

# Rhodes College Digital Archives - DLynx

## Ronald Ivy, Memphis State University BSA, 1968

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David Yellin- This is David Yellin and the day is Tuesday March 7<sup>th</sup> and we are in my office on the Memphis State campus and I am here with Ronald Ivy and we are going to have a little talk however long it takes us and wherever we go. Just for two reasons, Ron, tell me, give me the vital statistics about yourself, the two reasons are to kind of get you warmed up and secondly I think it becomes important that we know a little bit about you.

Ronald Ivy- I am Ronald Ivy, 21 years old born in Memphis been here all my life and I haven't been many places outside of Memphis for several reasons. (muffled) what is going on in Memphis because I have been here all the time.

David Yellin- Do you mind, Ron, and anytime that you feel a question is not in order or you answer I am sure as much as you want to. You were born in Memphis 21 years ago, where did you go to school?

Ronald Ivy- I went to Booker T. Washington high school and before then I went to Kansas Elementary and so forth.

David Yellin- Would you mind talking about your parents?

Ronald Ivy- Well, most of my parents are living. My father works for the veteran's administration and he is the waiter part time. He has been working two jobs about as long as I can remember.

David Yellin- Really?

Ronald Ivy- My mother never worked for health reasons, because she had 7 kids to take care of also.

David Yellin- Which one of the 7 are you?

Ronald Ivy- 4<sup>th</sup>.

David Yellin- Your 4<sup>th</sup>? How many boys and girls.

Ronald Ivy- 5 boys and 2 girls.

David Yellin- And they are all living and all in Memphis?

Ronald Ivy- All living and all in Memphis now, my sister just returned from Springfield Massachusetts.

David Yellin- And you made an interesting statement you said you haven't left Memphis or haven't been away from it for a reason what was the reason.

Ronald Ivy- Several reasons mainly because I couldn't afford to leave Memphis and another reason, I was always too young to go travel across the country anyways. With 7 kids you just don't get invited up to an aunt's house in Milwaukee.

David Yellin- You mean as a family, I am going to drop in with my family and....that's true. You came to Memphis State then when?

Ronald Ivy- I came to Memphis state in 1964 and I graduated from Booker Washington, for several reasons and also mainly for financial reasons. I could have gone to Lemoyne possibly but Lemoyne is (muffled) and at least wanted to get out of the neighborhood when I went to college.

David Yellin- I see, yeah that is true a lot of people go to college just to get away from the town, I mean you wanted to get out of.....do you recall in making the choice, I don't know if it was significant to you at the time, did you make a significant choice or just fundamentally that reason?

Ronald Ivy- Well mainly, just for financial reasons, Memphis State was an integrated school and integration was new then, it was just formal integration was new and I don't think I really cared whether Memphis state was integrated or not, because I had many doubts about integration when it began. First of all I had been a waiter and at the time I was a bus boy and I had seen integration come and I had seen the change it didn't make and I had seen the disillusionment it presented most people. I didn't really expect anything really great different here I just came, like I said for financial reasons and to get the cheapest education I could and hopefully a good one.

David Yellin- TO get the education as cheaply as you could. I mean as if a faculty member at Memphis state...where are you a waiter?

Ronald Ivy- Well I work at several places, I have worked at the Peabody, Hotel Peabody, I started there at 16. Then I worked at the Rivermont, the Memphis athletic Club, many different places, I was what you call gigging, whatever I could find.

David Yellin- You call that gigging?

Ronald Ivy- We call that gigging.

David Yellin- g-i-g-g-i-n-g I guess. Alright now you obviously you said in coming to Memphis state, actually what I am sort of interested in now is your, the date of the vital statistics your sort of history as a person because I think, you know I think where you went to school and the reason you made a selection it kind of flushes you out, to yourself to don't you think so, they don't seem very important at the time but suddenly you discover hey, that's why I did it.

Ronald Ivy- Very resolved and I take what I call a personal assessment of my abilities.

David Yellin- Who doesn't.

Ronald Ivy- As far as where I am from and where I am going I suppose is what you want to know. Well I was, I found I was not as poor as some families are, even though we didn't have anything we had more than most people, at least most people we lived around and so forth. My father worked hard all the time, he was never really around, he was always at work. I went to school as a matter of course, went to school, everybody goes to school. I went to elementary school, I was always rather talkative and always had a big mouth even though I wasn't that outgoing I don't think.

David Yellin- Did you play ball or anything?

Ronald Ivy- No I am very poor at the sports I don't have any athletic ability what so ever, I like sports but I have never really just played.

David Yellin- Now obviously you are articulate let's put it that way, I have to say it kindly. Rather than talking.

Ronald Ivy- I just talked all the time (muffled).

David Yellin- How did you do that did you hang around the corner?

Ronald Ivy- Well I hung around several street corners as a matter of fact sometimes I would just go around and see who was still on the corner who is left and who is new. This was on (muffled) I lived my first 5 years downtown in the (muffled) homes housing project. There I don't remember what I did but we moved onto West Utah which in my opinion, is the poorest section in town I lived on Utah in a house a little frame house that was better than most of the houses on the street because the houses were dilapidated.

David Yellin- Ron are you talking from your point of view now or where you aware of this then?

Ronald Ivy- I was quite aware of it...

David Yellin- How come?

Ronald Ivy- Well, one thing the kids around there seemed to make some difference in different people. For instance we would get shoes and we would get our shoes we would wear them and then when the soles were out of them we would take them to the shoe shop and get them repaired for soles and then we would throw them away once they had soles gone. And these kids would get the shoes and put them back on and say we are rich because these are good shoes. These things stand in your head and all of the time knowing that you don't have anything but they must have less.

David Yellin- Well, how did you account for the difference was it actually a difference of the fact that your father was steadily employed as I gathered he was.

Ronald Ivy- Yeah it was mainly because several of the kids in the neighborhood didn't have fathers, the ones that had fathers most of them worked on very menial

jobs, jobs that didn't pay anything mainly. This is the best way to express it. And they lived differently. One thing my family was relatively religious, religious in the sense that they went to church every Sunday...

David Yellin- What church?

Ronald Ivy- Well my mother at that time was Methodist, she belonged to the African Methodist Episcopal church, and my father went to a church which is a branch of the church of god in Christ, it is called the church of Christ Holiness and it is another denominational branch and it is really, I think it is really a sect because it really isn't that large.

David Yellin- Which one did you go to ?

Ronald Ivy- I went to my mother's church most of the time. Of course now practically the whole balance has gotten me. I was baptized in the catholic church myself. I don't know why, I just was.

David Yellin- OH really ? When did this happen?

Ronald Ivy- Well I was baptized in the catholic church, I think I was in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade, 8<sup>th</sup> grade, or 9<sup>th</sup> grade because I was supposed to go to a catholic school and I didn't want to go because I didn't like the kids that went to Catholic schools. Because the kids that went to catholic school at that time were usually these kids from the middle class families, should I say, black middle class. The school teachers kids and preachers kids and all these kids went to catholic schools and I just didn't want to associate with these people because they were rather snobbish and I didn't like them so I wanted to go to Booker Washington like everybody else, so I didn't go to the catholic school.

David Yellin- If anybody were to ask you now what would be your religious affiliation?

Ronald Ivy- Well, if you would ask me now I would say that my only religion is my personal belief in myself probably.

David Yellin- You are an agnostic or?

Ronald Ivy- Well...

David Yellin- An atheist or...

Ronald Ivy- I don't like either term, I am a non-believer let's put it like that. I don't believe that Jesus was divine nor do I believe in most of the principles of the bible (muffled) I don't believe in the bible or the golden rule either.

David Yellin- Do you believe in god, god in whatever form you chooses.

Ronald Ivy- No.

David Yellin- So you truly in a sense are a non-believer in the...

Ronald Ivy- Well if you give, sometimes I wondered, I believed, I accept maybe that there is a force governing the universe but as far as it having anything to do with me, no I don't believe that there is a god having anything to do with me. What I do, my existence, my living and dying.

David Yellin- Now what did you, I would love to talk to you about religion, of course I think we are probably much closer than, very close. And we might come back to it and why not just to sort of fill out when you came to Memphis state, what did you decide to major in, what was your major?

Ronald Ivy- Well, when I graduated from high school I said in the year book, I think it is in the year book, I said I was going to be a lawyer. Well when I got to Memphis state I majored in biology. I majored in biology I think, in my freshmen year.

David Yellin- Yeah, how come you made that decision do you recall?

Ronald Ivy- I don't know, I think I made, I don't know why I majored in Biology. Sometimes I think I wondered, I think I majored in biology probably because supposedly all the smart kids majored in the natural sciences. Anyways I majored in biology I don't know why, I didn't like biology.

David Yellin- Certain statues.

Ronald Ivy- (Muffled) history, this is how my mind was, why was a biology major minor in history? Well I changed my major to History and picked up a minor in political science.

David Yellin- IS that where you were when you became a junior? You are now a senior aren't you?

Ronald Ivy- Senior.

David Yellin- And your major is political science?

Ronald Ivy- My major is history and minor is political science.

David Yellin- And when did you decide you would take practice teaching?

Ronald Ivy- Well I decided to go into the school of education and take education courses when I was a sophomore mainly because for some reason I have always figured that I would end up teaching somebody one way or the other. And I went into education and decided I would get my teaching certificate and....

David Yellin- That is an interesting statement teaching somebody Ronald. What do you mean? You know who do you think you are? What do you think you are teaching somebody? I don't mean that as accusative.

Ronald Ivy- I know what you mean., I have always felt that I had something to offer somebody as far as their minds were concerned, always thought that I had something to say. And I have always thought that what I had to say, somebody wanted to hear and it was important. Another thing I have always been very disillusioned about the educational system and I always thought that I could make a contribution towards burying that system.

David Yellin- Alright, let's talk a little bit about that. The educational system, what is wrong with it I was about to ask but...

