

To class
for finance

Box 19
Tape 1
Lolis Elie, Douglas
& Collins
New Orleans
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A: If I might say this, if you recall, yesterday you had referred to a statement that James Baldwin made, to the effect that the mob does not represent the thinking of the majority of the people in the south. And I answered this question in part by saying number one, that considering the fact, that in gubernatorial ~~xxxx~~ elections, the most extreme candidate on the race issue usually wins, the person we might consider to be the representative of the mob, usually, gets the majority of the votes, and wins, looking at the Beckwith ~~xxxx~~ trial, ^{considering the} ~~and-the~~ fact that the governor of this state, lost on ~~x~~ that, he walks in and he shakes this man's hand, and there was no hue and cry, on the part of any white ~~xxxx~~ element in Mississippi about the governor's actions, so this is why in my mind, there's still serious doubts as to whether or not it is not fair to say that the mob represents the majority of the south.

Q: That it does. represent the majority of the south.

A: It appears that way, I think there is a great deal of evidence to fancy that position. Of course, this is not to say that there are not some people in the south who do not go along, but this is the south, an element in the south, and if we say that the demagogues do not represent the majority of the southern people, then we have to then say that the majority of the southern people are silent.

Q: Yes, you ^{have} have to say that, ~~in any case~~. Silent and without leadership. I read somewhere, I have the quote, as a matter of fact, on

New Orleans, reminds me of course civil rights, ___ on civil rights, in that report, it said that ~~xxxx~~ not one leader in the New Orleans, one white leader, showed himself at all, on the issue, except the segregationaists.

A: Well, that's not altogether ~~xxx~~ true. I've had personal experience with some white leaders,

Q: Who showed themselves,

A: Well, it depends on what we mean by -- show themselves. I'm talking about men who went on television, after the first school crisis, the following -- they went on television, ~~and~~ to make appeals for ~~xxxx~~ order. In addition, they bought a fourpage ad, in the newspaper. And the ~~xxxx~~ really significant thing about what these people did, amounts to nothing more than this. ^{From} ~~When~~ the day that those men made their appeal on t.v., ~~there~~---there were no further disorders. Which means that the real power of the people with the power, the power structure, they can do anything they want to do, even though they may be in the minority. When they put the word on the Mayor that this is not to be tolerated, then the Mayor tells the chief of police, that this ~~riot~~ ^{riotous conduct} is not gonna be tolerated, it ends just like that. So I ~~xxxx~~ don't think it's fair to say that they haven't shown their faces at all. They haven't been as vocal, as they should have been. I don't think, they could not even be considered, ^{havent}, well, they are moderates, but they ~~xxxx~~ actually made as much noise as the moderates would be expected to make. And behind the scenes, there have been whites in the community ~~who~~ have worked behind the ~~xxxx~~ scenes. I've worked with them, am speaking now about people from the Chamber of Commerce, people who are presidents of the banks, and the utility companies. I have personally met with these people on these issues. For example, one thing that we have accomplished,

up until this year, if a Negro wanted to become a master plumber, he had to get two master plumbers to sign his application. Well now the truth of the matter is there were no Negroes who were master plumbers.

Q; There were no plumbers at all in New Orleans.

A: There were no Negroes, which meant that it was impossible for a Negro ever to become a plumber, because the white plumbers, would never sign the application. As the result of the person that we worked with, this changed. Presently, if you can get any two reputable citizens, to sign your application, if you want to be a plumber.

Q: Did you change the union regulation on this point?

A: I'm talking now about the city, about the city licensing, the licensing by the -- whether a person can join a union or not, is a different.

Q: ~~How~~ How much of this is at the union level?

A: I don't know, this was really, this was not one of our major problems, I don't throw ~~that~~ that out as an aside. We were negotiating on the question of jobs and city government, the question of firemen, on the question of garbage men, which may not appear to be significant, except there are many Negroes with no skills at all, and this is all they are qualified to do. ~~We were~~-We were negotiating on the removal of signs in city ~~hall~~ hall and in other public buildings, so this was just an aside. So the chairman of this ~~branch~~ branch of government, who was in the meeting, said, --"well, here's what I have done, to indicate my good faith," I have never made a thorough analysis, but now these leaders were ~~precipitated~~-precipitated by the real, the people who control the majority of the ~~wealth~~ wealth in this city. However, any time the Mayor went back on his word, they would not join ~~us~~ us in any attack, ~~For~~ For example, the Mayor put this

~~inxxxix~~ writing, I wish I had a copy of it here, ~~xxx~~ when I was present, the Mayor stated that ^{signs} ~~signs~~ would be removed from all of the public toilets, and the truth of this was three or fourth months ago. Now this was in August. And the truth of the matter is, the signs are still up. Right this minute. ~~Some~~ Some of them are not, but for the most part, they are still up. So now when we went back, and said -- well, you haven't, you didn't, you know, carry out ~~what~~ ~~xxx~~ your agreement, then he just hedged and we threatened him with demonstrations, and we really - he lied, that's the only way to state it. And as a result of the Mayor's position, we ~~xxx~~ have not been able to get any more fruitful, any more fruitful negotiations going, which means that, I think would ~~disappear~~, it appears that before the summer, or not later than the summer, you will have major demonstrations in New Orleans. As a matter of fact, New Orleans, will be the main focal point for demonstrations in the south, during the summer of 1964. This is the situation.

