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Memorial March Discussion, 1969

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David Yellin- Side 2 at Barthhouse April 29th, 1969, side 2.

Carolyn Yellin- The memorial march revisited.

David Yellin- Jerry Beyer, Beyer, Beyer with a big fat coke in her hand and ready to go. Jerry you didn't make the tape with us last year did you?

Jerry Beyer- No because I didn't march last year.

David Yellin- Oh that is right , yes.

Jerry Beyer- MY main feelings about the march this year were personal ones because I had not marched last year when it would have been difficult personally for me to march. And when it would have meant more to me to march. At the beginning of this march I felt somewhat disappointed in myself because it was so easy to do it this time and I went I would have done it last year when it would have meant more to me personally.

David Yellin- Well without getting too personal if what you are saying is that last year there was some element, physical element that stopped you from going. You are saying that you were frightened last year?

Jerry Beyer- No I was in disapproval of family and friends.

David Yellin- Oh I thought you were the implication.

Jerry Beyer- I could have done it but I rationalized myself out on this.

David Yellin- Last year?

Jerry Beyer- Last year. But it was not a hard thing to do this year.

David Yellin- Well what were some of your thoughts as you discovered this as you walked along, I mean what made you discover it do you recall?

Joan Beifuss- Did you walk next to Elizabeth.

Jerry Beyer- No I walked next to Pat and next to a priest and I did wonder at the time what was the etiquette of the march, do you introduce yourself to the one next to you. And finally I turned and introduced myself to the priest who was shy I think and we carried on a conversation along the way. And I particularly looked at the people on the sides of the street to see if they, what they were looking like. If they looked like they disapproved or if I saw anybody I knew.

David Yellin- Did you feel everybody was looking at you?

Jerry Beyer- No I felt like they were looking out of curiosity.

David Yellin- Did you feel or any of us did you feel that you were part of a mass, or did you feel separated from anybody or part or almost...

Jerry Beyer- I felt more separate because I was having all of these personal feelings about myself.

David Yellin- If I may the reason I ask that is for whatever reason last year I was separated from the whole group, last year I walked alone. This year I didn't.

John Beifuss- This year I found the reverse, t his year I found less of a feeling of solidarity than last year.

Carolyn Yellin- I would say that too.

Ted Hoover- I would also.

Carolyn Yellin- Would you Ted because last year I felt that most of the whole period of the march the atmosphere was electric. It was people knowingly doing something in order by action to say some thing, this year I felt it was not quite....

David Yellin- Well again it may be everybody's as I can recall and this is not to defend the position because that is the way it was, Last year I said I walked alone, because I was doing it for what I had to do and I didn't care about anybody in that sense. This time I felt it was more important or at least whatever it was I didn't consciously arrive at this, but that we were all together and it didn't make any difference. I mean I didn't want to be alone this time, I don't know whether you can draw anything out of it Ted.

Ted Hoover- Well let me bring in this much that one expects thee crowds that are on the sidewalk, there are some negro north, south of Beale and they were and not as many on the sidewalks as last year. But was moving on along moving north on Main where we normally were last year there were many white people standing and looking sometimes very belligerent. One man, a neighbor of ours was snapping pictures of people he knew and there was a real threat about this. This year the crowd was predominantly negro all the way along a very few white people along the sidelines. And not much of looking at the monkeys and much more well, the people in the parade or march, not that I didn't feel worse as much marked it off from the people on the sidewalks because that is the thing....

Carolyn Yellin- How did you feel about it Jerry? I was just about to say you were (muffled) how did you feel?

Jerry Beyer- I noticed it was exactly the opposite I noticed all the white people and I had told my lawyer who is quite a conservative that I would wave to them if we passed down the North Main building and I really looked for him because I wanted to wave,.

David Yellin- He wasn't about to be out there.

Jerry Beyer- He said that if I had waved to him that he would not have waved back and that the people with him would have said where did you meet that girl?

Pat Swank- I felt very much a part of a group, a group feeling until we approached the North 100 Main building and I think it was something that I probably wouldn't have even known it was there you know I was just heading for the plaza just like this, but Jerry said something about her lawyer and 100 North Main and I thought my lord this is how many many insurance offices there are in the North Main building what have I done. A moment of regret here you know. Then I thought no room for regrets in my life and it didn't bother me after this.

David Yellin- Mitch Hoover- How about you?

Mitch Hoover- - Well I didn't, I am a people watcher and I was interested in the people along the way. I noticed a couple of black kids would wave, or they look at you and if you look approachable they would wave and they would wave back and that was all there was to it. But I saw very little indication or response of any sort from black people. I had the feeling they sort approved, but they weren't making a great thing of it. The white people especially in the factory area that we went through just before we passed the Lorraine, there were some really hostile glances.

David Yellin- It was lunch time and they were out.

Mitch Hoover- - Yes, some looked fearful or afraid to do anything, be hostile or ugly and others were genuinely and outwardly very disapproving.

David Yellin- What was your reaction tot hat?