Ronald Ivy- Well, first of all when I started thinking about being a teacher it never occurred to me that the school would really be integrated, I never thought about this too much until very recent years. But being a teacher to teach in the system, I was always thinking about it, I think it was a segregated system. I have always found negro teachers to be very poor, very poor teachers. They were regardless of how well they were equipped in their subject areas, regardless of how much education they had they always put themselves in a class to themselves and they were discriminatory towards the students. I always felt that I was discriminated against several times while I was going to school.

David Yellin- By negro teachers?

Ronald Ivy- By negro teachers.

David Yellin- Because you were a negro and ....

Ronald Ivy- No it was because I was, it was certainly not because I was a negro but because of the class I was in. Socio-economic class and not only this at this time negros were, we used the term color struck.

David Yellin- Colorstruck?

Ronald Ivy- Yeah, I used to turn my stomach, I will speak in my own vernacular, little tired yellow children always getting all the breaks. I was a little chubby boy and I never got nay breaks and I never liked that I always thought this was awful.

David Yellin- Now what you are saying then just to be sure that I understand you is that the negro teachers were middle class and they thought of themselves as middles class and you were lower class, and therefore it was a class distinction they were making.

Ronald Ivy- It was a class distinction , it would be...

David Yellin- Let's just stop. (Tape break)

David Yellin- Ok so we go ahead now with the teacher then.

Ronald Ivy- Yeah, there are several things about negros, the traditional negro I call them. Since they choose to call us militants I call them traditional, old-fashioned

negros. They were, they always discriminate, they are just as discriminatory on color lines and on physical, as far as physical appearance is concerned they are so discriminatory simply because it seems I derived at the conclusion that they were obviously dissatisfied with themselves because the darker skinned most grotesque looking teachers I ever had were the most discriminatory, in other words they gave favors to the child with the fairer skin and the straight hair and all the Caucasian features that some negros have. I have derived at the conclusion that they were dissatisfied with themselves and for this reason they would discriminate with somebody that looked like them.

David Yellin- Taking it out on them?

Ronald Ivy- Yeah.

David Yellin- And so this is, your word is more meaning that it again is not black and white the whole spectrum of color. I see. So you felt that you wanted to rectify change, or at least not be subject to that kind of discrimination?

Ronald Ivy- Yeah.

David Yellin- So then you would be nice to everybody?

Ronald Ivy- Well...I thought it was stupid to look at people from the physical, to look at a person and judge a person on his physical characteristics for several reasons. One thing, my family for instance I always laugh about it if you lined all of my brothers and sisters up you would think we, we vary in color from very dark brown, to I have a brother that is a shade lighter than I am. In other words we just vary in color and size and shape and so forth. I talked and wondered what would have happened if my mother would have been a person that would choose between her children because we are all certain that we have family resemblances but we are all different for some reason.

David Yellin- Well I think the only time you could answer that in truth is when you become a parent. You know there is probably have you ever asked your mother this?

Ronald Ivy- Yeah we have conversations all the time.

David Yellin- What does she say?

Ronald Ivy- Well she thinks like I do, she had the same problem when she was a child. Her mother was a very light skinned negro woman and her father was a very dark negro man and she, her sister was a light skinned woman and she turns up brown. Well she had the same problem.

David Yellin- Ron there seems to be or at least in this phase of what we are talking about, I don't know how much it permeates your whole thinking. But there seems to be this matter of color how can I put it shades and so on, can be very important.

Ronald Ivy- It is very important.

David Yellin- You think this is significant.

Ronald Ivy- It shouldn't be but it is.

David Yellin- Yeah, and you have indicated that this important among and within the black people themselves.

Ronald Ivy- Within themselves, especially, I hate to say this but especially among middle class black man but I will say it is important to him simply because there was a time when the lightest skinned negro was the one that got all the breaks, even with the white man. The white man would hire the lightest skinned negro before he would hire the darker skinned negro and the lighter skinned negro would naturally cherish his fair complexion because it was financially profitable. Then socially profitable, he got stationed, negro men would look for the lightest skinned women and naturally the doctors and lawyers, the negroes that had money, the first woman they would look for a woman, they wouldn't talk to a woman unless she was light skinned, unless she was....

David Yellin- Now you see this by observation and this is your conclusion.

Ronald Ivy- Not only by observation, I have heard men , I have heard it all my life.

David Yellin- What did you hear can you recall, and when you heard it? I meant his was the talk around the corner...

Ronald Ivy- This was the talk in the barber shops and everywhere else. I wouldn't marry a black woman, or I want me a hot yellow woman gal.

David Yellin- Very often said as a joke? But probably...

Ronald Ivy- Not as a joke but really. You know I know some of my friends for instance now, they are trying to become a part of this so called black renaissance, they are trying to think differently but they still judge girls according to color and the texture of their hair and things like this. They want the lightest skinned girls and the girls that have straighter hair and this is a built in divisionary factor in the black community.

David Yellin- Yeah I like the phrase, I can't say I have heard it or I have noticed it before black renaissance, we will come to that. First could you define what you mean by middle class?

Ronald Ivy- Well this is a good question because probably my conception of middle class is different. Middle class to me is the person, I mean it is that class of people that live comfortably that don't necessarily do without what they want. They are those people whose children get what they want in other words they provide for their children and their children don't say I can't have this because my daddy doesn't have any money to buy it. They are those children that when Christmas

comes automatically assume that Santa Claus is coming. They are those children that always get...it is just an in a separate class, I don't know exactly how to explain it top you. They are not rich necessarily in wealth but in social station they get in other words when Dr. so and so's kids come over, they get to go certain places. Where as if we were, and a good example is in my neighborhood for instance we had kids over there whose mothers and fathers were school teachers and this type of thing. Well they would have parties for instance and they would be open to any doctor's son, and any teacher's son and daughter but to us, no we had to look in. And yet still when we would have parties they would be invited and feel perfectly alright in coming. This is a, I don't know I think it is a psychological thing more than economics.

David Yellin- Psychological based on economic activity or certainly...well this is not to catch you or anything, this is to help clarify. You said when you moved from that other neighborhood you half soled your shoes and then threw them away and those kids thought of you as middle class in a sense.

Ronald Ivy- Yeah they did.

David Yellin- And also the fact that your father with two jobs a good deal of the time but with 7 children I can see how that could be rough but in a sense you didn't want...you had some things.

Ronald Ivy- This is one thing that, one of the few things that I praise my parents for was the fact that it wasn't necessarily that we didn't want it was that we didn't expect or we didn't ask for.

David Yellin- I meant in want, not that you desired but the word want to be in need.

Ronald Ivy- No we weren't in need.

David Yellin- That is how I used that word.

Ronald Ivy- I never (muffled) I can't remember a time for instance when I know several kids that they actually experienced such things as wondering if they were going to have dinner the next day. But we never had to experience this.

David Yellin- So when you become president you can't say you came up from starvation and so.

Ronald Ivy- No.

David Yellin- You always were provided for on a (muffled) level that is certain. So that I think then your definition of middle class would be anybody who not only had that but one that was psychologically affected by the fact that they might not have it, there was always a possibility that you might not at sometime, if your father lost a job or didn't work extra for a couple of days, that meant instead of this much you 4 inches of things you had 1 inch of thing, and then when it got to 1 inch there could be no inches pretty soon. So you don't come from a real poverty background.

Ronald Ivy- No not a real, I wouldn't say a real poverty background.

David Yellin- So you are a kind of concept Ron, it seems to me, a kind of an intellectual concept, middle class, it is what you saw around you.

Ronald Ivy- Yes.

David Yellin- And in some ways I find that most more admirable, I have just been talking for 2 hours, in that it is not as selfish. It not only stems from you, it stems from what you saw around you in society.

Ronald Ivy- Yeah I read many books defining social class, socio-economic class, but I felt, I have always felt that they didn't relate to the black community because we have had our own class structures.

David Yellin- Yes that is my other question.

Ronald Ivy- A black man could be middle class and not have a dime.

David Yellin- That is exactly right. I was wondering you said who you were comparing it too. So it was in the black community that you were making this...so middle class black man might be very well lower class.

Ronald Ivy- Usually he is.

David Yellin- American white black whatever I don't know what are we? So that you are now talking within the framework of your own community.

Ronald Ivy- Yeah.

David Yellin- So that now this comes to the point and I guess we will come to the black renaissance and so on but there fore, what was your relationship with the white community. Should we clarify that as far as you know there always was in Memphis you say it was not only your home buy your cloister and your world and so on, a black and white community.

Ronald Ivy- There was always a definite division because for the main reason because of nothing else it is where you live. You, I lived in Foot Homes, and Foot Homes was a housing project, Everybody in Foot Homes was black. The store was owned by a white man and his kids lived upstairs in the little apartment they lived in and they didn't go to school with us. They caught the bus and they went across town to school. The only white people we saw then were store owners, store owner's kids, laundry men, Bill collectors, insurance men and so forth.

David Yellin- Did you go out of your neighborhood, you personally as a young, as a child. When did you first go away from your neighborhood, either by yourself or with your family do you remember?

Ronald Ivy- I remember several things, I remember catching the bus we didn't always have a car and I remember riding the bus and always going to the back of the

bus and I never did like it. I remember several things, I remember going to the fairgrounds to the tri-state fair. I used to detest the tri-state fair. I always sensed these things when I was a kid. We had to go to the tri-state fair and we look in the paper and see the big advertisement about the mid-south fair but we never saw the mid-south fair we went to the tri-state fair. Which was a little watered down fair grounds.

David Yellin- Well when were negros allowed to go to the...

Ronald Ivy- Mid-south fair? I was in high school, I don't know exactly when but I know I was in high school because I went because I wanted to see what was there that we didn't see at our fair.

David Yellin- So your relationship with the white community was almost as a tourist.

Ronald Ivy- Yes.

David Yellin- I don't know who is touring what but you would go up and .....do you recall as a young person, since you are 21 and very quickly you were born in 47?

Ronald Ivy- 46.

David Yellin- 46, that's right you will be 22. This is before 46 after World War 2 there was still segregation. Do you recall how it was your concern with the white. Was there much concern in your group, in your family, in your gang, among your peers about the white people?