Q: Unless a change takes place.

A: I think at this point, it would have to be a radical change, before, you see, we negotiated for about two years, and we desegregated the lunch counters, we got some jobs for Negroes on Canal Street, and in other areas, and we got some jobs in government, very ~~insigif~~-insignificant jobs, but nevertheless ~~xxx~~ jobs. This was a start, this was to see how much and how fast the community ~~xxx~~ could absorb change. But then the other ~~wants-to-see~~-side wants to see, the man's in the city government. So at this point, grievances are ~~S-hi~~--so high, until there's just no doubt, I personally, don't want to negotiate any more. I have no desire whatever, I, at no time, if I'm called by the prsons I have talked with before, I tell them I'm no longer work -- ~~I-xxx-worth~~-devoting my time to court fights, and to voter registra-

tion, plus giving demonstrations whatever support I can.

Q: Do you know anything about the Baton Rouge biracial committee, and it s working.

a; I know the man who was chiefly ~~xxxx~~ responsible for it, the man by the ~~xxxx~~ name of William Mackie, who is a Quaker, and as a matter of fact, he's in charge of American Friends Service Committee in the state of Louisiana. He's the Executive Director. He is the guiding hand. He and a guy by the name of Doubleyoo who is a state senator. Just as a _____, I'd like to state that Doubleyoo was a state senator, he was defeated because of his liberal views, he's on the Civil Rights Commission, and this man was reelected. He defeated Wendell Harris, who was one of the Governor Davis' chief henchmen, and I consider this to be the most significant race in the state of Louisiana, but he is now the State Senator. Well, it was these two men, but mainly Mackie, who is a very very ^a ₁ gret man, who started this. I discussed it with him. And this, as you know, came about only after demonstrations, 1500 kids in the streets, the fire hoses, and the dogs and all of this, so William Mackie was able to prevail upon, again the power structure ~~e-det-~~ to do something. They've only succeeded thus far in desegregating the lunch counters.

Q: I ~~head-the--~~ heard the other day in Baton Rouge, that they have agreed to admit Negro doctors to practice in Baton Rouge hospitals

A: This is probably true, but I cannot state it as a fact.

q; I talked to a responsible source, but not to a member of the committee.

a; Well, ^{Rennie} Annie M _____ can ~~xxxx~~ answer that question.

Q: I didn't think about it at the time.

A: And by the time I could answer that question for you~~xxxx~~ in a letter, _____. I will know this as I will see where x _____. This too, this Wednesday he will be coming down to spend a few days. He's very active with American Civil Liberties, of which I am a member. Wade Mack is the man.

Q: He would know whether it's been actually achieved.

A: No question about it, he knows more about it than any ~~the~~--other individual.

q; If you find substantial even though slow progress like that, so long as it has motion, how does that modify your views of yesterday, or would it modify them? I ~~want~~x wasn't quite sure, you see, we were interrupted before coming to what seemed to be a fatalistic view on your part of there being no solution in terms of negotiations, in terms of social progress, depending on "some good ~~xxxx~~ will."

A: I certainly dislike ~~xxxx~~ having to have the attitude that I have in many instances on the question, but I'd be less than honest if I said that I don't possess this attitude, because I ~~am~~ don't believe for example, that these kinds of changes, like you say, ~~e-ven~~-so long as there's motion, I think the this is doing nothing to change the basic problem. I think from the ~~xxxx~~ viewpoint of our gaining momentum, some changes help our side, but frankly speaking, I think it does harm to the white side in a sense, in the sense of -- what it does, really, it just means that Negroes are getting a little taste of freedom, so to speak, and it just makes them push ~~that~~x much harder. I think Atlanta, Georgia, is a good example.

Q: Well, that is always the case, isn't it? A gain means acceleration of desire. And

A: Rightx.

Q; And gains also mean increased powers of organization.

A: That's right, this is exactly what I am saying, but it doesn't mean gains does not mean, it means that people become less satisfied, and not more satisfied,

Q; Right, right

A: Which means that my fatalistic attitude toward this thing, certainly isn't changed. What I'm suggesting is this plain and simple. At what point, when is it possible for white people to look at black people as being human beings. I don't mean an individual ~~hate~~---white ~~person~~ person, I mean as a whole. I read the other day, this happened in the Belgian Congo, and ~~again~~ again, I say, it's probably the same all over, there was this African, I don't ~~know~~ know what went on between these people, but _____, there's the white woman, and she pushes this guy. I don't know what ~~happened~~ happened, but she shoves him. And then the policeman comes and he ~~moves~~ moves him.