Mitch Hoover- - Well I thought it was kind of funny, I guess, you feel stronger in numbers, but I thought it was very funny and felt terribly superior. Not so righteous but that we were just really cleverer than just about anybody you know. One thing I was reflecting on and I am maybe digressing but since my husband is on the faculty we were watching for kids we knew, how many kids form Memphis state would be here black or white. And the response of black students when they saw faculty members you probably experienced this, Calvin Taylor who works for the Commercial I believe it is, he does some writing, came up, this was before we entered the march and embraced Dr. Phillips, just threw his arms around her and she was just as pleased as he was but she had him in class and he was oh so happy that she was there I think.

David Yellin- He should know by now that she would be.

Mitch Hoover- - She told us she had marched since James Reed had been killed and I was impressed by this, it was marvelous. Several others, one kid came running up to us on the way back and knew my husband he wasn't a music major and he was talking, how many people from Memphis state he asks. So Walt goes through the list and he smiles and just feels you could tell that this really pleased him because he

apparently had some identity with the campus and was really proud that these people had marched.

David Yellin- Well Jerry since you have to go maybe we can finish you off as we say. Well again I think it is important to us, at least it seems like a sensible question to me, how did you feel at the conclusion of it or even as you look back now, was the march a satisfying experience?

Jerry Beyer- I can only repeat what I said, not for me personally because I felt all this disappointment in myself for having done some thing that was easy to do now, that wasn't a hard thing for someone to do.

David Yellin- So that it didn't ask enough of you?

Jerry Beyer- No it was a normal natural thing now, it wasn't, it just wasn't a hard thing for me personally. Although there was some disapproval from family and I did tell my maid in case anything did happen I gave her the number of a close friend and said not to call family, call this friend.

David Yellin- Yeah, I am led to ask a question on this. (muffled) the satisfaction of it. Would you march again?

Jerry Beyer- Yes.

David Yellin- I think that we too find that this is a worthwhile for the people involved. Some of us are sometimes moved to things, not particularly this because as your daughters said it is the stylish thing to do and if you don't do it, it is the stylish thing for a lot of people to stay away from the march.

Mitch Hoover- - But I think maybe after awhile maybe you get into such a habit that for a year or two years you do so many things that are hard, you train yourself to do the hard thing. And you get a sense of the hard things have some sort of a glorification about it. Then when it becomes almost second nature to you, you seem to think well since this comes so naturally it is less worthwhile which is not the way it is.

Jerry Beyer- I didn't think it was a less worth while thing to do I thought it was less worth while for what it meant to me, because let's face it I didn't go last year and I didn't go for the wrong reasons.

Carolyn Yellin- But you used an interesting word Jerry, you said it now seems so normal and I think that is an interesting word to examine where you have come to in this past year that now it would seem normal to you to go on a march, where I am sure that let's go back farther than last year. Two years ago nothing could have probably seemed more abnormal.

Jerry Beyer- Two years ago I would have said it is fine for those who do it but I wouldn't do it. Last year I felt I should do it but I didn't have enough courage to, and this year there was no question about whether I would or not.

Carolyn Yellin- One other question in regards to this and maybe for Pat too, just and anyone else but particularly our native southerners here. Do you think the fact that Dr. King was killed in Memphis has given impotence to this change that has come about in your feelings. You think you would be this far along now had you not lived through this past year in Memphis or the past year and a half.

Jerry Beyer- I probably would not be.

Carolyn Yellin- You wouldn't be this far along.

Jerry Beyer- I would, it is hard to say because I have been this far along intellectually for a very long time but not actively. Not to the point where I would act out what I believe without question and now I would.

David Yellin- Are you asking if for instance to speculate that if Martin Luther King had been killed in Birmingham, would that have the same reaction is that what you are saying? Is that your question?

Carolyn Yellin- Well first of all if he hadn't been killed and second of all if he had been killed elsewhere I think it is almost two questions. I think many people were affected by the fact that he was killed and there were many changes of people who do not live in Memphis, and I think many of us would have felt a change because....

Pat Swank- Well I think it affected me in that he was killed at the spot where I was at the time. But I couldn't have been in Birmingham, or I could have been in Chicago or I could have....because I am a southerner by birth and have spent most of life in the south but not all, but I have a sort of detachment from the south somehow, I am not of the southern aristocracy and I have never felt this tied to the south.

Carolyn Yellin- The vested interest in the traditional....

Jerry Beyer- I don't either but I feel very much a southerner.

Pat Swank- I don't have this feeling.

David Yellin- What is a southerner, it is unfair question.

Jerry Beyer- A kind of culture, a kind of a way of life, a easy going...

David Yellin- Does the land attract you is there anything in the land? Or is it just place? Would you feel the same way if you were from Walton Massachusetts?

Jerry Beyer- Yes. In fact, we lived in the Delta of Mississippi once and I thought you know that was the ugliest place in the world and I said to a native Deltan, is this pretty to you, and she said why it is just beautiful. And I think it, I don't think being a southerner is any better than being a Midwesterner. Or an easterner but I just think it is a different kind of a growing up process. If you have a certain kind of heritage that is not better but it is just different.

David Yellin- It is yours.