Ronald Ivy- Well one thing, when I moved to where I live now (muffled) off Lauderdale, when we first moved over there I was about 10 years old. I was old enough then to get in the street and play and go off as I wanted to. This was in the daytime hours I mean. There were several white people in the neighborhood that hadn't moved, there was this invasion and immigration thing going on when white people were leaving and negros were moving in this neighborhood. I came in contact with several white people. There was an old white man that lived down the street and he refused to move, He just said he wasn't going to move because he had built his house and he was going to stay there. Well our relationship, everybody knew him we called him Mr. Johnny. He didn't bother us and we didn't bother him, if anything he was an asset to the neighborhood because we could always go down and cut his yard he would give us \$2 and not ask any questions. Now the white kids in the neighborhood we would play ball in the day time and fight at night. This was the way it was. We were friends as long as the sun was out and somebody was looking. As soon as the sun was down we fought.

David Yellin- Well now how did you fight?

Ronald Ivy- We fought to beat each other to death I guess.

David Yellin- With fists?

Ronald Ivy- Yeah. And sticks and bottles. I often wondered why in the world we would play ball all day and then at night we would fight each other.

David Yellin- How did the fights start impromptu or from an incident?

Ronald Ivy- Well they almost got to be almost like ritual. You play ball at the day time and when it would start getting dark the white boy would start calling us niggers and we would start calling them crackers and patties and so forth. And then we would fight the next day (muffled).

David Yellin- That is kind of ridiculous isn't it?

Ronald Ivy- But this went on everyday. One incident I remember that I think it had a great affect on my thinking. A friend of mine had a paper route, Precimeter paper route and I used to go around with him sometimes, I think I was about 11 or 12 years old. And these white fellows had paper routes too and we went to the same paper station to pick up the papers. I remember one day I was with him and we were tearing up the old paper off the new papers and untangling the wires and so forth. And these white boys told me they said, here put this in the trash can and unthinking I got up and I took it back and I put it in the trash can. I would have probably have done it no matter who asked me because I just did it. And I came back and it was a big thing about it, they were laughing because I did what they said, and my friend was angry. He was angry because he said you are scared of white folks, you let them tell you what to do. I thought about this and since then every time anybody no matter what situation a white man ask me to do some thing I look at him twice.

David Yellin- You mean now.

Ronald Ivy- Yes even now.

David Yellin- That is one of those things that stayed in your self conscious.

Ronald Ivy- Stayed in my mind because this was the first incident I can remember that shall I say a white man, even though they were boys, little boys, was actually used me because I was a negro available to use.

David Yellin- Right and you weren't aware of this?

Ronald Ivy- I wasn't aware of it until I came back and it was a big thing.

David Yellin- You were of complete innocence and they had done calculatingly, this is their ritual to see if you were...

Ronald Ivy- To see if I would do it. And I did without even thinking about it.

David Yellin- Alright now, ok and you say you remember this. Do you remember any other incidents that without yet divulging your full how you feel. That kind of molded the kind of person you ware?

Ronald Ivy- Well I think one of the main experiences was when I started working. I guess I started working at the Peabody when I was 16, as a bus boy and my father was a waiter there on the sky top of the Peabody. I came, this was when I first came in contact with white people on an extended basis, in other words every night, This was the first time I had ever come in almost intimate contact with white people. And during this period I learned a lot to thing. I learned, I guess you can say I learned what was supposed to be negro's proper place. I learned about smiling if you wanted to keep your job and keep making money.

David Yellin- What did you learn, what did you learn?

Ronald Ivy- I learned that you always smile and you never look up at a person straight because if you looked at him straight and you talked to him like you did anybody else you were being arrogant and you wouldn't get any money. And I learned that whatever a person, whatever the white man would cal you was perfectly alright because if you said something about it you would get fired. I learned several things. In other words I called it, I learned what was being considered the negros place and I resented it.

David Yellin- The double language.

Ronald Ivy- Yeah. I resented it all the way,. I talked, I remember saying things to people that I didn't think I would ever say, I was brought up tot say yes sir, no sir, to grownups. Well this was perfectly alright saying yes sir and no sir to grownups. But all of a sudden my father who I always respected because he was the person who came in at night from work. He was always the person that if anybody was going to be called Mr. it was him. And I learned that he was a boy, my boy, somebody else's boy you see. This, I don't know for a while I said I wouldn't, I was going to quit I didn't like it.

David Yellin- You said it right then?

Ronald Ivy- Yeah.

David Yellin- You are not saying now what you think you said, but..

Ronald Ivy- I remember I said I want to quit I don't like it.

David Yellin- You remember the first time you heard your father, or you felt that somebody was treating your father ignobly, you know the way they treat negros, the way that...do you remember the first time?

Ronald Ivy- I don't remember the first time no, because...

David Yellin- Do you remember any time?

Ronald Ivy- I don't remember the person, I don't remember the first night I worked even but I do remember several, I remember a man, this man's name was Ivy

surprisingly, this is why (muffle). He said who are you? And I said my name is Ronald Ivy.

David Yellin- Was he a patron?

Ronald Ivy- Yeah.

David Yellin- A diner.

Ronald Ivy- A regular customer, and he said oh you Ben something? I said Ben who? You know I got arrogant in other words because I had never heard anybody call my father Ben but my mother. You know I got very nasty I guess you could say. I said I am Mr. Ivy's son. (muffled) He said well you will never be the man that your father is because he is a good boy. This was killing me, I remember that so much, it was killing me. And after that I quit working. I did everything I could while I was working at the Peabody I did everything I could to stay as far away from my father as possible so I didn't have to hear this kind of stuff.

David Yellin- Did you ever discuss this with your father?

Ronald Ivy- Well I talked to him several times but what could he say after all he was working and he knew he had to work if we were going to eat.

David Yellin- Did you excuse him for this I mean if that is the phrase.

Ronald Ivy- Yeah.

David Yellin- Did you understand this?

Ronald Ivy- I understood it, I always understood it. I think I understood it the first time I heard it because I was...

David Yellin- But did you feel that you would never be put in this position is that the kind of feeling that maybe you had?

Ronald Ivy- Well I had to feeling that I didn't like this way that things were going. I always when I first started waiting tables I always knew that i would never be a waiter, at least as long, at least if I had anything to do with it I wouldn't wait tables for ever. I wouldn't wait tables all of my life I knew that I couldn't stand this. I knew that I wasn't going to stand it. I knew it as soon as I got out of school and got me something lees to do I would run I would leave these kind of jobs alone for the rest of my life.

David Yellin- And yet you did take these jobs.

Ronald Ivy- I always did because one thing, this was about the only job you could get, the only job I could get at the time.

David Yellin- That made you angrier?

Ronald Ivy- I didn't want to be a grocery boy because I had heard the way grocery store owners would talk to grocery boys and I didn't want to be one of those. I didn't want to be anything as a matter of fact I didn't want to work for a white man period.

David Yellin- Now when did this start? I am trying to just for yourself some of this don't you think, I am asking even though I am stating it. You look back now did you have these feelings in relation to that you would never do this and that you were going to be free of this kind of thing in those days when there wasn't the supreme court ruling or just about, that did come...

Ronald Ivy- Well I remember the first nights in the Peabody. For instance I remember the first night the (muffled) the Peabody I was there looking and wondering.

David Yellin- What happened?

Ronald Ivy- Well, manager put reservation cards on all the tables and Pickett, W.O. Pickett I think it is and his wife came to dinner. And he had with him. I don't know who the other people were, but they were prominent negros, negros with money I guess you could say. And they came and the manager took them back to a table that was the worst table in the dining room, the table that was the furthest out of the way. I remember just looking and they got up and they danced on the dance floor. I don't think I worked that night I just stood there and looked.

David Yellin- Do you think that Mr. Pickett knew that he was being taken back to the worst table?

Ronald Ivy- I don't think he knew, if he did know it, he probably pretended that he didn't.

David Yellin- you know what interests me and I wish you could tell me more about it, you said you learned to smile and all that. It is what I call the two level language I think double language I used before and I meant the two levels when you say one thing and you know that you mean another. And course when two negros talk they say one thing to the white man and they know what they mean however. This is true of a lot of people who understand each other, maybe two Americans will talk to a Frenchman and they will say one thing and the Frenchmen thinks he means one, but both Americans know that he means another. Is this something that you plan or can you tell me some of these things.

Ronald Ivy- This is something that you learn and it becomes not habit, but you learn to play a different roles. You learn to play the different roles. Learn to play the different roles. What I found very, I found myself in a very difficult situation when I came to Memphis state. I was talking to white kids out here, I had white instructors and even if they didn't mean it they tried, I think they tried to make me feel as comparable as possible and they did talk to me as a person and I talked to them like I talked to anyone else and then I would leave Memphis State and I would go to work. And then I would play a different role, I would be a different person for the

next 4 hours. I am talking this is very difficult to do because I found myself talking to people when I was working like I would talk to people out here. I found myself getting 50 cents instead of a dollar and half or getting evil looks or this type of thing. Insulting remarks from people like a man called me boy once and I was 18 and he called me boy. I turned around and asked him who the hell was he talking to? I looked at him and I thought about it (muffled) I just felt like asking who the hell was he talking to hollering boy across the room. I had heard people call me worse things than boy and hadn't said anything. (muffled) and suddenly I had gotten so arrogant that I am going to say who the hell are you talking to calling me boy. I found myself going steadily, I hated going to work. I hated to go to work, not because I hated to work it was because I hated to do this type of work.

David Yellin- Play that role.

Ronald Ivy- Hated to play this role, hated to my bones. I would rather be broke than have a cent doing this type of work.

David Yellin- What are you angry at Ron. Can you chronicle?

Ronald Ivy- Chronicle?

David Yellin- I mean to list and it is an awful question of obviously your angered wouldn't you say.

Ronald Ivy- Obviously (muffled).