Q: This in South Africa.

A: No, this is the Belgian Congo. You know what existed in the Belgian Congo in the past, you see, and then can people who are really of good will, discuss this thing. It's difficult for me to believe that in my, I know not in my lifetime, that there's gonna be any, that white people are going to be able to look at colored people as really human.

Q: Can you distinguish between looking at colored people as ~~being~~ ~~being~~ being human, and working arrangements which lead to the direction of justice. Increasing and accelerating the movement toward that. ~~Say~~ Say -- jobs, skills, say votes. Whether they're ~~gonna~~-----we're gonna see this or not, the process of actual practical amelioration ~~is~~, practical adjustments, if not

leading toward ~~the~~ recognition.

A: I'm not, I don't deny that for one minute, and this is why I'm still a member of ~~the~~ CORE and not a member of the Black Muslims, because I believe that, I ~~xx~~ believe that ~~xxx~~ ultimately all of these things here, you do these things with the hope that well, and this ~~x~~ has always been true of Negroes, well if I accomplish this, if I do that, then these people ~~are~~ gonna ~~realize-that-~~realize that I'm human, maybe they will -- you see, but these are minor things, let's face it. You know, this is the 20th ^{and} ~~century--~~century/we are talking about ~~x~~ a people who have been on this continent for over 400 years and they-have-there hasn't been a recognition to date. So this, these slow steps, but significant steps, are, I'm afraid that at times they mean a lot more to the Negro, or they mean different things to the Negro, than what they ~~mean~~ mean to his ~~counter--~~white counterpart. It doesn't mean the same thing.

Q: Right, right,

A: You see this can be a big ~~xxxx~~ problem.

Q: ~~xxxxxxx~~ Q: I'm certain you are right, about the fact that it doesn't necessarily ~~mean~~ mean the same thing. But be that as it may, would not just this process ~~xxx~~ lead toward the human recognition.

a; Maybe so, maybe not. ~~Be~~cause you see, if you start out 10 miles ahead, well, let's put it this way, if you start out with 10 times as much as I have, and you constantly give me a little more than I started with, but you constantly get a little more than you started with, and for both, you are getting a little -- the ~~proportion~~ proportion remains the same, you see, then the status is still the same. Do you see what I mean. And I made this statement yesterday, this, I think, should be understood, I think that a ~~large~~ large part of this has to be the Negro himself, his mind, you see. Certainly

I don't kind myself. ~~Th-re-is~~---There are certain things that Negroes haven't recognized. There's certain Negroes who are not convinced that they are human. There are Negroes who see nothing wrong with going to a store, and not seeing Negroes working, going to a store and they an't sitg at the lunch counter, but they can spend all their money at this counyter. You see, the~~ex~~ people who don't see anyting~~xxx~~ wrong with it.

You mean

Q: /The basic lack of self-respect, or ~~xxx~~ racial self-respect. Or human self-respect ~~xxx~~ wither.

A: No self-respect, this is what I mean.

Q: _____ of two sides.

Ax: I'm talking about the human ~~side,--the-racial--~~self-respect, racial self-respect is ~~respecting--~~something altogehter different, is somewhat different.

Q: May I cut back to the question of Black Muslims?

I remember your remarks of yesterday about them, now, on the one hand, they are , represent a withdrawal, from white society. The emphasis on the nationalistic, black nationalistic aspect of it. And , looking forward to totally separate society, now in _____ book on the Black Muslims, a very fascinating book , by the way, he says, that the concealed motivation in the movement, or one of the powerful motivations which is concealed, is the drive toward the life of and values of the American middle class, tht the program of self-betterment, moral and practical, which has been so successful with the Black Muslims, means acceptance of these values, as a channel for their aspirations, ~~xxxxx~~ are people hopeless about entering ~~xxx~~ "respectability," their _____ for respectability, so it does/^{not}mean actualy a withdrawal from the values of the American middle class, it's a ~~xxxx~~ secret movement toward the value of the American middle class, therefore, there is a paradox, a contradiction. Does that make any sense to you?

A: It makes an awful lot of sense. Unfortunatley I did not read the book, and I'm not sure ~~it's~~ it's _____.
I am not prepared to comment, on it, because this is really a lot more ~~han-----f-~~ than the _____ analysis, this is something I'd like to think about.

Q: Yes, well, his point was, you have the surface appeal, and you have certain hidden appeals, and that they are ~~xxx~~ contradictory.
R Or do you agree that they are contradictory.

A: I don't think that they are contradictory, because if I say you have something good, if you're not gonna share it with me, you see, so I can't share this with you, so I'll develop it for myself, I ~~amxxx~~ don't know that this is, there's anything contradictory, and I don't want to associate with white people, but I know some of the things they do, I want to adopt, ~~xxx~~ I'm gonna adopt the health habits, for example. And I don't see anything contradictory about this.