Jerry Beyer- And I think what made me. I did want to report something that I thought was sort of interesting with my maid about the march. I had told her that, I had asked her that if she wanted to march without, and I am saying well if you do you can have the day off and she said no I am not going to. I said why not. And she said, well there will be people down there acting naughty. And I said well I am going Mary and she really looked taken aback. Like she didn't understand me at all, what is that white woman doing down there.,

David Yellin- Well there must have been something about that naughty business. Because well a cook, our housekeeper didn't go either and in fact I don't know whether she said it to you Carolyn but she said to me that suggestion that there might be trouble and that her sons weren't going. Well I have even a sadder story, I gave our maid the day off so that she could go and paid her. And she, there was a rough time my mother was in the hospital and just before Easter and (muffled) she went to a dental appointment instead. (Muffled) Her and her big mouth yes.

Joan Beifuss- I think also there were quite a number of rumors in the black community that the march would be violent.

David Yellin- I think there were many many rumors which account for the....

Joan Beifuss- Come out here I think.

David Yellin- Right, which accounts for the lack of, smaller size.

Jerry Beyer- This is not particularly surprising to me because I think we should recognize the different attitudes among the segments of the black community as well as among the white. I mean this, you think if there were a white person or a black person to go logically the black person will go we thin this. But this is not necessarily logical because the people I feel like the people who go to the march, maybe not all of them, but a great number of them are going not as a black or as a white but there going because of an ideology that they follow regardless of their color. And a great many of black people are just not up to this they just haven't...

David Yellin- You mean they don't have an ideology or they are not quite certain about it?

Jerry Beyer- They are still living back in the days of the reconstruction.

Ted Hoover- Think of the first three blacks of the march and all the phones we went by and all the people we went by of people sitting out front or sitting on porches, many waving.

David Yellin- You wondered why they weren't in the march?

John Beifuss- I had a feeling they were not negros by persuasion.

(Muffled)

David Yellin- Well Joan we haven't heard from you and I think you ought to be heard from.

Joan Beifuss- I don't really know that you need to except that I marched in a march in between these marches. I marched in January again with the national council of churches down to the Lorraine Motel.

John Beifuss- To hang Walter Weiss trumpets.

Joan Beifuss- That is kind of interesting only that in there were, I noticed the police radios on the corners as we passed, or the police walkie talkies and I did not notice them particularly on this larger march on April 4th but in January you could hear the police walkie talkies quite well and they would say you know the march is approaching the corner of such and such. For the first time I was afraid of the policemen. On all these marches I have been, I am afraid of everything on marches but I have never been afraid of the police before and I was disquieted about the police in that January march which was utterly ridiculous because that was all ministers who were marching plus (muffled). But the best thing about that march was that we marched to the Lorraine motel and Mitch Hoover- 's husband Walter had gotten a (muffled).

Mitch Hoover- - suppose you call it brass quartet it was two trombones and two trumpets, all three of whom were Memphis state faculty and one student.

Joan Beifuss- That was kind of neat we went out in the street in front of the Peabody hotel and there was this trumpets at the corner and somebody said it is the salvation army.

David Yellin- That is wonderful, well talking about the police and of course the kids did too and I have to report that when the tear gas bomb went off and I saw the crowd sort of surging towards where I was. My first thought was that somebody had started trouble in the march and the police were out to get them and that there would be more police come and I don't know I heard someone else remark, I can't remember who that if there had been one more policemen in that crowd it would have started a riot and I believe that to be so. But the best thing that had ever happened was that they had kept the police, now one may be too many, too few but one or two or three and when, and I know myself I would have gotten concerned.

Carolyn Yellin- I think the police handling of that march was beautiful as a matter of fact he police stayed off the Main St. they were a block a way.

David Yellin- But what concerns me of the thought oh my god the police are coming.

Joan Beifuss- Well I think speaking ads a white middle class American this is a very disturbing thing for me that I would turn the fear towards the police.

Carolyn Yellin- Well this interests me because my own ambivalent feelings about the police that came to me so clearly in the march. Because what you have described I

certainly felt as I looked, standing there looking straight ahead and a little to the right, up to the speakers platform hearing not being aware that anything was happening until I saw a consternation on the speakers platform and then saw the first I was aware was the voice of reverend Lawson and I recalled this voice having heard it on the radio reports last year the voice saying this is reverend Lawson will the march please turn around, I could still hear this voice ringing in my ears and when I heard, when I saw him take the microphone and say, this is reverend Lawson everyone please keep your place there has been a little disturbance, just the quality of his voice sent panic into...

Joan Beifuss- He sounded, at the beginning he sounded a little bit panicky, I think his voice broke a bit.

Carolyn Yellin- Yes and I felt panic at this and then I immediately and I saw that they were looking and I looked to the left almost because that was the direction in which the march was coming from, I looked to my left and then I heard him saying stay where you are do not run, stay where you are it is only a smoke bomb but I hadn't seen anything and the moment he said it was only a smoke bomb, everybody ran and they were running toward me, but many people there was a surge of people toward me. But almost instantly a space cleared and from where I was standing even I could see a, see where the smoke was coming from and it was clear all around it, And it was at that moment that I became aware that police were not chasing the people who were running toward me, all of this happening at once but I realized then that my greatest fear was not the smoke bomb or...no my greatest fear was that he, smoke was mace being used by the police and I was about to be maced, I was certain of this and I was ready to throw my coat over my face and so forth. But when I saw no police coming I felt so relieved and then I started singing we shall overcome in a very loud voice. And sort of to quiet, like whistling in the dark and all the people around me I felt a little of what you felt too Pat of a feeling of oneness, with the negro people around me all of whom were strangers and I felt as safe with them as I have ever felt with, I have never felt more at peace with black people than I did of those immediately around me.