David Yellin- And I mean it in a well, I am not quite sure I mean you are not angry at this thing, and you are not angry at the boy, maybe you are not even angry at me as me or anybody but something is inside of you pushing you somewhere and I would like to...because some of the things you tell me now are searing and they are true and they are reaching for something and maybe you won't mind just as you say, this is an assessment. Because and I will give you just a chance to take your breath because it occurs to me as you are talking about role playing. All of us play roles. The guy goes out of his house in the morning and he is a father and the kids worship him and he is a big man and then maybe he goes down to the corner store and I am thinking in my own background and the guy there you know he josh's him and he is still a big man and then as soon as he comes into his office or something and the boss comes in he is suddenly somebody else. But of course the central theme in all of your role playing is your color.

Ronald Ivy- Yes.

David Yellin- So that there is some relationship but not really, it is not the same, would you agree with that?

Ronald Ivy- Yes.

David Yellin- I was about to say well look everybody plays a role. I just visited Dr. Humphreys. I played p[art of a role, I would like to think I don't but I am sure you

do. Yes sir this and that and then I come here and somebody came in my office I act a different role. But you have a thing that it is always your color and I think something you have to keep this in mind. So I say to you, I am making this premise because maybe I want to come back to find out and what I think with a fellow like you maybe, who is, who intellectualizes things, who tries to in the best sense of the term look at it logically. Maybe you might become more effective for what you want, if you would utilize the forces that are your strengths instead of feeding the things that may be your weaknesses. Now this is to be desired by everybody in the world you know and...It just kind of occurs to me as I listen to you and I am listening, and truly in the best sense and I would tear this up if it meant anything and I am not, I am aware this is here and so on but if I never was before in my life in these last three weeks I am aware more of human beings than ever before in my whole life. I am now taking over and telling you my story but that is not what I intend to do. But I don't know if I had made myself clear to you about....in other words I think that you should be, that you want to be as effective a human being as possible to become the human being that you can be and sometimes if you let the anger over come what you want,, and just let me say this I am not putting you in a trap to later say but yeah you shouldn't do this or you shouldn't do that. I don't know what he heck you should do. If I do you call me on it that is not the purpose, it is for you to see.

Ronald Ivy- My anger, I have often said that if I had a problem, and I have several but if I had a problem then I would say my greatest problem. It is my tendency to become angry and when I become angry I don't just go through a thing of getting angry and beating on a desk, I get angry, angry all the way through, I get angry and stay angry. I have a tendency to stay angry for years. I remember I hold grudges now that are old and I should forget. I remember a guy swindled me out of a dime in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade and I saw this guy he is 22 years old now and I saw this guy and I hated him. This guy came over he hadn't seen me in years, you know he had been in the service and I looked at him and I hated him. The first thing I said to him was do you remember one time you swindled me out of a dime? (muffled) I remember it and I think about it all the time. I just think about things like this.

David Yellin- Now do you think that is because you are black or because of what?

Ronald Ivy- Well I think one of the reasons, I think that it is an individual thing probably with me, why I personalize everything I don't know but I think it is pretty individual for me.

David Yellin- You mean you would be this way if you were suddenly transformed..

Ronald Ivy- Yeah I would probably be that way if I was to wake up white one day, I would probably still personalize everything and look at everything deeper than most people. I have conversations with my friends about different incidents or anything that might have happened and they never saw some of the things that were so significant to me. They would never see them because they weren't looking for them but I seen people looking for significance in everything I do and everything everybody else does.

David Yellin- So that is what you mean by personalizing?

Ronald Ivy- Yes.

David Yellin- And therefore because you personalize the reaction to it tends to be a personal thing which is anger. Alright now this is a good place now not to have a commercial, we could have one, can you tell me about the black student association, your affiliation with it and how it came to be and who got the idea? It is not a shift I think it is a...

Ronald Ivy- Well since I had been at Memphis State I had always seen a lack of communications between the black students mainly because when I first came there was the class thing. First negroes to come to Memphis state were integrating Memphis state. They didn't come to Memphis state to get an education because it was inexpensive, they came to Memphis state to get an education, not to get an education but to integrate Memphis state. These were people that could have gone to any school in the country. These were people whose parents could have sent them to any school in the country. But they came to Memphis State to integrate Memphis state.

David Yellin- Was that their choice?

Ronald Ivy- That was their purpose, that was their purpose in coming. I suppose they chose to do this for, the cause because then to integrate. This was the cause and this was what they came to Memphis state for.

David Yellin- Was this an organized thing?

Ronald Ivy- It was an, it was pretty organized.

David Yellin- By whom do you recall?

Ronald Ivy- NAACP.

David Yellin- They sought out people to send...

Ronald Ivy- First negroes that came here were superior intellectually. Some negroes made straight A's some of them and now it is different because now you have negroes at Memphis state. (muffled) school with both races because now you have negroes at Memphis state from one extreme to the other. You have all type and all classes and so forth.

David Yellin- Just for my own, when was this, 63 or 62?

Ronald Ivy- When Memphis was integrated first? I think it was, I think the first negroes came to the day school here in 59. And then...

David Yellin- Because when I came in 64 it was already done.

Ronald Ivy- A small number came, when I came out here there were about I gue4ss 3 or 4 hundred negroes in 64, there were enough that you could see them and know they were here.

David Yellin- That was when I came at the same time as you.

Ronald Ivy- Now when UI first came out here I saw something lacking I guess you could say or something the negro students here were lacking. I would go to parties for instance where you would have students from Lemoyne College and Owen College and then you would have students from Memphis State and they would hold conversations and Memphis state negro students always seemed so backwards. They knew what was in the books and but as far as what I think is important in getting an education I don't think books, what is in the books really matters because you forget it anyway but it is the, I guess you could say the culturizing process of college, it is supposed to deal with students. The good negro students here were missing it. They didn't know anything about what was happening in the world. They disassociated themselves from local events and local pursuits and so forth. They disassociated themselves with efforts, being in the NAACP was the only active negro groups as far as trying to bring about a change in the community and they disassociated themselves from NAACP They couldn't hold conversations on any level but with themselves in the student center and this type of thing. In other words they were just like high school students and they would graduate by high school students in the course of it. And I saw the need for at least some awareness on their part that they had to play a greater role. A larger role than just coming here and saying I go to Memphis State and they would go to classes and the culturizing process it just wasn't there. The speaking and drama department for instance, I remember when I tried out for Hi John. It was strange, the guy came over to the library I as in the library working on a term paper and this guy came over and he said well one of your friends (muffled) said that you could sing the blues. Well I can't sing the blues, I just sing blues for Audry because I don't have anything else to do and I always like them. They said they had this part in there for blind blues singer and he said I thought maybe you would like to try out for it. And I went over and I looked at him the first day I didn't really want to try out I just wondered what they were doing. And the guy said why didn't you come before didn't you see the signs outside saying try outs for Hi. John. I said yeah I saw the sign but I never looked at it. I never look at it. I look at the bulletin board but I never think about what, it doesn't relate to me. I hear about the dances and the social functions and all of these things but I never think about these things because they don't refer to me. I got to football games some of them because I like football and I don't even go to those unless the opposing team has negro players. And I just thought about it because I am going to shout for the opposing team anyway. And I said well what is the use in me going to Memphis State? How can I say I am a Memphis State student I could just be a correspondent student. I could just stay at home and let them send me work and I send it back to them for that matter. And I talked to quite a few people and I found out that this was the attitude that most of the negro students had out here. They didn't know what was going on in the world. I was always a reader, I started reading

a lot in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade because I was on crutches and I had a little hip injury and I read all the time. But they didn't read they didn't do anything.

David Yellin- Does anybody else in your family read?

Ronald Ivy- Yeah most of the people in my family read a lot. My mother reads probably, one thing was there were always a lot of books around the house. I read all the time but they never read anything, they didn't know anything. As far as they were concerned they were living in their own little private world and I thought this was bad. And I felt the need for some communications between the students here so that they could find out what problems they had, what problems John had over there and these type, you would never know. I mean you can sit up and talk to a cat all day and you would never know that this cat was flunking out because this cat had flunked out. You never knew anything about this cat as far as his school activities are concerned. You might know him, you might run around in the street together but you didn't know anything about this guy's school life at all and he didn't care whether you knew it and he didn't know anything about yours.

David Yellin- Why do you think that?

Ronald Ivy- Because school became very insignificant. I think this is why I heard it said or negroes complained they said well why in the world don't these folks get up out of the school instead of getting cars., Why don't they do this and why don't they do that., well they don't care about this and that. School doesn't mean that much to them, they are just out here. They are out here mainly for the same reason that a quite of few of the white kids are out here I suppose because everybody goes to college. Everybody within a sense goes to college because college means success. But as far as living an active college life, they don't care. It doesn't procure them.

David Yellin- Now you are going to tell about the beginning of the black (muffled). But before that though let me ask you something. Did you feel that your future your drive was with the black community or was it with the white community or did you want it to be integrated or combined community? Why did you feel, or take it upon yourself to right this wrong in the black community or in the black students and so on.

Ronald Ivy- Why did I feel? I don't know.

David Yellin- I mean it was almost a kind of a natural thing for you when you go around you say well the black students don't care. (muffled).

Ronald Ivy- I have always had a tendency to set myself up with some kind of corrective, even when I was on the corners.

David Yellin- Well are you going to be a teacher or you going to be a corrector.

Ronald Ivy- I was always these persons, the cats who would do things like you know how they do, most they call it the sociology of poverty. When the people that protect

their neighborhoods. They didn't have anything, wasn't anybody else going to trample on their nothing. They would beat people up, well I have always found myself saying leave the cat alone. Don't do this or don't do that, I have always found myself on the outside of the in crowd saying in crowd you are doing this is wrong and in crowd you need to do this and you need to do that. I don't know why I have always done this but I have.

David Yellin- You are a social critic.

Ronald Ivy- Yeah in a sense.

David Yellin- Now we're coming to the black student association.

Ronald Ivy- Well the black student association began rather I guess as a just some thing to do almost.

David Yellin- Did you start it?