Q: No, there's no contradiction at the level of , that are technical, whether it's habits or ice boxes, I think, though I don't want to assert this, that more is involved, in his statement, that not only the techniques, and objects and habits of the middle class, but also, an ~~xxx~~ inevitable absorption of values, this becomes a way of moving into the middle class society, and the ~~xxx~~ values are absorbed ~~long---~~ along with the techniques and habits.

a: In other words what you are saying is that if it's movement of the thing to be completely separate, then they must do as the American Indian, ~~become~~ become complete isolationists, maintain their own values, for example, one of the things that white America, prides itself on, is this bit about the one man, one wife, which is somewhat nonsensical, because no one really believes in it. So the movement, they accept this value, where by , in the Muslim countries, if you can afford a harem, ~~xxx~~ get one. I don't think, if this is what you're

saying, I don't think that , this has nothing to do ~~whx~~ with the fact that this is the way of the whites, it's more that they live in a country where they can't do nothing else. You see, the big problem with the Black Muslims, ultimately, is that they have not , tht the whole thing is, has not been well thought out, because no matter how you attempt to analyze , they have no wealth, and ~~you~~ ^{they} don't have any program, by which they could possibly hope to buy any wealth, and they are bound there, it's impossible, for example, for me to be anything but an American, whether I like it or not, and this is true with the Muslim, this is true with Malcolm X. This is true with the Elijah Mohammed. ~~Maxx~~ This is true with all these people, and ^{is} this/one of the problems of the ~~Mgx~~ Negro. Well, now the Puerto Rican in New Yrk, is gradually ~~gaxxx~~ gaining much more wealth than the Negro. Why? Merely because he has not adapted and lived with itx American values. Whether we like it ~~max~~ or not, the values of America, is to , even if he's a poor guy, to try to go to a nice restaurant at times, wear nice clothese, get a nice car. This is it. The Puerto Ricans, this hasn't been a value of the ~~u~~ poor Puerto Rican in his country. You see? So, what I'm trying to say, is the Muslims are so bound up in America, that it's impossible. This guy says, ~~max~~ he's a Muslim, and I've seen this in Harlem, a guy standing on the corner, here's the big Muslim, and Monday morning, he's ~~gaxxx~~ ^{goin down in the} ~~gix~~ garment center and he's gonna work ~~a~~ for a white man. Here's ~~max~~ a contradiction for me.

So I don't, I don't know whether I really understand what this man is trying to say.

q; Well, he doesn't develop it at great length. But certainly he ~~is~~ ^{has} explored the possibilities of it. What crossed my mind in ~~relation to~~ ~~max~~ what ~~ixx~~ he said, let me cut back to explain the quota ton of it, with reference to what I'm talking about, Mr. Douglas, this is a paragraph or passage from Emen - O dem book on the Black Muslims

in which he pointed out what he considers to be a fact, that on the one hand, you have the withdrawal of the black nationalism, the _____ as opposed to the American middle class values, you know, but on the other hand, he says the drive towards rehabilitation, and towards habits of thrift, health, and all of that, these are drives toward the American middle class values. And the concealed motive of the Black Muslims movement, is to ^{him} the appeal ~~is~~ to move toward American middle class values. Therefore, ~~is~~ ultimately it is a movement toward integration, rather than away from integration ⁱⁿ white society. Somehow the middle class values, as well as the middle class techniques. That's his ^{notion} ~~note~~, as I take it to be.

A: I'd like to make a further comment on that. Oftimes I've heard people say that what the Negro wants, is to be accepted by white people. And I think more enlightened people say that what the Negro wants is a contract with white people, contract in the sense ~~that~~ that we both ~~have~~ ~~some~~ have something to offer, whereby acceptance might imply that I have nothing to ~~share~~ ~~with~~ ~~you~~ share with you, but ~~everything~~ ~~you~~ ~~everything~~ ~~is~~ ~~you~~ ~~have~~ ~~you~~ know, I'm coming to take a part of. And hence, the resistance, this is caused by it. We have something to share, we have some things that would be ~~beneficial~~ ~~to~~ ~~you~~ ~~to~~ you, you have some things that would be beneficial to us. Therefore we can enter into this contract, we can you know, live here ~~together~~ ~~together~~. Now, I think maybe what this man, author, I can't think of his name, is saying here, is that the values that the Muslims are saying - let's ~~develop~~ ~~something~~, you know. I don't think he's saying, let's wake up, so we are like white people, and then they won't have anything ^{not be accepted.} ~~to~~ ~~develop~~. I think what they're ~~trying~~ ~~to~~ ~~develop~~, is something ~~really~~ ~~very~~ ~~vague~~. And no one is really been very profound in attempting to express it. But I don't think that, I think the ~~implication~~ ~~implication~~ what this man is saying, is that these people are

seeking acceptance, and I don't think this is true.