David Yellin- David Yellin- There were a lot of kids around you.

Carolyn Yellin- There were many kids and we had shared our lunch with one little boy who in fact had no shoes on and I thought it is too early for a child to go barefoot.

Joan Beifuss- I wish I would have known you had lunch.

David Yellin- Well we are old veterans, last year somebody else had lunch and we didn't.

Joan Beifuss- I was going to say one thing that Lawson said that kind of struck me when he was trying to calm the crowd was when he kept saying you are beautiful, you are beautiful.

Carolyn Yellin- Oh yes they liked this suggestion.

Jerry Beyer- I liked it too.

(Muffled)

David Yellin- I repeat this time I did not take that personally. Last year I would have.

Ted Hoover- That is understandable.

Jerry Beyer- I took it personal but I took it personal...

David Yellin- Well you should.

Jerry Beyer- Thank you but in a group sense I felt we were. I felt very very proud. I felt so proud.

David Yellin- This is an idiom that they use it was fine and it was it was exciting in a sense.

Joan Beifuss- I think for a moment it could have gone the other way.

David Yellin- Oh it would have taken one incident and as I say 5 policemen would have really because there was two kids next to me young kids, who started screaming and literally standing in place and screaming and sobbing and so I was at a loss momentarily what to do because I felt here was big white poppa, that would be the wrong thing to do so I took the tact of don't rub your eyes, because they were screaming before they really had anything much, In mean my eyes started, now I said don't rub your eyes just take it easy and I kind of held her hand the one and she didn't seem to mind and I got more courage and told her not too. But pretty soon she stopped but a couple screams of this kind. And I did see the policemen that was injured, he came up our way and went down and he was and I do remember something on his shoulder.

Joan Beifuss- Well I wonder why we were packed in so tightly.

Carolyn Yellin- I wanted to say there was the second time and this is what Douglas referred to when we were walking back along Main St. having left the plaza while the speeches were still going on we left and it was just beginning to rain and when we did pass this group of young blacks on the corner and this girl did say something quite ugly, I didn't hear all the profanity and so forth. I heard her say it is not going to do you any good to march and there was hatred in her tone and say where you been to the march or something. We were carrying signs, we had all the signs, I am a man and freedom whatever they all said, I have a dream, soul force.

Ted Hoover- (Muffled)

Carolyn Yellin- Whichever one it was I had two of them and so I said did you want a sign and handed it to her and she accepted it and it was at this moment and this again, this was happening, I thought at first she was asking for a sign and even as I

was handing her a sign thinking she wanted it for a souvenir and was a big Martin Luther King fan this was my instinct that everybody here was friendly. I realized that she was saying these hateful things and even as I was handing her the sign I became aware of the three police cars parked along side the policemen still in the cars as Doug described and we had seen several sets of these always traveling in 3 or 4 and I was so glad they were there and they were the friendliest looking policemen I had ever seen and my instant thing was they are handling this so beautifully and I am on their side and they are on my side and even as I was thinking this how can feel this way when moment ago I thought surely the enemy that would be coming upon me would be cops. This feeling I was aware of this split feeling that I had all the time during this march. I never once could take exception tot what the police did and in the end when I certainly could take exception to the attitude being shown by this negro girl instantly my best friends were the cops in that car.

David Yellin- I think you summed it up in the end, we summed it up at he end by saying that we sure didn't want the police there but we sure were glad they were.

Ted Hoover- Kirk Robinson was still in the line of march when the trouble broke out, and he saw the police cars come whipping along sirens blaring he said about 50 or 60 miles an hour very close to the marchers and the policemen jumped out and said open up the trunks and pulled out the riot guns and started pumping them and he went, and he was most made uncomfortable by them. He said there was some kind of joy in the way which some of them were pumping their guns.

Joan Beifuss- Of course I think you should mention that Herb Robinson is a negro.

Ted Hoover- Yes.

Carolyn Yellin- In fact, he is the principal...

David Yellin- Oh yes yes, he now lives in an integrated neighborhood.

Joan Beifuss- Yes.

Ted Hoover- He always lives in an integrated neighborhood after he is there.

Joan Beifuss- I think another thing we should mention the speeches I thought were interminably long, you left early. Were well out of it I think and that when Dr, Abernathy was speaking and it did begin to pour rain and everybody put their signs over their head, as matter of fact we had brought for our excellent file, we had bought a copy of the black power piece that was being sold but it got all wet with the rain so it was destroyed. But Abernathy launched into a very long speech and the rain started and everyone looked kind of uncomfortable I suppose and started shifting around and he said well he would cut his speech short hew would not give his full speech...

David Yellin- He would give a resume.

Joan Beifuss- He would give a resume of it. Which then went on for another half hour with the rain pouring down.

Ted Hoover- During which time Walter said to me, I am glad he cut it short. I said yeah, he was really going on..

David Yellin- I wish he had given his longer speech maybe it would have turned out shorter.