Ronald Ivy- Yeah myself along with a few other people 3 or 4 other people. Well, first of all we tried to organize what was called the student alliance. I didn't go out on the student alliance thing because I didn't like the idea behind it and that was to bring, get black students and white students together. In an organization and they would discuss things, they would discuss the problems of society, they could discuss the problems of black people. I have long since, rather it was stupid to discuss your problems with white people because white people couldn't even relate to your problems. But they wanted to, some of the same people that helped start the black student association, decided to go into the student alliance and we got a petition up and it was submitted, the white students really the ones that devoted all their time to this effort because we didn't, we just signed our name and just passed the roll and all and they were admitted to the student government association and for some reason the student government association denied them a charter. Well after this we were bent on organizing black students at Memphis State in sort of a pressure group type of thing and what we did first was to get together and decide we were going to call all students together to form this organization. What we gave, we asked, we passed around a little hand out, a little handbill. We passed it around to the negro students.

David Yellin- Do you have any copies of these?

Ronald Ivy- Somewhere, they are all records somewhere,.

David Yellin- Can I make a request, I think that part of the archives here I mean these little mementos would just be terrific I am talking a hundred years from now, I mean really. You have, well you are a history major you know, I got you there. You know what I am talking about would you?

Ronald Ivy- I will see who has them.

David Yellin- Anything of this nature first hand bills, the first minutes the first letter or whatever. Ok fine, excuse me.

Ronald Ivy- These hand bills were asking the negro students to come to the Shelby county democratic club, this was the only facility that we could find. One of the girls that was working with us was also working with the NAACP and the Shelby County Democratic Club. So she secured the auditorium at the Shelby county democratic club. We went down there that night and there were 5 students. 5 students came to the meeting so we said this won't work and so we tried it again. We passed out some more hand bills and invited the negro students out here to come to the auditorium of the Shelby county democratic club.

David Yellin- Do you remember the dates on this?

Ronald Ivy- No.

David Yellin- Approximate?

Ronald Ivy- This was around September.

David Yellin- Of this year? 67, I mean this term.

Ronald Ivy- Yeah.

David Yellin- That is the first one was September and the second was a little after.

Ronald Ivy- It was about a week or so later. And the next time we had about 6 people about one more than we had last time. Then we said obviously nobody is going to come to the Shelby county democratic club. But I some of the kids in the group said well they don't care we may as well abandon the idea. I couldn't believe they didn't care because I had talked to too many of them and I started thinking about well it was a transportation problem because I wouldn't have been here myself if I didn't live it was in walking distance and so forth. And but we decided to do then was to call a meeting of all negro students in the most available place and the most practical; place, the place where all the negro students were the student center. We knew that there must have been some rule about holding mass meetings in a student center but we decided that we were going to go on and do it and we all decided that we would all suffer the consequences together whatever happened.

David Yellin- You talked about this?

Ronald Ivy- We talked about the consequences of holding this meeting. So one day we planned it, we planned what we were going to say to the people and everything and we passed out handbills. I think the name of it was the black speak easy. This was the name of the handbill. It was nice this girl has this little necklace on and it had speak easy on it. So we named it the black speak easy because we looked on the necklace and saw it.

David Yellin- Did everybody know what speak easy means?

Ronald Ivy- No we didn't, we didn't care what it mean but we thought it sounded good.

David Yellin- That is interesting do you know what it means?

Ronald Ivy- Yeah I know what it means.

David Yellin- Not many because it has been out of date for so long.

Ronald Ivy- We used to call it the black speak easy and we told al the negro students to be upstairs in the student center in Jones Hall at 12:30. Well at 12:30 I stood up on top of a chair and I started shouting little things that really didn't mean anything to me like do you know that you don't have the negro girls representing you on the angel flight. Did you know that you didn't have the negro laid to rest. Little things that they could relate to because like I said I always thought that they had (muffled) themselves from outsider and so we couldn't play up the national movement at that time. So we concentrated on little local things and things they could relate to. We shouted these things and we told everybody to be downstairs in the student center at 4:00. Well the white students on the other side of the student center stared shouting. Well then I started shouting back at them and it ended up a shouting session between the black students and the white students.

David Yellin- Were you aware that this was going to happen?

Ronald Ivy- I sensed it and I anticipated it, I don't know whether anybody else did but I was quite sure that this would happen.

David Yellin- And were you ready for it and in what way were you ready?

Ronald Ivy- I was sure that the, that we would have some white opposition but I was not necessarily ready for it but I wanted to see the reactions from the black students to the white opposition. This is the first thing I wanted to, I wanted to see this for myself and I saw then that the black students did have some sense of solidarity.

David Yellin- What did they do?

Ronald Ivy- They all started hollering at the white students together.

David Yellin- What was it, was it ever ugly or was it all kind of spirited.

Ronald Ivy- It was simultaneous and high spirited.

David Yellin- It wasn't like your gang fights.

Ronald Ivy- No it wasn't, nobody wanted to throw any bottles it was just this thing. I imagine if somebody had a thrown a bottle it would have been a terrible situation. I was afraid after it was over I said suppose somebody had thrown a bottle. You learn, in other words I have learned now that whenever you plan a demonstration of any kind you have got to anticipate any and all reactions from whoever you are demonstrating against. But I wasn't thinking in those terms then and this is what we

did. And immediately after this demonstration the dean said you can't hold a meeting in the student center. The deans didn't come directly to me they went to another fellow who was a graduate student.

David Yellin- Which Dean?

Ronald Ivy- The dean of students.

David Yellin- Was it Dean Collins?

Ronald Ivy- This was Dean (Muffled) working through dean Caters and the reason they did this and the reason they talked to this fellow I believe was because this fellow, I don't like to use the term but I think of another one, this fellow was...

David Yellin- Why don't you use it?

Ronald Ivy- He was a young uncle tom. He grinned all the time and you know...

David Yellin- Was he involved though?

Ronald Ivy- Oh he would grin all the time but not for money, you see he would grin all the time. And I had imagined that he had been talking to the deans and so forth all the time you see and for this reason they went to him. He wasn't involved in what we were doing, he didn't even know what we were doing but they called him and they talked to him and tried to use him to influence us to the point of not holding this meeting.

David Yellin- Do you think that they knew who they were?

Ronald Ivy- I am sure that they knew who I was I am sure they knew my name and everything else if they did know in person I am sure this fellow told them my name and all the history of me that he knew and everybody else. And we went over then to see, this cat told us that the dean wanted to talk to us.

David Yellin- And who are we?

Ronald Ivy- This was myself, Joseph Potter and Wheeler Harold, Thomas Potter and I don't know this cat's cold name we always...Brook Shard. His name was Brooks Shard.

David Yellin- You call him one name?

Ronald Ivy- We called him Brookshard. He was Brooks Shard.

David Yellin- And you were in the sense the leaders and the organizers?

Ronald Ivy- Yeah the organizers.

David Yellin- There was no actual leaders at that point?

Ronald Ivy- No not at that point. Even though I had the biggest mouth all the time. Because I have a big mouth anyway. So we went over and the dean said well you can hold this organizational meeting in the auditorium of the psychology building which is Johnson Hall, but we ended up holding the meeting in the auditorium of the education building because they had a class in the auditorium of Johnson Hall and we went through practically the same thing there that we went through in the student center. In other words we were just trying to work up emotion, we were appealing to emotion.

David Yellin- But there were not white students there who came to heckle?

Ronald Ivy- There were no white students that came to heckle no.

David Yellin- I mean this was your own meeting.

Ronald Ivy- Yes.

David Yellin- But you felt you had to have an emotion with people.

Ronald Ivy- Yes, we felt that we had to have an emotional appeal because like I said these students here were missing this thing. You couldn't speak on an intellectual level with them, you couldn't talk about things in perspective you had to get some simple something that they could relate to and something they could holler about and yet not get hung up onto the point on to dwell on something that they could holler about for today and forget about tomorrow but just something to stir up that emotion, this was our plan. We sit down and thought about things that we hear students complaining about all the time. We worked on their complaints.

David Yellin- You got their grievances.

Ronald Ivy- Yes we worked from their grievances and grievances that we heard and the grievances that we knew about and that sort of thing. Well at this meeting we did this and we called for another meeting but I have forgotten exactly I don't think this meeting really accomplished anything. Other than feelings of emotions because we tried to, we asked them to, if they had any grievances to write them down and turn them in to us but we didn't get anybody to write anything down. A few people shouted about what they didn't like but they didn't write it down.

David Yellin- And this is all related to Memphis state not the world...

Ronald Ivy- No Memphis state. Of course, this group that I was associated with we certainly got concerned with Memphis state we were just trying to relate to these students. Well we had another meeting about a week or two, I think it was about two weeks later in the same auditorium.

David Yellin- What were the grievances can you recall? What were the main or chief grievances,....

Ronald Ivy- Well mostly grievances were things that probably could have been solved without any organization what so ever. Things like, I have a teacher that did this to me and that to me.

David Yellin- And that to me means he discriminated in his own way by how?

Ronald Ivy- Things like we don't have any negro girls, no campus cuties. No negro girl tried to be a campus cutie. Things like this but we didn't tell them this we played it like yeah but you have got to get together and do something about this. In other words we were pretty, we were evading the real issues at first, we evaded all the real issues. We didn't really talk about things that, serious problems.

David Yellin- But you thought that you would one day?

Ronald Ivy- Yeah.

David Yellin- It wasn't your purpose to form an organization for what you might call petty, or localized.

Ronald Ivy- No I wouldn't have spent my time on doing it. It was our purpose to get them together, I have always thought that if you could start a person to thinking and make sure, that is if you could guide that person or you might even use the word indoctrinate. If you could start a person to thinking in one direction as long as that person would think in that direction that his mind will eventually come to a point where he would in effect think like you do. I have tried this with several people, with the Potter brothers. They come from, I guess you could say families that could very well, you could very well call middle class or bourgeois. They live in the negro suburban and I talked to them a long time. And I was suing them, they were my friends certainly but I was still using them for a dual purpose. I was trying to see, how long it would take me to get them to think like I did,. How long it would take me to get them to relate to my ideas. And I found out it really didn't take that long once they were thinking and I was going to make sure they were going to keep thinking about it because I was going to be talking about it. And I was steadily trying to bend their minds in the direction I wanted them in. In otherwards the things that I wanted them to talk about I made sure I kept throwing it at them, things I wanted them to think about it I kept throwing it at them. I kept criticizing heavily the thoughts that they had that I didn't like. It may sound evil but it is practical. This is what I did. And so well this was the rationale we were working on that if we could get the students together in one place with no cards, no playing cards, with no coca-colas, and with no foolishness, if we could get them together to talk on a intellectual basis. That we could eventually get them to speaking about that position and thinking about things more important than just coming out here and playing cards because you can play cards anyway.