Q: It's making ~~xxx~~ sense, simply because they are unconsciously seeking it, presents it this way, you see, unconscious drive, concealed appeal of the movement.

A: My ~~xxx~~ initial impression, just off the top of my head, ~~xxxx~~ without attempting to analyze it at length, is that first of ~~xxx~~ all, the Black Muslim or the Black Muslim type of thing, is not unprecedented in America. You had a black Muslim kind of thinking with Marcus Garvey, I believe. Initially the motivating force, I would imagine, would be some person who has the wherewithal and enough ability to use a psychological or economic situation, to achieve his own individualistic goals. Well, the thought that I'm trying to get ~~xxx~~ across is that I've said at one time or ~~another~~-~~ante~~-another, that Kennedy was ~~w~~ not the ~~person~~ person that this image was made out to be. In other words, I'm ~~xxx~~ saying he agitated for civil rights, and in a sense, Elijah Mohammed, is agitating in a different direction, toward their own individual goals, but this is only a small part of the situation. I mentioned at one time or other, the business of CORE with action, and reaction. Here, ~~M~~ Elijah, or here, Kennedy, sets out a certain action in the community, and of course, unless there's a response, positively or negatively, his idea goes for naught. The real substance of what ~~xxx~~ the Black Muslims think, would be evidenced by, to me, by those people who form the real run of the mill membership of the Muslim movement.

Q: Let me ask you another question ~~xxxx~~ about them, sort of push on. Why Muslims, why reference to a Mohammedan world, ~~why not~~, what's the appeal in that?

A: I would say, it doesn't matter what you call it, if the response is the kind of response that you want to get. Well, I mean this seriously, _____ decided with the Negro being led to _____ America. The Mau Mau, do not have to use Mohammedanism, they could

~~xxxxxx~~ attach some significance to nature. Something mysterious now. Now all religions have to have something that's mysterious. For example, I've always thought it was nonsense for anyone to tell me that the Pope is is son of God, or some descendant, this is absolutely nonsense. _____ so Kennedy got himself elected. So, but it has its mysticism, you see. So the American Negro, they had to bring something that was a mystery to him, that was a mystery to him, so you talk about Mohammedism, it's way out, so to speak. There was nothing in America that you could have built and attach ~~xxx~~ any supernatural significance to, that would not have been, identifiable with whites.

Q: In other words, the Christian religion would not serve.

A: Oh, the Christian religion would not serve, this is the real theory of many centuries. And I ~~got~~ to church tomorrow morning, I'm a Methodist, I go for personal reasons, I suppose, but this isn't appealing. The Muslims, they may think that they are fighting the white American, white people in an international sense, but they are really fighting this Christianity, and they are right. The church supported slavery, the church supports segregation, and we have discussed this. When these segregationist, this woman, Mrs. Gilliard (?), when she said to the Archbishop, well, Archbishop you are telling me now that segregation is sinful, where has the church been? ~~xxxxxxx~~ Even ~~xxx~~ today there are churches, where Negro ~~and~~ Catholics sit in the back. So, look, when did it become ~~sinful~~ sinful. Is it something that was always ~~sinful~~ sinful, father, or is it something that just got sinful, since 1954, and these people are right when they ~~ask~~ ask that question. The biggest hypocrites in the world have been the Christians, this is true, this is true with the Baptists, some kids, some friends of mine, went to sit in a Baptist Church, the Big Rev. J. B. Gregg, and he said, go where you're wanted, and this is a question too. Christ says no east and west, this, you know. So I ~~think~~-think, if there's anything,

I agree with the Muslims, in so ~~far~~ far as they say the Negro should ~~eject~~--reject Christianity, this is gonna get us no place, all this means isturning the other cheek, we were talking and someone said, that the preacher in the white church, tells the white kids, to slap the Negroes , and thepreacher in the colored church, tells the Negroes toturn the other cheek. So I ~~think~~ think, I don't think that the Muslims could possibly, I mean, ~~as-pre~~have predicated their movement on Christianity, they had to be anti-Christian. This was the ABC of it, without this, there would have been ^{no} a possible ~~chance~~ chance to develop. Look the minds the Muslims are~~try~~ trying to appeal to. They are appeal to people that they have to show them, now look at these sins, and believe me, you couldnever~~win~~^{win}~~---in-Albany~~ with ~~he-M---~~ the Muslims on the race question. The evidence is that high in his favor. I could show that Christianity has failed me as a Negro. And

Dr. Mays

A: Well, let's bring it down to New Orleans in a sense, well, with my opinion, is thatthe balance in the segregation versus integration, bit in New Orleans, particularly, because of the fact that there are such ~~was~~ a substantial number of Catholics , both Negro and white, ~~lies~~ lies within thepower of the Catholic church, until now , we have, when I say we~~xxxxxxx~~ now, I'm speaking aboutCathloics, we only give obeisance ~~verbally~~ verbally ~~to~~ to the moral mandate. Well, I don't fall within a strict category , Catholic, I guess if you throw me in or out on thebasis of tenets, I'd have to say no, I was baptized, I went to Catholic grammar school and high school, but and Catholic law school, but it's not satisfying to me.

a number of
Elie → A: He hasn't been to church in ~~many~~ years, let's put it thatway.
Elie A: Off the other~~hand~~hand, I go to a church every Sunday,
Elie Q: That's theMethodist church.
 a; Wouldn't make any difference, I don't see any difference.

