holloman when he said on television, in a news conference the other night when he said that the reason he was asking for volunteer force was the reason he was asking for more policemen was that he could build up better relations with the black community. I don't think these were his intentions on the one hand I think he in my neighborhood for instance, car 25, this is a precinct squad cruiser and it had the (muffle) and I tell what they want to do now is make two cars for the projects put another car in the neighborhood. Police cruiser had the (muffled) in it, everybody could relate and everybody in the neighborhood can relate to one time that the cops in car 25 hit them in the head of cursed them out or something. I think he wanted to put two cars in there, I think he wants to put more pressure on the black community and I think this is what I see for Memphis in the culture.

David Yellin- Do you think there will be trouble in the summer?

Ron Ivy- I don't think there will be a riot in Memphis this summer. Of course there may be a riot so I like I said, people don't control riots.

David Yellin- In other words well your explanation says of the riot that happened, they didn't plan it but they were ready for it. Do you think this is the feeling now?

Ron Ivy- I think that everybody now, I think the feeling the black community is such that if the cops hit me again I am going to do this and do that.

David Yellin- They hit the wrong guy and..

Ron Ivy- I am going to do this and I think this is the feeling and I have heard people say well I was nonviolent but now I think if a cop touched me I am going to knock his brains out. I hear people saying now, well if we were going to get beaten all over town for something that a few of us did then all of us may as well profit. And because everybody ought to know that this is, that if a riot is going to start that everybody is going to participate next time because everybody is going to be punished for it anyway. I think this is the attitude in the black community now.

David Yellin- If (muffled)

Ron Ivy- Everybody is going to be, I heard a person say these every words, since I am going to be punished for what this guy did, then I am going to do it too, I will be getting punished for something.

David Yellin- Yeah what do you think that Martin Luther king means to eh black community now?

Ron Ivy- I think that the black community looks at Martin Luther King as a fallen martyr. I think they look at him like he wanted to be (muffled) as a fallen soldier, as a fallen drum major as he would call it in this march towards freedom. I don't think that there was a few people that weren't decided one way or the other, decided they were going to continue Dr. King's work because they thought he was a great man. But I think that most people feel that the man is dead and his ideas may live but it doesn't mean that I have to follow him to the grave and this is how I feel about it personally. I respected him, I am sorry he was dead and sorry he died, I think he was a great man and I think he was one of the greatest men, I think he was among those few men that had just been called to be great and to be truthful but I am not going to follow him from the grave. I don't think, I am obligated to do it and I don't think it would be good sense for me to do it. I think at least with the people I can vouch for this is the attitude, this is one of the things that we discussed in this forum after, directly after we got back to school after his death people said where do we go from here and everybody seemed to be of the attitude that we will mourn Dr. King's death but we won't follow him from the grave.

David Yellin- Do you think that had he lived he would have been defeated by what is considered and what I would have to term your movement's kind of thinking, that he would have gone down naturally?

Ron Ivy- I think that had he lived that militancy new type of militancy that does not disavow violence, a new type of militancy that believes if it is practical to take our (muffled) in certain situations and take an offensive, in other words do what is necessary. I think this is characteristic of the new (muffled) to do what is necessary and I think that it eventually would have swallowed Dr. King up.

David Yellin- So in the long view of history and then the making of a drama of world, Dr. King in a sense died closer to the mountain rather in the valley.

Ron Ivy- Yeah.

David Yellin- And maybe in that sense it was providential. If you are religious and you believe anything.

Ron Ivy- As a matter of fact I sort of think that as far as the man dying served as critical dying the way he did but I don't think he could have picked a better, I don't think anybody could have picked a better time for Dr. King to die. I mean he died when his movement was still alive, he died before he was old and gray and forgotten. His death was a ...(Tape End)