David Yellin- So your whole trust in this was for the overall, well I guess you have to say the situation that the black man finds himself in, in the world. I mean this is what you were trying to do. And so you were doing this through the student, a student movement but eventually hopeful to wake them up to the world.

Ronald Ivy- Yes, this is right.

David Yellin- So this is now the 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting at Johnson Hall and it wasn't very successful you say, I mean how many were there?

Ronald Ivy- At the 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting?

David Yellin- Yeah.

Ronald Ivy- The 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting was....you are thinking of the 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting.

David Yellin- This is the second excuse me.

Ronald Ivy- The 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting wasn't successful there were about 200 negro students there but most of them came to see what was happening.

David Yellin- And you got verbal permission from the dean to hold this.

Ronald Ivy- Verbal permission.

David Yellin- Ok then what happened?

Ronald Ivy- For our 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting was a carefully planned meeting. We spent a lot of time on planning this so that it would go the way we wanted it to go. In other words we planned, selecting or having the black students who are members these were the ones at the meetings selecting the drafting committee to draft a constitution (muffled).

David Yellin- Who chaired this meeting?

Ronald Ivy- I did. On a statement on purpose,. What we planned (muffled) we had people that were going to suggest certain things and we knew what they were going to suggest and we anticipated the way the people were going to react. And so out of this meeting we got a constitutional drafting committee, and the people on this constitutional drafting committee were the people that we wanted to be on it in the first place.

David Yellin- Was that by election or selection by you.

Ronald Ivy- This was by election but....

David Yellin- Voice election or raising hand?

Ronald Ivy- Raising of the hand.

David Yellin- So an open election.

Ronald Ivy- But we had (muffled) it in such a way that we were quite sure who would be selected to the drafting committee. This is sort of a undemocratic, democratic election.

David Yellin- Planned democracy.

Ronald Ivy- And we had a meeting and (muffled) chairman of our financial committee had a meeting in his hall and drew up..

David Yellin- Of this committee the drafting committee.

Ronald Ivy- And drew up a constitution. After this, this was out at the(muffled) we had another meeting and read the constitution to the entire body and submitted the constitution to the student government association, however there is one thing that I think I should make clear to you as far as the way we were thinking and I think I related the same thing to the dean that day. We didn't necessarily care whether we were chartered or not because our ultimate purposes were of such nature that it didn't matter whether or not we were a chartered Memphis state organization or not.

David Yellin- And you say you told the dean this.

Well I just told him that the other day.

David Yellin- You told him after the fact, yeah.

Ronald Ivy- Yeah.

David Yellin- What was his reaction?

Ronald Ivy- I don't know.

David Yellin- Did you think he got what you meant?

Ronald Ivy- I am sure he got what I meant. I think he was surprised because I don't think (muffled) at that time. We didn't care really, the main reason that we wanted to be chartered was because so many negro students were afraid of us and we felt that if we were chartered as a chartered campus organization then they wouldn't be quite as afraid of us.

David Yellin- The cloak of decency or whatever.

Ronald Ivy- We call it a cover. This is the way we, I guess you could say this is when we started to function. Right now we have just began to function like we wanted it to. That is, we have several people doing several things and everybody knows what everybody else is doing. We are organized and structure we have a central committee a coordinating committee that is supposed to be comprised of people elected from the entire body. These people decide what is to be done, how is to be done and so forth.

David Yellin- How many on that committee?

Ronald Ivy- 13.

David Yellin- Any reason having 13 is that a good number or you just...

Ronald Ivy- Well originally we had 10 but several of the students left and one graduated and one entered the service and one quit and so forth. So we decided since we had to replace them and we had to get another organizing committee we decided to have an odd number because we had some situations where half of the people voted one way and half voted the other way and we had a stalemate.

David Yellin- Your officers are what president or chairman or what?

Ronald Ivy- Well my office was chairman of the coordinating committee.

David Yellin- Chairman of the coordinating committee. Now is that the top executive officer.

Ronald Ivy- Yeah.

David Yellin- Now somebody has replaced you?

Ronald Ivy- Yeah Charles Jones.

David Yellin- This is for next year already.

Ronald Ivy- Yeah already. Now what we have done so far is practically....I always thought we would do it in the first place, at least from the outset. That is, we I guess you could use the expression turned a lot of people on. And this is what we had to do in order to create a solid base to initiate and participate in certain programs aimed at uplifting the black community. We had to turn on enough people that is in numbers.

David Yellin- Were some programs, what did you think to turn people on or to keep them turned on.

Ronald Ivy- Well to turn people on, we use the same, this same concept I was telling you about and that is to feed things into people's minds and try to direct it. In other words this is what we used our forum for, we called it the black forum. These people would come and we would talk about local issues, we would talk about national issues.

David Yellin- So now you felt courageous enough to bring the world into your...

Ronald Ivy- We brought the world into this organization.

David Yellin- And you say you mean to say that you staged who takes part in it because you know what will happen as their result of their taking part in it.

Ronald Ivy- Yeah.

David Yellin- In other words you know who your members are and you know who the vocal ones are and so on. And so you allow them to be members of a forum.

Ronald Ivy- Members of the speaking part. Now the forum isn't just open to anybody. And it does serve two purposes that is you can find out first of all when a person comes to a forum for the first time, the thing you talk about are of such nature that it will appeal to a person's emotions if they have any. When they speak out the way they feel you can find out where they are in terms of the way they think about the movement about things in general.

David Yellin- I just made a new phrase for you, you can tell them anything (muffled).

Ronald Ivy- Yeah you can find out where they are. And once you find out where they are then you can proceed to try to mold their minds or to try to carry them, I called it, you can try to turn them on. But you can't turn them on until you find out where they are.

David Yellin- But what do you turn them on about, is what I mean.

Ronald Ivy- \_Some of the things you do, some of the things we try to get them to do is to first of all, our main theme is black awareness. That is what this means is awareness of the black man's problem in America. Everybody realizes that the black man has a problem but very few people want to put their finger on what that problem is. We try to get them to think in (muffled) and thinking and make them aware that our problem is a problem of our blackness on the one hand and our poverty on the other. That is we are black and poor and we are poor largely because we are black.

David Yellin- You are not black because you are poor, that is where that...I see and you would say that is the central core...

Ronald Ivy- This is the central theme that we work around and then I order to bring this theme out we talk about anything. We talk about Dr. King's assassination. (muffled) all down to how it comes back to our problem and what our problem is.

David Yellin- Now when you say black awareness, you mean you want them to certainly make themselves aware that they are black and what it means to be black?

Ronald Ivy- Well I think that anybody who is black knows what it means to be black.

David Yellin- IN the frame work of themselves but that may not be necessarily (muffled).

Ronald Ivy- But not in terms of the entire community you see. In other words it is almost stressing brotherhood. In other words, expressing views all the time we are standing in the Mariclade.

David Yellin- In the what?

Ronald Ivy- In the mariclade together. This was an expression that a fellow named David HC who was a member who was one of the original people that started trying to get the organization together.

David Yellin- How do you spell that.

Ronald Ivy- Mairoy, Clay, I think it is spelled M-a-i-r-o-y or some thing.

David Yellin- Mary.

Ronald Ivy- Mairoy they call him.

David Yellin- Mairoy. Is it one word?

Ronald Ivy- Mairoy it is one word, Clay. So the Mairoy Clay the word Mairoy. I have never looked it up in the dictionary but what it means is something that could be broken and shattered at any time. In other words it almost like saying that we are all hanging on that thin string and at any time it could be broken and we could fall and perish.

David Yellin- Ok you go ahead. You want to take a little rest?

Ronald Ivy- Yeah. I have been talking all day too.

(Tape Break)

Ronald Ivy- I would like to use the example of and I read once about this man who was preaching and he said that he laughed at his neighbor when his neighbor was being put out of her house. She was being evicted and he said well it is not me. And he knew that his neighbor was being evicted for causes that she couldn't help. And the next week he was being evicted. The fact is what happens to your neighbor effects you also. When the, when black man is discriminated against for any reason what so ever because he is black then the whole black race is being discriminated against. When you walk into an employment office and the man denies you a job because you are black then he is denying the whole black race a job. Or when he hires a man because he is black he is hiring the whole race, not that man, he is not firing just that man, he is firing the black race.

David Yellin- At the same time does that suggest to the black man that he has the responsibility not for himself but for everybody?

Ronald Ivy- For all black people.

David Yellin- Well yes,...yeah and I don't mean this as the opposite point of view but this is so he conducts himself with the idea that he is not just one man. I mean he is human of course...

Ronald Ivy- There has been this tendency this trend, this I don't know, this, it happens everyday a black man goes to school maybe he gets a degree and he gets out of school and there are 20 black men with his qualifications and he is hired and suddenly he sets himself off as something special and tells the other black man if

you work hard you can get where I am. He didn't work hard to get where he was, he got where he was because some company decided to hire a black man.

David Yellin- I see. Alright well Ron can we do something now. I think that more of this will come out unless you want to say any more about your organization, can you just go on a little bit I do want to get to your meetings with Dr. King and that kind of thing. But I am certainly interested in your organization and it was going on how often have you had meetings since that first...

Ronald Ivy- Well we conduct our forum every Monday, every Monday.

David Yellin- Every Monday where and when?

Ronald Ivy- We have our forums usually in room 125 in the humanities building. We have committee meetings in different places about once or twice a week. We want to meet regularly but every once in a while we have these special meetings.

David Yellin- Are you going to disband for the summer or what are you doing?