I go to Methodist church because of , my wife was Methodist, and my father was Catholic, my mother was Baptist, and we agreed that whatever religion, I'd pick, she would join. And I didn't used to go to church, and my wife and I would have an argument every Sunday morning, was about the only thing we argued about, so I said --well, the hell with it,

A: Of course, there's a real reason why I don't go to church, because the symbolism which is viewed in churches , particularly, in the Catholic church, has been , well the ~~xxxx~~ focus has been so much on symbolism, that persons who are baptized, and born and educated in the church, by and large, don't recognize what the purpose of the church is, and the symbolism is lost all its original purpose. And I can communicate to whoever is responsible for our being here, on a person to person basis, at my convenience, as well as I can anywhere else. So I feel that in making the most of whatever it is that I have to offer, is as much that I can do, ~~xxxx~~ as against a person who feels that when he ~~does~~ eat meat on Friday, he ~~has~~ fulfilled his obligation as a Catholic for that particular day.

~~xxxx~~ Q: Mr. Douglas, I have been reading , those very interesting essays you gave me. And I have a question or two that stem ~~from that~~ ---from that reading. In one of your theses you say ~~xxx~~ that the fact that the New Orleans Negro population as opposed to community, ~~the fact that~~ I'm getting at, the fact that _____ there's no way to refer to a Negro community as a geographical ~~sense~~ sense. You say this or imply that this has been a liability in New Orleans. The dispersal, the geographic dispersal. I believe of the community. Now would it seem to some people anyway, that this dispersal, would actually make for absorption into general society, make for integration, rather than work against it, with relation to school attendance, in relation to the ghetto altogether, you see.

DOUGLAS: I don't think that, let me put it this way, built into everything, built into my position, of necessity is the theory of contradiction. However, when I say that the fact that Negroes are scattered throughout the city, might have a deleterious effect on any constructive work that we might do, what I meant a little more specifically, was that and I think Myrdal makes reference to it, is the fact that ~~we-shaped--~~we've had a matriarchal family set-up, and so the dispersal goes ~~every~~ even further than geographically. What I had in mind, was the situation, where in order to contribute something of a substantial nature to any community, one has to learn how to work with other people, and of course, if the family is broken up, you can't do this, because this is the starting point, brothers and sisters work ~~together--~~together and fathers and , parents, to fit it in geographical situations, there is a certain ^{kind of} ~~time-and~~ togetherness that can occur, with Negroes who have a peculiar problem. You can't expect initially other people to be sympathetic or to assist you in whatever ways ~~xxxx~~ they feel they should assist you, unless they feel that you are first of all, making an attempt to help yourself. Ex

Q: This would sound like, I'm not saying, that this what I got out of it, but it can be said, that this would lead to a statement, attributed to you, that you work out of the ghetto to bigger and better ghettos, the cultivated ghetto motivates the force of the break-out of ~~xxxx~~ the ghetto, and forces towards integrated and free society ,
really back in business.

A: You are a long way from that.

Q: Let me --- you are the Catholic member of the firm.

A: Yes, I think so. Sometimes these guys ~~xxxx~~ try to convince me that I'm not a Catholic.

(GENERAL TALK)

q; You referred to Myrdal a moment ago, let's go back for a moment, _____ Reconstruction in the south. After the civil war. He would consider the ideal program, of that period, what would have worked, would have avoided our later difficulties, as I remember it, it's ~~sxmx~~ something like this. ~~xixkharx~~ There would have been compensation to slave holders; there would have been expropriation of land, but payment for land, that was expropriated; there would have been a distribution of land, to ex-slaves, but on a purchase basis, at a very very low price, and yet to be amortized over a very long period of time ~~xxx~~, but at least to make this a purchase, and not a free gift, for obvious _____; there would have been ~~sxmx~~ supervision of land for a while, so that no sales could have been made, the person ~~he--w---~~ who undertook this, the burden of ownership, couldn't have been exploited by sharpees; that there would have been educational ~~program--~~ programs for both Negroes and whites; and the resettlement of Negroes on ~~wxkx~~ western land, the ~~dispersen--~~ dispersal of the southern ~~con-ne--~~ concentration with some attempt at supervised industries, or farming, for the new conditions to be ~~confront~~ confronted. Does that make ~~ense---~~ sense?