Ted Hoover- Well (muffled) Elizabeth Phillips turned around and said but it is so interesting.

(Muffled)

Pat Swank- I just nearly fainted and I cannot nearly describe the emotions that went over her face throughout the entire meeting. When they said when Ted Kennedy was going to be here and then when she caught sight of him I thought she was going to have a stroke, it was great.

David Yellin- I think that my own feeling as I recall up to them was that, and I had this feeling after hearing Farmer who was a marvelous orator give a very nothing speech and I had a feeling that this was kind of minor league, but when Ted Kennedy came the whole thing went up and it was something. It was then a major league or an important event.

Ted Hoover- Was any of Abernathy's speech like last years?

Last year he was so clearly attempting to seize reins. Was he clearly in control, was he confident...

John Beifuss- Much more comfortable.

David Yellin- OH yeah as Doug said,,...

John Beifuss- He was a much better speaker, especially when he got away from the (muffled)

David Yellin- Yes.

John Beifuss- Just the last 20 minutes.

David Yellin- Yes that's right. He had a sense of humor.

Joan Beifuss- Of course the response to Abernathy is a much better response than Farmer and Lawson gets. He is much more in tune.

Ted Hoover- Last year the response to him was a great deal of it I think at least struck me as being well this is what we got so we have got to applaud him. It seems to me this year he was much more effective and he was coming across.

Carolyn Yellin- There was one, wasn't this the speech when he said the Irishmen go back to Ireland, when the Germans go back to Germany that is when we will go back to Africa but I am an American.

Jerry Beyer- They put that on television that night and I was so glad that they got that part of it.

Ted Hoover- How the hell can I go back where I have never been.

Joan Beifuss- Tell about stopping to pick up the mirror that is kind of interesting.

Ted Hoover- On the way back we dropped off sister Adrian Marie at Cienna and we had heard there was a curfew and I went into Walgreens and I thought well the next thing they will be stopping is the sale of beer. So I went into Walgreens to buy a 6 pack and picked it up and took it over to the counter and they said we can't sell you any beer. And I said why not? And she said because of the curfew, so I played dumb and I said what curfew and she said the one that is coming from the riot downtown. I said riot? She said niggers, she didn't say niggers she said the negros are tearing up the place. I said I just came from downtown I didn't see any riot. She said oh no?

David Yellin- PS did you get the beer.

Ted Hoover- No.

John Beifuss- As a matter of fact I think they were able to sell it to 7 can't they?

Ted Hoover- No.

David Yellin- It is supposed to be immediately.

Joan Beifuss- I think probably another one should be mentioned just in passing for the record the newspaper coverage of the march.

David Yellin- Ok you mentioned it in passing.

Joan Beifuss- It was again incredibly bad, the headline in the Precimeter that Friday evening was something about riots.

Ted Hoover- Riots break out on march secondary headline windows broken on Main St. Tertiary headline, most marchers not involved.

David Yellin- Yeah. It was the Saturday afternoon one that was the worst.

Carolyn Yellin- The most interesting thing about the Precimeter's coverage was they were able to write the entire story of the march without once mentioning reverend James Lawson. They mentioned him in the final paragraph in their Saturday story the following day and they said that he was urging the marchers not to become violent. I never once heard him ask one marcher please don't be violent.

David Yellin- No.

Carolyn Yellin- That was not what he was saying but it was reported in the newspaper that reverend Lawson took the microphone and urged the marchers not to become violent.

David Yellin- Yeah eh was Marc Anthony.

Ted Hoover- Also mentioned the point that Lawson brought up at the banquet that all that afternoon while Ted Kennedy was there and even after he had finished and (muffled) was coming out the Precimeter kept repeating that Ted Kennedy would not be there.

Jenka Hoover- Had not been there.

Pat Swank- Had not and would not.

David Yellin- Will never be.

Ted Hoover- But this curfew business one thing that we mentioned kind of before briefly and one thing that struck me about it, the trouble was so miniscule comparatively and maybe the police had information that justified putting a curfew on that night, I can't see it at all for the next night. My own feeling was that there was an attempt here to alienate the (muffled) against the marches in general. I sort of read that motivation into it.

John Beifuss- Well I read something else into it which may not be fair and I think one asked me at least making this kin of statement put this before it. But there has been comments from people who are close to the mayor and also close to the situation who blame the downtown merchants for forcing Lobe to back down and it occurred to me that the people really being punished by the curfew were the merchants and the negros.

Ted Hoover- The two days before?

John Beifuss- Yeah. And this occurred to me as a possibility an attempt to polarize the situation.

David Yellin- Yeah well I...in all honestly my first reaction was that I was in favor of the curfew. And I am trying to recall why, not rationalize but recall why. I felt that the worst thing that could happen in Memphis and to the negros in the long run was more violence. And that if a curfew would stop fires and shooting then fine.

Joan Beifuss- That first night.

David Yellin- And I thought that from that point of view I truly was in favor of it because I, and of course no way and I would like to say as a rationalization again for having taken that stand that it did prove out. That there were..

Ted Hoover- That is what Holloman and Lobe said.

David Yellin- Now I choose,...

John Beifuss- You could also make the point that perhaps it was the march that prevented any violence.