Ronald Ivy- No I don't think so I think from listening, I was in the last forum they committed even though I am not even in it any more theoretically. And from what I could hear they don't want to disband over the summer, they want to stay together in communications.

David Yellin- Why is that?

Ronald Ivy- They want to do this simply because the issues this summer, because this summer is what they call it? It is going to be a long hot summer.

David Yellin- A long hot summer. Are you going to help it be a long hot summer, or are you going to prevent it from being a long hot summer?

Ronald Ivy- Well, I don't think it can be prevented, I think it is too late to prevent.

David Yellin- You do?

Ronald Ivy- Yeah and sometimes I wonder whether I want to prevent it really. But I do think that there is a need for ok you can tear down (muffled) before you tear down your house be sure you have another one. In other words that if the riots and so forth that are uncontrollable, nobody can control a riot. You can put a riot down but you can't control it.

David Yellin- Once it gets started.

Ronald Ivy- Yeah, and nobody controls when riot starts but I happen to know that you just don't do it. The last march on the 28<sup>th</sup> of march it was blamed on several people and this was not planned. The people that they blamed, the march on the riot on they blamed the, I don't call it a riot...

David Yellin- It was called the mini riot.

Ronald Ivy- Yeah, this was good, I like that term. The people that they blamed the mini riot on then didn't have anything to do with starting the riot.

David Yellin- You mean the invaders?

Ronald Ivy- Yeah the invaders had nothing to do with it and I happen to know every person that is calling themselves an invader. And they didn't have nothing to do with it.

David Yellin- Well someone told me that there was a plan to start trouble at each corner.

Ronald Ivy- No there was no plan what so ever.

David Yellin- And that whoever threw the first thing through the window, did it too soon.

Ronald Ivy- This is what a lot of people thought after the mini riot was over but there was no plan, no plan what so ever. The invaders I guess you can call them, it is funny to me because of the way they got the name. The invaders didn't plan any violence, but they anticipated violence, I anticipated violence myself, not hat I planned it, I anticipated it. I hoped that it wouldn't happen simply because there were little children going downtown then and I hoped not.

David Yellin- Well what do you mean you anticipated it?

Ronald Ivy- I anticipated violence because I knew, I knew that a group of ministers could not order the black community or ask them if you want to use that term I call it order the black community to come down and demonstrate so called nonviolently for justice. I knew that these ministers couldn't relate to half of the people in Memphis, half of the negros in Memphis because they don't care to think about ministers. The ministers couldn't relate to the high school kids. Because they don't listen to, after all it is a revolution, they are in a rebellious stage of rebellion.

David Yellin- You mean as children, not as the generation gap.

Ronald Ivy- Yeah. The generation gap this is what I am talking about. The ministers couldn't relate to them and I knew that these people downtown the people that live down there, the cats that hang out on the corners of Beale St all day with the rags on their heads. I knew that the ministers couldn't control them and I also knew that the ministers made no attempt what so ever to organize them or to talk to them.

David Yellin- And you include Dr. King in this?

Ronald Ivy- I don't include Dr. King in this because I know that Dr. King on that particular march on March 28<sup>th</sup> as a visitor, as an invited guest.

David Yellin- Ok fine now when you say you knew that the ministers couldn't, didn't have any liaison you meant mostly the young people plus the cats with the wraps

around their head and therefore it was this knowledge of lack of communication that made you fear or suspect the possibility of violence there is no direct, nobody said...

Ronald Ivy- I practically knew in the first place because just looking at things the way they have happened you can't do this all the time but sometimes it is good. I knew that the, I saw the polarization in Memphis communities.

David Yellin- You are talking about..

Ronald Ivy- I know in my neighborhood, in Memphis in the entire Memphis. I knew that in my neighborhood there was no garbage cans put on the curb for the garbage man to pick up besides the garbage truck better not ride down Lauderdale. But come into Memphis state every day and passing through the white neighborhoods I saw lines of garbage cans. I knew that, I saw the polarization going on. I saw white people getting together behind mayor Lobe regardless of whether he sympathizes with the sanitation workers or not. They got behind mayor Lobe not because they supported what he did but because he was a white man and the sanitation workers were black and their leaders were black and this they felt was a confrontation between black people and white people I saw this polarization. I also believe that the police works for the administration. I have always believed that the police force works for the majority, whatever they do they do with the permission of the majority. And I knew that these police force working for Mayor Lobe, working for this opposite, opposing force wasn't going to, I knew that they weren't going to let this peaceful demonstration as the ministers had planned. I knew that they would try as hard as they could to halt the march.

David Yellin- To provoke it. SO that would you have wished had you the ability or the responsibility or the authority not to have had the march?

Ronald Ivy- Yes, I didn't like the march at all as a matter of fact, I wish that they had never designed that.

David Yellin- well who do you blame in the march? Who said there should be a march I mean from your point of view.

Ronald Ivy- Well, the ministers, the ministerial alliance...

David Yellin- Who? Rabbi Wax?

Ronald Ivy- All of them, Billy Kyles, all the men, Ralph Jackson, all these preachers that formed the ministerial alliance.

David Yellin- (muffled)

Ronald Ivy- The strategy committee planned the demonstration. They did it because they are old mind civil rights workers, fighters should I put it. They think that the only way you solve an issue that they felt was related to civil rights is we will have a march, this is all they knew about was this marching. They would never think about

the other tactics such as the work stoppage program that Dr. King called for on the 28<sup>th</sup> of March. This was not their idea as a matter of fact some of them were opposed to the work stoppage program which would have been just as hectic as if they had simply just had the work stoppage and no march. Why have the march?

David Yellin- Stay home.

Ronald Ivy- Yeah stay home don't go downtown and risk the possibility..

David Yellin- Did you ever push this forward to anybody.

Ronald Ivy- I talked to several people, I didn't talk to any ministers because I didn't think that the ministers would listen to me as a matter of fact I am pretty sure they wouldn't however I talked to the invaders if you want to use that term. I talked to all the young people about it. My cousin is director, I think he is now a Tennessee director of union relations council, Gerry Fanion.

David Yellin- Oh yes he is assistant yeah. He is your cousin?

Ronald Ivy- Yeah.

David Yellin- Good I have spoken to him.

Ronald Ivy- I have talked to several people about this.

David Yellin- What response did you get?

Ronald Ivy- I didn't know what I was talking about first of all because I was young and they had been in the movement longer than me and I was brand new in the movement and there was a lot of things I don't know about.

David Yellin- Do you trust these men?

Ronald Ivy- Trust them?

David Yellin- Like the reverend Lawson and Billy Kyles and..

Ronald Ivy- I would say this I respect their integrity.

David Yellin- Ah that is what I meant, I don't mean are they intelligent or they did the right thing I mean we all make mistakes. .

Ronald Ivy- I think whatever they do they are sincere.

David Yellin- That is what I wanted to know because that is important and certainly it is important to you and this goes on to Jackson....in other words in a sense I am asking at least for my (muffled) no matter how close I am I am still distant point of view. I suppose the negro community as such was as united as almost possible.

Ronald Ivy- It was more united than I had ever seen it in my 21 years at least.

David Yellin- And this is at that given time.

Ronald Ivy- Yes.

David Yellin- Alright now where do you place Dr. King in all this?

Ronald Ivy- Well I think Dr. King came here, came to Memphis, he did come on invitation from the ministerial alliance. He came to Memphis to use his influence to get black community together more than it was. He came to Memphis to use his experience, his....since he was supposedly the most recognized black leader, even by black people in fact most black leaders are. He came here to do what he could as an influential person for the sanitation workers strike, for this effort that the black community was on.

David Yellin- Now when he came and he was late that day do you have any information about his activity that day, why was he late?

Ronald Ivy- I don't, the only thing that I know was that I was over at Gerry's house, Gerry Fanion. I rode downtown with him that day and I went there early because I thought that he march was starting on time and Gerry received communications over the phone that Dr. King wasn't arrive until 10:20 he would arrive over an hour late, why? I don't know.

David Yellin- Now there was a picture in the paper right at the beginning of the march with Dr. King and reverend Abernathy and I don't know who else, on his other side walking down and I remember seeing it at the time as a matter of fact we left town that day and there is no relation between the two. I remember seeing the picture and I had never seen him not in the sense of frightened but kind of looking...of course they could have caught him right in that moment but behind him were a group of young people and they were supposedly taunting him. Was this an organized thing or was this...

Ronald Ivy- No I think this was pretty spontaneous but you can say organized in the sense to use the word organization it wasn't planned but whenever you try to I have found that you have always got to take the risk when you talk about should I say black awareness and this has been going on now for quite some time. That is the invaders me and myself and trying to spread black awareness and trying....it always makes a man stronger, more bold, even the kids for that matter. They all, I think it is beautiful myself, the fact that these kids had the nerve, the guts to do some of the things like at Hamilton High school for instance, I would say that Wednesday, I didn't plan on going to school that next day to do my student teaching I planned on going downtown and some of the teachers were wondering whether or not the students were coming to school the next day and I said there wasn't any question. I was saying they wouldn't have the guts to come downtown and they wouldn't have the guts not to come to school. And when I got downtown, I would like to say this first at 9:00 Thursday the 28<sup>th</sup> of march I knew there wasn't going to be any peaceful anything.

David Yellin- How did you know that.

Ronald Ivy- I knew this from looking at the people there, from listening to the people, and listening to the things they were talking about. They didn't come down to march peacefully for justice they came downtown to raise hell.

David Yellin- These were the kids  
?

Ronald Ivy- These were the young people that I saw. Except that some of them, I won't say all of the young people because some of the young people came downtown...

David Yellin- It was something you could almost sense the smell in the air.

Ronald Ivy- It was in the air there was people shouting and screaming and there was just this air of unrest in there it was something that, the crowd was such that you couldn't control this crowd which ever way it was going to go.

David Yellin- Yes, and what if Dr. King had been on time?

Ronald Ivy- If he had been on time probably I think there would have been a better chance of the march being peaceful simply because the people first of all wouldn't have had a chance.