DOUGLAS: Well, my immediate response to that is, that I ~~would---~~ ~~etaine--~~ retained enough of this give-and-take of the American democratic system, to be against any situation where , and I recognize the fact that I subject to criticism for this kind of statement, particularly, when the, some of the civil rights people, are urging that the preferential treatment be given the Negroes, I don't believe in giving away anything to anybody, anything material, that is. And I think artificial means ~~fax~~ of compensating for things which have had a bad effect on us in the past, are not a real substitute because the people in power are gonna eventually, and perhaps sooner, find a way to get this from you unless you

know how to protect it. What I'm attempting to say is this, if the law is administered ~~fairly~~,--fairly, and if persons are given an opportunity to compete on the basis of your individual ~~xxx~~ merits, then you don't ~~xxxxxxx~~ need an artificial situation. ~~x~~ Now you can have your chance to talk. Go ahead.

eli A: Well, I can't agree, now we are talking about equal chance ~~e-e-e~~---to compete. You talk about the people that have ~~x~~ just been let ~~xxx~~ out of bondage. To me, there was no way in hell for them to compete. I think that perhaps _____ ~~xxxxx~~ except I'm reminded that you evaluated this in terms of something that has failed. What was tried during REconstruction in a sense, has failed, so he has a

Q: A second try .

a; Well, that's true.

DOUGLAS: In other words, I don't think you can ^{argue} ~~argue~~ with the proposition, that if given an equal chance to compete, ~~xxxxx~~ anybody who is born in a situation like this, there's very little more than he

eli A: ~~You're~~---You're talking about today -- given an equal chance, you're a lawyer, he's a lawyer, you ~~xxxxxxx~~ have an equal chance, you can do all right. But ~~xxx~~ now you are talking now about a ~~xxx~~ group of ~~people~~---people who were illiterate, and you are saying that you want to just ~~xxxx~~ give them a chance to compete? With the people that have been educated? And the people who are running the country? What the hell ~~egd-i~~---good is an equal chance?

Collins : DOUGLAS: Well, of course, I think to use that question _____ you seem to indicate both in your xxxxxxx preface to your last remarks, ~~xxxxx~~ that perhaps the question was somewhat academic. Well I think it's very practical for this reason. That in your ~~xxxxx~~ later, remarks, then you # _____ that it does _____. Perhaps there is some germ in truth in what Myrdal said, was ~~xxx~~ the solution then, for the ~~xxxx~~ solution now.

___: Especially the point of dispersal, this kind of thing.

A: I'm not ~~denying~~ denying that, there's nothing that I said.

Q: You're saying, Mr. Collins, then, that ~~the~~ fact ^{of} Myrdal's scheme, has concealed reference to the present.

COLLINS: Correct. I think he, of course, realized that he was speculating, what had _____, but I think that he must have had, I think he did have, a practical reference, for the future, as to what's being done.

Q: I find this notion, coming ~~up~~ up now and then, some ~~would~~ say, I think Myrdal is right, except for ~~number~~ number one. Compensation to slaveholders, ~~or~~ they are saying Myrdal is right, except for number two, compensation to the landowners, ~~who~~ ^{for} expropriated land.

COLLINS: This is ~~the~~ the same situation that exists when you enter in compromise of ~~the~~ a lawsuit, the guys generally ask for more than they expect to get, and whatever you get, is the same kind of situation where the people present would say, "well, we would accept points 3, 4, 5, of Myrdal, but we don't go along with 1 and 2."

Q: Well, my interest is this. In finding the motivation, you see, we ~~say~~ say --- I accept all, it would have been a good idea, but it's long since past, the possibility, or it was a bad idea. Or I resist, in discussing part of this program. In a retroactive way. That this is something to be told, by how I respond to Myrdal's program, even if hypothetical ground. ~~-----past-situation-----~~ In reference to a past situation. Whatever the approach it is, what does it imply about the spirit of an arrangement for the present, if not details.

DOUGLASS: But I think the two requirements that I've outlined, would apply theoretically both to the civil war period then, and to the period now. This is all that I ask personally, the opportunity to compete. I don't want anybody to give me anything, and I think this is a part of the whole ~~the~~ civil rights ~~movement~~ movement. We're not

~~asking--xxxxxxx~~ asking the majority race to give us something.

We're only asking that we ~~xxxxx~~ be accorded the same basic rights and opportunities which have been accorded to the white people for the very ~~XM~~ same reason. Our chief complaint about the administration of justice and about the legislative set up in the south now, is that legislatively the entire panoply of state government, city government, and whatever other kinds of government, you have, is thrown into the balance against the Negro, and I think ~~xxx~~ a substantial step forward will be made when we get some semblance of fairness in treatment, not only in the ~~ivil~~ civil rights cases, but in your criminal cases, and also in your ~~ivil--o--~~ civil cases. This system of segregation is so invidious that it permeates unconsciously the ~~mind~~ minds of a judge when he ~~decides~~ decides what is the money value of a Negro child who has been killed wrongfully in an automobile accident. And these are the , this is one of the many ~~xxx~~ many many instances of how we've been shortchanged. And the classic answer is that there's no one way to solve the problem, but it's the buckshot approach from all angles, and get whatever you can while you can get it.

q; Have any of you ever found yourselves discriminated against, ~~x~~ you think, from the bench?