David Yellin- Right, right.

Pat Swank- Didn't we have dreadful rains that night too?

Joan Beifuss- It rained.

Pat Swank- It rained cats and dogs....

David Yellin- Well it didn't rain that much it rained for awhile. I dot recall.

Carolyn Yellin- Te one thing that interests me about reporting. I want to get back to the newspapers for a moment and that is what does happen to your news coverage when you have a curfew on and this showed up again as it did last time. In the normal course of police department activities every night they are going to have a certain number of robberies, a certain number of fires and they are going to have perhaps someone that is using a gun and a gun will be discharged by a felon somewhere in the city. When you have a curfew this then is reported the next day. Sniping, looting, burning is going on in the city. And the normal police blotter of what becomes arson, looting and sniping rather than what happens everyday in a city of a million people and Saturday's headlines as I recall say, violence continues in the city and curfew continues as sniping, looting, and violence.

John Beifuss- Then they start listing the incidences, so and so throws a brick through the window and snatches a pair of shoes.

Pat Swank- Willy Jones beats up his wife.

John Beifuss- But as long as we are back on the papers for a moment I suppose that we really ought to mention the Sunday editorial accusing of Ted Kennedy of being an interval and forcing himself in where other politicians had grace enough not to appear.

Carolyn Yellin- I would say that was a partisan.

John Beifuss- I think it was partisan but I think we ought to make a note that in this, the county court had issued an invitation for citizen's to take part.

Carolyn Yellin- Yes that....

John Beifuss- And the chamber of commerce did and of course in contras the city council noted the anniversary and this is about it wasn't it.

Ted Hoover- Yeah they expressed sympathy to Mrs. King, and two councilman Todd and Chandler according to reports in both papers were late when that resolution passed, both papers said t hey were late so they would not have to vote for that resolution.

David Yellin- They reported that yeah. Well did any of us find any repercussions about our going, we asked the kids in their circle. Maybe we have narrowed our circle. Yeah within our group and I guess all of us here have more or less taken a stand.

Carolyn Yellin- I think I surprised Mrs. Chandler in my campus school carpool. In that...

David Yellin- No relation to Wyatt chandler, (muffled)

Carolyn Yellin- Relation to little Garner Chandler who is in 2nd grade with Emily at Campus School and we have shared the same carpool for two or three years and other than the fact that they had Nixon and a few sticker son their car and we had some Humphrey and occasionally a McCarthy sticker on our car, which was something of a tip off to a certain indication but we had never discussed this even through last years occurrences. But I was looking, all of our family was going with the exception of Emily. And the intervening parents did decide that little Emily 7 years old to go and we thought it was a good thing for our children to have participated in a march in Memphis in that in later years they will be aware. Sense of mystery let us instill it but I did need to find a place for little Emily to stay. I had called, was about to call up a friend when Mrs. Chandler called and asked if Emily could come visit Garner that day. They being out of school. I said lovely this is just what...she said you are going to the march. Oh lots of luck but she expressed no disapproval. She simply, it was incredible, it was incredible to her that nay one she knew would be going let alone taking children. But she would be glad to taker care of Emily.

David Yellin- It must be reported that Emily was returned safely.

Carolyn Yellin- And Emily came back and they had been doing artwork while they were there and Emily had made a sign which probably looked like a picket sign which said please march for Dr. Martin Luther King today signed Emily Yellin. She was allowed to make this at the Chandler's.

Ted Hoover- Virginia you with somebody you discussed this business and you gave a rationale for your kids to go and what not.

Virginia Hoover- Expressed some dismay and discuss among parents allowing children to go to the march. Well after all we must do our duty and prepare our children for college and they are going to have to know how to march....our children will not go to college without this knowledge and preparation.

Joan Beifuss- I was going to say, I think that putting historical things on the tape that it would be wise to mention for the tape, Memphis state in the last week just at the time...

David Yellin- I think also the fact that we are holding this meeting by occupying reverend Hoover's office.

Mitch Hoover- - I think another piece of humor that Jenka introduced was that morning she was fixing her hair and she said well as long as I am going to make my first national appearance on television I want to look good. But I think to me one of the reactions that I had, I think papa said yes that youngsters could go to the march and mother I think for the first time I realized that I had one maternal instinct in my body said no. Last year I think as the Yellin's we thought this was a very moving experience and it had expressed this through our children and said had we known it was going to turnout the way it did we would have taken you along. And so when the march occurred this following year they sort of held us to it. I think I intended to go and then for several days before hand I would pose questions to the children. I would say is this really your decision, is this what you really want to do, why are you going. Because in my own mind I just wanted to make sure the youngsters knew.

John Beifuss- And you almost didn't want them to go.

Mitch Hoover- - Well I think there is always this element that after one is a parent and this is the duty to protect.

David Yellin- Why didn't you want them to go?

Mitch Hoover- - Well I think there is always, there is always as you say this chance of danger of youngsters...

David Yellin- Do you have the feeling that you wish the whole thing would go away and you wouldn't have to make this decision?

Mitch Hoover- - No I think I came to the conclusion I think in raising children in this age that we wouldn't have to face the facts but this is no longer (muffled) that violence, a violent death that every parent must face the fact that if anything happens to the children it is probably a violent thing.