David Yellin- The unrest would have settled down.

Ronald Ivy- They wouldn't have had a chance to get unrestful.

David Yellin- Alright...

Ronald Ivy- They would have just come down and joined the march and marched on.

David Yellin- Well where were you in the march?

Ronald Ivy- You mean location wise?

David Yellin- Yeah I mean what happened to you in the march.

Ronald Ivy- Well when I got there I was planning on marching pretty close to the front. But the people in the black student association we had planned on marching together that day were about middle ways in the line so I got with them and we had a large (muffled) of black student association and we stood there about an hour and I was like you said casing everything that was happening. In know enough about demonstrations, I have read enough about demonstrations and so forth so called non violent demonstrations to know that you don't have a nonviolent demonstration if you don't have any control over the demonstrators and I saw these march marshals telling people to get off the sidewalk and get in the street and get in line and they were looking at the march marshals like they were crazy. And then I saw the Hamilton Students when they arrived they had fought their way out of

Hamilton High school you know about the disturbance there and had walked all the way downtown hot and sweaty some of them were bleeding. The cops had beat them and (muffled) some of them. And you just don't find a person arriving in this condition and then saying now get peaceful brother and stand in line because they weren't about to get peaceful. They came downtown shouting and screaming and curse words about mayor Lobe and so forth, this is what drove them down and this is the emotion that kept them going to get down there. And you just don't tell those people to get in line and march peacefully. So like I said at 9:00 I knew that this wasn't going to be as peaceful as they had planned. Of course I didn't, I will tell you I didn't think that negroes would have the nerve to do some of the things they did that day to my surprise. Of course I also talk to several people down there that weren't from Memphis that had come down simply to get in or whatever happened. They were prepared for anything that happened. And most everyone that was down there the young people especially were prepared, they would have marched peacefully if they would have marched peaceful or they were prepared to riot if it turned to a riot.

David Yellin- Now these people you say were prepared were they from Memphis?

Ronald Ivy- Well most of them were from Memphis.

David Yellin- Where were these people from?

Ronald Ivy- Places like Cleveland, Chicago, Detroit, large cities, St., Louis.

David Yellin- (Muffled) would this be all part of the young movement that is going around.

Ronald Ivy- Yeah.

David Yellin- And you say they were prepared to participate in this march.

Ronald Ivy- To participate in whatever happened.

David Yellin- In whatever happened.

Ronald Ivy- Whatever happened.,

David Yellin- So as soon as violence started they probably, this is the way it is going.

Ronald Ivy- Let's get into the swing of things.

David Yellin- Zip it up yeah, well then they didn't start the thing.

Ronald Ivy- No they didn't start it.

David Yellin- Does anybody know who started it, who is the kid that threw the first,...

Ronald Ivy- I don't think anybody knows who threw the first stick, I think it was a stick that went through the window.

David Yellin- (muffled).

Ronald Ivy- I don't thin anybody knows.

David Yellin- (Muffled) not that they would be reported or named divulged but just to have a voice, or have the stick. But that, alright now what do you recall about the march?

Ronald Ivy- Well what I recall. We marched a while singing and chanting and doing the things you do in a march and a demonstration. You sing and you shout we shall overcome for awhile and you should down with mayor Lobe and this type of thing for awhile. But when we had gotten on Beale about to turn on Main the first thing I saw was sticks going in the air. Well I had heard some noise but I didn't know what it was, it was shots that I was hearing it didn't sound like gunshots because they weren't they were tear gas. I hadn't heard this before and it was a strange sound, it sounded like a drum or something. And then I saw sticks flying and I saw people running, kids running all over the place, not running at the stores but running away form the policemen. And when the kids started running away form the policemen this is when the policemen started chasing them and when the policemen started chasing people everybody started running, except for the people that looted, the people that looted was on the way home by the time the policemen got to the main body. It just, it was very rapid and it is almost unbelievable that much damage could have been done that quickly. In other words the looters were at home by the time the main masses the marches had gotten back to Clayborne Temple the looters had packed up all of their things and stolen and gone home. There was, I saw several people get hit for sticks, the main thing I was looking for I was trying to take my people, my friends, these kids out here that look up to me, I was looking trying to see what was happening to them.

David Yellin- What was happening to them?

Ronald Ivy- Well my first reaction when we knew that violence had erupted the first thing I did was turn around to the people to the students, to my friends, and said everybody be still. Don't run, there is no sense in running because if you run you will fall and hurt yourself and nobody decides to chase you, I said don't run.

David Yellin- Did you stand your ground.

Ronald Ivy- Yeah.

David Yellin- But wasn't everybody coming back towards us this is what happened. Everybody was coming back towards us and I saw then that we just couldn't stand there and let all these people run over is so I said let's walk back to the church people.

David Yellin- You went back to the..

Ronald Ivy- We walked back to the church.

David Yellin- You walked back to the church.

Ronald Ivy- It was important that we walked, the fact that we were walking meant that a lot of policemen with a lot of sticks and clubs ran by us without looking at us. In other words they weren't concerned with the people that were walking they were concerned with the people that were frightened and were running.

David Yellin- I see.

Ronald Ivy- I had, I stood right in front of a policemen that was beating people running with a club. I stood right in front of him and looked right in his face and he didn't even do this he just looked at me and went on beating other people.

David Yellin- you mean anybody that was running?

Ronald Ivy- Anybody who was running or frightened screaming, they were getting beat but as long as we just walked back.

David Yellin- and where did you go to?

Ronald Ivy- We went back to the temple.

David Yellin- And went in the temple?

Ronald Ivy- Not at first, at first I was standing outside trying to find out where some of the kids had went.

David Yellin- What were you thinking about then can you remember?

Ronald Ivy- Well main thing I was thinking about believe it or not I was thinking about the kids that were downtown that I knew. I was thinking about them I wasn't thinking about...

David Yellin- The Hamilton kids?

Ronald Ivy- I was thinking about some Hamilton kids but I didn't know how, see I didn't know how many kids from Hamilton came down there. In fact I didn't know most of the kids that did come down there.

David Yellin- What did you think about of them or where you thinking of Hamilton?

Ronald Ivy- Well about these kids I was looking for I was thinking about them, I was trying to catch them and tell them to come on in the church so they wouldn't get hurt this is what I was trying to do.

David Yellin- Alright is there anything that you can think of that happened then?

Ronald Ivy- Well, one thing just disturbed me tremendously. I think out of all I saw this disturbed me the most. A minister was talking to reverend Lawson about getting people in the church and this ministers started back up Hernando telling people don't run and go up in the church. (muffled) and the policeman came and kicked him and knocked him down and they beat him under a car and this man was simply trying to bring people to order. And this police men heard him, he had to hear this man had a loud speaker.

David Yellin- One of the bullhorns.

Ronald Ivy- Yeah, the policemen knocked him down and two of them stood there and kicked him and you know this disturbed me, (Muffled) he is preaching peace and they do him like this. But I didn't say, I just looked at it and I just stood there I wasn't going in the church. I decided I wasn't going into the church.

David Yellin- Why?

Mainly because the church was (muffled) somebody else had gone in there I just stayed out side.

David Yellin- Were you afraid?

Ronald Ivy- Strangely I wasn't, I wasn't afraid of anything, they were, the policemen were shooting pistols and gas guns all around me...

David Yellin- Did you get any in your eyes?

Ronald Ivy- Yeah I got a whole tear gas bomb thrown in my face this is when I went to church, I didn't go into the church on Powell this guy drug me to church.

David Yellin- Who?

Ronald Ivy- I don't know who he was.

David Yellin- You mean a policemen.

Ronald Ivy- No this was one of the guys, a big guy, I just know he had to have been a big guy to pick me up and take me in the church.

David Yellin- Why did he do that?

Ronald Ivy- I don't know I guess he took me in there one thing because I was about to pass out from this gas. This policemen through a whole, what do you call it a capsule? This wasn't mace this was tear gas. And he through a red tear gas bomb you might call it down by my feet.

David Yellin- What would you have done if a policemen had hit you?

Ronald Ivy- I probably hit him back if I could have.

David Yellin- (muffled).

Ronald Ivy- If he hit me hard enough I would have probably fallen. But I am pretty sure I would have hit him back. I am not nonviolent and I do believe in defending myself certainly in that. But they didn't hit me for some, they never hit me they just looked at me while I was standing there until this cop came up and threw this gas by my feet and then I found myself in the church and by the time my head had cleared up well enough to see I was just going around trying to locate different people.

David Yellin- Did the policemen ever come in the church ?

Ronald Ivy- They came in the church twice. I saw them come in twice. They came in once chasing a fellow. They came in once then and then the fellow got lost in the crowd so they went back out. And the next time I saw them come in was when they came in with eh message saying that the people in the church could leave now because they had cleared things up outside.

David Yellin- And did the people in the church believe them?

Ronald Ivy- Well, I didn't care but I don't know if the people in the church were listening to the ministers and they would have done anything that the ministers told them at that point.

David Yellin- How do you think the ministers acted then, did they act responsibly, with pretty good order?

Ronald Ivy- I think they did very well in that situation because I was afraid then, I was afraid that somebody was going to lose his head and stand up and start telling people what to do. And that would have been a terrible situation because these people first of all weren't armed and what were they going to do with some signs? I wouldn't play to this, and the ministers were able to take the (muffled) and were able to..

David Yellin- Which ministers?

Ronald Ivy- This was reverend Starks and reverend Lawson. Reverend Lawson was trying to get people to sit down.

David Yellin- Yeah how did he get back so fast? I guess he wasn't at the head of the march then?

Ronald Ivy- No, yeah I think he was at the head of the march. I think he was because I don't know what happened in the church that I, I was one of the last people to go inside the church like I said because I wasn't going. I hadn't planned on going into the church really. I went in..

David Yellin- By god's angel.

Ronald Ivy- I think that the ministers they did a pretty good job at trying to control the people once they had gotten out of hand. (muffled) that they didn't do a good job of planning the thing in the first place.

David Yellin- Now, it seems to me that the one thing if I could now...(Tape End)