A: I think we could best answer that by telling you, where here is that question about _____. We tried ~~xxx~~ civil rights cases, and I think you can arrive at your own conclusions, we ~~represent---~~ represent CORE, we've been going up to Clinton, Louisiana, for many months now, about ~~xxx~~ nine I suppose, and the judge before whom we try these cases, we learned only this week, that he's a director of the Louisiana Citizens Council, I don't think it takes much imagination, to realize that we've experienced discrimination from the bench. No, let me say this, when you say the "bench," do you mean if I'm representing a person before

Judge X, will I get the same things that a white lawyer would have gotten had he been representing him, I'd say -- no, the answer is no, because the judges don't discriminate because I'm a Negro, if they're gonna discriminate it's because the client is a Negro. and if he is represented by a white lawyer, it isn't gonna do him any very much good,

A: I think that we've experienced discrimination in both because I can think of one very good example of a case in which there were Negroes on both sides. But I think that we had a prejudiced judge-who was prejudiced against us as Negro lawyers.

A: Was there something that you don't like to admit in your own case.

~~xxxx~~ A: Yes, it's something that you don't like to admit, frankly, it's something that a lawyer finds very difficult to confirm, because really it puts you out of competition in the market for the , in other words, we have less to sell if we can't get for our clients the same thing or more than anyone else. Frankly speaking, we don't have the practice, ~~xxx~~ as Negro lawyers, that we should have. WE would like to ~~xxx~~ think that Negroes would discriminate in our favor, in giving us their business, not only because of this , perhaps false ~~xxx~~ notion of race pride, but also, because of the fact that we can do more for them, ^{or just} ~~against~~ as much, anyway, put it on an equality basis, ~~xxxx~~ just as much as any other lawyer. Now certainly, I feel that I'm as qualified as any other member of the bar, any other average member of the bar, certainly some that I ~~xxx~~ feel are more qualified than me in terms of their age or their experience and opportunity, but certainly, we feel that we represent in this office, a cross section of the Bar Association, in the city of New Orleans, in the state of Louisiana, and we can represent our clients

as well as any one else. And in most situations, we don't feel that we have any problems, but we have an example, certainly. Now, some Jewish lawyer might be able to make the same comment. Or maybe some Italian lawyer might be able to make that comment before an Irish judge, maybe this Irish judge doesn't like Italians. So it may be that the discrimination that we have experienced as Negroes, is no more in this particular situation, ~~xxxx~~ because at times we suspect that we are discriminated in favor of, with reference to certain judges. Certain judges might give us a break because of the fact that they feel that perhaps we need ~~some~~---some extra help.

Dwight _____: We, particularly, when ~~xxxx~~ we've been involved in the civil rights cases, have had occasion to discuss with the judges and with the district ~~attorneys~~ attorneys, certain phases of the case. ~~And~~--And on more than one occasion we have been blatantly told, that, I believe the man was sincere when he said it, ~~althought~~--although I thought he was wrong, he said, "I ~~xxxx~~ lean over ~~xxxx~~ backwards to help the Negro. When he should get three years, I give him one year. When he should get one year, I give him a suspended sentence, and this is exactly what I mean when I said earlier, I don't want anybody ~~xxxx~~ to do me any favors for me. If I'm wrong, then say I'm wrong. But the important thing to me, is ~~xxxx~~ when I'm right, I want to be right. And don't you see that this ties in with the essence of justice, ~~because-i-~~because if a person is given wrong when in essence he's right, then it strikes at the core of everything that this man lives by. Right and wrong become intermingled and mixed up, and it really doesn't matter whether you're on the right side of the fence, or the wrong side of the fence, because you're gonna be given wrong anyhow. So then, and this ties up with the temper of the movement. The Negroes feel that, well, why not boycott. We don't have anything to lose. I don't ~~ave~~ any money invested in the store. And the white people are beginning

to realize that they have money invested in a store, and the Negroes are never satisfied as I thought they were, and the white people, are ~~gone~~---gonna stop coming around, if the stores remain boycotted, and there'll be tension in situations where they never felt the tension about it ~~was~~ before. ~~And~~ And maybe this is the fortunate-^{thing,}~~thing,~~ the bad publicity scares off incoming industry, and again, you have a pinch not on an individual basis, but on a citywide basis, or perhaps even a statewide basis.

Q: REv. Abernathy told me that they've had great success in their selective boycotts in Atlanta. ~~They~~ On a job basis, they haven't failed yet, to get results.

END OF TAPE ONE (1).