David Yellin- Well I think it is interesting what the kids did say, their own fears and their own...

Mitch Hoover- - I think one of Jenka's fears which she expressed to me when she returned from the march, I said now what was your reaction what was the greatest moment you had. Apparently, she said well some of these young negro boys that were just sort of hanging around really scared me and I suddenly realized that she had picked this up in the culture that she was afraid of a negro man.

Ted Hoover- Which she may also have picked up from me in the course of the march and again remember that I had really taken them my way on this.

(Muffled)

Ted Hoover- At one point and I was and I made a point of being between them I was on the end and then when negro man came to the end then I got in between them and then we had too many in our line of march and he wanted me, the marshal wanted me to move back and I said no, I am going to be here with my two children

and this of course whereas I had been able to maintain some cool at this point I am sure my apprehension came through at this point to them.

Pat Swank- I think one thing interesting that my mother had gone into surgery that morning and I can remember the previous year when Ted's father was at the hospital there was virtually no staff what so ever in (muffled) hospital at that time and so knowing that she was coming out of surgery I said I won't go to the march I will be there, tremendously short handed at the hospitals as they had been the previous year. And so I made inquiries and they said everyone showed up at the hospital this is a Baptist hospital and they said we are not short of any help and everyone was there at the hospital.

David Yellin- That is interesting to find out because the march was sponsored this time not only by COME, but by the union, the very same union.

Pat Swank- Same hospital workers and very definitely no shortage what so ever and (muffled) nurses were there.

David Yellin- I mean this is a project of people why did negroes (muffled).

Pat Swank- I was terribly disappointed in the negro employees and help at that time, because I said here is my husband and youngsters marching.

Ted Hoover- OF course (muffled).

Joan Beifuss- And as you say it is only a small (muffled) it is only a small percentage of people that are going to march anyway.

David Yellin- Well I just wonder about the effect of Martin Luther King particularly on the negro community in this past year I think my own opinion it has gone down. People never really knew him.

Pat Swank- I don't think I have been as strongly committed to Martin Luther King as many people have expressed in here but I think I am committed to the cause.

Joan Beifuss- Well I think what is going to prove it out for instance going back to what is happening in Memphis state now, if this holds as a nonviolent demonstration then the influence maybe not of King immediately in person but certainly an influence.

David Yellin- Well to mention that my fear is that it will go unrewarded and that is what is so sad about it.

Carolyn Yellin- Even as the nonviolent garbage workers strike..

David Yellin- Did you read their statement it is a beautiful statement that they made.

Joan Beifuss- Will somebody just say for the tape what's happening real quick at Memphis state?

Carolyn Yellin- The black students are, three are this very night I guess still and last night spent in jail one hundred and some negro students who sat in, in president Humphreys office here at the university.

David Yellin- Well quickly last week they went to president Humphreys office some 50 of them to make a demand, it was last Wednesday.

Carolyn Yellin- April 23rd.

David Yellin- Now it wasn't that much.

Joan Beifuss- It was last Wednesday.

David Yellin- 23rd yes thank you and they went to make the demand specifically since one speech was cancelled that they would have Adam Clayton Powell and while there he told them that they couldn't have it because there was no money and they gave 4 other demands and they sat down for two hours, he called the police and they quietly left his office and since then the next day or the day after they held another meeting with him or with dean parish and were supposed to have further meetings when this Monday, two days ago wasn't it? Or yesterday they went into yesterday went in his office again and this time there were some 108 or 109 as it turned out. They had a meeting over at the student center the meeting broke up and they walked over to Dr. Humphreys office and occupied his office quietly, Dr. Humphreys wasn't there and dean Parish was there and he asked them to leave and they wouldn't and he went and called the police, and the police came and said we will have to arrest you and they said fine. And it was almost done as casually he said we don't have enough cars to take you we are going to get some busses will you please walk over, and they said fine.

Ted Hoover- The things you left out was that from the time of the first kids going out the 50 of them, immediately a massive number of policemen on the campus and on the perimeters of it and police helicopters going around. So that when this second group ended up going in to object to this, they objected to the presence of the police and I think that is where the mistake was made that here they were pledging nonviolence and yet the police were all around and this was, is there complaint.

Carolyn Yellin- And this remains to be resolved.

David Yellin- Well I am kind of pessimistic about this.

Jerry Beyer- I know but the thing I think that alarms me is the president's public statement was published and also on television stating there was a police car.

Pat Swank- Oh you mean to lie.

David Yellin- You mean the first time?

Pat Swank- In the paper and in a statement on TV, that there was...

David Yellin- Only two around the campus.

Pat Swank- Yeah and he...

Ted Hoover- Sunday morning we had about 42 people in church but there were a good 8 to 12 policemen on the corner as we came outside as we came outside of church. And as I say one does develop some paranoia from this.

Carolyn Yellin- The helicopter is gone though.

David Yellin- It was disturbing classes.

Ted Hoover- As a matter of fact it was also disturbed residents in the community and they say, and according to one report that I had it took Humphreys, it took Humphreys 4 hours to convince Lobe to pull that thing down. Humphreys went on to get the plane out of the air. I know this is...

David Yellin- Well..

Joan Beifuss- It should also be stated quickly that the kids are being charged with what?

David Yellin- It is a state law of taking possession...

Carolyn Yellin- Was this state law has this been passed in the last year this is what I have been...

Mitch Hoover- - Yes.

Carolyn Yellin- It has been since the Lane college difficulties?

Mitch Hoover- - Yes.

Carolyn Yellin- So it is a brand new state law.

Joan Beifuss- So they are under 500 dollar bond.

David Yellin- Of course the judge is acting kind of strange about it because the lawyers tried to tell them in a sense taking legalities that these are kids that are not going to cause trouble let them out and we will settle this and you will fine them later if you want to. He said no and he put them in jail on 500 dollars bail. I am just afraid because somebody because this is not a disciplined group, which is both its charm if you would and also its drawback. It is not a disciplined group and oddly enough the leaders were not in favor of the second move and the leaders were not among them.

Pat Swank- Their leaders have been split the last couple, well almost a month.

Ted Hoover- Leadership was not in favor of the first one, so this is your...

Carolyn Yellin- Well you have a very volatile situation, I would have to say at the moment anything could happen and you could certainly make an argument for being prepared for anything happening. But over reaction again for which does this trigger something more than would have happened.,

Ted Hoover- We are paralleling last year's events in the city.

Joan Beifuss- Well in the newspaper coverage you can go back to the newspaper coverage, it has been abominable here in the last week regard to the....

Pat Swank- Why don't intelligent people learn from the past, I shouldn't think there would be too much to ask (muffled)

Carolyn Yellin- Most people are totally dependent on what they read in the newspapers and most people do believe there was a riot on April 4th this year downtown. And that there was...

David Yellin- Trouble at the campus?

Carolyn Yellin- And that there was looting burning and sniping that Friday night and we were terribly, a great deal of it.

David Yellin- You should have head them in the carpool the next day. About what the trouble was at campus and why the helicopter was there, of course all the students are breaking into the college.

Carolyn Yellin- This is the campus school the little kids in the...(Muffled)

(Muffled)

John Beifuss- The editorial in tonight's paper was (muffled) many of the editorials last spring and news cartoon for the editorial cartoon in yesterday evening's paper which showed among other things a rather (muffled) looking negro with dark glasses operating on a patient labeled university, there were others involved in it too and I think very close to that cartoon was (muffled) that showed the black sanitation worker sitting on a garbage can.

David Yellin- Yeah.

Carolyn Yellin- Well Dave and I were discussing and it think this is worth recording our conclusion we came to this morning at breakfast. Talking about this that last year when the strike started it seemed to us that what Lobe and the whole city was reacting to was not what was happening here in Memphis but there had been a terrible garbage strike in New York and we aren't going to have that happen here so they paid no attention to what was being said here rather they responded what had been said by the garbage workers in New York and reacted accordingly. And they were macing the garbage strikers in New York and in fact New York and the north in general to prove it won't happen here. This time, rather than responding to what is being said by the black students here on campus it seems that they are responding

to the Cornell students who took over with guns and these students might as well have been carrying guns for the way they appear in the eyes of the community right now. And they were carrying tooth brushes.

Ted Hoover- The only time guns had been on campus here as far as I know is when the football dorm (muffled).

David Yellin- Which they hushed it up.

Ted Hoover- They were hushed out.

David Yellin- Well they have their own little fee out there, you know Chancellor Murphy you don't go near him. By the way the all the athletes were locked up and there was a curfew from 6:00 (Muffled) And it had been 10:00 since the other things.

David Yellin- Yeah, because they would have been bad, they wouldn't have been bad.

Carolyn Yellin- We are nearing the end of the tape.

David Yellin- I think it though I would like to say even though it might sound a little melodramatic but I don't, since we have been talking about Martin Luther King that perhaps what he did do and keeping these students nonviolent and I am talking about the black students. Because it does fit, that I think his influence is much larger than maybe we do think. Because I think we ought to for our records get that statement by the black students about that they are nonviolent and they don't feel that a university can change over night they don't want demands to be happened immediately and I think it is a beautiful beautiful statement. Well alright, oh is this it.

Carolyn Yellin- And on the record I want to say too that Ted Hoover has written a little resume four or five pages of his experiences in the march and this to we are going to have in our records so whoever listens to this tape know that we have his anonymous note and his records.

David Yellin- Why we choose nonviolence is beautiful and our own thing, our own thing is black students at Memphis state university we have decided that we must do our own thing. We want what is right, we want what is just, we want what is ours and what has for too long been denied us and we want it now. We are dedicated to change we are dedicated to achieving justice, we are dedicated, we are committed. We seek to pressure no one, we seek to harm no one. We seek to intimidate no one but we are committed to what we know is right and we can wait no longer 400 years is not long enough nit is too long and we will wait no longer we are committed to peaceful and nonviolent change of evil into good, of wrong into right of injustice and justice. We will seek every peaceful method but we will struggle we will achieve we will win because this is our thing as we are going to do it. That is the end of it. Then there is a section why we choose nonviolence. Which maybe too long at this point.

Pat Swank- Well that is what Peter Singer would say take it easy but take it.

David Yellin- Yeah, very good and on that note. (Tape End)